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Constructions of literature in GCSE English policy and their implications for teaching practice

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Declaration of original authorship

Declaration: I confirm that this is my own work and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.

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Abstract

This thesis explores the discursive constructions of literature in GCSE English literature policy and their implications for teaching practice. It analyses the ways in which literature is constructed through the language of policy and identifies the differences between constructions in order to understand the discourses that are drawn upon and their relationship to one another. It examines the discursive contexts within which the different constructions of literature are deployed and identifies what subject positions are made available by these constructions. Finally, this study scrutinises the relationship between discourse and practice, exploring what can potentially be thought, felt and experienced by teachers positioned by the discursive constructions of literature. This is important because with the implementation of the reformed GCSE in English literature in 2015 came a tendency for teachers to perceive the subject as something over which they had no control, resulting in a potential misconception of its purpose.

This research followed an interpretive paradigm. Six teachers of literature from a school in the south of England took part in the research over six months. The data collected comprised policy documentation, group and individual interviews, observations, metaphors, and creative responses to literature. Data were analysed using Willig's (2013) procedural guidelines for Foucauldian Discourse Analysis. The use of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis and Foucault's social theory allowed a systematic enquiry of policy and practice in ways that threw light upon assumptions about the reformed GCSE in English literature being a 'memory test' that undermined teacher's expertise.

This study contributes new professional knowledge because it challenges professional assumptions about the intentions of the reformed GCSE in English literature and presents a hitherto unacknowledged disjuncture between reality and perception. Implications for both practice and research are discussed in light of this dissonance.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

1. Introduction

As I write this, GCSE English literature is being taught in classrooms around the department of the secondary school in which I teach.

In room 513, a former music teacher teaches Shakespeare. She works to connect teenagers with characters who seem to speak a different language, helping them to understand how the power of love can change lives – their lives. At home she reads responses that recount the story and seem indifferent towards tragedy.

In room 512, a teacher considers her own response to a poem during a lesson that has asked the same of the class. The poem is powerful, the image of the hare on fire burns into her conscience and she imagines herself as the soldier. Momentarily overwhelmed, she struggles to convey this effect in words. After the allotted time she hopes to share her writing with the class.

In room 510, a teacher whose classroom is plastered with posters – helpful hints on exam technique – is talking with a class while they pass judgement on Gerald, the fairy prince of Priestley's 1945 text, 'An Inspector Calls'. Even with the casual mention of Gerald's penchant for prostitutes, the teacher struggles to move the class beyond wanting to know what they need to know for the exam. She thinks the Birlings would help them to understand the culture in which they live and make them thoughtful and respectful citizens. They know the value of grade 4, the GCSE assessment outcome that opens the door to college.

In room 514, a teacher sighs at the thought of another lesson exploring the animalistic qualities of Stevenson's Mr Hyde. He is always 'ape-like'. Dr Jekyll's work is always 'balderdash'.

GCSE English literature was described by Cox (1989) as a subject that seeks to foster a love of reading in students, to encourage their awareness of the unique relationship that literature has to human experience and to promote a sense of excitement at the power of language. Through literature, students can grow emotionally and aesthetically, morally and socially, Cox claimed (1989).

Yet it has been argued that, at the time of this study, there was a potentially negative perception of the reformed GCSE in English literature that needed to be understood and challenged (Brennan, 2013; Isaacs, 2014; Morby, 2014; Smith, 2015; Boffey, 2016; Stock, 2017). This negative perception was addressed by Smith (2015) who stated that the 'radical series of reforms' that GCSEs underwent in 2015 were never explained to teachers and so were 'widely viewed negatively and fearfully' rather than as an opportunity; this resulted in teachers not 'engaging' with the subject that they were teaching (p.1).

These negative perceptions of the reformed GCSE in English literature were also noted elsewhere. Concerns were raised over the potential for the awarding bodies to be unfair in their grading processes (Isaacs, 2014), over the abolition of world literature that would hinder those students who did not possess the cultural capital to access the new curriculum (Morby, 2014), and over the eradication of coursework and controlled assessment (Brennan, 2013). Morby (2014) described the reformed exam as 'alienating' for both student and teacher (p.507) and Boffey (2016) described it as 'elitist'. Stock (2017), writing from the perspective of an English teacher, defined this concern around the reformed examination as due to it being seen, by teachers, as a qualification that tested the opposing concepts of knowledge and skill. Ultimately, despite the 'cries of researchers and practitioners, [English teachers] continue to work within a discordant system' (Stock, 2017, p.154). These were all reasons why the reformed GCSE in English literature was seen to be viewed with negativity.

These issues formed the impetus for this research: negativity of the reformed GCSE in English literature prompted by similar discussion in my own department, at an anecdotal level. GCSE English literature can be an important subject: the literary canon offers an opportunity for social and cultural diversity challenging stereotype and marginalisation, expressing alternative points of view, and representing those who demand a voice (Cox, 1989). The wide reading that comes through the study of literature is 'essential to the full development of an ear for language, and to a full knowledge of the range of possible patterns of thought and feeling made accessible by the power and range of language' (Kingman, 1988). Through literature, a student can be taught to become receptive to and productive of language, and if the teacher is not engaged with literature because they view it with negativity, then this could be subordinated for everyone in the classroom (Commeyras, 2003).

In conclusion, the aim of this research was to examine the relationship between GCSE English literature in policy and practice. The purpose of this research was to understand where the control lay in this relationship and how each positioned, and controlled, the other in the classroom.

1.1 Personal and professional background

My interest in the area of GCSE English literature stemmed from both my present position and my professional background. I studied literature for many years, from being a student at GCSE and A-Level, and then at university with a BA (Hons) in English and American Literature and an MA in Contemporary Literature with a focus on ghost stories.

At the time of this study, I was an English teacher in a secondary school in the south of England. I had been at this school for twelve years, in role as Second in Department, as Head of Department, as

a Middle Leader, as a Leading Practitioner for English, and as a county Specialist Leader of Education. Throughout all of these positions, I had always been a teacher of English. As an English teacher, I come into contact with literature on a daily basis – it is the subject that I teach, it is the qualification whose requirements I must understand, and it is how I define myself when I am asked. In this role I had spoken with many teachers in my own school, and locally, who believed that the reformed GCSE was forced upon them by a government that did not listen to their concerns as teachers. If one of the challenges as a Head of Department was ensuring that our results were in line with expectations, then as a leader I needed to understand factors that might not only affect our results, but the beliefs and practices of the teachers upon whom I rely to achieve them. Thus, I further approached this study with the idea that if teachers felt more positively about teaching the reformed GCSE, then this might impact upon our departmental outcomes.

This need for understanding of how the new policy was perceived, received and enacted shaped the scope of this study. As a teacher of GCSE English literature, I understood and was aware of the roles and responsibilities that surrounded being a teacher of GCSE English literature from my own experience in the classroom. However I lacked understanding of diverse perspectives on teaching literature and how these may differ from my own, beyond the anecdotal. I wanted to understand more about how other teachers understood literature to see if they confirmed or challenged my own beliefs, and those of other researchers, about GCSE reform. In reading around the topic and finding that some teachers felt 'combat fatigue' (Okolosie, 2013) in relation to the reform of GCSE English literature, it became clear that my experiences as an English teacher were not unique, and that perhaps the negativity with which the curriculum was viewed (Brennan, 2013; Isaacs, 2014; Morby, 2014; Smith, 2015; Boffey, 2016; Stock, 2017) was not just theoretical, but were embodied in our classrooms around the school.

1.2 Introduction to the context for the study

In my role as the coordinator of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and professional development in my current school, my primary interest was in helping teachers develop their practice. In my role as Head of English, my responsibility was in supporting the outstanding practice of the teachers in my department. Combined with the theory that passionate teachers invest time and energy in their teaching (Carbonneau, Vallerand, Fernet & Guay, 2008) and that for some teachers it is 'a field of knowledge' (Fried, 2001, p.44) that inspires them, the teachers' perspectives, rather than the students', formed the focus of this study. It was set in the context of a secondary school located in the south of England.

The study took place at a time of radical GCSE reform. Initial data were collected as teachers were experiencing first teaching of the new GCSE in English literature to the first cohort (from 2015). At the study's close in 2018, this cohort had been assessed under the new 1-9 grading and accountability system. With regards to GCSE English literature, the subject at the heart of this study, this reform acted as a catalyst for discussions in education about the value and construction of GCSE English literature as a subject, and how it should be assessed. Criticism in the media was levelled at a qualification that, for example, did not require students to read a single work of English literature written before 1900, apart from Shakespeare (Bate, 2014). Such tension was at the heart of this study: in government policy, GCSE English literature 'did not ban any authors, books or genres' (DfE, 2014); yet, the perception in practice was that the qualification dictated what students were 'allowed' to read (Gatiss, 2014). Thus the curriculum was criticised by unions and their allies in the media as being 'too specific and too content heavy' (Gove, 2013). A 'Twitterstorm' (Bate, 2014) about the 'ax[ing]' of 'American classics' (Molloy, 2014) resulted in the qualification being called 'a syllabus out of the 1940s' (Marshall, a senior lecturer in English at King's College, London, quoted in Molloy, 2014). The mockingbird was pronounced 'dead' (Griffiths, 2014). All of these debates were echoed in the department of the school in which the study took place. It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.

1.3 Overview of the research

In order to understand how teachers engaged with the teaching of literature, this study explored their discursive constructions of literature in GCSE English policy and their implications for teaching practice. It analysed the ways in which literature was constructed through the language of policy and identified the differences between constructions in order to understand the discourses that were drawn upon and their relationship to one another. It examined the discursive contexts within which the different constructions of literature were deployed and identified what subject positions were made available by these constructions. Finally, this study scrutinised the relationship between discourse and practice, exploring what could potentially be thought, felt and experienced by teachers positioned by the discursive constructions of literature. Such a systematic enquiry of policy and practice threw light upon assumptions about the reformed GCSE in English literature.

This study sought to give a voice to teachers who felt they had been silenced at a time of reform through data collection methods including interview, but also in their classrooms. The aim throughout was to listen to what they had to say, but to frame that in the policy that determined what they taught. In my opinion, policy and practice were inseparable. As suggested, it has been argued that teachers have a negative relationship with the way in which the GCSE reforms in English were rolled out (Geary, 2015) and thus the policy that was published (Mansworth, 2015). This led to

my desire also to give the policy a voice rather than to accept potential preconceptions and assumptions that may have manifested in the participants' practice. This was also part of the study's originality: there was very little research into the reformed GCSE in English literature, primarily because it was so new but also because research into literature has a tendency to focus on classroom practice rather than the policy, itself.

In particular, the focus of this study was on exam specifications rather than the policy that informed the curriculum itself. While it could be argued that curriculum is closer to government and reflects ideas of power more explicitly, this research chose to focus more specifically on exam specifications. The Department for Education determines the subject content for the reformed GCSEs which exam boards use to produce submissions that meet these conditions. It is this subject content document (*English literature GCSE subject content and assessment objectives,* DfE, 2013) that sets out the knowledge, understanding, skills and assessment objectives common to all GCSE specifications in GCSE English literature. It is a framework within which the awarding organisations create the detail of their specifications thus ensuring progression from Key Stage 3 national curriculum requirements. In practice, it is this document, and the documents that it informs, that most directly impact upon the classroom teacher of GCSE English literature, at the moment the Key Stage 3 curriculum becomes the Key Stage 4 curriculum, in the form of the GCSE qualification. Arguably, the GCSE is the practical enactment of policy and the measure of its success. Therefore in seeking to understand the relationship of the reformed GCSE in English literature to classroom practice, it is the specification documents that inform what is taught in the GCSE classroom that are explored in this study, as opposed to the national curriculum requirements themselves.

In that this research was, in essence, a study of constructions of literature as expressed in language and practice, it was appropriate to use the theory of Foucault as a methodological lens through which to observe the disjuncture between reality and perception. Foucault theorises a model of power embodied in Bentham's Panopticon (1791), an ideal architectural form of modern disciplinary power and a proposal for maximising control of prisoners with minimal staff. It has been suggested that the Panopticon, as a model of power, can seem 'strikingly familiar' to a school (Gallagher, 2010, p.262). This is because, when understood as an ideal model of power, rather than as a description of how specific institutions actually work, aspects of panoptic control are embodied in the classroom. Therefore, this research also contributed to studies of power and surveillance in educational institutions (Holt, 2004; Hope, 2005; Hayter et al, 2007; Pike, 2008). This is because when analysing the ways in which literature was constructed and deployed in the data, a particular facet of negativity towards the reformed GCSE was explored, that of the proposal that if teachers believe that GCSE policy is controlling them, then they will allow themselves to be controlled and respond to

this control with negativity (Mansworth, 2015). In Foucault's social theory, the principle of control is not the observation itself, but the possibility of observation, the result of which is to 'induce in the inmate a state of consciousness and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power' (Foucault, 1977, p.201). Applied to this study, the perception of being controlled resulted in teachers who tended to be passive and docile because they perceived the GCSE English literature exam to be no more than a 'memory test' that required a predefined response. Thus, teachers had the power to rebel against the rhetoric of the curriculum but they chose not to (Goodwyn, 2012). This study, in exploring the relationship between discourse and what could potentially be felt, thought, and experienced from the subject positions made available by the constructions of literature in policy, examined whether teachers were aware of their docility and the functioning of control around them (Jones, 2017).

In conclusion, this study examined the constructions of literature in GCSE English policy and their implications for teaching practice. It used the social theory of Foucault as both method and methodology and it challenged professional assumptions about the intentions of the reformed GCSE in English literature.

1.4 Structure of the study

This study is organised into the following chapters. Chapter 2 reviews the literature that underpins the research into the constructions of literature in policy and practice. It explores the tensions in GCSE English literature policy, the ideological roots of policy and the reformed policy. It then moves to consider tensions in GCSE English literature in practice, the difficulty of personal response in the classroom and the role of the teacher in the reading response as a challenge to the perception of the exam requiring a 'right reading' (Crosman, 1982). It concludes by setting out the research questions that arise from the literature review.

Chapter 3 sets out the methodological approach taken to explore the research questions. The choice and limitations of an interpretive paradigm are considered, alongside the strengths and limitations of qualitative research methods. This chapter then presents the rationale behind the choice of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) as methodology and method, before presenting the procedural guidelines that were adopted, as defined by Willig (2013).

Chapters 4 and 5 present the findings through data analysis. Chapter 4 moves through stage one of Willig's procedural guidelines, analysing the ways in which the discursive object is constructed in the data. It asks how literature is constructed through language and what type of literature is constructed. Chapter 5 then moves through stages two and three of Willig's procedural guidelines. It identifies the differences between the discursive constructions of literature and asks what wider

discourses are drawn upon and what their relationships are to each other. It then examines the discursive contexts within which the different constructions of the object are deployed, challenging what the constructions achieve, what is gained from their deployment, and their function in the data.

Chapter 6 discusses the findings as described in stages four, five and six of Willig's procedural guidelines. The study identifies how discourse constructs subjects as well as objects, examining the subject positions made by the constructions of literature. The relationship between discourse and practice is explored. The possibilities for action as mapped out by the constructions of literature are examined and what this means can be said and done in practice is considered. This chapter then explores the relationship between discourse and subjectivity. It asks what can potentially be felt, thought and experience from the available subject positions, and the implications of this.

Finally, chapter 7 draws together the preceding chapters to challenge the professional assumptions through a reflection on the power of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, and the limitations of the research, and to identify the practical and theoretical contributions that this research has made to professional knowledge.

2. Literature review

The aim of this research was to analyse the ways in which literature was discursively constructed in policy and practice in order to identify how discourse positions the teacher in the classroom, and the implications of these positions for future practice. The purpose of this was to identify why the reformed GCSE in English literature was perceived with negativity, if it was at all.

There was a vast amount of literature addressing both the assumptions underlying this stated aim and the background to it, and reviewing the literature forms the focus of this chapter. Chapter 2 reviews the literature that underpins the research into the constructions of literature in policy and practice. It explores the tensions in GCSE English literature policy, the ideological roots of policy, and the reformed policy. It then moves to consider tensions in GCSE English literature in practice, the difficulty of personal response in the classroom and the role of the teacher in the reading response as a challenge to the perception of the exam requiring a 'right reading' (Crosman, 1982). Next, it explores teaching as a profession and some of the key professional issues related to knowledge, freedom, and accountability within this. It concludes by considering the social theory of Foucault and the implications of panoptic docility in the teaching of GCSE English literature. Finally, the research questions that arise from the literature review are set out.

2.1 Tensions in GCSE English literature policy

It is necessary to distinguish the relevance of the literary canon. In this study, the definition of the canon is accepted as 'what gets taught' in GCSE English literature (Nelson, 2016). Indeed, GCSE English literature itself could be seen as a literary canon (Payne, 2014). This is significant because 'what gets taught' has just changed with the content of the GCSE English literature curriculum being reformed for first teaching in 2015. As a consequence, the exam boards had to make a list of what their students ought to read and ought to master, and present that list in the GCSE specification defined as 'subject content' (AQA, 2015). In exploring the potential ideology at the heart of the GCSE English literature canon, as this section will do, it is accepted that the canon must be taught. As Nelson (2015) writes, in choosing not to teach it, or in choosing not to critically engage with it, the teacher is disempowering students by not teaching them to read critically and carefully. They are also not doing their job.

This section explores the complexity of centuries of debate about the concept of a literary canon and seeks to make it relevant to the reformed GCSE in English literature. It considers the literary canon in GCSE English literature policy and the ideological roots of the canon both before and after reform. It highlights research into the potential problems of the literary canon in policy and the form that the reformed GCSE has taken.

As argued by Fleming (2008), the concept of a literary canon is one that frequently arises in the context of discussions about the place of literature in curriculum. This is because decisions made by policy makers about the content of the literature curriculum have underlying theoretical and political implications. Therefore, 'what gets taught' in GCSE English literature was seen by some to have an 'ideological bent', be that for the 'interest of children' or not (Didau, 2014). For some, GCSE English literature has been accused of being imperialistic (Okolosie, 2013), of representing ethnocentric values (Fleming, 2018), of being a canon of 'dead white males' (Stevenson, 2007, p.10), of being 'flimsy' and 'patronising' (Payne, 2014), or of being an ideological extension of the State (Nelson, 2016). These issues highlight some of the tensions that appear to be in conflict with diversity or representation in the 21st century (Fleming, 2008), as embodied by GCSE English literature policy. During (2005) asked whether literature at the end of the millennium was less a canonical cultural formation and more a pile of mouldering old books as the subject gave way to film, television, music and the Internet – new cultural repositories of cultural meaning. Ultimately, 'what gets taught' becomes a highly complex thing, and the policy document becomes a site of underlying ideology and intention (Mansworth, 2015).

In considering 'what gets taught', policy documentation states that students of GCSE English literature must read a wide range of literature, critically and evaluatively, effectively and analytically (DfE, 2013). This 'wide range' of texts should be a distinct body of knowledge that students should study (Donadio, 2007), they should be texts that have shaped the modern literary world, and their value should be defended, 'quills aloft' (Law, 2012). The subject must also take into consideration the practicalities of its teaching, addressing the needs of content as specified by Ofqual (specified authors, texts, genres, or historical period, for example) balanced against the way that teachers approach this content (Fleming, 2008). The dynamic between the texts to be taught and how teachers teach them results in the experience of literature in the classroom (Fleming, 2008). Ultimately, in taking all of these things into consideration, the subject of GCSE English literature, in its reform, became an opportunity for the redrafting of the canon for the 21st century (Payne, 2014).

There are many different perspectives on the nature and importance of the literary canon within the subject of literature. Some suggest that literary knowledge is grounded in the canon as the foundation to creativity and critical thinking, an intellectual hinterland that students draw upon (Gibb, 2016). Policy itself states that the study of literature teaches students the skills and knowledge they will need to read, to understand, and to respond to texts critically and personally (DfE, June 2013; Ofqual, May 2014). Matthew Arnold suggested that the purpose of studying literature was to 'know the best that is known and thought in the world, and by in its turn making this known, to create a current of true and fresh ideas' (1865). This theory was further developed by

F.R. Leavis in 1948, who claimed that utilitarian values had so changed twentieth-century culture that it was only in reading literature that our moral and spiritual bearings could be recovered, as it was in literature that society could escape from 'the smoke and stir, the din and turmoil of man's lower life of care and business and debate' (Sampson, quoted in Baldick, 1988, p.153). As recently as 2015, the exam board AQA claimed literature would inspire, challenge and motivate every student who studied their specification.

However difficulties arise in defining 'what gets taught', or what the canon of GCSE English literature might look like, when consideration is made of what the texts to be included might be. In particular, the DfE states that GCSE English literature should contain the best that has been thought and written (DfE, 2013). Any judgement of the 'best' in the classroom has an inherent political dimension (Fleming, 2008) and getting the text-choice wrong has wider implications than a text being poorly received by the students (Payne, 2014). The texts studied in GCSE English literature teach more than the skills of simple decoding (PISA, 2013). Participation in literary knowledge encourages personal liberation, emancipation, and empowerment (Lundberg, 1991; Linnakylä, 1992). Furthermore, exam boards are businesses that have to compete to sell their product (Payne, 2014).

When a school signs up to an exam board (which they must do if they want the students to get GCSE certification), a defined list of texts is provided (Figure 2.1).

3 Subject content

3.1 Shakespeare and the 19th-century novel

3.1.1 Shakespeare

Students will study one play from the list of six set texts. Students should study the whole text.

Choose one of:

- *Macbeth*
- *Romeo and Juliet*
- *The Tempest*
- *The Merchant of Venice*
- *Much Ado About Nothing*
- *Julius Caesar.*

3.1.2 The 19th-century novel

Students will study one novel from the list of seven set texts. Students should study the whole text.

Choose one of:

Author	Title
Robert Louis Stevenson	*The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*
Charles Dickens	*A Christmas Carol*
Charles Dickens	*Great Expectations*
Charlotte Brontë	*Jane Eyre*
Mary Shelley	*Frankenstein*
Jane Austen	*Pride and Prejudice*
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle	*The Sign of Four*

Figure 2. 1 Subject Content of the AQA GCSE English literature specification (2015)

Figure 2.1 details the specific list of texts that English departments who select AQA as their exam board are given. A similar list is provided for those who choose the other exam boards. It defines 'what gets taught'.

2.1.1 The ideological roots of policy

For some, the subject of literature can be critical, pleasurable, and powerful. It is reported that F. Scott Fitzgerald stated that part of the beauty of literature was when the reader discovered that 'your longings are universal longings, that you're not lonely and isolated from anyone. You belong' (Graham, 1958, p.260). In lamenting his writer's block, Bukowski supposedly cried that 'without literature, life is hell' (2005) and Tuchman (1980) described a world in which 'history is silent, literature dumb, science crippled, thought and speculation at a standstill.' Without literature, he suggested, 'the development of civilization would have been impossible' (p.16). Such strong statements assume the influence of literature and as such, the importance to define such a powerful thing.

Since the 1960s, the concept of literature has been contested (Lodge, 2013), with Ryan and Ryan (2014) describing the quest to define it as a road much travelled but with an unsatisfactory point of arrival. In fact, they suggest that the only thing that is certain about defining literature is that the definition, much like the concept itself, will change as the journey continues. The debate around the nature of literature has focused not only on what is deemed to have artistic or intellectual distinction – perhaps understood as the literary canon – but also the problematic notion that such a value judgement can have. If literature is classified as 'the best that is known and thought in the world' (Arnold, 1865), then it is problematic that there is no objective definition of what constitutes literature; if anything can be literature, then anything can be excluded since value judgements change over time (Eagleton, 2003).

Whereas Eagleton (2003) is arguing that potentially anything could be literature, it can also be argued that not everything is literature. Historically it seems that the Western Canon, a concept roughly defined as a 'Western intellectual tradition that goes from, say, Socrates to Wittgenstein in philosophy, and from Homer to James Joyce in literature' (Searle, quoted in Nelson et al., 2012), would suggest that there is arguably an objective conception of literature upon which all would agree. Yet it has been, and still is, the subject of ongoing debate and is constantly being revised (Searle, 1990), as the 'shadows of the mighty dead are hovering o'er us now' (Tait, quoted in Nelson et al., 2012). This perspective has been demonstrated in the continued debate over the ideologies behind text choice in the reformed GCSE in English literature (Geary, 2015).

Here, the 21st century discussion around GCSE reform and the designation of something as having literary worth has become something that is politically-charged with the creation of a space, in the form of the literary canon endorsed in the classroom, in which ideologies are seen to be enacted to create policy (Mansworth, 2016, p.119). In drawing on Lefebvre's conception of conceived space, the curriculum is defined as an 'ideological-institutional' (Kipfer, Goonewardena, Schmid, and Milgram, 2008, p.8) and as a place where ideologies are endorsed, boundaries drawn, and teaching and learning institutionalised (Mansworth, 2016). The literary canon becomes a place of tension constructed from the multiple ideologies that influence it, all of which are situated within a policy document that 'claims to provide a unifying and authoritative voice' (Mansworth, 2016, p.119) of the best that has been thought and written (DfE, 2013). The literary canon is perceived by some to be both exclusive and divisive and as a place that has been invaded by politics (Donadio, 2007). While the term 'canon' comes from the Greek 'kanon' meaning a measuring rod and then a rule in law, it has been argued that a 'kanon' has always been an imposition of ideological authority and canonical judgements have always had inherent political dimensions (Fleming, 2008).

Specific criticism of the reformed GCSE in English literature had been made of a subject that did not encourage students to read a work of literature from before 1900, apart from Shakespeare (Bate, 2014). Furthermore, much was made in the media of Michael Gove's widely reported comment that he 'hated' 'Of Mice and Men'. In fact, what he was commenting on was the fact that of the 280,000 yearly candidates sitting GCSE English literature, more than 190,000 had only studied one novel for the AQA GCSE (Gove, 2014) and that novel was 'Of Mice and Men', a statistic that undermined the breadth of study that the subject was supposed to encourage. While some argued that at the heart of 'Of Mice and Men' was a study of the poor and the weak (Kennedy, 2014), there was also the suspicion that 'Of Mice and Men' was taught because it was short (BBC, 2011). Either way, the text became representative of a wider argument that such American literature was 'ideological baggage' that was not entirely relevant for British school children (Sutherland, 2014).

In particular, ideological tension was seen to be rooted in a debate around the role that GCSE English literature should play in the transmission of cultural heritage, the view of Cox (1989) that emphasised the responsibility of schools to lead children to an 'appreciation of those works of literature that have been widely regarded as amongst the finest in the language' (p.60). For some, this was seen as an attempt 'to distil multiple ideas into a policy that seeks to promulgate a one-dimensional identity' (Mansworth, 2016, p.119) under the ideological auspices of 'Cultural Heritage' (Cox, 1989).

On one hand, the teaching of cultural heritage brought students and teachers together in the beauty and value of a literature that was open for all, not just the elite (Thielemans, 1995). Literature itself contributed to a democracy that encouraged a society of people who recognised their common interests, goals, freedoms and responsibilities, no matter how different they were individually (Rosenblatt, 1995). The teaching of a cultural literary heritage created community and tradition (Munoz, 1995) and gave a voice to others before us about themselves and their times (Kress, 1985).

On the other hand, Cox's (1989) definition of cultural heritage could be seen as simply 'comforting rhetoric' (Goodwyn, 2008) that minimised the complexity of centuries of debate around the literary canon. In reflecting on critics who commented on the ethnocentric values of the commonly accepted Western literary canon and the lack of diversity reflected within (Fleming, 2008), the aims of the subject were challenged. Some critics argued that the literary canon did not impart to students a sense of all literature enabling the understanding of our commonality of experience and desire, because the selection of texts was arbitrary and exclusive, and thus prescriptive (Okolosie, 2013). Eagleton (2003) suggested that the texts that constructed a literary canon, any literary canon, reflected 'the arbitrary authority of the literary institution' (p.176). Rather than as an opportunity for students to develop culturally, emotionally, spiritually and socially (Cox, 1989), the canon became 'a

set of ideological convictions that view the study of English literature as a means through which a nationalistic and ossified vision of England can be propagated' (Okolosie, 2013) rather than as something constructed by teachers and that represented their understanding of diversity.

These perspectives on the potential problems of the canon at GCSE are relevant because they support Smith's (2015) assertion that teachers of the reformed GCSE in English literature felt they were not consulted about the changes that they would be expected to teach resulting in a feeling that they lacked control over the subject in their classrooms. In not being given the opportunity to contribute to the construction of, arguably, *their* canon, teachers approached the qualification with negativity, suggested Smith (2015). Thus, the cultural heritage that the study of literature was intended to 'propagate' instead became a state-sanctioned version of history through which the values of policymakers, rather than teachers, were perceived to be represented (Mansworth, 2016, p.119). This resulted in teachers who felt controlled rather than inspired (Goodwyn, 2008).

The architects of the reformed GCSE in English literature fought against its perception as an imposition of law (Fleming, 2008), even going so far as to publish a 'myth buster' guide (DfE, 2014) in order to reinforce how no books, authors or genres were 'banned' (p.1) In challenging the misconception that they only valued the cultural heritage of British authors, the DfE argued that 'This couldn't be more wrong' and that the new curriculum would 'rightly ensure that all pupils have a solid grounding in the rich literary heritage of the British Isles' while simultaneously rewarding students who read 'widely and freely' (DfE, 2014, p.1). Furthermore, in continuing to bust the myth that the reformed curriculum was 'trying to control what teenagers are allowed to read', the DfE responded by arguing that by giving students a grounding in the demanding literature that had been prescribed, the curriculum would equip them with the skills they would need to discover new literature for themselves (DfE, 2014 p.2). Ultimately, this document was arguing that the new curriculum was not imposing any ideological or state-sanctioned version of history, instead, it was simply the framework for 'curious and inquiring minds' who needed an 'essential grounding' in works that would engage and challenge them from 'this country's fantastic literary heritage' (DfE, 2014, pp.1-.2). Indeed, it was argued that the new English literature GCSE had been designed 'as a way of helping to introduce more and more children to the great minds of the past' (Gove, 2014). The reformed literature qualification was explicit in its conception of critical reading as being inspired by knowledge of 'the best that is known and thought in the world' (Arnold, 1865).

However, for some, the perception of this was that 'the best' was predefined for teachers by a policymaker who was anonymous and invisible (Mansworth, 2015) and that any room for discussion of what 'the best' might be, was silenced. Furthermore, some teachers potentially still 'view their job as one of transmitting culture rather than critiquing or transforming it' (Roger, 1997, p.113). For

others, an acceptance of such perceived prescription made the teacher of literature feel like 'a collaborator in the imposition of an alien culture which is excluding pupils' (Wilks, 1998, p.14). For some, as was previously mentioned, teachers teach best when they are passionate about what they teach (Mart, 2013). Indeed, Bate (2014) who was part of the board of experts redesigning the qualification recommended the government broaden 'what had been a very narrow English literature syllabus' by suggesting that the notion of 'set texts' be abandoned altogether so that teachers could tailor their text choices to the particular circumstances of their class and teach 'what they are passionate about' rather than feeling excluded from the discussion. The reformed GCSE in English Literature was thus an attempt at liberation (Bate, 2014).

Indeed, the DfE (2014) had clearly stated its intention for curriculum reform:

> We want schools and teachers to take the opportunity to develop their own school curricula…There will be no new statutory document or guidance from Whitehall telling teachers how to do this.

Furthermore, PISA's assertion that 'in countries where schools have greater autonomy over what is taught and how students are assessed, students tend to perform better' (OECD, 2010, p.14), suggested that the curriculum reforms were the Coalition government's response to teachers who 'consistently tell us they feel constrained and burdened' by a curriculum that is 'limited' and 'non-essential' (DfE, 2010, p.8). It was a reaction to a crowded curriculum that deskilled teachers and restricted creativity (Moss, 2008). As early as 1921, the Newbolt Report had specified that all literature teachers should be free to draw up their own syllabus and adopt their own methods as it was 'a real misfortune when examinations dictate the whole syllabus of study for a school' (p.303).

Thus there was the perception that the reformed GCSE in English literature was not the brave new world that it could have been (Didau, 2014). While the DfE called the new GCSE 'broader and more challenging' than the previous incarnation (2014, p.1), and AQA described their specification as inspiring, challenging and motivating (2015), the new canon was described by others as culturally incoherent (McCrum, 2014). Issues included that the choice of texts were 'monocultural' and 'utterly prescriptive' (Okolosie, 2013) on a 'little English list' (McCrum, 2014). Indeed, it had been argued that the contemporary GCSE needed to reflect a multicultural and cross-disciplinary construction of the subject manifested in an attempt to reclaim marginalised or excluded literary genres such as utopian and science-fiction, travel writing and life-writing, and a deeper engagement with, for example, post-colonial and women's writing (Pope, 2012, p.5). And it was suggested that the reformed GCSE in English literature, did not (Marshall, 2014).

In summary, while the authors of the reformed GCSE in English literature did not seemingly intend to present a restricted canon, this was how it was perceived and interpreted. As a consequence, the reform was met with hostility. There were several possible reasons for this.

Firstly, Smith (2015) suggested that the Government's lack of guidance for secondary schools contributed to a lack of inspiration to implement change. Rather than as an opportunity to make the teaching of the subject of GCSE literature more 'stimulating, effective, equitable and enjoyable' for both teachers and students, teachers did not feel supported or engaged and so viewed the changes with negativity and fear (p.1).

Secondly, rather than a subject that embraced seminal world literature, literature in this reformed GCSE was situated in England, in English. This was perceived as limiting, even when considering the wealth of culture across the British Isles, and resulted in a 'potentially alienating conception of English' (Mansworth, 2015, p.118).

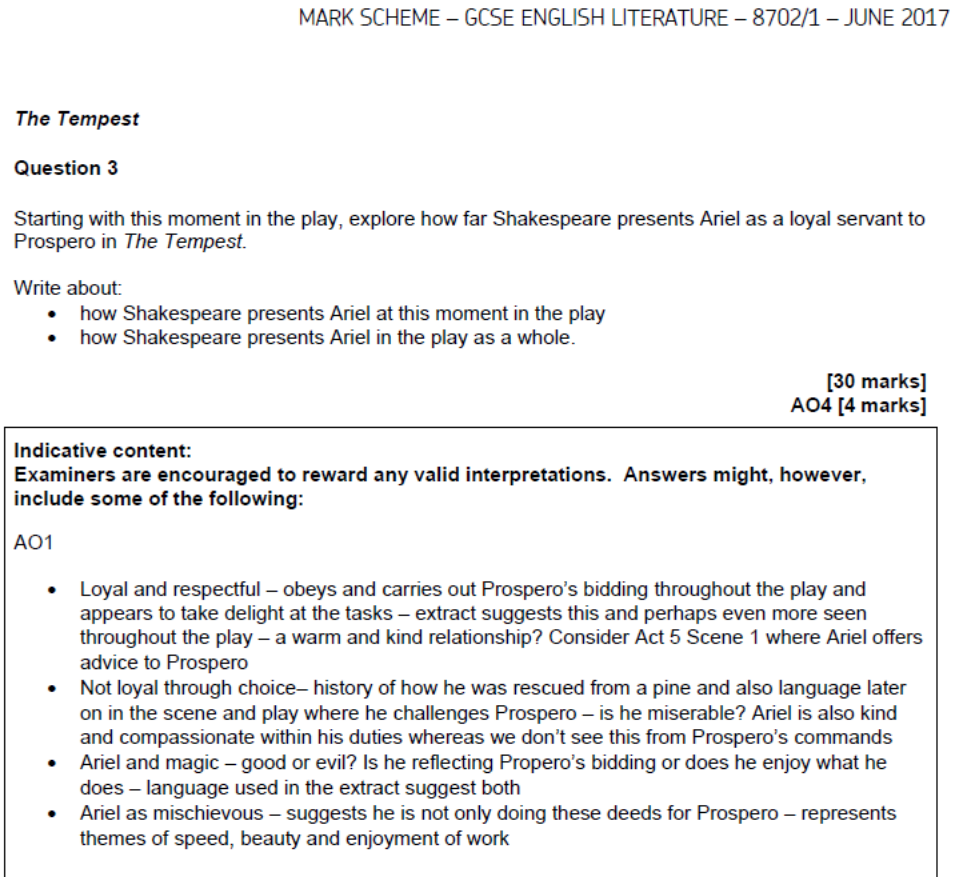
Thirdly, there was the perception that the literary canon offered by the qualification was 'rigid and prescriptive' (Maisuria, 2005, p147). In perceiving the canon of the qualification as predefined, teachers were silenced in their discussion of what was 'the best' as the ideological values of the policymakers were held as dominant and imposed upon them (Willis, 1990). Such authority was seen as impacting upon teachers' perceptions of their own expertise and literary knowledge, diminishing their engagement with the texts they taught and undermining the personal significance of the canon, and so the subject (Goodwyn, 2012).

In conclusion, with the launch of the reformed GCSE in English literature in 2015, the official rhetoric and practical realities of teaching literature were very much in opposition (Goodwyn, 2012), even before it made it to the classroom.

2.1.2 Reformed policy in practice

It has been argued that above any call for inspirational literature, GCSE English literature should be 'teachable', defined by McCrum (2014) as a subject that inspired debate, opened imaginative doors, and stimulated classroom discussion. Thus there are things to consider beyond the choice of texts. This is because literature is not only a subject; it is a qualification by which teachers, schools, and departments, will be measured. It could be argued that any reading of any text within the context of the qualification of literature must be the 'right reading' (Crosman, 1982, p.207) that is expected in an exam response answer. For example, it could be argued that the reader must understand the construction of the character of Crooks is to be representative of the marginalised voice of the African-American in the 1930s (Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men,* 1937); they must agree that Napoleon's raise to power is analogous of Stalin's (Orwell, *Animal Farm,* 1945); they must join arms against Mr

Birling's capitalist individualism and seek a socialist utopia in their own society (Priestley, *An Inspector Calls,* 1945). For this (although arguably) is what the writer wants the reader to think, and so this is the 'answer', a constraint to the teaching of literature that could be considered a 'real misfortune' (Newbolt, 1921, p.303).



MARK SCHEME – GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE – 8702/1 – JUNE 2017

The Tempest

Question 3

Starting with this moment in the play, explore how far Shakespeare presents Ariel as a loyal servant to Prospero in *The Tempest*.

Write about:

- how Shakespeare presents Ariel at this moment in the play
- how Shakespeare presents Ariel in the play as a whole.

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]

Indicative content:
Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however, include some of the following:

AO1

- Loyal and respectful – obeys and carries out Prospero's bidding throughout the play and appears to take delight at the tasks – extract suggests this and perhaps even more seen throughout the play – a warm and kind relationship? Consider Act 5 Scene 1 where Ariel offers advice to Prospero
- Not loyal through choice– history of how he was rescued from a pine and also language later on in the scene and play where he challenges Prospero – is he miserable? Ariel is also kind and compassionate within his duties whereas we don't see this from Prospero's commands
- Ariel and magic – good or evil? Is he reflecting Propero's bidding or does he enjoy what he does – language used in the extract suggest both
- Ariel as mischievous – suggests he is not only doing these deeds for Prospero – represents themes of speed, beauty and enjoyment of work

Figure 2. 2 Indicative content in the AQA GCSE English literature mark scheme, Paper 1 June 2017

It could also be argued that this is not true, that 'it is a narrow mind which cannot look at a subject from various points of view' (Eliot, 1871, p.66) and there is no 'right reading' (Crosman, 1982) that should be taught. Yet, for each text that is examined, the exam board provides a mark scheme of both skills (convincing, critical analysis and exploration; thoughtful, developed consideration, for example), but also the expectation of indicative content (Figure 2.2).

In conclusion, it has been suggested that while the reformation of literature as a subject presented an opportunity for transformation, in actuality, its reality as a qualification could not be escaped. While there was the opportunity for debate around the reformed literary canon, instead, 'the best' was seen as already decided and so offering little to discuss in the eyes of teachers. Thus, it seemed that the reformation of GCSE English literature had resulted in a subject that was constructed of a

single voice (Mansworth, 2016) as opposed to a subject that celebrated the multi-voiced diversity of the twenty-first century (Guttierrez, Rymes & Laron, 1993). Ultimately, it could be argued that there was the perception that this 'single voice' not only determined the content of the subject and thus 'what gets taught', but it also determined the 'right' way for it to be taught in the form of a 'right reading'. This resulted in a negative perception of GCSE English literature policy and the feeling that teachers were not in control of literature in their classrooms: policy was.

2.2 Tensions in GCSE English literature in practice

The literature review now moves to explore the reformed GCSE in English literature in practice. It reflects on the difficulty of teaching a critical and personal response in a qualification in which such a response is measured and held to account. It further considers the role of the teacher in the reading response.

Over the past few decades, the way that readers have been asked to respond to the texts that they are studying has radically shifted (McDonald, 2004) from a search for the author's meaning (Kempe, 1993) to the relationship between the text and the students' life experiences (Luke and Freebody, 1997). Approaches that emphasise the active role of the reader have gained acceptance (Iser, 1980;; Fish, 1980; Rosenblatt, 1995; Bloom 2003; Miall 2003) with the meaning of the text perceived as being constructed through a transactional process between text and reader. In classrooms, this transaction is negotiated through a tripartite process between text, reader and teacher (Poyas, 2004).

Reader-response is an influential theory in classrooms (Park, 2012). It was influenced by New Criticism which argued that the meaning of the work was to be identified by the reader through exploration of a text's literary qualities. This was a practice that required close and careful attention to form and language (Gallop, 2007). As a reading response, this was limiting. It failed to acknowledge the reader as a maker of meaning and could not account for the presence of multiple interpretations (Fish, 1980). The transaction model of reading promoted by Rosenblatt (1995), challenged the notion of the text as having one true meaning and de-centred the teacher as the prospector digging for gold (Park, 2012).

In recognising the reader as an active participant in the reading transaction (Brooks & Brown, 2012), reader-response theory proposed that the reader imparted a real existence to the work and completed its meaning through interpretation. In suggesting that until a book is read, it is simply an object waiting to be delivered from its materiality (Poulet, 1969), reader-response theory acknowledged that 'different readers will naturally and inevitably construct different meanings of the same text' (Sipe, 2008, p.50). Such a negotiation between the theorists who privilege authors by

foregrounding the technical construction of the genre (Rabinowitz, 1987) and those who suggest that the text has very little to do with the meaning created (Bleich, 1976) resulted in the theory of Rosenblatt (Brooks & Brown, 2012). Here meaning was negotiated between text and reader and consideration of how the two influenced each other independently and simultaneously through the reading, resulting in a reading transaction (Rosenblatt, 1995).

In GCSE English literature, such a critical reading is important because, in the twenty-first century, students interact with many more sources of information than in the past and as a consequence, they need to respond to what they read (McLaughlin and DeVoogd, 2004) with a critical edge (Pearson, 2001). In calling on a reading response that is critical and evaluative, effective and analytical (DfE, 2013), the reformed GCSE in English literature acknowledges that a reader's response to a text is a complex thing. This is recognised in theoretical perspectives on language and learning that have resulted in increasingly sophisticated questions about texts, readers, and contexts for response (Galda and Beach, 2001).

Furthermore, the reader should be both a participant in the reading process as well as a spectator; they should bring their knowledge of the outside world to join with their contemplation of the literary world (Britton, 1994). Indeed, a text must require something from the reader's imagination: if it does not, then the reader is bored; if too much is required, then engagement is lost (Iser, 1972). If books are metaphorical caged animals longing to be free, their fate is dependent on human intervention so they can be 'delivered from the shame of being treated as objects' and their existence transformed (Poulet, 1969, p.53). A critical response recognises the existence of the book but also the reader and is a requirement of the specification (AQA, 2014, p.11).

2.2.1 The difficulty of personal response in the classroom

Reader Response criticism is a school of literary thought that focuses on the reader and their experience of a literary work, in contrast to other theories that focus on the author, content, or form of the work. Within this school of thought, Rosenblatt relates her theory of the reader to the teacher, arguing that it is important for the teacher to avoid imposing any 'preconceived notions about the proper way to react to any work' (1938, p.66). Within the boundaries of this study, Rosenblatt's theories of transactional reader-response – that of the meaning created in the transaction between reader and text – seemed most appropriate. This is because Rosenblatt theorises reading response as a continuum from 'efferent' to 'aesthetic' (2005): the efferent is the impersonal, the informational or the instructional within a text which must be read and acted upon; the aesthetic is the personal response and associations to the words read and actually experienced during the reading.

This continuum of reading response is useful for understanding the requirements of GCSE English literature and what students need to be taught. The reformed GCSE renews the emphasis on the quality of teaching (Smith, 2015). This is because the new qualification has a higher linguistic demand and calls for confidence and resilience in response to a wider variety of unseen texts. To succeed, students of literature need to 'narrate, explain, speculate, imagine, hypothesise, explore, evaluate, discuss, argue, reason and justify' (Alexander, 2012, p.4). Students need to have an active response that is exploratory but not unfocussed (Smith, 2015). As readers, they need to be 'critical' in their reading response (AQA, 2014). Yet, it has been argued that literature teaching tends to adopt a more efferent approach (Goodwyn, 2012) as schools are still primarily concerned with the establishment of a common interpretation: a 'right reading' (Crosman, 1982). This prioritises the text and silences the reader (Lewis, 2000). It could be further argued that the study of literature, before the reform of the GCSE in English literature, did not allow the opportunity for aesthetic response at all (Bean & Moni, 2003).

It is important for GCSE English literature to teach a spectrum of reading response in order for students in the 21st century. This is because young readers live in a world of the 'chaotic, unpredictable and unstructured' (McDonald, 1999, p.2). The 'anchors' of family, community, and institution are no longer stable and students feel disconnected and alienated by the ephemeral (Bean and Moni, 2003, p.640). As a consequence, some feel that there was a need for the subject to become less of a civilising force and historical document (Mansworth, 2016), and more of an autonomous space where cultures intersect, shift and destabilise, where contemporary teenage readers can exist (Bean and Moni, 2003. This space exists beyond the rhetoric of a single dominant ideology stating what 'the best' literature is. It exists in the multiple voices of classroom beyond a qualification that defines a reading that is 'right', beyond the siren call of the exam, and in a classroom of active readers (Soter, Wilkinson, Connors, Murphy and Shen, 2010; Bressler, 2011). Rather than a focus on 'pre-packaged programs and recipes' for teaching the skills of reading, the classroom should become a place of power and empowerment (Latham & Faulkner, 2013, p.57). GCSE English literature must move beyond the perception of an imposed curriculum (Goodwyn & Findlay, 2002) or a 'bag of tricks' (Gordan, 2007, p.37).

Beyond a perception of constraint (Mansworth, 2015), the classroom should be noisy (Alexander, 2012). It is a classroom where response moves from what is already known and figured out, to talking together to understand what was not yet understood in a 'narrative of unfolding understandings' (Nystrand, 1997, p.2). Rather than accepting the knowledge of GCSE English literature as 'fixed, objective, autonomous' (Nystrand, 1986, p.16), the classroom should be a place that merges voice into a dialogic noise as each reader brings their own reading and weaves it with

others (Bakhtin, 1986, p.89) as the classroom becomes inherently critical and multi-voiced (Guttierrez, Rymes & Laron, 1993).

2.2.2 The role of the teacher in the reading response

If teachers are the most important source for motivating their students (Graves, 2001), then it is important for teachers to reflect on their own reading (Bintz, 1993), and discover the 'passionate reader and writer within us' (Kirby, 2002, p.142). However, some teachers do not read and are not readers, a lack of professional knowledge which could be seen as having a 'potentially serious consequences for all children' (Cremin, 2009, p.1). Yet, in contrast to this argument which presents a teacher's reading as the source of motivation for their students, when a teacher's 'passionate reading' becomes the main force for interpretation of a text, tension grows between the development of the growth of students as readers and the institutional constraints of accountability, a conflict that can be incredibly frustrating (Poyas, 2004). Thus, there seems to be a conflict between the role of the teacher as a reader and the role of the teacher as teacher. Indeed, if Graves' (2001) link between teacher and student motivation is accepted, this seems to suggest that if a teacher is not a reader, or if a teacher does not privilege their reading, the student will not be motivated to read.

It could be suggested that this is not necessarily true. This is because it has been argued that the teacher must 'dis-position [them]selves as learners, teachers, readers' in order to move beyond teaching what worked for them in the past (Vinz, Gordon, Hamilton & LaMontagne, 2000, p.148). This is a difficult position (or dis-position) but it has been suggested that this can be achieved through being honest and tentative in discussions, responding as a reader (or not) as well as a teacher, and being responsive to the ideas of students (Galda & Beach, 2001). Commeyras (2003) further suggests that this can be achieved through letting students see their teachers as readers, or not, through strategies such as sharing struggles and failures as a reader or through sharing what they are learning as readers. Even before this research, Bakhtin (1981) encouraged the teacher to embrace the struggle of 'contradictory opinions, points of view and value judgements' (quoted in Nystrand, 2012, p73), working with students to learn together. Furthermore, if it is the job of classroom teachers to develop critical readers, not literary critics (Probst, 1994), then perhaps it is suggested that teachers should be modelling reading alongside their students, as readers. It is from this position that the teacher can shape the reading responses that determine what, and how, their students will learn (Barnes, 2008). While this is not always easy, Commeyras (2003) suggests that it is important to challenge the divide between 'who we are as readers and who we are as teachers' and that 'each must inform the other' (p.162).

Ultimately, students should not be taught to 'shut out the world from [their] classrooms and [their] minds' (Lindblom, 2003, p.97) and should instead be encouraged to look through a window of the House of Fiction (James, 1888) together, with the many readers in their classroom. James' metaphor describes the door to a house as being covered in red foil with a party happening inside. Outside of the house are the guests who view the party through different windows and thus react to different aspects of it: a mound of presents; an empty room; a lion; a feast. Each child is seeing the same party, but receiving different impressions of it, an analogy of reader and text. This metaphor can be read as a conceptualisation of reader response. Here, students are no longer trained to assimilate a predetermined response, but to form their own personal response to literature and 'destabilise the unchallenged authority of teacher in the classroom' (Yaqoob, 2011, p.513). This practice will result in an active rather than passive response and students being impacted upon by what they read (Ghaith & Madi, 2008). In encouraging such a response between reader and text, students can be inspired to think for themselves (Rosslyn, 2005) and such an approach can allow literature to be a tool for teaching enquiry and investigation skills (Wagner, 2005) as well as shifting the focus from what texts mean to how students respond to them and how this helps them to learn to be critical (Knapp, 2004).

If a teacher accepts their position as reader and teacher and challenges any authority in which literature only presents one worldview, then alternative readings are welcomed in the classroom (Bean and Moni, 2003). The reading-teacher has the potential to encourage a feeling of security that will enable the student to respond personally to the text, building on their experiences and 'ways of being' (Schieble, 2010, p.382). In their role as reader in this space, alongside their students, there is the potential to enhance their teaching in general (Commeyras et al., 2003). For if literature should be a subject constructed of competing 'noises, Sounds and sweet airs' (Shakespeare, 1610, Act 3 Scene 2, Lines 129-130), and it is the role of the teacher to 'question the fallacy of the single voice of the curriculum' (Mansworth, 2016, p.125) then the most powerful voice that the teacher can use to challenge is their own voice, but as reader.

2.3 Teaching as a profession

In considering the position of the teacher in this study and the power of their voice, then issues of teacher professionalism are raised alongside views about the nature of teaching as a profession. While the term itself may be used inconsistently (Freidson, 1994), at the centre of the traditional notion of professionalism are the concepts of knowledge, autonomy, and responsibility (Furlong et al., 2005). Here, the suggested complexity and unpredictability of the teacher's role results in the need for a specialised body of knowledge that is responsibly applied with the autonomy of their own judgements. For some, this specialised knowledge base and the increased demand for professional

standards defines teaching as a profession (Sachs, 2010). Yet for others, such professionalism is defined through how teachers are held to account through externally imposed standards (Evans, 2011) that guide a teacher's action (Hargreaves, 1999). There is the suggestion that in holding teachers to professional account their voices are silenced and marginalised (Beck, 2008). It is also proposed that individual teachers can shape their own version of professionalism to find the positive within the performance and development systems available to them (Storey, 2009). These ideas will now be explored.

2.3.1 Professional knowledge and accountability

Professionalism can be defined by a teacher matching a set of predefined criteria concerning knowledge of the profession (Stronach et al, 2001), an assumption that rests on teachers' practice being based upon their professional knowledge (Borko & Putnam, 1995). Such knowledge is intricate and intuitive and therefore difficult to explain (Connell, 1985). Such knowledge is also composed of a wide variety of components and influenced by a wide variety of people, places, and things (Clandinin & Connelly, 1995). As such, it is suggested that teachers should not be subject to any criteria that do not recognise the individual context of the teacher (Harris, 1997). There is also the argument that any government defined criteria against which teachers' professional practice is measured, conceives of them as 'lab rats of political imperatives' (Ravitch, 2010), as opposed to individuals.

Yet, teaching is messy and problematic in practice (Schon, 1983). Alongside the practical realities of the classroom comes consideration of a teacher's knowledge and skill (Turner-Bisset, 2001), and what they know, do, and care about (Hattie, 2003). A teacher's professional knowledge can be a very personal thing (Opfer & Pedder, 2011) meaning that teachers should be considered as individuals with diverse learning needs and knowledge bases (Johnston, 2015).

Bell and Bolam (2010) argue that since the 1980s there has been a series of attempts made to define what it means to be a teaching professional through the enforcement of standards against which teachers are measured and valued. It is suggested that education is obsessed with statistics, testing, grades and goals that are used as a means of incentive and control: a focus on the 'performativity' of the teacher that becomes a measure of their value, or their worth (Ball, 2010, p.215). Controls on professionalism, such as the professional standards, challenge teacher autonomy and individuality within the classroom (Bell and Bolam, 2010) and result in teacher professionalism being defined by student outcome (Storey, 2009). Indeed, the complexities and rewards of teaching are focused on an increased emphasis on narrow academic outcomes (Stevenson, 2007, p.236), in a classroom in which trust is replaced with surveillance (Bennett, 2003). Ultimately, it is suggested that teachers question

whether they are doing something because it is worthwhile or because it is measured and their performance is being watched (Ball, 2010).

While it is also important to recognise that an agenda of accountability can be seen to have the intention to raise standards (Green and Oates, 2009), such an agenda might be interpreted as carrying the inherent assumption that teachers cannot be trusted to do their jobs and need to be 'managed' (Pearson & Morrow, 2005). Such control results in closer monitoring (Avalos, 2011) and undermines autonomy and individuality (Sahlberg, 2011).

2.3.2 Professional autonomy and disciplinary power

Hilferty (2008) argues that issues of power are embedded in the discourse of professionalism. Her example calls on the routines in which individuals or groups seek to control the work of teachers. Such organisational practice has power embedded in it as it is through such actions that change can be generated (Hilferty, 2008), as power is ever-present in human interactions and social processes (Foucault, 1994). If there were no power, then nothing would be changed.

Hattie (2012) suggests that the single most important influence on the pupil is the teacher when they are free to close the classroom door and perform. This freedom to teach is in contrast to teachers whose practice is controlled, and who cynically comply with this control with an enacted fantasy of performance (Ball, 2010). As the freedom of the teacher is taken away, so too is their humanity, reducing humans to 'teaching and learning automatons' (Stitt and Pula, 2014, p.25), unable to resist or challenge the power structures that render them docile.

In defining teacher professionalism, it has been suggested that the teacher is often left out (Sachs, 2001). Instead, 'academics, unions and bureaucrats' seek to define the shared understandings about issues of professionalism (Sachs, 2001, p.150), a form of control (Ingersoll, 2003) that negates the voice of the teacher (Johnston, 2015). Teachers desire to be treated like professionals, to be given autonomy and respect from the profession itself and to make decisions about their own professional teaching pedagogy (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005), but this freedom of trust is not always achieved (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Ultimately, there is value in questioning who is controlling what teachers ought to learn to be 'more professional' (Johnston, 2015, p.11). There is also value in questioning who positions this learning as valuable, to whom, and for what reasons (Overton, 2006). And, at the heart of all of these questions of professionalism is the discourse of accountability (Nadelson et al., 2012). These questions inform this thesis.

2.4 GCSE English literature and the social theory of Foucault

It is argued that disciplinary power operates in the daily routines of practising teachers (Bourke et al., 2015). Indeed, Bourke et al. (2015) suggest that hierarchical observation, as defined by Foucault (1995), masquerades as professionalism. According to a Foucauldian definition (1995), being subjected to the visibility of constant surveillance, teachers become the mechanism of their subjection whether they were being watched or not. Thus, teachers' notions of professionalism align with Foucault's notion of disciplinary technologies that exercise docility through securing power over teachers. Instead of an autonomous professionalism that prioritises the individual, teachers are positioned under the watching gaze of an external power. This idea will now be explored through the social theory of Foucault.

In reviewing the literature, this study has explored teachers' relationship with literature through seeking to explore the underlying ideologies and intentions that characterise the canon, and so the policy that forms the reformed GCSE in English literature. Ultimately it has been suggested that it is when the teacher reflects on their role as reader and teacher of literature that they can take back control of their classroom and move beyond the perception that what GCSE English literature wants is the teaching of a 'right reading'. In the face of change and the continued pressures of accountability manifested in GCSE English literature in the 'right reading' (Crosman, 1982) required to fulfil the indicative content of the exam (Figure 2.2), the pressure of surveillance is at the heart of the classroom. This is because teachers are aware that they are being held to account on multiple levels and tied increasingly closely to 'explicit measures of performance' and the 'achievement of pre-specified learning outcomes' (Bell & Bolam, 2010, p.95). Teachers begin to ask, according to Ball (2010), whether they are doing something because it is important, because they believe in it, because it is worthwhile, or because it is being measured and compared. Such heightened awareness of self-regulation is the result of a type of self-regulatory panoptic surveillance (Foucault, 1979).

In particular, it is theorised that teachers are being controlled by an invisible voice that they perceive to be always watching and judging their practice in the classroom, this perception reflecting a 'gray area' (Stitt & Pula, 2014, p.24) of subjectivity that drives teachers to succeed and be more than simple 'automatons' (p.25) in the face of requirements and targets (Ball, 2010). This form of surveillance is embodied in the power at the heart of Foucault's Panopticon and his theorised hierarchy of surveyor/surveyed which will now be explored.

2.4.1 Panoptic docility

Foucault's model of power can be seen as 'strikingly familiar' to 'those who spent time in modern schools' (Gallagher, 2010, p.262). Of particular relevance to this study was Foucault's panoptic theory in 'Discipline and Punish' (1977). This text explores the disciplinary techniques introduced for criminals, and explores the transitions between modern and premodern approaches to disciplining and punishing criminals, which Foucault argues becomes the model for other modern sites of control, including schools. As such, Foucault suggests that prison discipline pervades all of modern society and that such control is 'total' (Gutting, 2005, p.80). This is because modern punishment's control is a subtle and pervasive control of the body, since the purpose of changing psychological attitudes and tendencies is to change bodily behaviour (Foucault, 1977). The point of such control is to achieve results through a specific set of procedures: for example, teachers are not just to achieve good outcomes for students; they are to teach the curriculum in a certain way, following certain steps – a form of micro-management that controls practice. This modern approach to discipline aims at producing 'docile bodies': bodies that not only do what is wanted but in the way that is wanted (Foucault, 1977, p.138). Thus, for such control to be successful, it must be internalised rendering the body docile.

Describing a school as 'panoptic' is not new (Gallagher, 2010). The Panopticon, as a model of power (Murakami Wood, 2007), literally means 'all-seeing' and describes the utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham's structure where a ring of cells circles a watch-tower, from within which a single observer is able to see inside each cell (Figure 2.3): 'It is the fact of being constantly seen, of always able to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his subjection' (Foucault, 1977, p.187).

Figure 2. 3 Panoptic prison design, Illinois State Penitentiary, 1954

As a model of power, the Panopticon results in a 'state of consciousness and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power' (Foucault 1977, p.201). It could be argued that the panopticon is a model of power which evokes the disciplinary regime of the modern school (1977). This link can be made because there is the perception that the subject of GCSE English literature, as embodied in policy, seeks to control what happens in the classroom (Mansworth, 2015). Such control is successful when the teacher is rendered 'docile' (Foucault, 1977, p.138). A docile teacher enacts the ideologies contained with policy without questioning their purpose, and is thus controlled.

The 'docile body' is the aim of modern approaches to discipline: bodies that do what is wanted, but in precisely the way that is wanted. This 'docile body' is produced and controlled through 'three distinctly modern means' (Gutting, 2005, p.82). They are controlled through being observed, through being judged, and through being examined (Foucault, 1977). Control in this way results in a teacher who is disciplined; they have the power to rebel against control, in whatever form it may manifest, but they choose not to (Moore, 2016). Thus, the body becomes docile.

In conclusion, this research contributed to an enlarged understanding of what panoptic surveillance might encompass in the teaching of GCSE English literature. In particular, it explored the potential production of docile bodies through modern disciplinary practices in schools, embodied in the 'right reading' and indicative content of the GCSE English literature exam. Interrogating discourse through the lens of Foucauldian social theory was an approach which allowed for consideration of the complex hierarchy of power and control at a time of GCSE reform.

2.5 Theoretical framework

This research was framed using the social theory of Foucault and particularly his ideas around disciplinary power (1977). This emerged as an appropriate theoretical framework as throughout the literature review the pressures of accountability embodied in surveillance seemed to pervade the discussion. Specifically, the literature review highlighted debate around the lack of control that teachers perceived that they had around the implementation of the reformed GCSE in English literature. The literature review also suggests that teachers, as a consequence of this perception of control, were regulating their behaviour in the classroom. Conceptually, this was recognisable as a form of disciplinary power as described by Foucault – panopticism – and so it was apposite to frame the study within the social theory that explores it, using the metaphor of the Panopticon to help untangle the complexities contained within.

Equally, Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was chosen as the method to frame the research. This was because it structured an exploration of the position of both policy and practice in relation to each

other, within the wider social process of legitimation and disciplinary power. The Foucauldian version of discourse analysis is concerned with language and language use beyond the immediate contexts of the speaking subjects. It questions the relationship between discourse and how people think or feel, what they do, and the context within which such experiences take place. In that the literature review had raised issues regarding the reformed GCSE in English literature in both policy and practice, querying the connection between the two, it seemed appropriate to explore these issues within a framework that found value in such a relationship. There is more discussion of how this theoretical framework was employed in the methods chapter.

2.6 Conceptual framework

This thesis explores key concepts that have been shaped by the literature review. These concepts – disciplinary power, docility, positioning, and policy – are defined here and serve as benchmarks for the discussion of findings later in this thesis.

The understanding of the key concepts of disciplinary power and docility come from Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* (1977) and his framing of these concepts have informed this study. Foucault argues that discipline is a mechanism of power that regulates the thought and behaviour of social actors through subtle means. As opposed to the more brutal, physical punishment of the premodern approach to discipline, Foucault theorises a more intrusive and pervasive control that seeks to change psychological attitudes and thus control bodily behaviour. Foucault describes that in the discipline of the modern age, the soul is 'the prison of the body', as opposed to, perhaps, the stick or whip (1977, p.298).

The concept of docility links to this disciplinary control. For Foucault, disciplinary power aims at producing docile bodies: bodies that do not only what we want but that do it in precisely the way that is wanted. Docile bodies are produced through observation, normalisation, and examination. Firstly, the body is subject to surveillance. Within this, the body is judged in comparison to everyone else. The body is examined and the judgement made visible. Through this process, the body self-regulates its behaviour and is controlled.

The understanding of the concept of positioning comes from the work of Willig (2013). Willig locates the subject positions that the wider discourses offer. A subject position within a discourse is identified as 'a location for persons within the structure of rights and duties for those who use that repertoire' (Davis and Harré, 1999, p.35). It is suggested that discourses do more than construct objects, they construct subjects by making available positions within networks of meaning that the speakers can take up and place others within (Willig, 2015, p.387). Subject positions offer discursive

locations from which to speak and act rather than prescribing a particular part to be acted out. This has direct implications for subjectivity.

Finally, within the context of this study, Foucauldian discourse analysis is conducted to provide a way of understanding the relationship between policy and practice. The concept of policy is understood as bringing to mind the actions of the government as they seek to intervene in the teaching of GCSE classroom English literature in the classroom. Here, policy has power and so its implementation and impact is examined. The policy that informs GCSE English literature (see page 13) has the potential for a positive or negative impact on teachers; it is not isolated from teaching practice. Therefore, the conceptual understanding of policy, in this study, comes from Foucault's ideas about how teachers engage with and interact with this external intervention, in order to understand the manifest practices of resistance, collaboration, or cooperation, a power relationship that 'only exists when it is put to action' (Foucault, 1990, p.101).

2.7 Research Questions

The aim of this research was to examine the relationship between GCSE English literature in policy and practice. The purpose of this was to understand where the control lay in this relationship and how each positioned, and controlled, the other in the classroom. Themes emerging from the review of literature, combined with my own professional experience as reported in chapter 1, led to the research questions. This, in turn, informed the development of the research design and methodology as set out within the following chapter:

1. How is GCSE English literature constructed discursively in policy and in the classroom?
    a. Which discourses are drawn upon?
    b. What are the discourses' relationship(s) to each other?
    c. What do the discourses seek to achieve?
2. How do these discourses position the teacher in the classroom?
    a. What subject positions do the discourses construct?
    b. Do teachers accept or challenge these subject positions?
    c. Do these subject positions limit what can be said or done?
3. What are the implications of these positionings for future practice in the teaching of GCSE English literature at Key Stage 4?
    a. To what extent does panoptic surveillance operate in the classroom?
    b. How might this surveillance be overcome?
    c. Does it need to be overcome?

These questions fed into the purpose for this study. Thus, this study sought to contribute understanding to the teaching of the reformed GCSE in English literature. Its originality lay in giving policy, as well as the teachers, a voice at a time of change in secondary English.

3. Methodology and methods

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this research was to examine the relationship between GCSE English literature in policy and practice. The purpose of this research was to understand where the control lay in this relationship and how each positioned, and controlled, the other in the classroom.

In taking Foucault's social theory as a starting point, attention was paid to how strategies of disciplinary surveillance were deployed in practice, looking at their forms and assessing what their limits might be. This theoretical focus was helpful as a lens through which to examine the exercise of control in the classroom and the relationship between the surveyor and the surveilled, and thus discourse and practice.

This section explains and justifies the interpretivist paradigm adopted to answer the research questions:

1. How is GCSE English literature constructed discursively in policy and in the classroom?
2. How do these discourses position the teacher in the classroom?
3. What are the implications of these positionings for future practice in the teaching of GCSE English literature at Key Stage 4?

It describes how these questions were answered within a qualitative research design, and why Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was chosen as a key tool for both method and methodology.

3.2 Research Paradigm

This research used an interpretive paradigm to answer the research questions. An interpretive paradigm assumes that reality is a social construct of which there is no single, observable reality; instead, there are multiple realities or interpretations of a single event (Merriam, 2009). If it is accepted that social science is seen as a subjective rather than an objective reality, and is only understood from the individuals who are part of the ongoing action then the viewpoint of the detached, objective observer is rejected (Beck, 1979). Thus, an interpretive paradigm accepts that the act of knowing should be conducted such that the knower's own value position is taken into account in the process (Thomas, 2013).

In contrast, a positivist orientation assumes that reality exists and is observable, single, and measurable (Merriam, 2009). This position assumes knowledge about the social world can be obtained objectively, straightforwardly perceived and is recordable (Thomas, 2013). As a paradigm, the act of trying to know is conducted in such a way that the knower's own value position is removed from the process of seeking to understand the natural world (Giddens, 1975). Positivism

claims that science provides us with the clearest possible ideal of knowledge (Cohen et al., 2011). Where positivism is less successful is its application to the study of human behaviour where there is an exploration of the complexity of human nature and the elusive and intangible quality of social phenomena, as opposed to the order and regularity of the natural world (Cohen et al., 2011).

In accepting an interpretive position, this research agreed that people actively construct their own social world rather than are passive to it, as theorised by positivism (Becker, 1970). This research also accepted that situations are fluid and changing rather than fixed and static; they evolve over time and are situated in their context (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). Fundamentally this study believed that if people define their situations as real, then they are real (Morrison, 1998), and that these realities cannot be reduced to simplistic interpretations, hence 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973) that recognise the complexity of the situations are required.

Finally, it is important to note that the discursive object – literature – was initially broken down to reflect the complexity of its definition. Literature is a subject (English literature), a qualification (GCSE English literature), and a canon (literature). These three definitions overlap, merge and separate throughout the research and it was ultimately decided that keeping them strictly separate did not reflect the intersections between them. Therefore where it is appropriate, this study identifies literature as 'canon', 'qualification' or 'subject'. Where it is not appropriate, literature is 'literature'.

3.3 Ontological and epistemological stance

This research was qualitative. It was interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences (Merriam, 2009). It is important, philosophically, to position qualitative research among other forms of research, a position that entails what is believed about the nature of reality (ontology) and the nature of knowledge (epistemology).

3.3.1 Insider Research

I approached this research from the position of an insider, a position that informed my epistemological and ontological reflection. 'Insider-research' is used to describe a project in which the researcher has a direct involvement with the research setting (Robson, 2002). Such an approach contrasts with the researcher being an objective outsider and studying issues external to themselves (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). While it is suggested that nothing is certain (Thomas, 2013), my knowledge of the world of teaching GCSE English literature made me an insider. The term 'positionality' described both my understanding of the nature of knowledge and the position that I chose to adopt in relation 'to' the research (Foote & Bartell, 2011) and 'within' the research (Savin-

Baden and Howell Major, 2013, p.71). This was 'coloured' by my values and beliefs (Wellington, Bathmaker et al. 2005). My positionality was not value free (Carr, 2000), and while it is likely to change over time, it was specific to this moment (Oakley, 1999) and so had value for this study.

Who I am shapes what I know about the world: I view the teaching of literature at school as incredibly important, both from the perspective of a student's personal growth but also for their cultural heritage (Cox, 1989). I am a potential product of Cox, sitting my GCSEs in 1995 and completing my PGCE in Secondary English in 2005. I feel that defined set texts are an imposition, but one that makes my job easier. I believe that the reform of GCSE English Literature was rushed and that we (as teachers) were not given adequate support to transition from the previous qualification. These are things that I believe to be true and which are likely to be a reflection of my own identity and experiences as a teacher of GCSE English literature. These views were not inevitable and they biased this study (Takacs, 2003). I knew what I knew because I experienced it every day: when I read the GCSE English Literature syllabus in my role as HoD, or when I explored a set text in the classroom in my role as English teacher, for example. My knowledge of literature came from my thinking about these experiences. And all of this was framed by an overwhelming sense of responsibility for the outcomes of both my students, and my department. From this position, my research was able to help teachers see things that they might have missed about literature, and about their own positions in education. Equally, I was able to ensure that I challenged the 'correctness' of my own position as I explored how my views were constrained by my own experiences and how I made assumptions based on this positionality (Takas, 2003, p.29).

It was important to acknowledge my insider role in this research. In considering my situatedness and context as a researcher, my unique perspective as an insider-researcher inevitably made a difference to the research as I was able to draw upon the shared understandings and trust of colleagues with whom normal social interactions of working communities had been developed (Costley, 2010). I was a member of the group that I researched, I was familiar with the members, and I thus gained 'insider knowledge' (Cohen et al., 2011). There were benefits to this (Costley, 2010). I was in an unique position to study the concept of literature in depth and with a special knowledge about the issue. I not only had my own insider knowledge, but I also had easy access to people who may have felt more confident in talking to me because they knew me (Tierney, 1994). I had social information that would further enhance that knowledge, something that was possible because of my 'knowledge of the actors, agendas, and conflicting values systems (Alkin, 1990, p.233). I had an advantage in dealing with work situations because I understood many of the complex issues; indeed, 'work issues are beset with paradox and ambiguity but an insider is often able to unravel and comprehend such intricacies and complications' (Costley, 2010, p.3), and this I found to be true.

It could be argued that this research is a form of action research due to my role as an insider. Indeed, this study acknowledged the lack of separation between the research and the participants: we are all members of the same English department. The research was a collective and shared enterprise as a result of my position as an insider. However, I would argue that this is not action research because action and reflection were not combined throughout the study (Ebbutt, 1985). It did not take the form of an intervention (Cohen and Mannion, 1994), and it was not a self-reflective enquiry (Carr and Kemmis, 1986). While this study did work to bridge the gap between research and practice in an area where there was little current research and with the aim of influencing future practice, primarily the research was on other people rather than on myself (Zuber-Skerritt, 1996). I chose not to reflect on my own teaching or opinions about GCSE English literature and instead focused solely on those of the participants. Thus, the study was not a 'collective self-reflection' as I was not part of it (Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988).

Furthermore, this research was not participatory action research even though it sought to improve practice by changing it (McTaggart, 1989). Participatory action research can be distinguished by collective participation and its outcomes of democracy and emancipation, but also by its focus on inequalities of power (Cohen et al., 2011). While this was a study of power, it was not a study of a hierarchical inequality, as such. I would further suggest that the area of focus for this study was not chosen by the participants and so was not 'owned' by the participants, an important factor of participatory action research. Furthermore, power was not accorded to the participants (David, 2002) as a collective (Elliott, 1991) and so this research did not constitute a democratic activity (Grundy, 1987). In conclusion, while I was in insider, I was not a participant: an important distinction.

3.3.2 Limitations of insider research

In assuming, within an interpretive position, that knowledge is situated in relations between people then the person doing the research takes a central role in the interpretation of meaning (Thomas, 2013). This position affected the nature of the research and the data analysis, a process that must be reflected upon (Lincoln and Guba, 2000), with biases, dispositions, and assumptions regarding the research to be undertaken, explained (Merriam, 2009). The reason for this was not to eliminate 'variance between researchers in values and expectations they bring to the study' but to understand how the researcher's particular values and expectations influenced the study (Maxwell, 2005, p.108).

In positioning myself as 'human as instrument' (Lincoln and Guba, 2000, p.183) and thus as a participant in the situation that was being observed and studied, I was not seeking to detach myself and become invisible as observer. Instead, my visibility played an important role. I have studied

literature for many years: from being a student at GCSE and A-Level, continued through university with a BA and MA in Literature, and through a more informal relationship with literature as a reader since I was little. I was familiar with the school in which the research took place – I had worked there for eleven years in various roles. And throughout all of these positions, I have always been a teacher of English. I was familiar with the teachers who were the participants – they were all colleagues and some were good friends. I was familiar with the subject to be studied – I had been teaching the reformed GCSE in English literature, along with my department, since 2015. I had many thoughts and opinions about the government's series of reforms to GCSE English literature, thoughts that we as a department had been discussing and working with since they were announced in 2014.

This worldview shaped the scope of this study. As a teacher of GCSE English literature, I understood and was aware of the roles and responsibilities that surrounded being a teacher of GCSE English literature from my own experience in the classroom. However, I lacked understanding of diverse perspectives on teaching literature and how these may differ from my own. I wanted to understand more about how other teachers understood literature (as a subject, qualification, and canon) to see if they confirmed or challenged my own beliefs about GCSE reform in literature, and the beliefs that I had explored in the literature review. Furthermore, this understanding would have a wider professional impact.

As previously noted, it has been suggested that the reformed GCSE in English literature was viewed with negativity (Brennan, 2013; Isaacs, 2014; Morby, 2014; Smith, 2015; Boffey, 2016; Stock, 2017) rather than as an opportunity for improved teaching and learning in English. If the aims of this research were to examine the relationship between policy and practice and trace the consequences of this for the participants' experience, then it was expected that this research would shed light on what formed any assumed negativity so that it could be overcome. The professional impact of this would be an understanding of what support would be needed, from Heads of Department, for example, to ensure a much more positive relationship for teachers with the reformed GCSE in English literature. Research suggests that higher levels of teacher engagement and job satisfaction result in greater student engagement and achievement (Hanover, 2015), therefore, if teachers of GCSE English literature are supported in a positive relationship with what they teach then there is the potential for a positive impact upon student outcomes.

However, it was also important to recognise the limitations that came about as a result of my position as an insider (BERA, 2011, para. 12). There was the potential for participants to feel uncomfortable in sharing confidences with someone they knew (Cohen et al., 2011). This need for sensitivity (Costley, 2010) also extended to promising anonymity and confidentiality, especially if

participants wanted to challenge the value system of the school in some way (Torrance, 1989, p.177). Steps to minimise these limitations were taken throughout the study.

Criticism of the insider-researcher highlights the issue of the subjective nature of researching your own practice where there might be an issue of impartiality, a vested interest in certain results being achieved, and problems concerning a fresh and objective view of data (Costley, 2010). This criticism is valid and must be given careful attention, especially when considering insider bias and validity (Murray and Lawrence, 2000). For example, in explicitly acknowledging that I felt somewhat disillusioned with the reformed GCSE English literature qualification, this research was able to explore the limits of this perspective and approach it from a more rational and objective understanding. If it is argued that complete objectivity is impossible, then the task is to minimise the impact of biases on the research process while making the researcher's position transparent (Hammersley, 2000). By making the research process transparent, readers can construct their own perspectives which 'are equally as valid as our own', as researcher (Cohen et al. et al, 2000, p.106). Unlike a positivist approach, it was important to recognise the opportunities that such a lack of potential objectivity presented (Thomas, 2013). Ultimately, I was in a prime position to investigate and make positive changes to future practice in the teaching of GCSE English literature, a compelling rationale for this study (Costley, 2010). Thus in highlighting my own position as a teacher of GCSE English literature within this social world, I was able to use my own knowledge to immerse myself in a research context in which I was particularly interested and in which my own practice was invested, but with transparency.

3.4 Defining qualitative research

Qualitative and quantitative research complement each other (Thomas, 2013), and it has been suggested that drawing a distinction between them is 'unnecessary and unwelcome' (p.116). However because this research tends towards interpretivism, it could perhaps be defined as qualitative in nature. In defining qualitative research as 'empirical research where the data are not in the form of numbers' (Punch, 1998, p.4), it could be said to involve studying things in their natural settings, and attempting to make sense of, or interpreting, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). In potential contrast, quantitative research is the systematic empirical investigation of observable phenomena using statistical, mathematical or computational techniques (Given, 2008). The objective of quantitative research can be to develop and employ mathematical models, theories, and hypotheses pertaining to phenomena (Given, 2008). The objective of qualitative research can be to uncover the meaning of a phenomena for those involved (Merriam, 2009). It aims for 'depth' rather than 'breadth' (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 1996, p.61). A qualitative approach was thus appropriate for this study because this research was

exploratory, seeking to gain an understanding of how literature was constructed in policy and practice. It was interested in those involved in the teaching of literature and it aimed for depth of understanding rather than exploring breadth of experience.

Within qualitative research, events are only understood if they are seen in context; therefore, a qualitative researcher immerses herself in the field (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). This is an interactive process in which the research is more open and responsive to its subject (Best and Kahn, 1989). Without the active participation of the researcher, no data exist (Greenbank, 2003). Theory is data driven and emerges as part of the research process in qualitative research. This is in contrast to quantitative researchers who try to control extraneous variables with the aim of objectivity and without bias (Merriam, 2009). Thus the researcher is separated from the data, and the design of the study is determined before it begins (McLeod, 2017). Hence, a qualitative approach was more appropriate for this study, because I, as researcher, was studying literature in my own 'natural setting', in my own school, in my own department (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p.3). It would have been limiting to ignore this connection and the potential bias it brought.

3.4.1 Ensuring quality in qualitative research

The strength of qualitative research is related to the close involvement of the researcher and the potential for an insider's view of the field (Burns, 2000). Being an insider allows the researcher to find issues that are often missed, due to the complexity of the participants' experiences and understandings (Denscombe, 2010). An insider researcher can share the experiences of the participants with 'eyes open' (Asselin, 2003). However, such a closeness raises questions of credibility and trustworthiness (in place of internal validity) in qualitative research (Brannen, 2005).

A potential lack of objectivity highlights a limitation of qualitative study in relation to the problem of adequate validity or reliability because of the subjective nature of qualitative data and its origin in single contexts (Burns, 2000). 'If a piece of research is invalid then it is worthless' (Cohen et al., 2011, p.179) thus rigour in the research was needed so that findings were to be trusted. In qualitative research, issues of trustworthiness understandably 'looms large', particularly when research impacts upon real lives and practice (Merriam, 1995, p.51) as was the case in this research with its implications for future practice.

3.4.2 Reliability

Reliability is a contested term in qualitative research (Winter, 2000; Stenbacka, 2001; Golafshani, 2003). It has been replaced with synonyms such as 'credibility', 'trustworthiness' or 'neutrality' as well as having been suggested that reliability is 'simply unworkable' for qualitative research which, unlike quantitative research, does not assume the possibility of replication (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

This is because reliability can be seen as denoting that the 'research process can be repeated at another time on similar participants in a similar context with the same results' (Basit, 2010, p.69). This is difficult to achieve in qualitative research that are grounded in such a precise situation; at another time or in another place, there will be differences because humans are complex and their situations, individual. Instead, in qualitative research the emphasis is on the 'uniqueness and idiosyncrasy' of the situation as a strength rather than a weakness (Cohen et al., 2011) and the assurance that all procedures are 'scrupulous, honest and precise' (Basit, 2010, p.70). As a consequence, the research design of this study must be explained in detail.

3.4.3 Validity

Validity has been defined as 'a demonstration that a particular instrument in fact measures what it purports to measure' (Cohen et al., 2011, p.179), or that it accurately represents 'those features that it intended to describe, explain or theorise' (Winter, 2000, p.1). Qualitative research abides by principles of validity that are very different to quantitative research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Bogden and Biklen, 1992). It must be remembered that what is being observed are 'people's constructions of reality, how they understand the world' (Merriam, 1998, p.167) and thus it is important to be cautious about not working with a positivist agenda (Maxwell, 1992). This is because it would not be appropriate in this research to claim that there is a single objective reality that describes the research phenomenon (Hudson and Ozanne, 1988).

Internal validity seeks to demonstrate that the explanation of a particular event, issue, or set of data which a piece of research provides can actually be sustained by the data (Cohen et al., 2011). Internal validity was ensured using multiple sources of data (Merriam, 1988) and establishing a chain of evidence for claims (Yin, 2009) in order to ensure that the study is not impacted by bias. In this study, a range of data collection tools were used to allow an exploration of literature across the data, comparing, for example, whether what was said in interview was corroborated or challenged in observation. Further measures of internal validity included the opportunity for member checking as deployed within the interviews, data collection points that were spread over a term, and an awareness of the researcher's bias (as explored in the section 3.3.1) (Merriam, 1988).

In turn, external validity relates to the degree that the results can be generalised to the wider population from a sample (Cohen et al., 2011). However, this study was not aiming for generalisation and viewed it as 'unimportant, unachievable, or both' (Schofield, 1990, p.202). Instead, this study agreed with the suggestion that research should not seek generalisation as 'when we give proper weight to local conditions, any generalisation is a working hypothesis, not a conclusion' (Merriam, 1998, p.209). Thus, this study sought a thorough exploration of the phenomena in a carefully

described and specific context that would be significant for others conducting similar practice-oriented research (Chalhoub-Deville et al, 2006) and so might inform future practice as well as contribute to the theoretical understanding of this specific area of interest.

There are limitations with research from which generalisations cannot be made to a wider context, and from which contexts, situations, events, conditions and interactions cannot be replicated (Burns, 2000). Therefore, it can be asked whether such research is 'sufficiently authentic' that it can be used to 'construct social policy or legislation' (Lincoln and Guba, 2000, p.178). Ultimately, what overcomes these limitations is the careful design of the research study and the application of standards that are well developed (Merriam, 2009), and the understanding that much can be learned from 'a vivid portrait' of the phenomenon (Eisner, 1991, p.199). Erickson (1986) argues that since the general lies in the particular, what we learn from a particular piece of research can be transferred to similar situations with the reader, not the researcher, determining what can apply to their context (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, while the question of generalisability is difficult, the aim of this research was not to learn from a large sample. In this qualitative research, a much smaller sample was chosen precisely because I wanted to understand 'the particular in depth' and not to find out what may be generally true (Merriam, 2009, p.224). Thus it was accepted that the general lies in the particular, and that what can be learned in a particular situation can be transferred to similar situations subsequently encountered. Teaching, in particular, is both particular and universal (Erickson, 1986) making an approach that valued the particular, important.

In conclusion, the qualitative methodology was considered appropriate for this study because of my own sense of 'belonging' to the research. In considering how to best address the research questions I chose not to separate my own personal position as researcher. It was important to acknowledge how the 'natural setting' of the research was my own 'natural setting' as a teacher of GCSE English literature (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p.3), an understanding of the subjective context that was crucial as I reflected on how my own narrative impacted upon the research process (Heracleous, 2006, p.3). It was this position, from which I began, that informed the study and that I felt best addressed the research questions and resulted in research that could be defined as 'qualitative'.

3.5 An interpretive paradigm

Within this qualitative research, an interpretative paradigm was chosen in order to explore the perceptions, experiences, and understandings of literature in policy and practice from the perspective of a group of secondary school teachers as opposed to the more frequently explored perspective of the student (Tehan, 2015; Mansworth, 2016; Wood, 2016), thus addressing a gap in current research.

Whereas a positivist design assumes that procedures can be applied to studying and explaining human behaviour (Bryman, 2012; Cohen et al. et al. 2011), an interpretivist position assumes that the role of the researcher is to 'grasp the subjective meaning of social action' (Bryman, 2012, p.30) with an emphasis on building understanding of the processes and actions of the individuals and interpreting their behaviours.

An important aspect of interpretive research is the context within which the research takes place (Hudson and Ozanne, 1998), an approach that 'looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world' (Crotty, 1998, p.67). Indeed it was an interest in understanding literature at a very specific time in its teaching that inspired this research, at a time of GCSE English Literature reform. It has been argued that this reform was 'widely viewed negatively and fearfully' (Smith, 2015), one of a spectrum of complex assumptions about GCSE reform that needed challenging and exploring from the perspective of those for whom reform directly impacted. The interpretive position was thus appropriate for this study because of its concern for 'the individual persons or groups' (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, pp.110-111) who were interacting with literature at this time of reform. The focus of this research was thus on how exploring how people thought and interrelated, how their worlds were constructed, and what understandings and perceptions they had about the world (Basit, 2010; Thomas, 2013).

An interpretive paradigm was also an appropriate position for the research due to its focus on thick descriptions that allowed for a representation of the complexity of situations (Geertz, 1973) in order to have an 'in-depth understanding' (Grbich, 2007, p.9) of the complexity of the discursive construction of literature in policy and practice. This study was an attempt to understand events which were both unique to the teachers in the sample (Patton, 1985) but also universal – every English teacher was teaching the reformed GCSE in English literature. In doing this, it sought to privilege teachers' opinions and experiences of the complex relationship between policy and practice (Mason, 2002; Creswell, 2003).

An interpretive position allowed the research to focus on the meaning and understanding of situations in their uniqueness (Patton, 1985), from the perspective of the teacher (Merriam, 2009) in the very specific context in which they teach and where meaning was constructed (Crotty, 1998). It also allowed me, as researcher, to critically reflect on 'the self as researcher' (Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p.183) in order to articulate and clarify my 'assumptions, experiences, worldview and theoretical orientation to the study at hand' to better understand my perspectives, biases, and assumptions (Merriam, 2009, p.219) about the issues raised and challenged by the study.

3.5.1 Limitations of an interpretive paradigm

There were weaknesses to an interpretive approach that had to be considered. In accepting the centrality of subjectivity in an interpretive approach, it has been argued that the researcher's values define the world that is studied and that the world beyond those values is never known (Ratner, 2002). If there is too much focus on the researcher's experience as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995) then the things that they do not know, will not be studied (Cohen et al. et al, 2005). This can result in conscious or unconscious bias (Hammersley, 2008). Even if the aim of this research was understanding from the perspective of the participants, it was important to acknowledge that my own 'professional experiences, personal intellectual concerns, and assumptions about knowledge' were what 'feed the dissertation' (Piantanida and Garman, 1999, p.24). This is because it was these experiences, concerns and knowledge that mirrored the participants and had to be interpreted (Turato, 2005). As a consequence and to avoid criticisms of bias, the researcher's values must be made explicit and visible throughout the research, with attention drawn to the level of involvement (Guba and Lincoln, 1981; Merriam, 2002). Responsibility must be taken for how bias might impact upon the research (Mason, 2002), resulting in the potential for such biases to be 'virtuous' (Peshkin, 1998, p.18) in this conversational space between researcher and bias (Owens, 2006).

3.5.2 Constructionism and social constructivism

Interpretive research is based on the belief that knowledge is socially constructed (Merriam, 2009) and created through an understanding that the world and what is considered to be true within this world, is a 'product of our own making' (Eisner, 1993, p.54). This subjectivity could be seen to be 'essential' because it is from these subjectivities that interpretation is made (Thomas, 2013, p.109).

Within this interpretive position, knowledge is not believed to be found but constructed and, as such, the term 'constructivism' is often used interchangeably with 'interpretivism' to describe researchers who seek this understanding of the world in which they live and work (Merriam, 2009). Indeed, such subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically and are formed through interaction with others, hence 'social constructivism' (Cresswell, 2007): an emphasis on how individuals make meaning within a social context. Subjective meanings are not just 'imprinted on individuals', they are formed through interaction with others and through the 'historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives' (Cresswell, 2007, p.21), a definition that was important to this study.

Crotty (1998, p.58) suggests that the language around constructionism and constructivism has been inconsistent. It is suggested that it is useful to use the term 'constructivism' for epistemological

considerations focusing exclusively on the 'meaning-making activity of the individual mind' and to use 'constructionism' (yet, with the adjective 'constructivist') where the focus includes 'the collective generation [and transmission] of meaning'. Constructivism is thus based on the idea of reality as 'an internal construction where individuals assign meaning to experiences and ideas' (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013, p.63). This distinction informed this study. The focus is on the discourse of social interaction as opposed to the individual's construction of meaning which is a more psychological concern (Doolottle, 2001).

Social constructionism emphasises 'the hold that our culture has on us: it shapes the way in which we see things (even the way in which we feel things!)' (Crotty, 1998, p.58). This definition underpins the decision to use discourse analysis as both method and methodology within this study. Within an interpretive epistemological position, social constructionism emphasises the essentially social nature of language. It argues that 'the world is produced and understood through interchanges between people and shared objects and activities' (Savin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013, p.62). Within this position, knowledge is created through the subjective world of people's experiences and efforts must be made to 'get inside the person and to understand from within' (Cohen et al., Manion & Morrison, 2005, p.17).

Indeed, it has been argued that literature exists in the heads of teachers where the nature of the enacted subject is brought to life (Goodwyn, 2011, p.63). As a consequence, the social context within which this takes place must be considered as teachers as social actors. Within this social context, literature is not a 'fixed entity' (Radley, 1994, p.55) and the way it is brought to life will not be consistent, stable and predictive of social behaviour (Willig, 2001). This is because different heads of different teachers will think different thoughts. Instead, talk about literature can be seen as a social practice which is inextricably bound up with other areas of the speakers' lives. The speaker, which in this study is the teacher, is likely to draw on different and often contradictory experiences in different social contexts (Willig, 2001). Thus, social constructionism ought to be used to study the talk about literature which is available within a culture and not just the individuals who happen to talk at a particular point in time. Indeed, the 'best teachers have deep insights into what makes their subject difficult (see Hattie, 2003) and how to represent those difficulties in a meaningful way' (Goodwyn, 2011, p.72). Such expertise is continually revised as they negotiate their position in relation to literature in response to the requirements of a reformed qualification, among other things – the social context.

In conclusion, English teachers have strong subject identities (Ellis, 2007) and an interpretive paradigm was chosen because this study assumed that their world was not readily definable. It is constructed by different people in different ways, with words and events carrying different

meanings in every case (Thomas, 2013). This study sought to understand how teachers constructed literature in a context within which they were submerged. The key to this study was understanding: what understanding did the research participants have about their world, and how could I, in turn, understand these from my position as an insider (Thomas, 2013).

3.6 Methodological rationale and research approach

The stance taken above regarding ontology and epistemology informed the decisions made that underpinned the chosen methodology. This section addresses how the research was designed in order to examine the relationship between GCSE English literature in policy and practice, and thus understand how each positioned, and controlled, the other in the classroom.

3.6.1 Discourse analysis

Teaching takes place within specific social and cultural contexts where it is given meaning through language and discourse. Discourse analysis is broadly defined as using textual data to gain insights to particular phenomena (Heracleous, 2006). More specifically, 'discourse' is defined as a 'collection of texts, whether oral or written, located within social and organisational contexts that are patterned by certain structural, inner textual features and have both functional and constructive effects on their contexts' (Heracleous, 2006, p.2). In accepting this definition, language can be seen as the 'raw material of discourse' with individual texts as both manifestations of broader discourses and having the power to give organised existence to broader discourses (Hendry, 2000; Heracleous, 2004) with an interest in linking the emergent nature of these discourses to their effects on the social actors within particular organisations and social settings (Heracleous, 2006).

Discourse analysis seeks a critical approach to knowledge that is taken for granted. Discourse analysis argues that our knowledge of the world is not a reflection of reality, but rather products of discourse (Burr, 1995; Gergen, 1985). Through discourse analysis, language is interrogated to gain a detailed understanding of the world of the people who act within it (Heracleous, 2006), illustrating how language is central to shared meanings (Smircich, 1983) and is thus a common identity for organisational members (Evered, 1983) who are 'products of historically situated interchanges among people' (Gergen, 1985, p.267). These definitions suggest that if this research was seeking to understand a certain meaning – in this case, the experience of teaching literature at GCSE – shared with a particular group of actors – the teachers in the classroom – then this could be understood through the way that they talked about it. But more than this was needed. In accepting that these teachers were 'products of discourse', specifically the discourses surrounding the teaching of GCSE English literature, then this social context also needed to be understood beyond what the actors had

to say about it. This research needed to listen to the policy as well, thus linking the actor to the social setting – the teacher to the policy, and thus offering original insights.

Within discourse analysis there are distinct traditions that conceptualise talk in different ways. Woofitt (2005) describes these traditions as either 'bottom-up' or 'top-down'. A 'bottom-up' approach focuses on interactions and discursive practices without consideration of the wider context or on theories and is therefore inductive. This approach includes conversation analysis and discursive psychology and tends to adopt the ontological position of relativism. Relativism suggests that there are multiple versions of reality being constructed, all of which are equally valid, and so it is meaningless to consider them beyond the text or interaction. This 'bottom-up' approach is interested in what goes on at the interactional level and on empirical data to identify rhetorical devices to achieve particular functions (Edwards and Potter, 1992).

A 'top-down' approach focuses on macro-level discourse and on wider societal and cultural contexts. They are less interested in interactional devices in talk and can therefore be said to be deductive. 'Top-down' approaches include Critical Discourse Analysis and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) and tend to adopt a position of critical realism. Critical realism, while there is not one agreed framework (Archer et al., 2016) maintains that while an objective reality is unknowable in full, it is possible to be approximated.

There are shortcomings with each approach. This study chose to adopt Foucauldian Discourse Analysis for reasons that will be explained in this chapter. Of particular importance to this study was that while FDA allowed a consideration of the effects of a wider context on individual subjectivity, it positioned people as passive-users of discourse with no allowance of how language operated and how people negotiated their talk in a given context (Budds, Locke and Burr, 2014). This limitation could be addressed through discursive psychology, for example, which considers local interactions. However, discursive psychology does not consider the context beyond that action. A combined approach called Critical Discursive Psychology sought to overcome these shortcomings (Brunton et al., 2014) but had less focus on social and cultural contexts. Again, this would mean this approach would not be appropriate for the aims of this study.

One reasons that Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was chosen for this study was as a consequence of the social theory of Foucault. Prior to the start of the data collection in school, an initial impression was formed that the classroom and the teachers' perceptions of it, were panoptic. The classroom was 'an empire of the gaze' (Welland, 2001). This was because it has been argued that education policy-making has been appropriated by the central state to control, manage, and transform society (Braun, Maguire, and Ball, 2010). This control subordinates individual schools and local education

authorities (Fielding, 2001; Fullan, 2003) and results in what teachers teach becoming heavily prescribed by government policy (Day and Sachs, 2004; Maguire and Dillon, 2007). As a consequence, teachers are expected to teach policies that are planned by others, but to which they are held accountable (Moss, 2007), a conflict that suggests that policy controls what happens in the classroom. To add to this from my own anecdotal experience, I had noticed that the majority of teachers currently teaching the reformed GCSE in English literature bemoaned a perceived lack of freedom to teach 'what they wanted' and instead felt that they were simply 'teaching to the exam'. While these are generalised comments, they portray a feeling within the English department. English teachers did not feel that they were in control of the literature in their classrooms; they felt they were being controlled by *something* or *someone* that was watching and judging their progress towards exam results. Based on my own knowledge of Foucault from prior to this research, I felt that this context could be described in terms of the Foucauldian concept of panopticism, and that Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was the best approach to understand this idea. These ideas will now be explored.

3.6.2 Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

It has been suggested that 'there is no such thing' as Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) (Graham, 2005), or even that it is 'inaccessible and dangerous (O'Farrell, 2005) because there are no rules to follow (Graham, 2005). Therefore, this section will explore what the researcher is 'supposedly doing' when undertaking discourse analysis informed by the work of Foucault (Graham, 2005, p.5) in order to justify its use. The discussion will locate FDA epistemologically and demonstrate understanding of what kind of knowledge it aims to produce and what kinds of assumptions it makes about the world. The common theme between the differing analytical practices of discourse analysis is their rejection of language of being reflective of a concrete reality. Instead, language is seen as a social construct, created and perpetuated by those who have the power and the means of communication (Pitsoe and Letseka, 2013, p.24).

Foucauldian discourse analysis was chosen as both a methodology and a method because discourse is a 'particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)' (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p.1) that addresses the role of language and discourse in constructing social and psychological realities (Willig, 2001). Discourse analysis seeks to understand how language is used 'to say things, do things, and be things' (Gee, 2014, p.3) and it suggests that the ways of understanding the world are created and maintained by social processes (Burr, 1995; Gergen, 1985). Discourses occur within socio-cultural contexts, they both enable and constrain ways of constructing a topic, and so have implications for subjective experience (Brunton et al., 2017).

Underpinned by an interpretative approach, discourse analysis should not be 'detached from its theoretical and methodological foundations' as theory and method are intertwined within a social constructionist approach to analysis (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, pp.3-4).

FDA takes as its starting point that our ways of talking do not neutrally reflect our world but rather play an active role in creating and changing it (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002). Furthermore, this research accepted Habermas' (1970) argument that utterances are never disembodied from context, an assumption that defines FDA, as opposed to different approaches to discourse analysis which are analytically distinct. This idea is particularly important because, as described above, this study wanted to explore the relationship between teachers and the context within which they teach, how they understood that context, and how this understanding changed or shaped how they taught literature.

Rather than attempting to categorise or predict attitudes towards literature, this study sought to emphasise the 'production and constraint of meaning through language' (Gillies & Willig, 1998). For example, rather than aiming to identify *why* teachers of literature teach literature, this study aimed to explore *how* teachers of literature positioned themselves within discourses of literature and what the consequences of this was on their practice. In exploring the discursive positions that speakers 'take up' in relation to other discourses as well as in relation to events and actions, this research questioned how such positions limit as well as facilitate particular behaviours (Gillies & Willig, 1998).

3.6.3 Foucauldian social theory

To understand why FDA was chosen as the most appropriate way of exploring these ideas, it is necessary to understand the work of Michel Foucault and its influence on FDA.

FDA is inspired by Foucault's historical studies of discursive practices. Foucault refers to 'discourse' not as a particular language use or piece of text, but as the rules and systems of a particular body of knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledge and the relations between them (Weedon, 1987). FDA does not seek to understand the true nature of psychological phenomena, but rather the ways in which particular versions of phenomena are constructed through language (Willig, 2013). The discourses that construct these phenomena are, as defined by Foucault, a form of power that circulate in the social world which can attach to strategies of domination as well as resistance (Diamond and Quinby, 1988). This definition of discourse was a key consideration in the design of this study which explored which dominant discourses were reflected in teachers' talk about literature, if any, and whether these were resisted and/or transformed, if at all. The discourse of literature was explored in policy with the same aim. Foucault was interested in how knowledge, power and discourse are connected

(Foucault, 1990; Carabine, 2001) and in exploring the discursive construction of literature, this study was interested in the same thing.

Discourses are bound up with social practices and material realities – a 'top-down' approach (Brunton et al., 2014). For example, the discourse of literature is a powerful discourse in contemporary classrooms. It has an array of 'subject positions' (Willig, 2001) including the teacher and the students, and it entails practical implications for individuals who use this discourse.

Of particular importance was the understanding that FDA is not a theory of the subject, instead it explains the positioning of the subject within relations of power. This is because power is not the possession of the individual, but it operates through the individual by acting upon their actions (Foucault, 1982). The subject is not a 'thing' but a 'position' maintained within relations of force. These positionings are contradictory and discontinuous; they are not pre-existing roles: they are emergent. The subjects are not discourses nor are they determined by them: because power acts on possible actions, there is always the opportunity for the subject to act 'otherwise' (Foucault, 1982). As a consequence, FDA assumes that there is no one world that can be described and studied, instead there are numerous versions of the world each of which is constructed through discourses and practices, none of which is dominant (Gillies & Willig, 1998).

The knowledge that FDA aims to foster is to 'map the discursive worlds people inhabit and to trace possible ways-of-being afforded by them' (Willig, 2013, p.138). Discourses facilitate and limit, and enable and constrain what can be said, by whom it can be said, where, and when (Parker, 1992). In talk, people construct and reflect social activities through actions that invoke identity, ideology, belief, and power (Willig, 2013). They do this through semiotic systems (Ortega, 2008), which for the purposes of this research were related to words and talk, as opposed to images, for example. Foucauldian Discourse analysts focus on the availability of the discursive resources that participants employ in order to perform these actions (Willig, 2013). By framing what participants do in discursive practices as 'resources', the emphasis is on how participants in this discourse achieve their goals for the interaction, goals such as a conscious desire to persuade or resist another participant, or to accept or reject a proposed action, for example (Willig, 2013), through their language.

Furthermore, this study drew on Foucauldian understandings of positionings. The term 'positioning' is used as opposed to 'role' as it articulates a more fluid and dynamic sense of a potentially multiple self and how these 'selves' are actively constructed (Pinkus, 1996). A 'role' leaves little room for capturing the more subtle and complex aspects of interaction (Davies and Harre, 1990). In seeking to understand how these positions, and the subjective nature of them, were 'precarious, contradictory and in process' then change becomes possible as different meanings can be ascribed to experiences,

a poststructuralist 'decentring of the subject' (Weedon, 1987, p.33). This recognises that social identities are 'discursively constructed in historically specific social contexts' and that they 'shift over time' (Fraser, 1992, p.178). This understanding related to the potential for change in future teaching practice.

Thus, FDA was chosen as both method and methodology, rather than any other versions of discourse analysis because it was concerned with language and language use beyond its immediate contexts within which language may be used by speaking subjects (Willig, 2013). Of the proposed 'six traditions of discourse analysis' as summarised by Morgan (2010), discursive psychology could also have been considered as an approach for this study as it incorporates Foucauldian principles. However, as the name suggests, it is more concerned with discourse and language in psychology and the challenge of psychological phenomena such as identity, memory, personality, and attitude. Equally, critical discourse analysis could have been used to illustrate a desire for positive political change through an exploration of social processes and social change. Limitations of this method are its lack of philosophical roots (Haig, 2004), a lack of reflexivity (Billig, 2002), and of most interest, the 'largely negative nature of work produced within the field of CDA' (Martin, 2004). Therefore, FDA was chosen because of its exploration of disciplinary power from the philosophical perspective of Foucault and how it operated through institutional apparatus. This approach considered there to be multiple versions of events, a social constructionist theory of representation and meaning, and explored how discourse constructs subject positions: a primary interest. Ultimately, FDA was seen to be the most appropriate framework for a critical analysis of the positioning of policy and practice in the teaching of GCSE English literature, within the social theory of Foucault.

3.6.4 The procedural guidelines of FDA

'Words are fatter than numbers, and usually have multiple meanings' which makes them harder to move around and work with; they are also meaningless unless you look backward or forward to other words (Miles and Huberman, 1984, p.54), a problem in qualitative research. On top of this, this research accepted a Foucauldian definition of discourse as a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorisations that are produced, reproduced and transformed in a particular set of practices, through which meaning is given to physical and social realities (Hajer, 1995). Therefore in developing a research methodology, this study considered how to put the Foucauldian approach into qualitative research practice. This was especially difficult because while Foucault's writing was the main framework from which the conceptual position was derived, Foucault offers less guidance on the practical application of his theories (Sharp & Richardson, 2001).

A solution to this was to use methodological procedures associated with Foucauldian Discourse Analysis that were already available and that provided a clear structure within which to understand these multiple meanings. As such, Foucault could be applied in a way that was appropriate for this study (Fadyl, Nicholls & McPherson, 2012).

Willig's procedural guidelines were chosen because six stages were deemed to be more practically manageable than, for example, Parker's (1992) 20 steps in the analysis of discourse. While other FDA guides such as Kendall and Wickham (1999) rely on fewer stages, they presuppose a more advanced conceptual understanding of Foucault's method which is not necessarily useful. Hall (2001) covers the basic concepts of Foucauldian analysis but does not include issues of power. Carabine (2001) explores genealogical analysis but through broad and basic instructions that have no evidence of Foucauldian concepts.

Stage		Purpose	Key questions to ask
1	Discursive constructions	To analyse the ways in which discursive objects are constructed in the text	• How is the discursive object constructed through language? • What type of object is being constructed?
2	Discourses	To identify the difference between constructions	• What discourses are drawn upon? • What is their relationship to one another?
3	Action orientation	To examine the discursive contexts within which the different constructions of the object are deployed	• What do the constructions achieve? • What is gained from deploying them here? • What are their functions? • What is the author doing here?
4	Positioning	To identify how discourse constructs the subjects as well as objects	• What subject positions are made available by these constructions?
5	Practice	To explore the relationship between discourse and practice	• What possibilities for action are mapped out by these constructions? • What can be said and done from within these subject positions?
6	Subjectivity	To explore the relationship between discourse and subjectivity	• What can potentially be felt, thought and experienced from the available subject positions?

Figure 3. 1 Procedural guidelines for the analysis of discourse adapted from Willig (2013)

Considering the limitations of all of these methodological 'guides', Willig's procedural guidelines for six stages in the analysis of discourse ultimately were most appropriate and offered an accessible introduction to how Foucault's work has influenced Discourse Analysis (Figure 3.1).

3.7 Gathering data

Studies exploring the teaching of GCSE English literature tend to explore the perceptions, experiences, and understandings of the subject of literature from the perspective of the student (Tehan, 2015; Mansworth, 2016; Wood, 2016), or the reader from the perspective of the primary-aged teacher (Cremin et al., 2009; Collins et al., 2009; Cremin, 2010). There is also little research exploring the reformed GCSE in English literature (Mansworth, 2016; Stock, 2017), it being such a

new qualification with first teaching in 2015. Having established with the literature review that the connection between literature in policy and practice is a valid relationship to explore, this section presents how the data were gathered.

This research used procedural guidelines for the analysis of discourse adapted from Willig (2013) because this was a structure that mapped out the discursive resources used in a text and the subject positions they contained, and the implications of this for subjectivity and practice (Figure 3.1). It is important to note that there is criticism of following such a 'guide'. This is because it is suggested that in its use there is too much of a focus on the texts to which the guide is applied at the cost of an exploration of how discourse operates beyond the confines of the study, therefore losing much of what makes Foucault's analyses significant (Fadyl, Nicholls & McPherson, 2012). Furthermore, Hook (2001) argues that Foucault's discourse is productive and thus what is produced must be studied, not just what is articulated in a text. However, it could be suggested that this is something that the chosen 'guide' for this study does as it moves beyond the construction of the discursive object in the text to the implications of its construction on practice and subjectivity.

While Willig acknowledges that the stages of her methodological guide do not constitute a full analysis in the Foucauldian sense (2013) as they disregard a concern with historicity (Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine, 2008), they are appropriate for addressing the research questions in this study. This is because this research was not seeking to explicitly trace the history of the development of the discourse of literature in order to reveal something about its power (Carabine, 2000); instead, it sought to explore a moment in time. However, it was important to note that while this research was not an explicit study of historical authenticity, it was not ahistorical (Kendall and Wickham, 1999) as the context of GCSE reform was important and so acknowledged.

3.7.1 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are alluded to in several sections of this chapter in order to reflect the ways in which the study was conducted both respectfully and appropriately of the participants' needs and contexts; for example, ethical issues are considered in the discussion of the tensions associated with being an insider researcher and the selection of participants. Full ethical procedures were followed (BERA, 2011, para. 14) and approved by the University Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix 1 Ethical approval documentation). The British Educational Research Association guidelines states that researchers must 'seek to minimise the impact of their research on the normal working and workloads of participants (BERA, 2011, p.7), a requirement that was necessary for the busy lives of the teachers involved in this study and so required constant review.

From the beginning of the study, the participants understood the nature of the research, its purpose, and exactly what would happen to them and their data (BERA, 2011). This was achieved through meeting the participants, explaining the research, and answering any questions. Participants were given an information sheet and consent form which they were asked to take away to consider, and then return to indicate their consent (Appendix 4). Permission was also sought from the head teacher of the school with information provided to explain the study (Appendix 2) and then his consent acquired (Appendix 3). This also involved an informal talk with the head teacher to answer the questions that he had and to reassure him that the study would not impact on the workload of the participants or myself. The right to withdraw was set out in the paperwork detailed above and reiterated throughout the process.

All data collected were held in strict confidence. Pseudonyms were guaranteed as detailed in the BERA guidelines (2011, para. 25). The records of this study were kept private. No identifiers linking the head teacher, the teachers, the students, or the school were included. Research records were stored securely in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer that only I had access to. The data will be destroyed securely once the findings of the study are written up, after five years. (BERA, 2011, paras. 25, 26, 27). Participants were invited to review transcriptions to ensure they corresponded to their own subjective reality, rather than my own bias (BERA, 2011, para. 27).

3.7.2 Participant and school selection

The school chosen for this study was the school in which I have been teaching since 2007. The school was an average-sized secondary school in England of 900 students, almost all students were from White British backgrounds, the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language was well below average, and the proportion of disadvantaged students, disabled students and those with special educational needs was below average.

The participants chosen for this study were teachers in the English department of the school in which I was teaching while the research was taking place. The selection of the sample was purposive, although it should be acknowledged that there was an element of selecting participants simply because of their ready availability and convenience – this was the school in which I was working. In purposive sampling, the participants are hand-picked on the basis of a judgement of their typicality or possession of the particular characteristics being sought (Cohen et al., 2011). This sample was chosen in order to access those with knowledge of teaching literature, by virtue of their professional role (Ball, 1990). There would have been little benefit in seeking a random sample across the school, thus a purposive sample was vital. Though they may not be representable and

their comments not generalisable, the concern was more to gain in-depth information from those in a position to give it.

As a consequence of this necessity, consideration was made of the experience of the teachers invited to participate. In particular, only teachers who were currently teaching the reformed GCSE English literature specification were invited to participate, as opposed to those who were only teaching KS3 English. This was because the expectation of accountability and the awareness of the specification itself was very specific to those teaching GCSE, and that unless it formed a part of a teacher's context, then their experiences, for the purposes of this study, were not the most relevant. Participants were chosen in order to yield the most relevant and plentiful data so that I could 'obtain the broadest range of information and perspectives on the subject of study' (Kuzul, 1992, p.37).

It was important to understand that unnecessary workload is a 'huge problem in teaching', with a suggested 82% of teachers describing their workload as 'unmanageable' (Niemtus, 2016) due, in part, to the contribution of unnecessary and unproductive tasks (DfE, 2015, p.6). This factor was significant because it informed how the participants were approached. It was clearly emphasised that participation would not be an unnecessary burden to the general workload and was entirely voluntary. The consent of participants needed to be properly informed and freely given; 'voluntary informed consent' is defined as the condition in which participants 'understand and agree to their participation without any duress' and in that they understand the process, why their participation is necessary, how it will be used and how and to whom it will be reported (BERA, 2011, p.5). Initially, consent was gained through meeting with the head teacher, the (then) head of department and the participants individually, explaining the research, the risks and the benefits, and answering any questions that they may have had. The head teacher and participants were then given an information sheet (see Appendix 2 Head Teacher Information Sheet) and consent form (see Appendix 3 Head Teacher Consent Form) to consider and return. Permission for the research to take place was gained from the head teacher and then the head of department. Throughout the research, the research supervisor and the head teacher were kept updated on the research taking place. The right to withdraw was detailed in the paperwork and reiterated at the beginning of the all data collection points.

Ultimately, of the eight teachers approached, six agreed to participate (Figure 3.2).

Name	Current role(s)
Lucy	Assistant Head Teacher and Teacher of English
Silvia	Second in English
Celia	Second in English
Lena	Literacy Coordinator and Teacher of English
Bea	Teacher of English
Cassandra	Teacher of English

Figure 3. 2 Background information about participants

It was important to recognise participants' entitlement to privacy and it was necessary to accord them their rights to confidentiality and anonymity, unless that right is specifically waived (BERA, 2011). Confidentiality was maintained through changing identifying details of the school and the participants, keeping data secure and ensuring participants knew how and why their personal data was being stored, to what uses it was being put and to whom it may be available. Participants were given the opportunity to verify statements at the stage of drafting, to allow for participation validation. Anonymity was ensured through pseudonyms, unless participants wanted to be acknowledged.

The participants who volunteered for the study represented six of the eight full time GCSE English literature teachers in the department, not including myself. There was only one male teacher in the department but he chose not to participate and so the sample is female, something that could not be avoided in this case. The age of the sample was fairly even with four of the six participants between the ages of 30 and 39 and, as a consequence, a similar number of years' teaching experience.

It is acknowledged that there were potential weaknesses in the sampling method used and that the results are not necessarily generalizable to the wider population. However, this sample was not intended to be generalised and thus this issue was viewed as 'unimportant' (Schofield, 1990, p.202). Even then, 'when we give proper weight to local conditions, any generalisation is a working hypothesis, not a conclusion' (Merriam, 1998, p.209). Instead, this study sought a thorough exploration of the phenomena in a carefully described context that would be of interest to others conducting similar research (Chalhoub-Deville et al, 2006). It was not the intention of this small scale qualitative research to 'find universal truths but simply to get sound information and understanding

of their local context' (Drever, 1995, p.33) in the hope of informing future practice as well as contributing to the theoretical understanding of this area.

3.7.3 Selecting texts for analysis

FDA can be carried out 'wherever there is meaning' (Parker and the Bolton Discourse Network, 1999, p.1). While this means that FDA does not necessarily have to analyse words, in this research the texts selected for analysis were transcripts of speech and written documents. The selection of suitable texts for analysis was informed by the research questions. Therefore, the texts chosen for analysis were from a mosaic of qualitative approaches (Clark and Moss, 2011).

Data collection points were spread over approximately one term. This was primarily for practical reasons: firstly, to manage data collection alongside a full-time job; secondly, to allow for the stages of data collection to progress chronologically and thus be able to build upon each other, thematically and comparatively; thirdly, to ensure, as previously mentioned, that participants did not feel unduly burdened with 'extra work'.

Phase	Date	Activity
Research Question One	March 2017 – July 2017	Document Analysis
Research Questions Two and Three	April 2017	Individual Interviews
	May 2017	Metaphor Activities Poetry Responses
	May 2017 – June 2017	Observations

Figure 3. 3 Timescale of data collection events

Data was collected at four different points over the year. Firstly, there was the ongoing collection of the policy data through document analysis. This took time and included revisiting the data as themes emerged, often prompted by ideas from the other data. Secondly, individual interviews took place in April. Interviews were chosen as the first data to be collected because I wanted to know what was 'inside a person's head' (Tuckman, 1972), before moving onto the more creative responses. I concluded with observations starting in May because having talked to the participants, and having explored some ideas in more depth in the creative responses, I was aware that they knew the focus of my study and had, perhaps, had time to reflect on some of the things we had discussed thus far in the data collection period (away from talking with me). By ending with the observations, I felt it would be perhaps be a more open reflection of practice but also, perhaps, a more typical lesson as the fear of the unknown had been taken away – they knew why I was there, and so did not have to 'perform', if they did not want to.

3.7.3.1 Policy documentation

The first research question required analysis of policy documentation and asked how literature was constructed discursively in policy. Exam board specifications, published papers, and official publications were selected to identify discourses that directly impacted upon the teaching of GCSE English literature, a sample of government discourse around the reformed GCSE English literature qualification and the concept of literature. Specifically, it was thought that such discourses might be evident in the accreditation process that guided the endorsement of the reformed GCSE in English Literature. Therefore, a sample of ministerial department (DfE), non-ministerial department (Ofqual), and exam board (AQA) policy documents related to GCSE English literature were selected. Ofqual (2012) describes the accreditation process used to decide whether GCSE qualifications produced by the exam boards can be rewarded and so, perhaps, is describing a list of documents that contributed towards the accreditation of the specification that is taught in classrooms:

1. The DfE determines the subject content for reformed GCSEs which exam boards use to produce submissions.
2. These submissions must also meet Ofqual's rules (known as Conditions).
3. Ofqual produces guidance about their rules.
4. Exam board submissions, which include a specification, are reviewed against Ofqual's General Conditions and qualification and subject level conditions by a panel of subject experts.

Therefore, the following policy documents were chosen for this study because they directly informed the accreditation of the exam board specification that is taught in the classroom, as described above:

Title of Policy Document	Publisher	Purpose	Reference Code in Study
English literature: GCSE subject content and assessment objectives	DfE, June 2013	to set out the learning outcomes, assessment objectives and context coverage required	Content
Subject content of reformed GCSEs in English and mathematics: equality analysis	DfE, November 2013	to assess the impact of new GCSE content in English literature with reference to the protected characteristics of pupils and students	Equality analysis
GCSE (9-1) Subject Level Guidance for English literature	Ofqual, May 2014	to offer guidance intended to help awarding organisations understand how to comply with the subject level guidance	Guidance
English literature GCSE: a myth buster	DfE, May 2014	to clear up some false impressions people may have about the English literature GCSE	Myth buster
AQA GCSE English literature specification	AQA, September 2014	to prescribe, for both teacher and students, the GCSE subject content and assessment in detail	Specification

Figure 3. 4 GCSE English literature policy documentation

It is worth noting that AQA's specification was chosen because it was the specification taught in my department and so it was appropriate in this respect. The Equality analysis and Myth buster documents were chosen because they directly reflect on the qualification at the level of the Department of Education, thus offering an inside perspective from those who are responsible for 'educational excellence' (DfE, 2017) in England. This is a different perspective from Ofqual who are responsible for regulating the qualifications taught to ensure people have confidence in them (Ofqual, 2017) and are the documents which have direct impact upon GCSE English literature in practice (Content, Guidance, Specification).

3.7.3.2 Interviews

The research questions sought to understand how GCSE English literature was constructed discursively in policy and practice, and the consequences of this. Therefore, it was decided that in order to find out how teachers discursively construct meaning in relation to literature then the most appropriate texts to be explored would be transcripts of semi-structured interviews. To prepare the interview schedule, key ideas raised in the document analysis that were important to explore in more depth were selected. Questions asked were designed to explore teachers' experiences of reading, teaching, and enjoying literature in order to answer the research questions (see Appendix 4 Finalised Interview Questions). The questions for the interviews were based on the work of Goodwyn (2012) whose research considered what counts as literature, teachers' experiences of teaching literature, and the perceptions of its status and significance in the classroom. Questions were developed from key ideas about the potential tensions between the official rhetoric and practical realities of teaching literature (Goodwyn, 2012) (see Appendix 5 Potential questions for participant individual interview).

Interviews took place over a period of a week, after school had finished, and when students had left. They were conducted in the classroom of the teacher (having been invited in), lasted approximately 30 minutes, and were digitally recorded and transcribed (see Appendix 7 for interview transcripts). Interviews were semi-structured, with guiding topics and principles but with the emphasis on conversation in order to 'learn from people' rather than study them (Spradley, 1979, p.3). In the interviews, the participants were given the space to talk; it is their narrative.

It was particularly important to consider my relationship to the participants. I decided to avoid a more formal persona of 'interviewer' and instead to follow a more conversational mode that lead to a social relationship of sorts: a 'conversation with a purpose' (Dexter, 1970, p.136). The conversational mode was perhaps a type of narrative interview (Wengraf, 2001) that allowed the teacher to tell stories about their experiences in their own way and from their own perspective, remembering how it felt at the time, if anecdotal. I tried to ask open questions rather than questions asking for opinion or generalisation. This encouraged teachers to move towards the experience of events rather than their opinions of that experience, although both were useful. Such an approach resulted in me being quite passive with the focus on listening as 'qualitative interviewing requires intense listening…and a systematic effort to really hear and understand what people tell you' (Rubin and Rubin, 11995, p.17) in order to 'hear the meaning of what is being said' (p.7). This allowed the opportunity to come back to important topics later on in the interview.

While I entered the interview with prepared questions, and the thought that the interview would be semi-structured in approach, as opposed to structured, I quickly realised that other than an opening

question ('What is the value of teaching literature?') the interview was not semi-structured. While the prepared questions remained as prompts for me, as needed, instead the interview was unstructured and conversational. The nature of conversation allowed for spontaneity and for questions to develop over the course of the interview, based on the participant's responses. I was able to ask questions that prioritised depth in response, and thus validity.

However, the limitations of interview in this situation was potentially in my hands, with the interview hindered by poorly constructed questions and response bias. The purpose was to find out things that could not be directly observed (Patton, 2002). It was therefore important to encourage the teacher to use their own words, rather than anything that had been predefined (Yin, 2011), although to call it a dialogue would be misleading as there was a purpose and so the interview was not a joint endeavour (Kvale, 2006). Ultimately the purpose of this data was to understand participants 'on their own terms and how they make meaning of their own lives, experiences, and cognitive processes' (Brenner, 2006, p.357). However, in encouraging a conversational interview, a potential drawback was a lack of reliability. There was also the potential for a lack of structure to result in difficultly in drawing patterns across the participants' responses in comparison to a more structured interview. These limitations were overcome by collecting several different types of data.

3.7.3.3 Metaphors

Qualitative research suggests a 'flexibility of design' in the search for 'what it means to be human' (Gilgun, p.3). Different data will tell different stories (Piercy and Benson, 2005). Eisner (1997) suggests that most people use a variety of ways to convey what they know, and so metaphors and responses to poetry represent a different way to reflect experience. As such, creative and more alternative ways of collecting data can connect with various audiences on emotional as well as intellectual levels, as they reflect the experiences of the research participant (Piercy and Benson, 2005). Fundamentally, such alternative representation (Butler-Kisber, 1998) has 'the capacity to clarify and magnify existence' and, at its best, 'honours the subjective experience of the individual' (Furman, 2007, p.1).

As a consequence, a further type of text for analysis was metaphors. As part of the first one-hour session dedicated to collecting data around creative response, participants were asked to craft metaphorical representations of literature:

Figure 3. 5 'If literature were a…' metaphor prompts

Using metaphors (Figure 3.2) as a device for examining beliefs results in the bringing together of two potentially incongruous ideas resulting in something meaningful that is central to language as well as human cognition (Cameron and Low, 1999). In particular, literature is a complex phenomenon and it has been suggested that metaphor can organise a whole system of thought (Lakoff and Turner, 1989) by structuring thinking (Abelson, 1979). Ultimately it is suggested that metaphorical representations might offer up a 'truer' picture of beliefs, articulated in a way that had not been previously considered (Fisher, 2013, p.376).

3.7.3.4 Creative Poetry Response

A creative poetry response and a reflection on it was chosen as a form of data because it is exactly the kind of thing that we ask our students to do every day in literature lessons. It is also what students have to do in the GCSE English literature examination.

It was important to question the value that this type of data would have and whether it would make a substantive contribution (Richardson, 2000). I considered that this task would be perceived as perhaps less formal and more fun, resulting in some interesting insights about the complexity of the participants' understanding and experiences of literature. Over the course of two hour-long, after school meetings, participants were asked to respond to an unseen poem (Appendix 7) much like students have to in the GCSE English literature exam, Paper 2.

However, unlike the exam, and to deliberately move away from the concept of a 'right reading' (Crosman, 1982), participants were invited to respond in any way that they chose: analytical essay,

narrative, description, poem, for example. After sharing their responses, they were asked to reflect on the response that they had chosen and so explore their relationship to literature as both reader and teacher.

The limitations of this type of data are related to issues of 'truth' and are overcome by the researcher being clear about the purpose of the data, so that it is not misjudged against the wrong criteria for a different type of research (Piercy and Benson, 2005, p.111; Fisher, 2013, p.380). As such the purpose of this data was to provide further contrast to the transcripts of interviews, revealing a more in-depth understanding of the phenomenon.

3.7.3.5 Field notes of observations

A further text for analysis were the notes recorded during observation of the teachers teaching GCSE English literature. Observation is 'more than just looking' (Marshall and Rossman, 1995); it is systematically noting people, events, behaviours, settings, artefacts, and routines, offering the researcher the opportunity to gather 'live' primary data from natural occurring social situations (Cohen et al., 2011, p.456). As a consequence, it is suggested that observation as a data collection method can potentially yield more valid or authentic data than would otherwise be the case with more inferential methods (Cohen et al., 2011), something that was crucial for addressing the research questions.

In contrast to the interview which sought to gain close access to the language of subjective experience, observation provided a platform from which to reflect upon language in its natural context (Bogdevic, 1999). As such, it is consistent with the principles of interpretivism (Friberg and Öhlen, 2010). Observation offered the advantage of language that was not filtered through social discourse (except perhaps in conversation with the students) and was a useful strategy for gaining contextual understanding of the world within which subjective and social experience existed (Thorne, 2016). While the observations were 'unstructured' (Thomas, 2013), they did have an element of structure to ensure integrity and purpose. As such, I went into the observation with the initial analyses gathered from the documents and interviews in answer to the first research question (see Appendix 9). These informed the observation. Therefore, while I allowed the focus to emerge and have the potential to evolve throughout the observation, I acknowledged that I could not observe everything (Wolcott, 1992) and so I allowed the categories of 'wider discourse' that I had already begun to tentatively define from the policy documentation, to guide me (Willig, 2001).

Observation provided a 'reality check', enabling an opportunity to look at these tentative discourses afresh (Cooper and Schindler, 2001, p.374). As a teacher of GCSE English literature myself, it would have been very easy to simply rely on my own experiences of teaching the subject. Observation of

other teachers teaching GCSE English literature ensured that I did not take things for granted (Cooper and Schindler, 2001).

It was also important to recognise that observation is part of my role at school. As a Head of Department, I have observed the members of the English department for purposes of both development and accountability. As a Leading Practitioner, I have observed across my colleagues for the same reasons. As a Specialist Leader of Education, I have observed English teachers in other schools across the county. As a teacher myself, my classroom practice has been observed numerous times both formally and informally. Therefore, it could be argued that I am an 'experienced' observer, and perhaps also, a 'careful, systematic observer' (Merriam, 2009, p.118). I have practised 'learning to pay attention', how to write descriptively, how to record field notes with discipline, and how 'to separate detail from trivia' (Patton, 2002, pp.22-23) in my years in practice. However, this experience was also problematic. I was observing in none of these roles, yet chose not to adopt a stance that was completely detached from this experience (Gold, 1958) accepting that it was important to use my position to understand what I was observing and to be discerning during the observation (Adler and Adler, 1998).

Thus, the observations were unstructured and I was not a participant. Observations took place during a typical timetable period of 50 minutes. They allowed me to immerse myself in the social situation in order to understand something about the teaching of literature and what was going on there (Thomas, 2013). I recorded reflective field notes to track the observations (See Field Notes from observations in Appendix 10). Field notes were highly descriptive (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992) with a focus on the actions of the teacher and the interactions between the teacher and the students, categories adapted from Yin (2011). At the level of description, the interactions of the teacher and the students were classified as direct quotations or at least the substance of the interactions, as well as any questions that the teacher asked of the students, or that the student asked of the teacher during their talk about literature (Merriam, 2009). The actions of the teacher were defined as direct quotations, or the substance of, the teacher's whole-class interactions, while modelling at the board or facilitating discussion, for example. While it is suggested that researchers need to record the physical and contextual setting of the observation, and any critical incidents (Moyles, 2002), I chose to focus on the teachers' interactions with literature, defined as their talk around the text they were teaching. As such, any 'critical incidents' such as behavioural incidents were not recorded, unless they were related to the teacher's talk about literature, a decision made during the observation.

The reflective component to the field notes captured my commentary as observer under the title 'Thoughts and Questions'. Here I recorded feelings, reactions, hunches, initial interpretations,

speculations, and questions as I observed, as well as possible lines of further enquiries (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). These comments move beyond the factual description of the teacher's interactions and raise questions about what is observed, a form of preliminary data analysis (Merriam, 2009).

In order to reduce bias and lack of representativeness, observations were made of all participants and the data compared before any conclusions were reached. In order to address the issue of reflexivity in observation (Cohen et al. et al. 2011), it was important to acknowledge the unknown impact that a presence in the classroom had on the activity in that classroom. Furthermore, it was also important to consider that the participants knew, to a certain extent, what my study was about. There were no issues regarding deception or subterfuge in this research, something that was considered (BERA, 2011, para. 14). The participants were fully aware of the purpose of the research and the research design. In that the research sought the perceptions and understandings of teachers of GCSE English literature, the consideration was made to keep the specific focus of the study away from the participants out of concern for the potential for reactivity in which the teachers modified an aspect of their behaviour in response to their awareness of being observed (Oliver, 2003), or even said what they thought I wanted to hear and see, when being interviewed and observed. However, it was ultimately decided that the benefits of participants feeling that there was an open and authentic relationship with the research were more persuasive. This also enabled them to reflect on their participation and thus contribute with a more informed confidence.

As a potential obverse to the Hawthorne effect, my expectations may have had an influence, either consciously or unconsciously on the participants that resulted in them conforming to a perceived expectation. Thus I had to be particularly careful not to lead the participants in any way with any expectations for the observation (Thomas, 2013) and strive to balance 'involvement with detachment, closeness with distance, familiarity with strangeness' (Cohen et al., 2011, p.457). Such detachment was difficult but it was also important to accept that this was unavoidable and so I sought to identify the effects of observer bias and present them in a favourable manner (Merriam, 2009). As such, in suggesting that it is useful for the researcher to 'observe themselves observing' (Patton, 2002), I found that the teachers that I observed did not change 'custom and practice built up over years' (Frankenberg, 1982, p.51), an anecdotal reflection based on my previous observations of them, and that instead what I was watching was comparable to other observations that I had done.

Observations took place in the natural setting of the teacher's classroom. Teachers were invited to teach a GCSE English literature lesson, but the content would be of their choosing. In considering workload, it was suggested that I would be happy to observe the teacher's 'regular' lesson, although if they wanted to teach something different, then this would also be observed. Ultimately the

content of the lesson was irrelevant (as long as GCSE English literature was being taught); I was interested in the discursive construction of literature.

Because of the practicalities of the school timetable, it was more appropriate for the GCSE English literature classes observed to be Year 10, rather than Year 11 who would be preparing for their exams and thus more likely to be independently revising in May, when exams were taking place. Equally, the priority of teachers of Year 11 GCSE English literature was not my research study. Furthermore, the choice of Year 10 classes represented the third year that participants had taught the reformed GCSE English literature qualification (the current Year 11 cohort would be the first group to sit the reformed exams in 2017), and so potentially teachers of literature would be more comfortable or perhaps more aware of what they were teaching due to that experience.

Observations were recorded through field notes (see Appendix 10) rather than any form of audio-video device due to practicalities of capturing teacher-pupil interaction as with a whole class this would have been too difficult to do meaningfully. Furthermore, I normally record observations through field notes and so this was a process with which I felt comfortable and, more importantly, the colleagues I was observing felt comfortable. Field notes were made throughout the observations with full, detailed notes typed as soon after the observation as possible (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007). They were 'highly descriptive' (Merriam, 2009) and included reflective comments and thoughts that I had, and questions that I asked. As such, the field notes contained direct quotations or at least the substance of what the teacher was saying, descriptions of the setting, the people and the activities, and my reflective comments, as guided by Miles and Huberman (1994).

3.8 Limitations of the study

This research assumed there was value in Foucault's work for critiquing education as a societal institution and as a modern regime of institutional power (Woermann, 2012), yet there were limitations to discourse analysis informed by Foucault, as an approach. While the advantages appear to far outweigh the limitations (Morgan, 2010), one limitation is that the array of different traditions of discourse analysis make issues of methodology problematic, as each has different positions, concepts, procedures, and understandings of discourse (Morgan, 2010). A further disadvantage is that discourse analysists believe that meaning is never fixed and everything is always open to interpretation and negotiation, resulting in analysis that is never closed (Morgan, 2010). More specifically, it has been argued that FDA, compared to some approaches to discourse analysis, is too broad with a lack of explicit techniques being a hindrance (Morgan, 2010). There is also criticism of the specific method chosen in this study (Willig, 1998), with suggestions made that this method

relates to direct analysis of text at the cost of the more fundamental precepts of Foucauldian method such as those of power/knowledge, historicity and governmentality.

Conceptually, there are limitations to discourse analysis as a methodology. It has been argued that the 'identification of discourses has a tendency to become little more than the labelling of everyday common-sense categories' (Burr, 1995, p.174) resulting in discourse analysts reproducing the same structures which they are trying to challenge in the first place (p.182). Furthermore, in focusing on texts, other forms of discourse that are visible in other ways than words are disregarded resulting in a failure to analyse 'public manifestations of discourse such as thought and self-awareness' (Willig, 2001, p.101) meaning discourse analysts give validity to the role of language and texts rather than to subjectivity or mental state. A further limitation highlighted (Willig, 2013) is whether what teachers could potentially feel, think and experience from the available subject positions, can be theorised on the basis of discourse alone. FDA attributes to discourse the 'power to construct subjects' (Willig, 2013, p.137). It is implicated in the process by which 'human beings are made subjects' (Foucault, 1982, p.208) and so how they gain access to particular ways of being and seeing. A challenge to this asks whether discourse is all that is required for the thinking, feeling human subject to emerge, or whether there is something more involved: something that discourse analysis does not necessarily explore (Willig, 2013).

As a consequence of these limitations, it has been argued that Foucauldian Discourse Analysists may adopt their own methodological procedures, guided by a specific topic, research question and point of focus, provided this is explained in detail (Taylor, 2001). The following chapter sets out this detail.

4. Findings: Discursive constructions of literature in policy and practice

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the journey through the stages of data analysis using the procedural guidelines for the analysis of discourse adapted from Willig (2015) and as detailed in Figure 3.1. This structured approach was useful both as a practical approach to data analysis but the questions that were posed also helped each stage to focus on what was relevant and of interest in answer to the research questions. Chapter four, five and six illustrate this journey.

The aim of this research was to explore the constructions of literature in policy and practice and the implications of these for future practice. Interviews, observations, and written responses to creative tasks were used to collect data although any form of text may be analysed from a FDA perspective (Parker, 1992). There are six stages to Willig's (2013) version of FDA which will be explored using data from the study to illustrate the process.

It is important to note that stage one, identifying the discursive constructions of literature, is fully explored in detail in its own chapter in answer to the first research question. The journey through stages two to six are introduced in this section but explored in more detail in the following chapter. This was because I felt it was more pertinent to explore the connections, contradictions and paradoxes between the wider discourses identified in both policy and practice in a more holistic way, rather than stage by stage as detailed in this section.

Figure 4. 1 Mind map of temporary discursive constructs after a second reading of the data

Figure 4.1 summarises the discursive constructions of literature explored in this chapter. The dashed lines indicate potential contradictions, disagreements or paradoxes in the discursive constructions of literature. All of these are explored in the findings. Three main discursive constructions of literature were identified from the data: choice, inspiration and knowledge. Firstly in the discursive construction of *choice*, policy highlighted the importance of the teacher making individual and informed practical decisions about what was best for the reader in the classroom. Policy further emphasised the choices that a reader can make in both text and response, inherent in the reading transaction. This discursive construction was contrasted with disagreements in which participants brought forth particular aspects of contextual prescription as being responsible for any choices being

shut down in practice. Secondly in the discursive construction of *inspiration*, policy highlighted the responsibility of teachers to engage their students with literature as the reason for its success. In contrast to this, the participants again called on the monocultural context of the reformed literary canon at GCSE as responsible for a lack of engagement. Finally in the discursive construction of *knowledge,* policy emphasised the value of literary knowledge and made explicit its purpose as a definition of the qualification. This discursive construction was again undermined by the participants who underlined how by redefining knowledge through accountability expectations, it lost its value.

4.2 Stage One: Discursive constructions of literature

In the first stage of the analysis the different ways of talking about the topic were identified. In this case, the topic of interest was literature. I wanted to identify what were the possible ways that literature was talked about in policy and practice. This was important to help answer the first research question: how is literature constructed discursively in policy and practice? For this stage of analysis, I read and re-read all the texts in order to identify different times where participants mentioned literature. To do this, all references to literature were highlighted beyond the simple keyword literature both implicitly and explicitly. This approach also made consideration of when the text did not include direct reference to literature, but when it was still being referenced. This is because a text may talk about literature without directly naming it. For example, references to 'someone who has been to Eton', 'old white people', and 'the government' are talking about the choices made around literature as a qualification although the word 'literature' has not been used. I chose not to use computer software because I wanted to focus on both implicit and explicit references; in paying attention to highlighted explicit references, there is the potential to miss implicit references. This was a useful way to visualise this stage of FDA. However, in FDA the references to the topic are not conceptualised as 'codes' or 'themes' but as 'discursive constructions' and 'discourses'. These have distinct effects within the stages of FDA and are tied to the specific social constructionist epistemology.

An example of the processes involved in this stage is included below. Figure 4.2 presents an example the initial themes described by FDA as identifying constructions of the discursive object. Here the data, in this case the AQA GCSE English literature specification policy document (2014), is annotated with explicit and implicit references to literature.

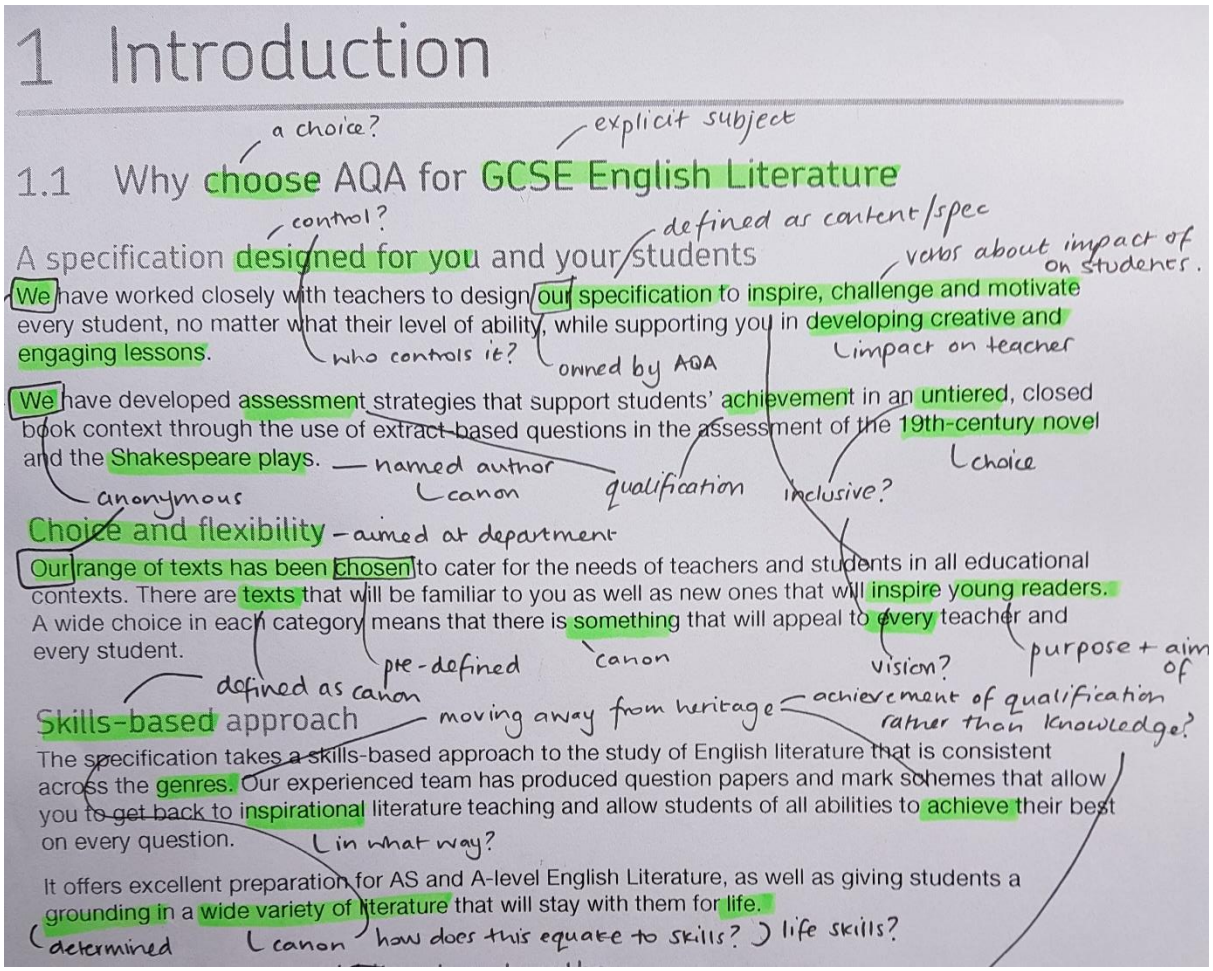


Figure 4. 2 Identifying references to literature in policy

It could be suggested that this stage of the data analysis was akin to the constant comparative method as defined by Thomas (2013). Indeed, this process was used to identify the discursive construction of literature. In identifying all of the references to literature (Figure 4.2), an impression was formed of important ideas that kept recurring. For example, at this stage it became apparent that when talking about literature as a subject, it was surrounded by constructs relating to liberation, freedom, emancipation. Figure 4.3 presents an example of this stage of organisation.

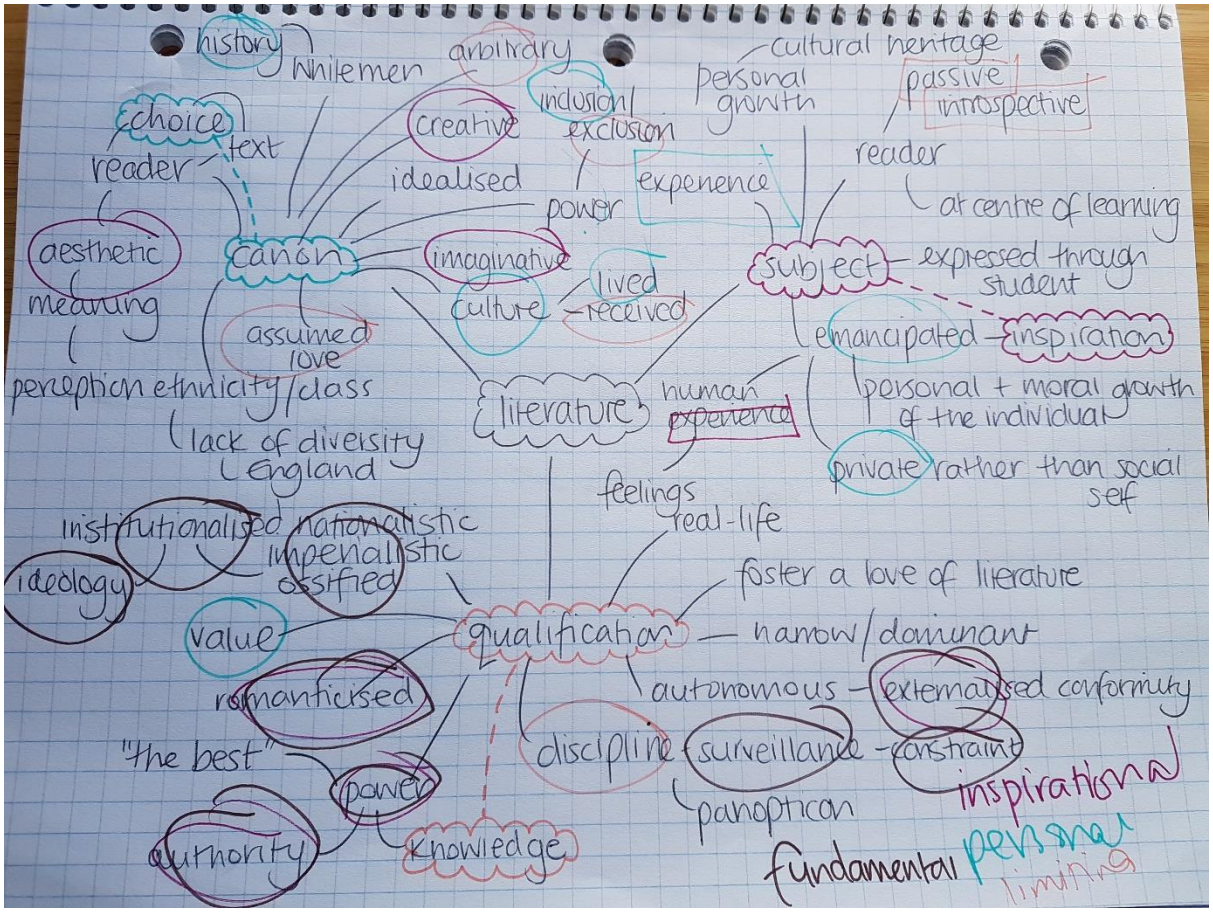


Figure 4. 3 Organising references to literature into discursive constructs

This stage of organisation involved identifying patterns in how the implicit and explicit references were constructed in a search for 'themes' that would be explored as 'discourses'. As shown in Figure 4.3, it was discovered that the discursive object of literature was more manageable when understood as three distinct concepts: literature as a qualification; literature as a canon; and literature as a subject. This is perhaps unsurprising as 'literature' is a vast concept with multiple meanings. Interestingly, these three concepts of literature are discrete and yet were talked about in the policy data as if they were the same thing, complicating the description of literature. Perhaps this was an early indication of where the conflict between policy and practice manifested – an idea explored in a further stage of analysis.

The initial discursive constructions in this case, were found through collecting together and categorising the references that described 'literature' and were used to revise discursive constructions. Notes and observations relating to these constructs were compiled in a table, an abbreviated version of which is shown in Figure 4.4.

Discursive Constructions	Notes and observations
Choice ***alternative*** ***option*** ***preference*** ***opportunity*** ***pick*** ***decision***	• So many things to choose from: choice of exam board (AQA, OCR, EDEXCEL etc.); choice of texts although limited to a pre-chosen selection; choice of Shakespeare plays although has to be Shakespeare; choice of poetry clusters; choice of essay questions in response in exam • synonyms for choice defined in different ways reflecting purpose of individual documents • teacher choice of response emphasised - constructed as a freedom from restraint
	• personal response is routed in the relationship between language and learning in the reader • the role of literature is to develop readers' imaginative and aesthetic response: interplay between choice and love/inspiration; emphasis on student reading widely for pleasure • role of the teacher to equip students to discover, and appreciate, literature for themselves: the literature to be discovered is from the literary canon; English literary heritage; promotion of literature • personal response should be informed by knowledge
	• reader is a citizen free to choose what they read and how they read it yet restricted by practicalities of accountability • synonyms: choose/select/pick/decide

Figure 4. 4 Examples of notes and observations about the discursive constructions

This process continued to eliminate any discursive constructions that were not supported in the rest of the data. I also made a note of any references to literature that seemed opposed to the discourses that were emerging. These counter-examples were identified and recorded in the same way. What was initially quite a long list was condensed into a general commentary about literature represented by three basic discursive constructions, or initial codes – about choice (i.e. in teaching reading, as a reader), about inspiration (i.e. as a responsibility) and about knowledge (i.e. as a value, as a requirement). These were the basic ways in which policy and practice seemed to frame how literature was constructed. What I soon found was that these three constructs continued to intersect as I moved towards identifying the discourses that they formed. They will now be explained in more detail with evidence from the data.

4.2.1 Inspiration in policy

Within the context of GCSE reform, policy constructed literature discursively through the concept of inspiration. Throughout policy there were references to literature that explicitly stated that inspiration was the reason why students were reading, and also why teachers enjoyed reading literature and teaching the subject. Specifically, within policy, literature was constructed as something that was inspirational for both student and teacher. It was inspirational for those who invested personally as reader. It was inspirational for teachers who embraced the texts presented in the qualification as their own. The evidence of this is presented in Figure 4.5.

Policy document	Discursive evidence of inspiration (page number)
Equality Analysis (2013)	'The content now clearly allows for wide coverage of seminal world texts.' (p.14)
	'…detailed studies in the English Literature GCSE must be high quality, intellectually challenging, and substantial whole texts…' (p.14)
Subject Content (2013)	'Through literature, students have a chance to develop culturally and acquire knowledge of the best that has been thought and written.' (p.3)
	'Studying GCSE English literature should ensure that students read widely for pleasure…' (p.3)
	'…no more than two texts from the great traditions of English literature…' (p.4)
	'Study of high quality English literature should be the principal focus of study for this GCSE.' (p.4)
	'Detailed study of a range of high quality, intellectually challenging, and substantial whole texts…' (p.4)
Myth Buster (2014)	'…give pupils the chance to study some of this country's fantastic literary heritage…' (p.1)
	'…teachers are as free to introduce children to the brilliant writing of…' (p.1)
	'…all pupils have a solid grounding in the rich literary heritage of the British Isles.' (p.1)
	'Exam boards remain free to include a rich array of poetry, drama and prose…' (p.1)
Specification (2014)	'We have worked closely with teachers to design our specification to inspire…' (p.4)
	'There are texts that will be familiar to you as well as new ones that will inspire young readers.' (p.4)
	'…inspirational literature teaching…' (p.4)
	'…students should have a chance to develop culturally and acquire knowledge of the best that has been thought and written.' (p.12)

Figure 4. 5 Evidence of the discursive construction of inspiration in policy

All of these references from the discourse of policy suggested how inspiring the literary canon could be, and, by association, teaching the subject of literature could be. Thus, inspiration as a goal formed part of a construction of literature in which 'reading', the 'best', and 'pleasure' were linked. Specifically, inspiration was described in the repeated instruction for teachers to teach students to 'read widely for pleasure' (DfE, June 2013, p.3; AQA, September 2014, p.12) and to 'appreciate the depth and power of the English literary heritage' (DfE, June 2013, p.3). The DfE (May 2014) wanted to 'expose' students to 'works that will engage' them and that they will 'want to' read (p.1) while AQA (September 2014) wanted to 'inspire, challenge and motive every student' (p.5). Furthermore, this construction of literature in policy suggested that the teacher should be inspired. The role of the teacher was to equip students to 'discover' new literature for themselves (DfE, May 2014, p.2) and to develop 'creative and engaging lessons' (September 2014, p.5), all through inspiring both teacher and student to a love of reading through inspired teaching.

4.2.2 Inspiration in practice

Goodwyn (2010) argued that the dominant conceptualisation of the subject of literature for the teachers who teach it, is as an affective and personal relationship encapsulated in the discourse of 'love', a word to describe English teachers who are 'partly formed by literary experience' (p.19). It is this 'love' of literature, this personal and emotional connection to the subject that has inspired them to become a literature teacher in the first place, but also that inspires them in their teaching of literature (Cremin, 2009).

In analysing the teacher's responses to the interview, metaphor, and observation data, this inspiration was indeed described as a personal experience that was intimately linked to an emotional response to what was being read, and at times, a love. Within the discursive construction of literature in the classroom, this constructed literature as a subject that could be inspiring, but as a qualification that was not inspiring because there was not an emotional connection to it.

Participants described literature as something that was inspiring when it meant something personal to them, as a reader: 'If literature was a colour it would be silver because it reflects humanity back on itself and you cannot help but stare. It captivates you' (metaphor, Bea). Furthermore, to the teachers, inspiration could manifest physically as well as emotionally: if the subject were an animal, it would be a whale because *'it looks intimidating but it isn't really, it's exhilarating. It's big and powerful. You can feel it*' (metaphor, Cassandra). In its teaching, inspiration came '*once they're lying on the floor re-enacting the murder of Paris by Romeo, then they feel the value in it*' (interview, Celia). Lucy (interview) made reference to inspiration by suggesting engaging tasks inspired a love of reading:

Rather than asking what we understand, for example, we'd look at images of tsunamis and compare them with the images in the poem. We'd imagine we were the tsunami, maybe do a sensory description to capture the power. I would want the poem to inspire them.

For Lucy, inspiration was linked to powerful emotion. Elsewhere in the data, it was described as a 'heart' that 'keeps us feeling' (metaphor, Bea), as 'my soul' and 'my life' (metaphor, Silvia). It was described as an intensely personal and emotional state for the reader and for the teacher.

References to actually teaching the subject also highlighted these emotions. Literature was 'a jaguar because it is exciting, it keeps you on your toes and can sneak up on you unexpectedly and catch you unawares' (metaphor, Celia), it was 'a British day because all the types of weather can be seen – literature has the power to make us feel a variety of emotions from storms to sun' (metaphor, Lucy), it was a 'thunderstorm' which 'evokes a spectrum of emotions from fear to exhilaration' (metaphor, Celia), a 'rain' that 'can drown' you (metaphor, Cassandra).

While talking about the aspects of literature that inspired them, the most powerful type of inspiration was specifically described in terms relating to 'love': teachers were inspired because they 'loved' literature. The concept of 'love' was inextricably linked to reading as a specifically named emotion. Evidence in the data suggests a 'love' of teaching intersected with a 'love' of reading, as highlighted in Figure 4.6.

Participant	**Discursive reference to 'love' in participant interviews**
Celia	'I **love** getting into the novel'
Cassandra	'I've always **loved** Macbeth…you are going the route you **love** because you **love** reading and you **love** literature…I don't think I could be an English teacher if I didn't **love** reading'
Lucy	'…one of the things I **love** about literature…
Bea	'…you know my feelings about Shakespeare. I **love** him very much'

Figure 4. 6 Discursive reference to 'love' in participant interviews

This interpretation was confirmed in previous research. So much of the teaching of literature is dependent on readings, at the conceptual level, being 'affective, imaginal, and personal' (Miall and Kuikan, 1994, p.337), that when that inspiration, or 'love', is lost, then so is the voice of the text. Whether or not the policy documentation required teachers and students to have an affective relationship with what they taught, the perception that the teachers have of the teaching of literature suggested that they were inspired by reading and this is why they taught literature, requirement or not.

However, the data suggested a further emotional response associated with the teaching of literature, an emotional response that further inspired them to teach. Teachers wanted their students to feel an emotional response to literature, as described by Cassandra (interview). I had just asked whether an emotional response to a text is important.

> *Yes, because it makes you think. It makes you, it makes you question the way you see people, it makes you question the way that you view the world, its makes you question the way that you perceive people, or yourself, it makes you see beyond the superficial because you actually care.*

In Cassandra's response, emotion was described as something that could inspire both teacher and student in their roles as reader, a sentiment confirmed by Bea: *'If there is beauty in that for us, there will be beauty in something for them'*. Furthermore beyond a 'love' for the literary canon, there was a 'love' for teaching the subject and in inspiring their students to read, again as identified by Goodwyn (2012). This inspiration was described, in part, through the sharing of this love of reading with students, as defined by Celia:

> *… I kind of want to inspire and to enthuse and say that I loved this one and I read this whole series, those kind of ideas because then they would get into the mindset that miss is a reader and miss likes this… It impacts on your teaching because the more inspired and passionate you are about something that you have read and about something that you are using in your lesson that reflects, doesn't it, on your teaching...*

Celia discursively constructed literature as inspirational when she was reading. She was also inspired by portraying herself as being a reader in the classroom and the impact that this had upon her teaching. Literature was being discursively constructed through a specific type of inspiration, and that was the impact that this inspiration had upon its teaching – the implication being that if the teacher is not inspired, then the quality of the teaching will suffer. Indeed, this perception was echoed by Bea who explicitly said that *'if you love something then you teach it better'* (Bea). It is this belief that was at the heart of what was beginning to emerge as a potential conflict. If literature is discursively constructed through being inspired, then what happens when that inspiration does not manifest itself? This tension was highlighted by Lucy who described that while she may be inspired, she felt her students were not. I had just asked if literature needed to be inspiring:

> *For me, that is what I love about literature and it doesn't. But if it is just about the reading skills then it doesn't matter which text you do ultimately, I guess. I also feel like it should inspire reading and inspire you to want to go away and read lots of other texts and I don't think it does that either.*

I further clarified whether she was talking about herself or the students.

> *I don't think it inspires the students. In terms of, I think the ideas that they explore are interesting and they engage with the texts for sure. But do they then go away want to read more Shakespeare? Do they want to go and read more plays about socialism? I don't think they do.*

Lucy's response constructed literature as something that had the potential to be inspiring but was not. She attributed this to the text choice. In exploring why teachers may not be inspired by what they taught, it is suggested that teachers '*don't have time'* (interview, Lucy) to teach the range of texts that they would like. Furthermore, Celia commented that '*however much you read the poem and you make personal connotations and associations to do with it'* there are certain things that the examiner is going to want to see, of which '*we have no choice'* (interview, Celia), a prescription that evoked Crosman's (1982) 'right reading' (p.207). These two constructions of literature highlighted an inherent tension within it: literature must be more than an inspirational literary canon; it is a qualification by which teachers, schools, and departments, will be measured. As a consequence, the meaning made from texts must form an 'answer', whether inspirational or not, a constraint that could be considered a 'real misfortune' (Newbolt, 1921, p.303).

4.2.3 Choice in policy

It was at this point in the discursive construction of literature where the overlap between literature being constructed as inspirational and the more practical realities of it were drawn out in the analysis. Here, the tension between the discursive construction of literature in policy and practice was more prominent. The central mismatch between policy and practice arose as very significant within the findings from this research.

Initially, in policy, literature was discursively constructed to construct the teacher as a reader and so gatekeeper to 'the best' literature that they can choose to teach – a positive opportunity for them to craft their own literary canon using their own subjective expertise. It was suggested that policy was not seeking to control the definition of literature, and instead was inviting teachers to be inspired by the multitude of choices available to them. Evidence of these choices is presented in Figure 4.7.

Policy Document	Reference to choice
Content, DfE, June 2013	• 'the choice of literary texts' (p.12) • prescription of choice: 'no more than two texts...should be selected' (p.4)
Equality Analysis, DfE, November 2013	• 'the choice of literary texts' (p.12) • 'broad' choice (p.12)
Myth Buster, DfE, May 2014	• 'freedom' of choice (p.1) • teachers are 'free' to introduce students to writers of their choice (p.1) • exam boards have the 'freedom to design specifications' (p.1)
Specfication, AQA, September 2014	• 'choice and flexibility' of specification (p.5) • 'choice' of texts (p.5) • 'choice' of questions (p.5) • 'choice' of Shakespeare play (p.8) • 'choice of essay questions (p.8) • 'choice of 12' set texts (p.10) • 'choice' of poetry clusters (p.10)

Figure 4. 7 References to 'choice' in policy documents

The constructions of literature as inspirational and personal resonated with the discursive construction of literature as a subject full of choices. This is because at the heart of this inspiration was the teacher who could choose how best to inspire her students to become a reader. By constructing literature as full of choices to be made, policy constructed literature as 'flexible' (AQA, September, 2014, p.5) and thus not as prescriptive. The policy documentation described the construction of the literary canon in the classroom as a 'freedom' for teachers who were 'free to introduce' their students to whichever writers they choose (DfE, May 2014). Teachers could craft their canon according to 'historical period, location, social and cultural structures and so on' as well as literary contexts such as 'genres' (Ofqual, May 2014), with the purpose of ensuring a 'solid grounding in the rich literary heritage of the British Isles' but also literature written 'from all corners of the globe' (DfE, May 2014). Here, the literary canon was discursively constructed of choices, with the word 'freedom' suggesting that the control of it, and thus of 'the best', is in the hands of the teachers in their classrooms.

It could be further suggested that policy constructed literature as a choice in order to position the teacher as a reader of the literary canon and gatekeeper to 'the best' literature. The policy's constructions of choice could be constructed as a way of empowering the teacher and promising the reader that the classroom is a place for personal liberation, emancipation and empowerment (MacCarthey & Raphael, 1989; Linnakylä, 1992; Lundberg, 1991, 1997). In particular, the policy constructed the reader as a citizen free to choose what they read and how they read it; it was then up to the teacher to choose to allow this pedagogical freedom in their classroom. The teacher was potentially empowered to become a reading citizen alongside their students, if they so chose.

In policy, literature was discursively constructed through both choice and its potential opposite, prescription. However, in the classroom, participants did not construct literature as 'free' but rather as closed, with choices limited and a perception of policy as being prescriptive and thus controlling.

4.2.4 Choice in practice

In the classroom, the construction of the literary canon emphasised the vast amount of texts worth reading: an exciting prospect for both reader and teacher. Bea chose to describe literature as 'fruit *because* there are so many different varieties [of books] to choose from' (metaphor, Bea), metaphorically emphasising the inspiring choice that the reader faces. Celia also constructed literature through the choices that a teacher could make, responding to discussion about how this made reading a very personal thing:

> *And even when we have discussions in department meetings, haven't we, about how somebody loves Dickens, somebody loves Hardy, where somebody else thinks both of those are shocking, to have it so prescriptive that you have to teach the same texts limits the teacher because they have got their area of skills and their area of passion.*

One of the practical choices that a teacher could make is through their choice of text, a choice that has been explored from the perspective of exam boards (Elkin, 2010) and of students (Moss and Macdonald, 2004; Pihl, 2012; Cremin and Swann, 2016). In this study, the participant interviews highlighted the importance of text choice for teachers. Text choice was important if a teacher wanted students to '*think through the implications in their own lives of what they are seeing in the literature and also broaden their horizons*' (interview, Celia), and to encourage students to '*make that emotional connection between you and somebody that you have never met and you will never meet*' (interview, Bea). This was possible because of the choices that the teachers were potentially free to make. This version of the literary canon became one in which the aim of these choices was to engage both student and teacher in the literature. In invoking choice, teachers also invoked engagement – the two linked in the construction of the canon in the classroom.

Yet in questioning whether the students appreciate this, Lena suggested that they did not.

> *It really saddens me to think but they wouldn't. It really saddens me because sometimes I feel like the way that we teach it makes them really not enjoy it. I just think it's also the nature of school of being forced to do something that you are not choosing to do because someone else has chosen to teach it to you. It's quite passive. Whereas, if they had come with a text they wanted to learn that would be very different. So it's that kind of prescription, that sort of prescribed approach.*

Here, Lena's emotional response ('saddens') constructed literature as prescriptive but through necessity. It is not practical for students to pick their own individual texts, and some would not want to. Prescription becomes a necessity and the 'nature' of the qualification, even if the teacher has chosen a text that she hopes will inspire her students.

Ultimately, the references to the literary canon in the form of the texts that teachers choose to teach implied the presence of engagement as a goal, while references to the subject and qualification defined prescription as a goal. The teachers want to be able to choose their own texts and craft their own literary canon so that they could engage their students, but they perceived the practicalities of the subject as embodied in policy, and so as taking their choice away. Lucy described this tension as she imagined the faces behind the anonymity of policy, when I asked her to reflect on who decided what 'the best' was.

> *Not someone who has been to Eton and has a first class honours in literature, or maybe not even that. Who would be best? I'm loathe to say the teacher because we would just bring one of our favourite books in and make kids read them, so how is that different to what the government is doing? I think there is a place for recognising that some literature is better than others and I'm not sure that even that is right.*

Lucy's comments suggested that teachers felt disempowered in making their own choices. She raised the issue of class - '*Not someone who has been to Eton'* - to metonymically describe her own feelings of powerlessness; once more invoking Morby's (2014) findings that the reformed GCSE hinders those students from certain poor socio-economic backgrounds due to a lack of cultural capital. Yet, Lucy and the other participants did not challenge this perceived disempowerment even though they recognised and articulated it. As a result, literature was constructed through both choice and prescription. Indeed, Lena suggested that certain texts should be prescribed, *'because otherwise we would all just do things that we find interesting and it might not give us the broadest range. They might miss out on something.*' Indeed, Lena further suggested that *'doing what I am told'* takes the stress out of teaching the qualification because you know that what you are teaching

is '*right*'. Finally, Lucy concluded by suggesting that if the subject is just about the teaching of prescriptive skills '*then it doesn't matter which text you do ultimately, I guess*' (interview), an expression that suggested that teachers' powerlessness is perhaps a choice. This may evoke Moore's (2016) theory, as explored in the literature review (Chapter Two). Moore suggested that while some teachers may be broadly supportive of the reformed GCSE English literature policy and some teachers may feel confident in challenging such policy, some teachers are forced to be reluctantly compliant, resulting in them investing in certain ideas that they may not fully agree with and so assuming responsibility for their implementation in practice. This is, potentially, a form of powerlessness which is a choice.

In conclusion, in relation to the notion of choice, the data suggested that it is up to the teacher to accept that what is being taught is inspirational and thus worthy of being taught. In accepting to teach texts which have been described in policy as 'fantastic', teachers are reinforcing an acceptance of quality as defined by someone other than themselves and are thus endorsing it, in an embodiment of Moore's 'reluctant compliance' (2016, p.667). The data suggest that teachers are consciously choosing to comply because they feel it is a professional obligation. In the discourse of the teachers, such compliance is framed within the realities of its teaching in practice. The teachers suggest that in order to accept literature as a GCSE qualification – something a teacher must accept for that is its very purpose – the qualification must be more than simply inspiring and more than a reflection of texts that teachers have chosen. Ultimately, the purpose of literature is as a qualification that must be assessed and teacher acknowledge that they must comply with the policy that defines the terms of this assessment. It is from this understanding that teachers are choosing to comply. What the data suggest they are not choosing to consciously challenge though, is whether policy defines the terms of assessment in the way that teachers think it does. This potential tension is explored in later discussion around how policy and practice position each other. This discussion is further linked to Foucault's theory of 'docile bodies', as defined in the literature review (Chapter Two).

4.2.5 Knowledge in policy

In order to endorse the subject as one of value, policy constructs literature as a qualification that tests knowledge in order to justify its purpose. It could be further argued that references to literature in policy constructs this knowledge as framed by the expertise of the teacher, as gatekeeper to that knowledge.

References to literature in policy describe the purpose of the subject, and so the qualification, as gaining of knowledge: texts should be 'chosen' for a purpose, with the 'key aim of providing students

with knowledge to support both current and future study' (DfE, June 2013, p.4). Likewise, the goal of the qualification was to 'encourage students to develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking' and to give students the 'chance to develop culturally and acquire knowledge of the best that has been thought and written' (AQA, 2014, p.12). The student was required to 'develop' and 'acquire' knowledge in order to identify that what they were reading was 'the best that has been thought or 'written', a potentially ideological position. Such development and acquirement of 'knowledge' was presented as the aim of the qualification, and so what gave the subject its value – a value, policy suggests, that is to be chosen by the teacher.

In reflecting on the policy data, the potential freedom of any GCSE subject policy is inhibited by the practical requirements of a qualification that needs a tangible form to exist. It could be suggested that, in reality, it is necessary for policy to explicitly state the value that it has, otherwise it serves no purpose. This is because schools choose to buy into, and so comply with, the policy of their chosen exam board. If schools do not accept the value that policy states that it has, then they will not choose it for their school and so the policy has no purpose. The policy's discourse of knowledge could be interpreted as a way of giving purpose to literature and so tangible form for the qualification to exist in reality thus moving it beyond simply being inspiring.

4.2.6 Knowledge in practice

Policy requires teachers to internalise their knowledge about literature and redistribute it to their students in order to ensure that their students think and behave within the boundaries of a literature as it is constructed in policy. Literal success in GCSE English literature relies on this internalisation of knowledge or a student will fail their examination and the purpose of the qualification is undermined.

In practice, compliance with this understanding results in the teachers defining a literature that was constructed through knowledge. If policy presented the value of literature in the form of a literary canon reduced to a Leavisite position of 'knowledge' of a predefined 'best that has been thought and written' (AQA, 2014, p.12), then a teacher may feel their expertise is being undermined by prescription (Goodwyn & Findlay, 1999, p.21). Instead the policy gave the teacher the opportunity to use their own knowledge to bring value to literature. It did this through stating what the teacher 'may' do or 'could' teach, rather than what they 'should'. This moved away from asserting what the teacher must value and towards permission for the teacher to construct a literary canon that they hold as valuable. It saw that knowledge was discursively constructed through the teacher's expertise, if they choose. This is in opposition to policy being seen as a metaphorical 'cage' of

requirement (Goodwyn & Findlay, 1999, p.19), and highlighting the potential for knowledge to be more than what is 'right'. This is an ambiguous concept in itself (Stock, 2017).

Thus Stock (2017) explores this potential. In suggesting there are 'common interpretations, agreed understandings' when it comes to literary knowledge – in this case a comment made on communism in 'Animal Farm' – he argues that there is no 'unequivocally correct' comment because texts can have multiple meanings (p.147). Stock argues that this makes GCSE English literature difficult to assess, for how can a text be reduced to a single interpretation assessed in a single exam. He further argues that this paradox means that knowledge cannot be determined, or defined in an English examination. Yet, it could be argued that policy addresses this perceived conflict. It does this by avoiding a definition of the 'best' and redefining knowledge as something more than just a demonstration of, in the case of the GCSE English literature examination, a 'right' reading (Crosman, 1982).

In the data, this conflicted construction of literature was captured by Lucy who described literature as a metaphorical chameleon:

> *Don't judge a book by its cover, there are lots of layers of meaning you need to discover when you read, meanings can change, it means different things at different times, you don't always know what a book is going to be.*

The 'you' was left vague in this metaphor. It could imply the teacher as reader, or the student as reader, or the teacher as teacher, or the person reading the text as it was written then, or all of us, or some of us, or something else. Equally, the 'meaning' that needed to be discovered, perhaps defined as 'knowledge', was left open to interpretation, perhaps negatively. There is a freedom within the discursive context for a personal response that may be different between different readers, and between teacher and student. In the data literature was discursively constructed as chameleonic, as summarised in the conflicting discourses above.

The idea that the meaning of literature is intangible and complex is presented in the data and summarised in Figure 4.8.

Participant	Literature is…
Celia	• a food – curry as it is a melting pot of ideas, styles, contents (depending on the cook!) • a colour – purple because it is my favourite but it might not be someone else's favourite • a person – Lizzie Bennett as she has many layers and can be accessible on the surface but extremely complex underneath
Cassandra	• an animal – a whale can look intimidating but it isn't (but it can be) • a colour – all the colours, a rainbow, and no colours • scenery – a lake because it is deep and dark. It looks lovely and tranquil but underneath there is more to know, lurking underneath the surface
Lena	• a colour – a rainbow because there are so many contextual factors behind it that lead to one outcome – the reading – though not always tangible – you cannot touch it • an animal – a unicorn as it is made of imagination and only some people can see it, others cannot – they probably see a horse • a food – noodles all linked and tangled and intertwined
Bea	• an animal – a feral cat that can be wonderful or destroy • weather – a storm that is both terrifying and exciting and different every time you encounter it

Figure 4. 8 Participants' metaphorical descriptions of literature

These metaphors all discursively constructed literature as a conflict. They also constructed this conflict as exciting and personal, a conflict of itself. The data suggested that in practice, teachers did not construct literature as embodying a simple 'right' reading. Literary knowledge was formed from a teacher's personal response to it: the knowledge intangible, complex and subjective. While it has been suggested that such a personal response to teaching literature could produce 'passive citizens who are paralysed by their obsession with introspection and private feeling' (Goodwyn, 2016), the data suggested that policy encouraged this because this is where expertise was located. The teachers constructed literature with a self-referential awareness of its complexity: tangled noodles; feral cats; storms.

This awareness echoed the discursive construction of literary knowledge in policy. In both policy and practice, knowledge was constructed as anything but passive because it called on the teacher to

actively untangle it by using their expertise as readers. Yet in practice, in contrast to in policy, the participants did not recognise this opportunity for their expertise as readers. They discursively constructed their knowledge in position as teacher, as opposed to as reader. Lena positions her knowledge as teacher, when asked how she responded to the poetry task.

> *My instinct was definitely to respond as a teacher. I wanted to pull it apart and make sense of it and fit things together and solve it. Lots of questions arose as a result that I wanted to answer, and that I wanted answers as I would with planning a lesson. I never thought of myself as a reader, maybe because we are in a classroom.*

Similarly, Lucy positioned her knowledge in role as teacher.

> *I like to get to the bottom of poetry – to unpick its meanings like I would in a lesson. I like literature to have an answer. I like people to tell me what that answer is, I realised, almost like a student. I like to know what the message is. This is how I read, perhaps asking lots of questions, and looking for several answers which is how I try to teach literature. I was probably thinking as both. Maybe I always read as a teacher?*

Both of these responses discursively constructed literature as having an 'answer' and so make a direct link between readings as a teacher in order to arrive at a 'right' reading. Furthermore, both participants separated their knowledge as teacher and their knowledge as reader. Interestingly, Silvia also responded that she read as a teacher because '*we were sat at a table with highlighters*'. While this may suggest a flaw in the data collection method. It also highlighted a key issue: can teachers think of themselves as readers when they are reading in a classroom environment, in role as teacher? This may be the question at the heart of the discursive construction of literary knowledge.

If policy encouraged teachers to position themselves as expert readers, then this is their opportunity to take back control from a perception of prescription (Mansworth, 2015) and a perception of a qualification that is problematic in its cultural capital (Morby, 2014). Yet, the participants discursively construct themselves as readers who valued emotional, personal, and aesthetic reading-responses, but not as teachers who do.

4.3 Summary

It could be argued that the findings thus far paint the beginnings of a picture of panoptic surveillance, as suggested by the literature review. The analysis of the policy data portrayed a form of embodied docility, whether intentional or not. In constructing literature as *inspiring*, for example, an expectation was created that needed to be fulfilled. Similarly, in constructing literature through

the *knowledge* that will be taught, a set of standards was defined that needed to be met. At this stage, the policy documentation was unconsciously constructing itself as a type of criteria against which performance would be measured. It could be argued that this construction was 'unconscious' because the repeated constructions of literature around choice negated any criteria as a compulsory measure. If the teacher is a gatekeeper to literature in the classroom then fulfilling the criteria becomes a choice and a teacher can choose not to be measured or docile, even if they are positioned to be.

Yet in the discursive construction of literature in practice, teachers of GCSE English literature chose to embody this docility by allowing themselves to be surveilled. In this case, teachers perceived policy to be surveilling their teaching of GCSE English literature. They felt that they were being observed and so they chose to act accordingly, self-regulating their behaviour, and manifested in their discourse. These initial perceptions of control are explored in the analysis of the wider discourses in the following chapter.

5. Findings: Wider discourses and their implications

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data as analysed according to the second, third and fourth stages of Willig's procedural guidelines. It explores the two wider discourses that were seen as constructing literature. These were labelled as the *Expert Teacher Discourse* and the *Accountability Discourse* – the choice of labels and how they were identified, is explored below.

At the heart of this study was an understanding of the relationship between literature and the teachers that teach it – a socially constructed relationship. The first research question aimed to investigate how literature was discursively constructed in GCSE English literature policy and classroom practice. It has been suggested that the political policies that underpin the reforms are rational and progressive, yet the reformed qualification is viewed, by teachers, with negativity and fear (Smith, 2015). In understanding how literature was discursively constructed in both policy and in the classroom, and the wider discourses that surrounded it, it was hoped that the potential tension between these discourses could be reconciled. This would help teachers to re-engage with changes to the qualification and the subject could become enjoyable and relevant.

The temporary discursive constructs of stage one allowed me to identify different discourses that were dependent on the contexts. These were the discourses that best summarised the important themes in my data. Consequently, stage two of the analysis identified two main wider discourses of importance to the teaching of literature: an *Expert Teacher Discourse* compared with an *Accountability Discourse*, as presented in Figure 5.1. It was these wider discourses that best captured the essence of the data and the discursive constructions of literature in policy and practice.

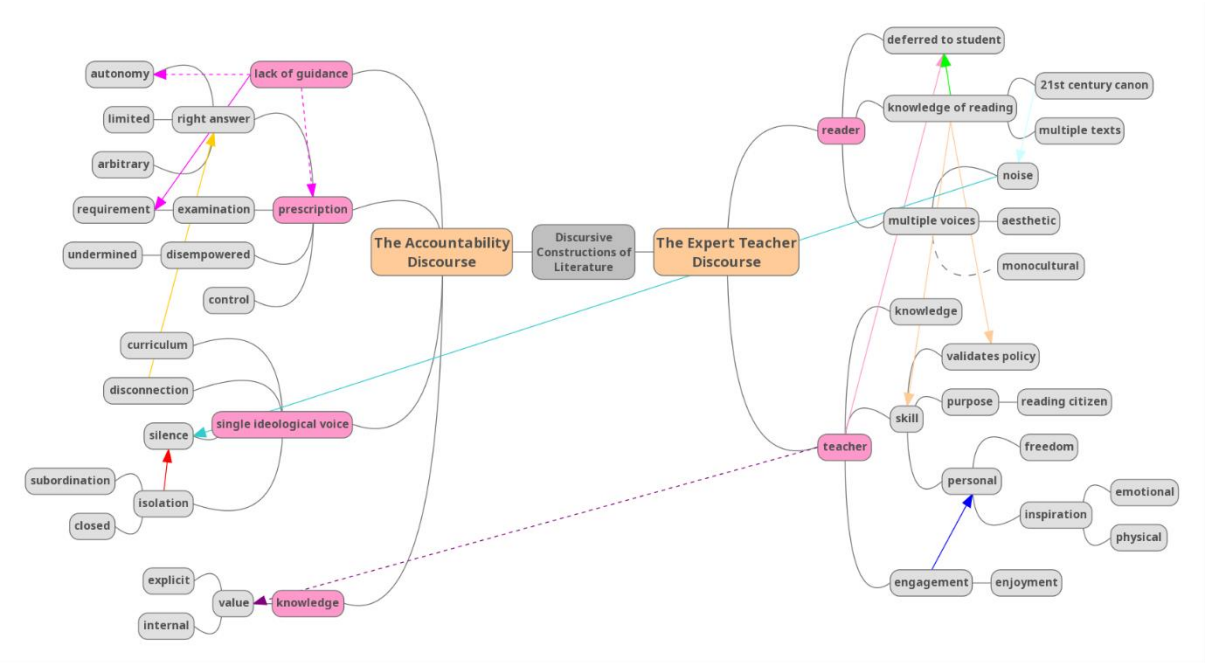


Figure 5. 1 Identifying the wider discourses of the discursive constructions of literature

Figure 5.1 identifies how the discursive constructs from stage one became the discourses of stage two. The first discourse I identified was the *Expert Teacher Discourse,* in which policy and practice talked about the teacher as an expert teacher and an expert reader and the potential of these roles in the classroom. In the *Accountability Discourse,* teachers talked about the contextual constraints which impacted on their roles as both teacher and reader and which could undermine the teaching of literature. Teachers emphasised their exclusion as readers, where the subject was prescribed.

Across all forms of data collection, it was apparent that this negativity was rooted in a conflict between how policymakers perceived, and thus represented, the purpose of studying literature in policy, and how this was perceived by teachers in the classroom. In policy, the study of literature was presented as an opportunity for an exploration of 'the best that is known and thought in the world' (Arnold, 1865). Yet, this opportunity was not recognised in practice where such objective and external value judgements of 'the best' were not welcome. In practice, teachers scrutinised this authoritative voice promoting 'the best' as something that they felt was not talking to or listening to them. Instead, teachers stressed the importance of their own voices as being where true expertise was centred; their perception being that the expert voice was in the classroom, not outside of it.

In the second stage of Willig's (2013) analytic approach, close attention was paid to some of the differences in how literature was talked about or constructed in wider discourse. I looked to see how the discursive constructions of literature connect together, agree, contradict or were paradoxical

(Thomas, 2014). This allowed me to identify how literature was impacted upon by its context. This stage of analysis further contributed towards answering the first research question, building on it to explore the relationship between the discursive constructions of literature in policy and practice.

In the third stage it is important to pay close attention to the discursive contexts of the discourses to consider the function that each achieves or the action orientation (Potter and Wetherall, 1987). This stage further answered the first research question which asked how literature was constructed discursively in policy and practice by asking what these discursive constructions sought to achieve. This involved a closer examination of the discursive contexts within which the different constructions of literature were being deployed. It asked what was being gained from constructing literature in this particular way at this particular point within the text, what was its function, and how did it relate to other constructions produced in the surrounding text. These questions were concerned with the action orientation of talk and text: the context within which a text was produced which provided information about the organisation and the function of the text. The variability in texts draws attention to the requirements of the discursive context within which speakers are located and the ways in which they orient towards such requirements. This suggests that the object – in this case literature – is not being talked about, but rather constituted through discourse, or 'talked into being' (Potter & Wetherall, 1987).

In the *Expert Teacher Discourse*, for example, policy constructed the literary canon and the texts that form it as a choice of the teacher. In contrast, in the *Accountability Discourse* in practice, it was perceived to be the head of department, or the budget, or the government that was responsible for making decisions about the literature that was to be taught in the classroom. The function of these discourses was to either allocate or abdicate individual responsibility in choosing the texts that form the GCSE English literature syllabus. For example, if there was talk about how poor results were, an individual teacher could hardly be blamed for not having inspired her students given the prescriptive nature of what was chosen for her to teach compared with if she had had freedom to personalise her curriculum for her students.

The fourth stage explores how the discourse positions the speakers. Positioning refers to subject positions within discourses. Subject positions are 'a location for persons within the structure of rights and duties for those who use that repertoire' (Davies and Harré 1999: 35). This means that discourses construct subjects as well as objects and, as a result, make available positions within networks of meaning that speakers can take up. These positions can both enable and constrain. This stage of the analysis moved to answer the second research question which asked how literature in policy and literature in the classroom position each other.

For example in the *Expert Teacher Discourse*, policy was seen to be actively encouraging teachers to make their own decisions about the literature that they teach. This position was tied to wider constructions about individual rights to be inspired, to choose, to personal response and was essentially seen as an active subject position. One subject position here was that of the 'expert' teacher who, for example, was promoted by policy as someone who was able to take individual responsibility for their teaching through accepting their role in forming a literary canon in their classroom, was proactive in making changes to meet the needs of their individual student-readers and has read widely themselves. By implication, an alternative subject position available would be an 'indifferent' teacher, someone who has decided to not make any choices, to not challenge a predefined literary canon and who relied on prescribed texts which they may not have read. In contrast, from the *Accountability Discourse*, participants talked about various barriers towards teaching literature in the classroom. This was essentially seen as a passive position when it came to decision-making as teachers were seen to be reliant on their perception of 'what the exam wants'. For example, as illustrated in the data, a 'right answer' was talked about as a barrier towards expertise.

This chapter will now explore the wider discourses in more detail, in answer to the research questions.

5.2 Stages Two and Three: Discourses and their contexts

In viewing the data through an FDA lens, and as highlighted in the previous chapter, it has been suggested that the initial impressions of the data illustrate evidence of panopticism. Teachers have an awareness that they are being watched and their constructions of literature reflect that. Policy is unaware that it is watching, or being perceived as watching, and its constructions reflect that.

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that there are multiple levels of surveillance running through both data collection and analysis, and that the findings are thus embroiled in wider currents of power. The method of participant observation is itself a form of surveillance. Teachers made comments which suggested that I was there to judge their teaching: 'Was that okay?' asked Bea at the end of the lesson. Even the interviews ran the risk of being perceived as judgemental, something that was very hard to avoid despite my assertions to the contrary. Thus, it could be suggested that the discourses that are 'observed' in this chapter were formed, and so controlled, by surveillance. All of this is strongly reminiscent of Foucault's interpretation of the Panopticon: 'This is perhaps the most diabolical aspect of the idea…this is a machine in which everyone is caught, those who exercise the power as well as those who are subjected to it' (1996, pp. 233-234). As these data suggest,

surveillance was a common feature of the teaching of GCSE English literature, involving regular reference to the perceived attempts of policy to exercise power by watching and judging.

At this stage in the analysis, the relationship between the discursive constructions of literature in policy and in the classroom resembled the panoptic model. However, in Chapters 6 and 7, it will be explained why this analogy is too simplistic and that techniques of surveillance are far more messy and complicated than the idealised model of the Panopticon might suggest.

5.2.1 The Expert Teacher Discourse

The *Expert Teacher Discourse* placed the individual responsibility for literature with the teacher. It was the teacher who controlled literature in the classroom and also promoted their position as a reader. Literature itself was positioned in the teacher's teaching expertise. Teachers were positioned as the expert. They were actively encouraged to make their own decisions about what they teach, about selecting texts, about encouraging multiple responses and in promoting the role of the reader in their practice. The expert teacher was encouraged to be inspired, to choose, and to have a personal response to literature. This discourse will now be explored and justified with the data.

This study has argued that the discursive construction of literature positioned the teacher as an expert. This is for two reasons. Firstly, the GCSE English literature exam is a test of knowledge and skill. Stock (2017) suggests that due to the multitude of different readings that can be extracted from a text, it is reductive to claim that literature is assessed solely on knowledge of the text. The skill of the reader is needed to move that knowledge beyond the simple recall of the familiar and into something more critical. As a consequence, there is an argument to suggest that policy positioned the teachers' knowledge though their role as reader, rather than just through their knowledge as a teacher. This was because GCSE English literature is assessed through the demonstration of critical reading, not through a demonstration of knowledge. This is a subtle distinction and is explained in more detail in Figure 6.1 as part of the discussion about the implications of this research for future practice. However, with regard to the wider discourse, it was through a reader's knowledge and expertise of reading that GCSE English literature was assessed, not through a reader's knowledge of the text. Secondly, it has been argued that the discursive construction of literature in policy positions the teacher as an expert because it is their expertise that validates the policy itself. Without such validation, the policy would serve no purpose and cease to exist. After all, the policy is just words on paper until it is brought to life in the classroom.

Furthermore, within practice and policy, literature was constructed of multiple voices, expert or not. In both policy and practice, it was up to the teacher to decide whether these voices were heard and allow herself to be positioned by them. In the data collected through observation, it was interesting

to identify how the participants positioned themselves in relation to their assumed expertise. Throughout the observations, the participants deferred expertise to the students, repeatedly positioning themselves as teacher rather than reader. One example of this is detailed in Figure 5.2, the observation notes that came from Silvia's observation.

Teacher	Comments positioning self as teacher	Comments positioning self as reader
Silvia	• but what does this poem mean to you? what is it about to you? • do you care? does the poem make you care? I think you need to care, you need to have a personal response • you need to talk about structure for the exam, what do you think? • where were you when this happened? were you even alive for 9/11? • what is the most significant line for you? what is it impact on you? why? • when you are reading it, he is talking to you as the reader • why do you like it? • how is the language coming through? what is happening to man? is he scared? would you be scared?	• my favourite poem is… • I think the poem fails if you don't care, I care and I have never been to New York • We were alive for 9/11, we remember where we were, we know what Armitage wants us to feel • stop, you are being really rude, this is a poem about people dying, be respectful

Figure 5. 2 Notes taken during Silvia's lesson about her position as reader/teacher

Throughout this lesson, Silvia repeatedly read the poem as a teacher, deferring interpretation to the students and calling only on her own position as a reader at the beginning of the lesson to introduce the poem ('my favourite poem…') and to challenge poor behaviour ('stop, you are being really rude, this is a poem about people dying, be respectful'). At no point in the rest of the lesson did Silvia really share her reading of what was an incredibly important poem to her. This may have been a missed opportunity. In policy, literature is constructed of multiple voices and the opportunity for a diversity of personal response. This poem ('Out of the blue' by Simon Armitage) is not on the GCSE English literature syllabus, thus is not prescribed as a text. It was chosen by Silvia because it is her 'favourite poem'. This was a perfect opportunity for her to share the knowledge and expertise of a

poem that belongs in her own personal canon and bring her own voice to the noise of its teaching. This pattern was repeated across the lessons observed, as evidenced in Figure 5.3.

Teacher	Comments positioning self as teacher	Comments positioning self as reader
Cassandra	• Ollie, how does Shakespeare introduce the Friar? What makes you trust him? • How does he introduce Lord Capulet? What do we need to know? What does he ask for? • Eve – what happens in Act One? Do you feel sorry for Juliet? What is she like? • Do you think Shakespeare thinks women are weak? Do they need men? Is it because Juliet is a virgin?	• I have little sympathy for Romeo
Lucy	• Listen to the music to get you in the mood – imagine you have just seen the one, your love at first sight, your love, what compliment would you pay them? • How does Romeo show his love? • How does Romeo's love match your love? • Are any of you more poetic that Romeo? What does that even mean?	• I don't like the word upset to describe Juliet, it is wrong, I will put a question mark next to that until I think of something better • Romeo's language is beautiful, don't you think?

Figure 5. 3 Notes taken during Lucy and Cassandra's lesson observations

Both of these participants chose to teach a prescribed text ('Romeo and Juliet') and both of these teachers positioned themselves as teachers, rather than readers. Both positioned themselves as teaching a 'right' reading for the examination and chose not to use their own reading responses to enrich their teaching. Commeyras (2003) argued that teachers who share their reading relationships with characters, with their students, and who ask questions of what they are reading, model these behaviours in their students. While this research was not seeking to judge the quality of the lessons

observed, it was interesting to compare Silvia (Figure 5.2), Cassandra and Lucy's (Figure 5.3) lessons with Bea and Celia's (Figure 5.4) lessons. It is also important to note that there was nothing wrong in these lessons, the student's voice as reader is just as important as the teacher. What was interesting was the silence of the teacher's reading voice.

Teacher	Comments positioning self as teacher	Comments positioning self as reader
Bea	• yesterday we talked about how men do not talk about women in the same way that women talk about men, how do men damage women by the way they talk about them? • do you think this is the woman's fault? • why is Mercutio inappropriate? Who has an opinion?	• I agree that Shakespeare is sexist, yes even misogynistic, but it is more complicated than that, you have to remember this was written a long time ago, it still makes me angry though • you need to think about your own opinions but also how someone else might interpret this, some people might argue that the introduction is violent, some might argue it is funny, what did Shakespeare want me to think? • Shakespeare was a pioneer • this was a patriarchal society, don't dismiss that, use it as you read, even if it challenges what you think • don't dismiss other people's perspectives
Celia	• Has anyone heard of Fugu? It is important to understand about Fugu to understand the story • Who is telling the story?	• I love this story, it reminds me of my time in the Far East, we are going back next week, I love that I can share it with you • this is a story about Japan, the culture of Japan, it doesn't matter if you know nothing about Japan, it is about being a reader • As a reader, if I didn't know what Fugu was I would try to figure out that it was some kind of food • This is my kimono, it evokes such powerful memories for me that are recalled in this story, but again, if you didn't know what one was you could figure it out

Figure 5. 4 Notes taken during Bea and Celia's lesson observations

In contrast to Silvia, Lucy and Lena, Bea and Celia both positioned themselves as readers rather than teachers of reading. This is important because literature should be constructed from 'differing opinions' (DfES, 1989, para. 1.17) beyond the single ideological voice of a qualification (Mansworth, 2016) that has 'no visible author' (p.125). Here, in these lessons, Bea and Celia positioned themselves as voices, manifest in their knowledge and expertise. At the very beginning of the lesson, Celia identified her position as a reader both emotionally ('I love this story') and physically ('it reminds me of my time in the Far East, we are going back next week') positioning her expertise as reader of the poem from the start. What was interesting in Celia's lesson was the physicality of it – the kimono, the chopsticks – and how Celia cleverly moved away from a potential position of privilege to be a reader with her students ('if I didn't know… I would'), modelling reading as a reader, but using her expertise. Similarly, Bea demonstrated her expertise as a reader through her passion. In her lesson she did not simply accept casual remarks about Shakespeare's sexism, she challenged them with her own readings and argued with those unwilling ('this was a patriarchal society, don't dismiss that'), or unable ('define immature, think what you mean'), to do the same. Again, in consciously positioning herself as reader, there were more voices and the beginnings of critical reading modelled by the reading-teacher. This was more than the simple recall of knowledge.

In adopting these positions, teachers can challenge the perception of the qualification as constructed of a single, invisible voice. Here is the position that policy invites: the teacher as the visible author of literature in the classroom and not just the passive recipient of a single ideological voice that shouts about the importance of knowledge. In accepting this positioning, literature becomes a negotiation of what any teacher, at any time, wants it to be, thus allowing a diversity of differing opinions to be heard through the empowered reader-response.

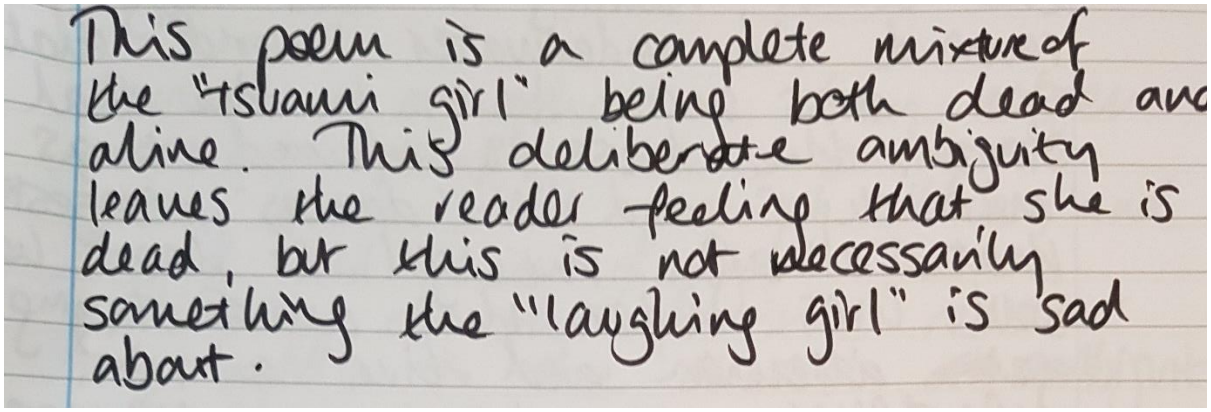
In asking why the policy may position the teacher in this way, it is important to note that this subject position conceives of a literature that is not an 'image of a bounded, rational, and unitary self' (Alvermann, 2001, p.678). Instead, the teacher is positioned within a more contemporary conception of self that is complex and multifaceted (Bean, 2001). This position could be offered as an analogy of the contemporary literary landscape itself, a literature that is fluid, incoherent and lacking a centre (Mansfield, 2000), or even the canon of the 21st century which grapples with a world in which almost everything is dissolvable and dispensable (Oliveria and Selvaratnam, 2012). Therefore, it could be argued that the teachers, who position themselves as expert readers, embrace this. Celia confirmed this in her interview:

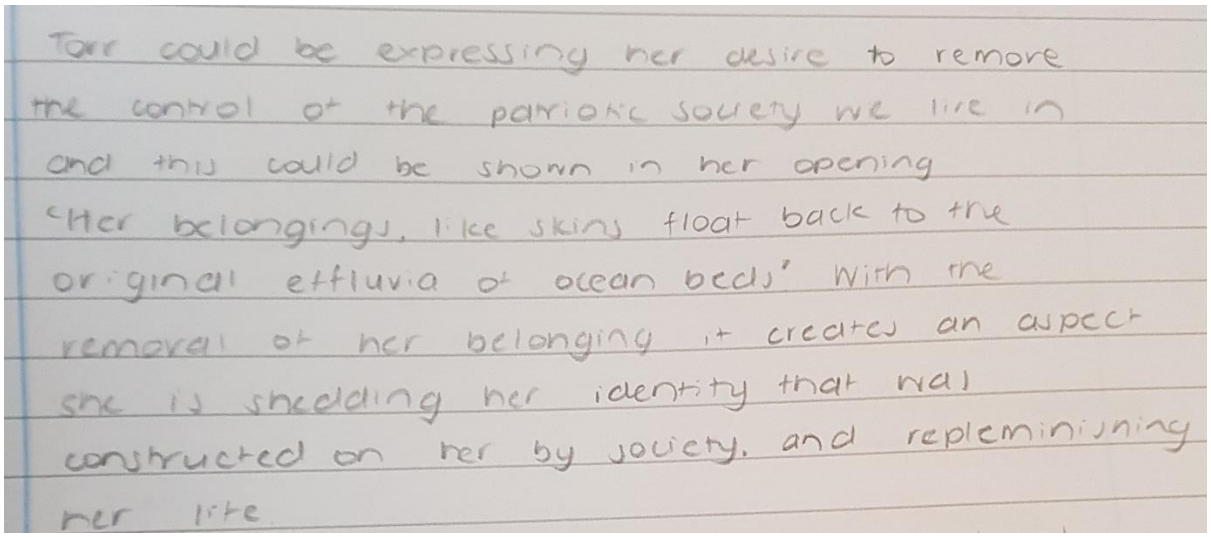
> *I kind of want to inspire and to enthuse and say that I loved this one and I read this whole series, those kind of ideas because then they would get into the mindset that miss is a reader and miss likes this. I think they would listen to me more as I know what I am doing.*

Here, Celia makes an implicit connection between her expertise as a reader and as a teacher, and the importance of that as a teacher. While a landscape of change (as embodied by the GCSE reforms) has the potential to engender feelings of disconnection and alienation, it could be suggested that it is not the policy itself that provokes this but the context within which the policy itself is enacted, as demonstrated by the positioning of the teacher.

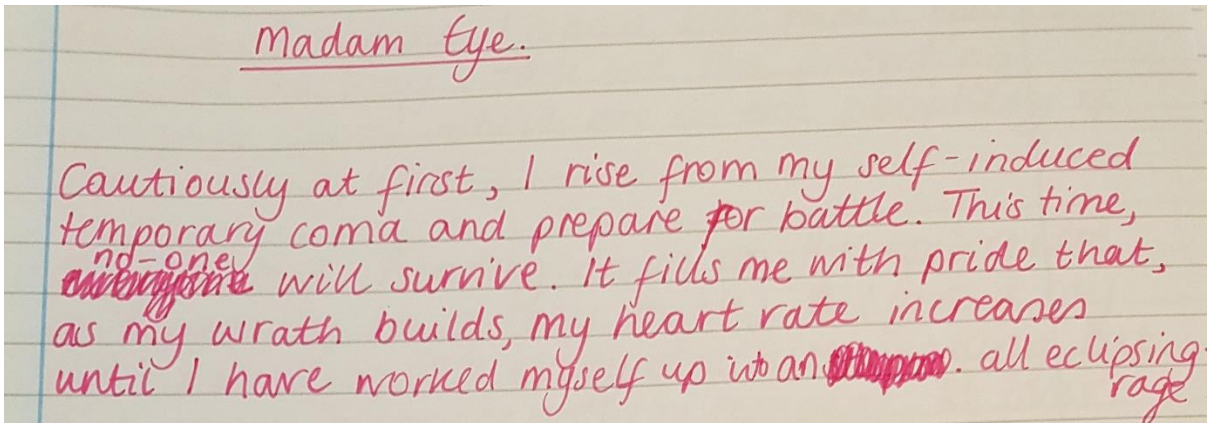
Therefore, the *Expert Teacher Discourse* is constructed as a literal and metaphorical place of sound. The teacher's expertise manifested in the noise of alternate readings and interpretations. It is here, in this multi-voiced space, that what appears to be 'chaotic, unpredictable and unstructured' (Macdonald, 1999, p.2) can, with the expertise of the teacher, become a place of noise. Within the data, this metaphorical noise is perhaps best embodied in the participants' creative response to poetry. The six participants responded to the poem ('Tsunami Girl' by Harriet Torr') in six different ways, exemplifying how a reading response is formed through the transaction of text and reader, and thus is different for everyone (for complete responses see Appendix 8). Again, there was no such thing as a 'right' reading amongst these responses, and it would be foolish to suggest that there should be (Stock, 2017). There are multiple 'right' readings and together, their voices are noisy.

For example, both Silvia and Cassandra analysed the text, much like the students in the exam would have to:



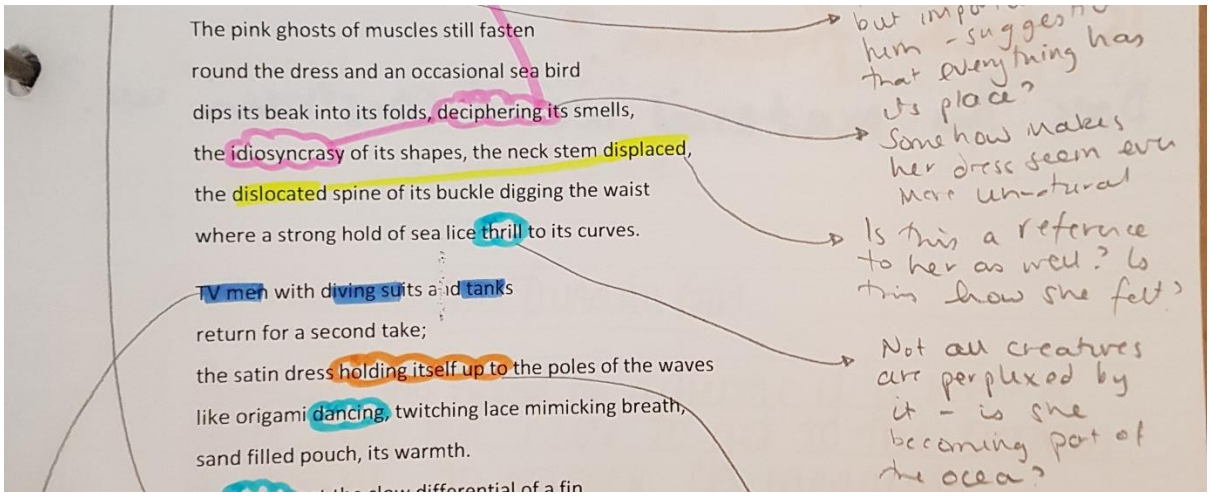

Tarr could be expressing her desire to remove the control of the patriotic society we live in and this could be shown in her opening 'Her belongings, like skins float back to the original effluvia of ocean beds' With the removal of her belonging it creates an aspect she is shedding her identity that was constructed on her by society, and replenishing her life

Celia responded through creative writing, personifying the tsunami as 'Madam Eye':


Madam Eye.

Cautiously at first, I rise from my self-induced temporary coma and prepare for battle. This time, no-one will survive. It fills me with pride that, as my wrath builds, my heart rate increases until I have worked myself up into an all eclipsing rage

Lena embraced analysis in the form of annotations, a skill taught to the students in literary analysis:


The pink ghosts of muscles still fasten
round the dress and an occasional sea bird
dips its beak into its folds, deciphering its smells,
the idiosyncrasy of its shapes, the neck stem displaced,
the dislocated spine of its buckle digging the waist
where a strong hold of sea lice thrill to its curves.

TV men with diving suits and tanks
return for a second take;
the satin dress holding itself up to the poles of the waves
like origami dancing, twitching lace mimicking breath,
sand filled pouch, its warmth.

but implies human - suggests that everything has its place?
Somehow makes her dress seem even more unnatural
Is this a reference to her as well? Is this how she felt?
Not all creatures are perplexed by it - is she becoming part of the ocean?

Finally, Bea responded with a poem:

I have no name.
All I once was, all I owned
Now gone
Returned to the earth,
Decaying in the depths.
And yet I am captured here, forever,
Immortalised in print and yet
I have no name.
In some way, I will continue,
I will remain.

In the reflection to these creative responses, participants were asked to consider whether they read as a teacher or as a reader (Figure 5.5).

Teacher	**How did you respond to the poem: reader, teacher, both, neither, something else?**
Celia	Creatively – as a reader firstly – a nice way to get us to do what the students do. I guess I also responded as a teacher by thinking it would be good to do this more, in front of the class.
Silvia	As a teacher – I like to think through and enjoy pulling apart written texts. I would have preferred some notes to help make me think, reflect and understand the poem.
Cassandra	I chose to respond like a teacher as I want to practice analysis and writing, specifically embedding quotations. I think slowly and write quickly and my thoughts often evolve as I'm writing.
Lena	My instinct was definitely to respond as a teacher. I wanted to pull it apart and make sense of it and fit things together and solve it. Lots of questions arose as a result that I wanted to answer, and that I wanted answers as I would with planning a lesson. I never thought of myself as a reader, maybe because we are in a classroom.
Lucy	I like to get to the bottom of poetry – to unpick its meanings like I would in a lesson. I like literature to have an answer. I like people to tell me what that answer is, I realised, almost like a student. I like to know what the message is. This is how I read, perhaps asking lots of questions, and looking for several answers which is how I try to teach literature. I was probably thinking as both. Maybe I always read as a teacher?
Bea	Creatively – a reader – taking lines, phrases, and thinking about what the poem made me think about – actually, probably as a writer. It is less about meaning and more about my own ideas and meanings.

Figure 5. 5 Participants' reflections on the creative task

Of the six participants, four positioned themselves as a teacher even though they were not asked to. Only two positioned themselves as a reader. Furthermore, what this may suggest is that the participants accepted their positioning as teacher also viewed it as a binary opposition: as either teacher or reader. This is because even though they were given the opportunity (*Did you response to the text as a teacher, reader, both, neither, something else?*), none of the teachers identified themselves as both, or neither. They also had the opportunity to identify as something else; I thought, perhaps, they might identify as a student. The data showed that the participants were either teacher or reader, but never both at the same time. Silvia was emphatically a '*teacher'* requesting '*notes to help make me think'*, a position that was perhaps actually that of a student, much like Lucy who likes literature '*to have an answer'*. Cassandra deliberately *'chose to respond like a teacher as I want to practice analysis and writing'*, a conscious decision that made no explicit reference to reading. Lena linked her response as a teacher to '*instinct'* suggesting an unconscious positioning. Interestingly, she then stated that she *'never thought of myself as a reader, maybe because we are in a classroom',* a potential flaw in the data collection method, but again raising the point (as with Silvia and her highlighters) that the reader's position may not be in the classroom. In contrast, Celia was a '*reader firstly'* before she thought as a teacher – two separate considerations. Equally, Bea positioned herself as a reader, highlighting the 'creative' element of her response.

It has been argued that knowledge and expertise in teaching literature is dependent on the teacher accepting their position as reader. With the reader's knowledge and expertise subordinated in role as teacher, reading is subordinated and the noise of multiple readings is replaced by the silence of a single 'right' reading for examination. Both Lucy and Silvia wanted an 'answer' in their creative response. In both of their lessons they positioned themselves as teacher. It is interesting that much like the observations, the same participants – Bea and Celia – positioned themselves as readers.

Perhaps a conclusion can be drawn that the teacher's positioning in the classroom is something much more inherent that simply the choice to be a reader. All of these teachers are experienced in teaching literature and in interrogating the construction of literature in policy. There is the potential for the teacher to choose to fight against a definition of literature that they may not entirely agree with. Reasons a teacher may choose not to allow themselves to be positioned by policy may be in response to this drastically altered conception of literature in the 21st century (Serafini & Blasingame, 2012) that they may feel the reformed qualification does not recognise (as explored in the literature review). If they accept that the reformed qualification is 'backward-looking' and 'tedious' (BBC, 2014), then they will not be empowered by it, and they will silence the potential for noise. Literature in the 21st century has the opportunity to explore changing forms and nonlinear structures. It can change perspectives and boundaries, and welcome unheard voices and multiple

narrators (Dresang, 1999). But a teacher must choose to acknowledge this, something that the policy data assumes that they will.

It could be suggested that the thing that Bea and Celia have in common, other than their positioning as reader in the data, is that they both challenged the authority of the text they were teaching in their lesson observation. Furthermore, they both challenged a silent reading of the text. In challenging Shakespeare's authority, and highlighting his writing as misogynistic (in her opinion, as a reader), Bea moved her class beyond just 'knowing' about 'Romeo and Juliet' to recognising the value of insight into the human condition – a much more valuable category of knowledge (Christodoulou, 2017). Equally, Celia challenged the authority of the text as something that was given importance by an anonymous policymaker. Instead, it became important to her and that was its value. In both of these cases, it was the reader that controlled the value and modelled that value to their students.

Ultimately, it has been argued that the relationship between literature in policy and practice only works if the teacher is complicit and accepts their positioning as 'expert'. In particular, this expertise is identified in role as reader. Otherwise, all that can be heard is the single ideological voice of the qualification. Even though policy defines and constructs literature, it is not the enacted subject in a classroom (Goodwyn, 2011, p.63). In the classroom teachers position themselves as readers of literature and as experts about the teaching of literature regardless of policy, thus negotiating how policy seeks to position them and controlling their own practice.

5.2.2 The Accountability Discourse

In contrast to the *Expert Teacher Discourse*, the *Accountability Discourse* places individual responsibility for engagement in literature externally to the classroom. The data suggests that the teachers in this study locate expertise in other people – in the head of department, in the government, in whomever gets to decide the texts that are taught. It further suggests that this results in teachers who become reliant on perceptions of the 'what the exam wants', a finding that will now be explored.

In asking why the participants did not read in the classroom, the answers given positioned the teacher as someone who specifically selects texts to meet the needs of her students to fulfil the needs of the qualification. This reflects Goodwyn's (2011) assertion that when positioned as teachers (as opposed to readers), teachers are driven by intrinsic concerns for their students rather than themselves. Teachers find themselves driven by explicit measures of performance and the achievement of pre-specified learning outcomes (Bell and Bolam, 2010, p.95).

This subject position is ultimately defined by their role as teacher of literature which subordinates their role as reader to the perceived practicalities of the specification. Thus the wider discourse constructs the subject positions of teacher and reader as separate. This empowers the student as reader but disempowers the teacher as reader. This position was summarised by Bea who stated that *'I could write a glorious essay about my personal response to Journey's End and potentially nobody else would have read it and felt the same way as me, so what's the point?'* Bea was speaking in relation to 'Journey's End' as a text on the GCSE English literature syllabus. She described it as '*beautiful'* and reflected on the '*dying of the light'* as Raleigh is entombed. However, her prior statement suggested that this text was almost too important to her and that this was a barrier to its teaching – *'what's the point?*' In contrast, Lucy said that she had '*never really thought about it*' and that she '*just got on with it*' when it came to teaching literature.

These two positions almost reflect the two ends of a spectrum of disempowerment, from passion to reluctant compliance, an evocation of Foucault's concept of modern disciplinary control, apparent in Lucy's *'just [getting] on with it'*. Such control, it could be argued, manifests in the data of practice. It is as if teachers believe their teaching of GCSE English literature to be controlled in the classroom, in order to achieve a specific outcome – a grade at GCSE. The perception of the GCSE English literature syllabus micro-managing how a teacher must teach literature in their classroom results in the teacher positioning themselves as a 'docile body' (Foucault, 1977, p.138). This conceptual approach to discipline produces teachers that not only do what is wanted but in the way that it is wanted. In internalising the requirements of policy and enacting them in the classroom whether they are agreed with or not, the teacher becomes the metaphorical docile body, choosing to enact the reformed policy of GCSE English literature. Specifically, such reluctant compliance positions teachers who perceive the literary canon as defined in policy as unfair or misguided but who feel they have no option but to accept it (Moore, 2016), because in an era of accountability, *'what's the point'*? (Bea).

The *Accountability Discourse* positions literature externally to the reader. What is interesting in Bea's case is that she chose to do this herself. She could have taught one of her favourite texts but saw her passion for it as a barrier. The text was more important to her as a reader than as a teacher. As a consequence, Bea's teaching becomes passive as she consciously chooses to accept a text that she has not chosen for herself. This acceptance becomes a form of reluctant compliance. She becomes Foucault's 'docile' body.

A further barrier is rooted in knowledge that only comes from being a reader. Celia stated that reading '*must be'* taught to fulfil what '*the examiner is ultimately going to want to see'* (interview). Lucy agreed that *'if it's just about the reading skills in the exam then it doesn't matter which text you*

do ultimately, I guess' (interview, Lucy). Both participants described reading in terms of the external expectations of accountability with the result being that text choice was arbitrary.

Like Bea, Lena in her interview linked this barrier to an emotional response, describing it as '*sad'*. Lena highlighted that there was more to literature than the exam, yet teachers '*cannot seem to escape the exam'*. Here the exam is described like a physical barrier, a cage that sought to contain teachers.

In talk around being a reader, there were more barriers than the external pressures of the exam. Lena described a different kind of accountability that was a barrier to her reading outside of the classroom. She described herself as having '*lost my passion for reading'* due to the pressures of having time off to have a baby. Again, reading is linked to an emotional response – '*passion'* – and again an external factor – being a mother – is impacting upon the classroom.

Yet, for those participants that discussed their loss of their passion for reading, they continued to acknowledge the importance of their students' reading experiences. In the *Accountability Discourse,* the teacher was identified as the one who must inspire and enthuse their students to read which makes sense, for they are the teacher. However, the reading experiences of the students were explicitly privileged above those of the teacher, as described by Celia.

> *If you talk to students that are not naturally readers you don't want to spend too much time talking about what you found tough or what you haven't finished because they won't hear the I tried hard with this part, they will hear that well, even English teachers don't finish what they're reading so why should they.*

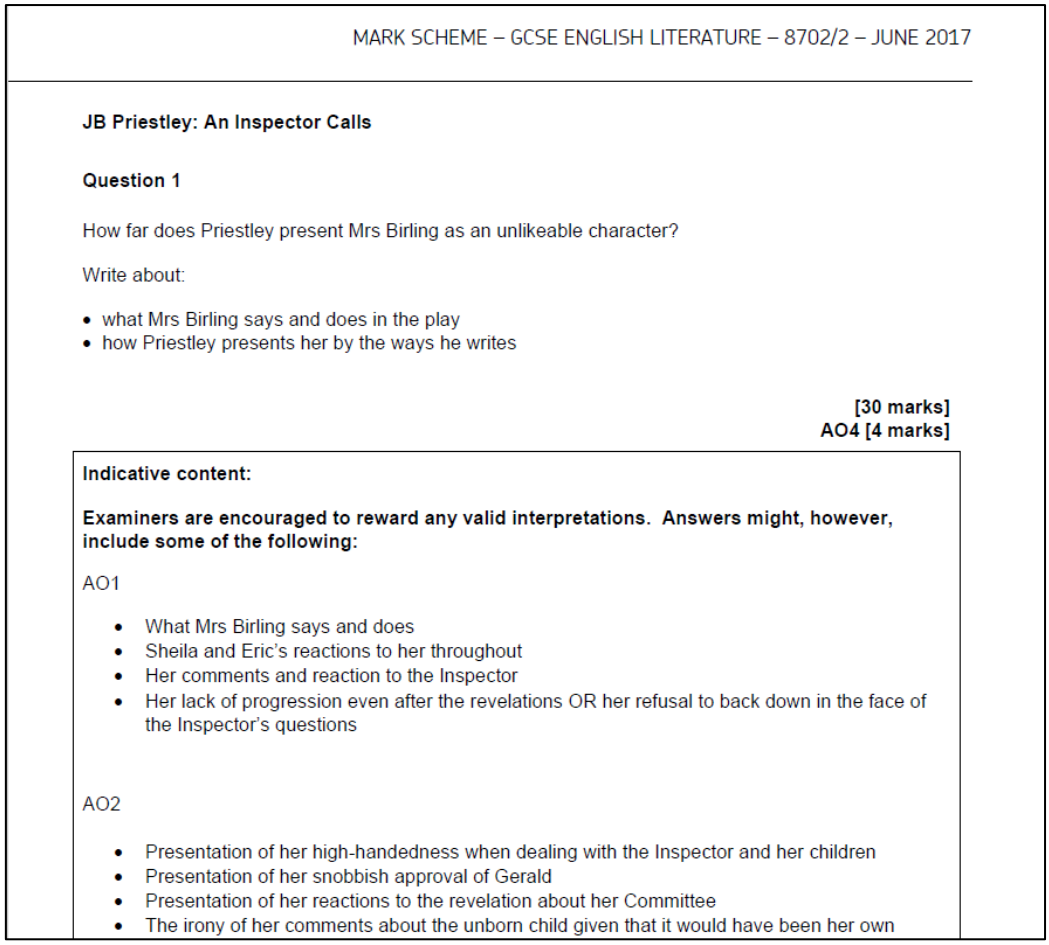
This perception of the students as readers actively subordinates the teacher's experiences of reading because it might be harmful to the learning of the students. Ultimately when the subject positions of reader and teacher are brought together in practice, the position of the teacher is privileged and that of the teaching-reader is subordinated. Yet, this positioning only happens in the discourse of practice. In policy, the teacher is positioned both as a teacher who is free to construct their own canon using their own expertise but also as an empowered reader of the canon that they have instructed. In practice, this position was challenged for the good of the students.

In conclusion, in the *Accountability Discourse* the subject positions offered by these constructions of literature are in tension. On one hand, policy positioned the teacher as expert and the reader as empowered. On the other hand, teachers in practice held strong beliefs about the purpose and value of literature and yet chose to challenge the position that policy opened up. Teachers positioned themselves as celebrating the reader through internalising the literary canon as a result of their own expertise. Yet, this role is not translated in the classroom due to the barriers that

confine it. Teachers felt unable to accept the position of empowerment because they did not believe that this is what the qualification wanted. Or, potentially, that they unconsciously failed to understand that they were empowered.

Thus, the *Accountability Discourse* embodied the tension between the 'official' discourses that constructed literature in policy and the 'lived' discourses that constructed it in practice, all acted out in an historical moment of reform (Willig, 2001). The discourse of both policy and practice, perceive and position the other to be the 'expert'. This becomes another barrier to the teaching of literature. They each hold the other accountable with the role of the teaching-reader impacted by this tension. Whereas the discourse of policy constructs this as a potentially empowering position, the discourse of practice does not.

This barrier could be seen as being embodied in the concept of the 'right reading' (Crosman, 1982, p.207) as explored in the literature review. In the 'official' construction the teachers were being positioned to teach their own version of literature, with policy embracing their internal library being 'dukedom large enough' (Shakespeare, The Tempest, 1.2.109-110) to meet the purpose and aims of the qualification. However, the teachers in this study challenged the scope of this freedom, rejecting the 'expert' discourse. This may be because, fundamentally, within the context of GCSE English literature there are 'right' answers and prescribed meanings that readers are expected to understand and that teachers are expected to teach to fulfil the criteria of the qualification. The meaning made from the texts that are read, no matter how personal, is prescribed as demonstrated in Figure 5.2, a page from the 2017 mark scheme for Unit 2.



MARK SCHEME – GCSE ENGLISH LITERATURE – 8702/2 – JUNE 2017

JB Priestley: An Inspector Calls

Question 1

How far does Priestley present Mrs Birling as an unlikeable character?

Write about:

- what Mrs Birling says and does in the play
- how Priestley presents her by the ways he writes

[30 marks]
AO4 [4 marks]

Indicative content:

Examiners are encouraged to reward any valid interpretations. Answers might, however, include some of the following:

AO1

- What Mrs Birling says and does
- Sheila and Eric's reactions to her throughout
- Her comments and reaction to the Inspector
- Her lack of progression even after the revelations OR her refusal to back down in the face of the Inspector's questions

AO2

- Presentation of her high-handedness when dealing with the Inspector and her children
- Presentation of her snobbish approval of Gerald
- Presentation of her reactions to the revelation about her Committee
- The irony of her comments about the unborn child given that it would have been her own

Figure 5. 6 A page from the AQA GCSE English literature Mark Scheme, 2017

No matter how free the teaching is from prescription, in the moment of examination, literature in practice becomes once more defined by policy, as the students sitting it hope to meet the official criteria of the exam boards, and the teachers' expertise is explicitly tested.

With the abolition of coursework for examination from 2017, the exam entirely symbolises this expertise for the first time and becomes a literal embodiment of the tension between expertise in practice and expertise in policy. It could be suggested that the discourse of the participants in this study recognised this and so contained an expertise that was not defined by reading or a knowledge of literature, or even of being a reader, but by a knowledge of the examination. Thus, the *Accountability Discourse* is not all passive as perhaps was initially suggested. This discourse is complicated by the implications for its context. A teacher must actively teach to the exam, reader or not. When it comes to the exam, they cannot be passive.

Therefore, a central tension has been identified in the *Accountability Discourse.* On one hand, the *Accountability Discourse* positions the teacher as struggling to overcome external barriers and restrictions that confine their teaching of literature. This teacher is constrained and disenfranchised.

Yet, this teacher is also somewhat empowered by their expertise. But not the expertise as constructed by the *Expert Teacher Discourse* and perhaps recognised in policy. Instead, this teacher is empowered by their knowledge of the exam, not by their role as a reader. Their knowledge of accountability is what made them an expert as a teacher, in their opinion.

Strategies for managing and negotiating this tension were evident among the participants, the main one was underscoring the importance of being vigilant about the wider purpose of the exam. In talking about the teaching of literature, exam vigilance was emphasised with participants widely questioning the purpose of the exam and criticising how it tested 'quotations learned off by heart' as opposed to its focus on the skill of critical reading. This tension was highlighted by Lucy.

> *In the previous GCSE, the A* candidates would have to go in and they have to know their stuff, but if you didn't have the right evidence you had the time, you had the opportunity to find it. Now if you don't know a quotation, your understanding of a character could be brilliant but if you don't remember the quotation then you are going to be penalised and that's not fair.*

This wariness was also evident in instances where the exam's interests were constructed as potentially interfering with the students' role as readers.

> *How do you judge if that person's interpretation is as good as somebody else's in an exam? You have to have that analytical, this is the effect that it has on people, rather than on just me, says the exam. Because, ok, yeah, it made me feel like this, well that's great but that has actually got nothing to do with the book and what the writer was potentially trying to do.*

From the above, the examiner's interests could potentially be at odds with the reader's response. Bea emphasises the importance of having a personal response in the face of exam requirement: '*How do you judge if that person's interpretation is as good as somebody else's in an exam?*' in order to emphasise the importance of taking ultimate responsibility for her student being a critical reader.

Despite one participant claiming that they liked '*doing what I am told'* (Lena), exam vigilance is highlighted by Lena.

> *I really cannot see the value in learning tens and tens of, I was trying to look for a unit that was not as dramatic as hundreds, of quotations, just to be regurgitated. I think as it was before was much better where you had the extract and then you had to show your analysis skills and link it to other parts of the text, potentially. But not having just a memory test.*

Describing the exam as a *'memory test'* suggests that there is a sense of needing to make the exam tangible. Lucy also described the exam in this way, unprompted: *'I think it is becoming a memory test*

rather than testing the skills of critical reading'. This was a new exam (first examined in 2017) and there was evidence to suggest that the participants had a lack of exam-related knowledge. There was a sense that in needing to understand the wider purpose of the exam, participants had deliberately reduced it to a '*memory test'.* Perhaps this was to make it manageable in the face of a lack of guidance for schools on how to respond most effectively to the new GCSEs and their grading and accountability arrangements (Smith, 2015). As previously explored, for some teachers, such professional autonomy is daunting (Nutkins, McDonald, and Stephen, 2013). In tune with being vigilant, some participants deliberately engaged in active refusal of reading-response in favour of tangible exam actions that were available to them, particularly teaching quotations to be learned off by heart (as highlighted earlier), whether they agreed with it as a strategy or not.

Finally, despite the discursive strategy of exam vigilance, the participants considered that they were not in possession of the necessary knowledge surrounding the new exam. They were ambivalent about the purpose of the reformed GCSE. Lucy described how she *'hadn't thought about [exam reform] in terms of literature'*. Participants appeared disempowered with respect to knowledge about the exam. They emphasised how exam knowledge was controlled externally to them, by *'someone who has been to Eton and has a first class honours in literature, or maybe not even that'* (Lucy, interview). Ultimately, exclusions from exam knowledge undermined the construction of the teacher in the *Accountability Discourse.*

6. Discussion

6.1 Introduction

It is at this point in the data analysis where the methodology, that in Chapters Four and Five could be described as thematic, moves to become wholly Foucauldian. This is because it is at this stage that the data analysis draws on Foucauldian understandings of positionings, a concept explained in detail in the methodology (Chapter Three). Thus, this chapter explores how policy and practice objectify and position themselves as subjects within GCSE English literature, in answer to the research questions, and the implications of this for subjectivities.

Furthermore, this chapter explores these positionings through the lens of Foucault's social theory. It has been suggested through the data analysis that surveillance is a common feature of the GCSE English literature classroom, with power exercised through expectations of accountability and the simultaneous encouragement and perceived undermining of teacher expertise. However, the positioning of teacher by policy, and policy by teacher, is more complex than the idealised panoptic model might suggest. In particular, this chapter argues that surveillance in the classroom was discontinuous and invisible, in contrast to the panoptic ideal of total and constant visibility (Gallagher, 2010). Therefore, this chapter now discusses what it is like to be positioned as a teacher of literature and what kind of actions and experiences are compatible with such a positioning.

The first research question asked how literature was discursively constructed in policy and in the classroom. The answer to this question was explored in Chapters Four and Five. Here, the analysis of the data portrayed a form of embodied docility and constructed literature through an expectation of inspiration and through a defined set of standards that the teacher may choose, or not, to fulfil. This answer was important because in order to answer the second research question – how the discourses of literature in policy and the classroom position the teacher – the discursive object of 'literature' needed to be located within the wider discourses.

A subject position within a discourse identifies 'a location for persons within the structure of rights and duties for those who use that repertoire' (Davies and Harré, 1999, p.35), constructing subjects as well as objects. As a result, speakers can take up, or place others within, networks of meanings. Here, the discourse of literature in policy positions the teacher as 'expert' and invites them to take up the position of 'reader' alongside their students, in the classroom. In contrast, in the discourse of literature in practice, teachers take up the position of 'docile body' (Foucault, 1977, p.138). Rather than accepting policy's position of the 'expert', discourse in practice positions the teacher as a reluctantly complicit agent of policy, rather than as a gatekeeper to it. This chapter will now discuss these positionings.

6.2 Stages Four and Five: positionings and practice

Firstly, as explored in the literature review (Chapter Two), Foucault's conception of discipline produces 'docile bodies': bodies that not only do what is wanted but in the way that it is wanted (Foucault, 1977, p.138). In internalising the requirements of policy and enacting them in the classroom whether they agree with the requirements or not, the data suggests that the teacher becomes a metaphorical docile body, unwilling to comply yet still complicit.

It could be argued that the discourse of literature in practice (Chapters Four and Five) perceives policy as a form of invisible observer, a single voice with no visible author (Mansworth, 2015). It is an anonymous power that watches everything that happens in the classroom. The result of this perception of control is that the teacher takes up the position of the docile body in the classroom, as a consequence of their perception of policy.

An example of this potential for docility could be found in the teachers' acceptance of, for example, a literary canon that they perceive to be defined by policy, rather than by themselves:

> Who would be best [to decide what texts are studied at GCSE]? I'm loathe to say the teacher because we would just bring one of our favourite books in and make kids read them, so how is that different to what the government is doing? It's a good job we don't get to decide. (Lucy, interview)

Teachers in the classroom may view this literary canon as unfair or misguided but feel they have no option but to accept and teach it as they think this is what policy wants them to do. Rather than seeking to challenge the boundaries of a curriculum that they perceive to be constraining, the data in the form of the teachers' interviews suggest that teachers are not choosing to negotiate or challenge a curriculum with which they do not agree:

> It should be prescribed because otherwise we would all just do things that we find interesting and it might not give us the broadest range. They might miss out on something. (Lena, interview)

Teachers are truly 'docile' in the Foucauldian sense. Perhaps such self-regulation is a result of a heightened awareness of accountability, or maybe as a result of feeling of disempowered due to curriculum changes upon which they felt they were not consulted:

> I didn't think literature needed to be reformed, but no one asked us. (Lucy, interview)

Yet, the policy data suggests that this level of regulation does not exist, beyond that which is practically necessary to fulfil Ofqual's requirements for GCSE English literature to be a qualification.

While the data gathered from teachers in the classroom suggest that they construct literature in policy as a type of invisible and anonymous overseer:

> Someone who has been to Eton and has a first class honours in literature (Lucy, interview)

The data from policy suggests that this is not the case. The discursive construction of literature in policy actively positions the teacher as the opposite of docile – wilful, disobedient? Policy invites teachers of GCSE English literature to be the author of their own literature in the classroom. They can do what they want, because they are the expert.

Thus the metaphorical panoptic observer of the classroom is not policy, even though the teachers think it is. In asking where this perception of policy as a principle of control has come from, the data collected in both the interviews and in the observations suggest that it is the possibility of being held to account that has usurped any 'real' framework of accountability. Instead, the classroom becomes defined by the terror of 'performativity', in which an obsession with statistics, testing, grades, and goals has become the primary means of incentive and control (Ball, 2010, p.215). This performativity results in a fabricated reality (Ball, 2010, p.215), embodied in this case by a potential misreading of policy's expectations and thus the docile suppression of a teacher's expertise.

This was summed up by Bea, in her interview:

> They just need to pass the exam. It doesn't matter what I think. I just need to do what I'm told and get it right. Can you imagine if they failed because of me?

Bea's statement suggests that she prioritises results, and the concept of a '*right*' answer that she will be '*told*'. This could be read as her positioning herself as docile: doing not only what is wanted but in the way that it is wanted (Foucault, 1977, p.138), rather than as taking up the position of expert, that she demonstrated in her lesson observation. This conflict between docility and expertise has potential implications for future practice and will be explored in more detail later in this chapter.

6.2.1 The teacher as expert

In contrast to the discourses of literature in practice which position the teacher as complicit in their docility, the discourses of literature in policy position the teacher outside of such Foucauldian methods of control.

Firstly, the discourses of literature in policy position the teacher as expert, explored in the *Expert Teacher Discourse* in Chapter Five. An example of this positioning can be explored through an exploration of the theory that 'part of the value of reading is to be able to read and talk about important books that almost everyone else has read' (Lemov, 2016), a commentary on the literary canon in schools. For this to happen, the teacher has to be inspired to choose the 'important' books

for their students to read, and all teachers need to pick the same books. It is perhaps from this starting point that policy seeks to define the 'best' books that students need to 'know' (AQA, 2014). However, categorising some literature as the 'best' results in teachers perceiving that what is 'important' is not up for debate as it has already been decided by the policy. This further links to a fear of 'getting it wrong' with the concern of 'what if I chose the wrong text?' (Lena, interview). The Exam Specification document (AQA, 2014) clearly lists the texts that 'students will study' (p.9). Teachers cannot avoid this; they must teach a choice from this list of texts as these texts have been defined as the 'best' and so 'important'. It also means that they cannot 'get it wrong'.

On one hand this policy document is clearly delineating the boundaries of a prescribed literary canon. Yet, on the other hand the literary knowledge that is expected to come from these texts is not prescribed ('Most of the time I don't know what I'm talking about' Cassandra, interview). The policy documents that precede the AQA specification (as explored in Chapter Three) suggest that the true value of these texts comes from the teacher's knowledge of their importance and the discussion they facilitate, not from the text itself. Thus, literature in policy positions the value of these texts in the teachers' expertise and so the teacher as expert. This may be the same for the teaching of literature: a list of texts in a policy document could be perceived as prescriptive, perhaps even politically loaded, but it is not until a teacher chooses to 'read' these texts that the meaning is formed, a theory that evokes Rosenblatt's reader-response theory as explored in the Literature Review (Chapter Two). With a teacher's expertise, meaning can be multiple and personal (Stock, 2017) and GCSE English literature can become more than the single voice of an anonymous policymaker (Mansworth, 2016) and instead reflect multiple critical readings:

> I had that last year, she said the thing is, Mr Birling worked for his money, why shouldn't he keep it all and everyone in the class gasped. She was a confident girl. She could take it. She said, I'm feeling really judged right now. Why are you feeling judged? I went with it. It was interesting to talk about something a bit different. (Cassandra, interview).

6.2.2 The teacher as agent

In returning to the discourses of literature in practice, a second conflict can be seen: that of the tension between a teacher who is positioned as a reader in policy but feels, in practice, that their reading is not valued and that their role is simply to deliver a predetermined 'right' reading on behalf of policy. This teacher is the opposite of Cassandra's example above, a teacher who would not choose to follow an alternative exploration that disagreed with common consensus, or who chose not to recognise that literature could be 'so much more than just a page in the revision guide' (Bea, interview).The data suggests that in the classroom, the teacher who takes up the position of being an agent of policy, delivers predetermined knowledge. In accepting this position, the teacher's

expertise is normalised and critical reading is suppressed. Within the classroom and under the watchful gaze of policy, teachers who perceive that they are judged by how their actions compare to a set criteria, do not recognise the value of their individual literary knowledge. As a consequence, these teachers feel that they are not judged by any intrinsic 'rightness' or 'wrongness', but instead by their actions in relation to others (Foucault, 1977, p.201). As Lucy states in her interview:

> Ultimately it's all just one big competition and all I have to do is make sure my students beat everyone else's students.

Thus the data from the teachers' interviews in particular, suggest that teachers perceive that their expertise as individuals does not matter in this '*competition'* for results. What matters is that their knowledge contributes to the department's GCSE English literature results being in, for example, the top 25% of the country, or at least showing an improvement from the previous year. Therefore, what matters for teachers is that they do not let anyone down and they do everything they can do to ensure their results are normal, as opposed to 'abnormal' (Gutting, 2005, p.84). Thus they view themselves as an agent, acting on behalf of policy.

Foucault defines this positioning as a result of 'normalising judgement' (1977), a concept that links to the *Accountability Discourse* as explored in Chapter Five. Such normalisation is pervasive in society for teaching must be held to account against national standards to give the GCSE its purpose and value (Gutting, 2005). Yet, if teachers perceive there to be no escape from being an agent of this normalising judgement. This is because whatever is achieved, it is thought that policy wants more – better grades, higher residuals, negative gaps. Thus, the teacher allows their behaviour to be controlled through the norms that they perceive policy to set in order to achieve exam success, resulting in the prioritisation of 'what the exam wants' (Celia, interview).

An example of this can perhaps be seen in the teaching of cultural heritage (Cox, 1989). In normalising the specification, the teacher may be seen as implicitly endorsing the Great Tradition (Leavis, 1948) and so giving purpose to literature in the classroom. Mansfield (2016) suggests that this may be indicative of the teacher being complicit in the concept of literature as a civilising force, as explore in the Literature Review (Chapter Two). This recalls Michael Gove's view of children who do not have access to literature as 'condemned to a prison house of ignorance (Cecil, 2011), thus linking intelligence and morality to reading. If literature (DfE, June 2013, p.3) is linked to the notion of 'civilising the native' (Mansworth, 2016, p.119), then the 'native' in this case is anyone who is not inspired by the text that has been chosen to be taught. The teacher is, therefore, positioned to accept and teach cultural heritage on behalf of policy.

There are potentially two ways of understanding this positioning. On one hand, it could be suggested that policy, in inviting teachers to choose it, is othering those teachers who choose not to be inspired, for whatever reason. In not accepting the civilising force of literature, the teacher is reduced to a cultural subordinate and excluded to the periphery. Therefore, on the other hand, this means that teachers have to accept the civilising influence of literature or they become the uncivilised native. This is a position explored by Morby (2014) who, in considering the abolition of world literature from the reformed GCSE, argued that this was now a qualification that rewarded cultural capital. This resulted in the consequent subordination of those lacking in exchangeable literary and cultural capital. While Morby was looking at reform from the students' perspective, it could be argued that the resultant cultural subordination could be the same for teachers. This process of othering justifies the subordination of teachers who do not choose to accept the texts offered as 'the best' by policy or otherwise. As a result, teachers must choose to position themselves as an agent of policy.

6.2.3 The teacher as reader

It could be argued that the discourses of literature in policy position the teacher as a reader in the classroom. In particular, policy invites teachers to take up a position that allows them to demonstrate their expertise as readers to create a space that echoed with the noise of multiple readings. The positioning of the teacher in this space of expertise encourages teachers to be more sophisticated readers. This could be seen as important in the contemporary teaching of literature in the 21st century as it has been suggested that the canonical literature of teachers' heritage has evolved and fragmented; as a consequence, multiple readings should be encouraged in the classroom (Serafini & Blasingame, 2012). For example, adolescent readers are fascinated with dystopian fiction, a fascination that is a 'phenomenon of the new millennium' (Serafini & Blasingame, 2012, p.147). Cantrell (2010) offers the example of how the choices made by Will and Lyra in their dystopic multiverse (Pullman, 1995) are not disempowering, but that instead they encourage the reader to confront their own notions of space in the world outside of the narrative, something that the teacher may not feel confident in doing if they have not considered this for themselves. It is in this position as sophisticated reader, that expertise is celebrated and encouraged.

The data suggests that this position, perhaps unlike that of the expert, is recognised in the classroom. Yet, it is a complex position to instigate and maintain. When the teachers are teaching, they perceive that their identity as reader is subordinated by policy which positions them solely as teacher, as explored in the *Accountability Discourse* in Chapter Five. It is perhaps in this position, more than the others that the potential conflict between policy and practice intersect. This will now

be explored in the following section of this chapter in an exploration of the implications of these positions for present, and future, practice.

6.3 Stage Six: Subjectivities

The final stage of Willig's Foucauldian discourse analysis is the 'most speculative' because at this stage of analysis 'we can do no more than to delineate what *can* be felt, thought and experienced from within various subject positions', whether or not speakers actually *do* feel, think or experience these things (2015, p.400).

As the data suggest, surveillance was a common feature of everyday life in the school, involving regular attempts to exercise power by watching and looking. For example, teachers were aware that their outcomes, in the form of GCSE English literature grades, would be scrutinised. They were aware of the expectations of the exam in the form of the exam boards' published criteria. They were aware of the potential for observation in the form of Learning Walks – a 20 minute, ungraded lesson observation.

In these respects, the school appeared, on the surface, to resemble the panoptic model of power. However, as the analysis progressed, it became clear that this resemblance was messier than Foucault's theorised hierarchy of surveyor/surveyed. This was because there was no simple correlation between policy/teacher in the form of surveyor/surveyed as perhaps might have been expected. One expectation might have been that teachers perceived policy as the surveyor and thus position themselves as the surveyed. Yet, in school, techniques of surveillance were more complicated than this idealised interpretation of the Panoptic (Gallagher, 2010). In particular, surveillance in the classroom and the positon of the surveyed was discontinuous, with the roles of both surveyor and surveyed available to all.

These issues will now be addressed with consideration made of the implications of this for future practice.

6.3.1 The context of docility

In considering docility within the broader context within which teachers work, the levels of accountability that teachers are subject to makes docility, ultimately, hard to avoid. Rather than a choice, it could be argued that the docile teacher is simply an embodiment of the scrutiny within education. While it has been argued that the Foucauldian metaphor of the Panopticon and the related theory around disciplinary surveillance is neither continuous nor visible in practice, the broader context within which teachers work suggests that this is not entirely true.

It has also been argued that a teacher's professional identity is evolving, with professionalism measured and valued against a 'misleadingly' objective façade (Ball, 2010, p.217). In particular, teachers work within the confines of performance management, a system of accountability that can be seen as moving away from autonomy and towards a docile compliance (Bell & Bolam, 2010). The value of the teaching professional is measured through academic outcomes (Stevenson, 2007), a measure that implies obligation as trust is replaced with scrutiny (Bennett, 2003).

The measure of academic outcome, particularly at GCSE level, suggests that docility is not a choice: it is a reality. While this chapter has explored the subjectivities of the participants, asking what can potentially be thought, felt, and experienced from the available subject positions, it could be argued that ultimately, it is difficult to detach any subjectivity of the teaching professional from such scrutiny. In suggesting that participants should deviate from a 'right reading' in their teaching of CGSE English literature, the exam paper and its requirements cannot be ignored. In suggesting that a teacher should bring their own authentic reading self to the classroom, it is a student who has to sit the exam. In suggesting that there exists no permanent observer in the classroom, the measures of progress still remain. Any moments of legitimacy that challenge such surveillance are inauthentic and could be perceived as 'a spectacle [...] cynical compliance [...] enacted fantasy [...] a fabrication' (Ball, 2010, p.222).

And yet, it could be suggested that this is not the bleak outcome that perhaps it seems. It cannot be denied that the current system places pressure on the teacher to conform, resulting in compliance (Didau, 2015). However, this study suggests that while the participants had succumbed to docility in part, there was still dissent. Surveillance – both literal and metaphorical – was widespread, common and carried out by both policy and practice. Yet it was also discontinuous, and its effects were limited and temporary. These findings suggest that there are limitations to surveillance that need to be explored.

6.3.2 Discontinuous surveillance

In the Panopticon, the principle of control is not the fact but the possibility of observation. The central tower in the Panopticon contains a monitor who will actually only look towards a cell occasionally, but the inmates have no way of knowing when the monitor will be looking and so self-regulate their behaviour under the assumption that they are being observed. The result is that the monitor will 'induce in the inmate a state of consciousness and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power' (Foucault, 1977, p.201).

If it is initially accepted, as the data suggest, that teachers perceive GCSE English Literature policy as a form of surveillance, watching and so influencing what they do in the classroom, then it could also

be assumed that the gaze of policy was continuous: policy is always watching, always looking. As a consequence the teacher is permanently visible, the teacher is aware of this, and they modify their behaviour as a result. Thus power functions in a Foucauldian ideal.

Yet in the classrooms where this study took place the gaze of policy was not continuous; it was discontinuous resulting in a loss of power. Even when teachers were explicitly making reference to the expectations of the exam, their awareness of these expectations resulted in a form of resistance. This discontinued their perception of the power that policy had over them as they unconsciously challenged its surveillance. Moreover, in the chaos of the classroom, the teachers often temporarily forgot that they were being watched as they challenged policy with their expertise.

In this context, surveillance involved regular reminders by policy of its presence in the form of the knowledge that the exam required:

> I am going to ask you things at different points – the whole point of this lesson is that you know what you need to know for the exam (Cassandra, observation)

It could be suggested that Cassandra is positioning herself as the surveyed in this instance. She is aware of the expectations of the exam and is modifying her teaching as a consequence.

However, later in the lesson this surveillance is forgotten:

> Do you think Shakespeare thinks women are weak? Do they need men? Is it because Juliet is a virgin? Do you want help? You know what the Friar says – he could be talking contextually, that women are weak and need men? Men have different experiences of virginity, if Juliet was not a virgin that was a big deal. If Romeo was not, then it was not really a problem. It's not the same now. Or is it? I don't know. There is no right answer. (Cassandra, observation)

Despite the effectiveness of policy's surveillance in this instance, this is still far from a panoptic scenario. The fact of policy's presence alone was evidently not sufficient to convince Cassandra that she might be seen. She had to remind herself that she could be seen:

> You need to soak in this knowledge like a sponge – like a sponge … you are creating your revision resources for next year – we need to get it right for the exam. (Cassandra, observation)

Emphasising the totality of surveillance in the Panopticon, Foucault described how in the central tower, 'one sees everything without being seen' as opposed to those outside of the tower who are 'totally seen, without ever seeing' (1977, p.202). However, in the classroom, the teacher is not 'totally seen' because policy exists only in teachers' perceptions of it. There exists no permanent observer in the classroom, ensuring that the expectations of the exam are fulfilled. Therefore,

surveillance in the classroom was easy to conceal, since the teachers ultimately managed whether policy was watching them or not. Again, this renders the gaze of policy discontinuous.

In the following example, Bea is also teaching *Romeo and Juliet*:

> You need to think about your own opinions but also how someone else might interpret this, some people might argue that the introduction is violent, some might argue it is funny, what did Shakespeare want me to think? What do I think? (Bea, observation)

Here, Bea has redirected the gaze of policy back towards the reader. Instead of talking about exam requirement, Bea explained that literature, for her, was '*about experience, to tie your experience with something else, or someone else, and make that emotional connection'* (interview). Previously, Bea had commented that she felt trapped by the expectations of the exam:

> Maybe I'm just so stuck in the confines of what we have to do and the way that I have been taught as well. I remember at school writing things and, you know, having people say, no that's not right. But if that's what I think then why is that not right?

In attributing a more aesthetic reader-response to the exam in the form of an emotional connection, Bea was identifying lapses in policy's surveillance, and monitoring her response to them in a kind of reverse-surveillance.

This would suggest that, in contrast to the Panopticon, policy's gaze is discontinuous and often restricted in the classroom. When observing the teachers, there were regular moments that moved beyond a 'right reading' to a more emotional connection and so could be perceived as a lapse in policy's gaze:

> Stop – you are being really rude – this is a poem about people dying – be respectful. (Silvia)
>
> The things that are important to you guys are very different to the things that were important to me, 15 years ago when I was dating (Lucy)
>
> *Japanese cultural artefacts – kimono wrapped around Ros – is that yours miss? Game with chopsticks and coriander seeds with Aaron and Adam – are those your chopsticks? You need the Wagamama ones* (Celia)

Furthermore, the teacher's expertise as a reader provided another means of avoiding the gaze of policy, acting as a symbolic screen behind which a reading 'transaction' can be carried out – the unique experience in which the reader and the text continuously act and are acted upon by each other (Rosenblatt, 1978). In this transaction, the text does not always have the same meaning for everyone, as each reader brings individual background knowledge, beliefs and context into their reading:

> Where were you when 9/11 happened? How old were you? We (Silvia and Anna) knew this poem was about 9/11. We were alive when this happened. We knew. As soon as we started exploring the poem, we knew. We remember where we were when the tragic events happened. The pain. (Silvia)
>
> I love this story. It reminds me of my time in the Far East. We are going back next week. (Celia)

In summary, the teachers' perception of policy's surveillance could not guarantee the docility of teachers in practice, docility in this case being defined as teachers choosing to conform to the expectations of the exam in the form of a 'right reading'.

Rather, docility was a matter of contention, something that was not simply accepted. Teacher's perception of the totality of policy's surveillance as presented in their interview data was not secure in the classroom, as presented by their observation data. Instead, surveillance was only ever partial and/or temporary in the classroom. Within these discontinuities, teachers' practice regularly found opportunities for evasion and resistance, resulting in wilful disobedience rather than docile submission. Ultimately, the everyday reality of disciplinary surveillance, in this study at least, bore only a limited resemblance to the generalised programme of omnipresent institutional power described by Foucault.

6.3.3 Invisible visibility

The Panopticon is generally understood as a mechanism where surveillance is carried out by a visible presence. As a work of architecture, it was an expression of the privileged status of those in power in their vantage point over their subjects (Gutting, 2005). The principle of control was 'central inspection' (McMullan, 2015), embodied in the visible invisibility of the central tower. The principle of the Panopticon was that power was visible, so that the inmate was always aware of a watching, but unverifiable, presence. In the perfect case, self-surveillance should become so effective that the supervising presence is made redundant (Gallagher, 2010). Those who are being surveyed modify their behaviour under the assumption that they are always under observation. It is only the bright light of the central tower that stops from the inmate from being able to see the watchman. He is both visible and invisible. They cannot see him, but they know that he is there.

Mansworth (2015) describes GCSE English literature policy as having 'no visible author' (p.125). It could be perhaps be expected that this is because institutional surveillance is invisible; there is no observer in the classroom, no CCTV, no two-way mirror. There is no physical presence to policy; there is no central tower in the classroom. McMullen argues that without 'physical ownership and without an explicit sense of exposure I do not normalise my actions' (2015). This suggests that

without a visible presence, the inmate is not incentivised to conform. Therefore, for surveillance to be effective, it must be visible.

In the data collected, some teachers personified the exam as an invisible presence in their classroom, making a connection between the living presence of the exam and its surveillance of the class:

> I still think you need to care, to have a personal response. The exam wants you to care. (Silvia, observation)
>
> You need to soak in this knowledge like a sponge – like a sponge – you are creating your revision resources for next year – we need to get it right for the exam. (Cassandra, observation)
>
> I feel like teachers cannot seem to escape the exam (Lena, interview)

At one point my presence in the classroom as a GCSE examiner (although for GCSE English language, not GCSE English literature) was highlighted in Silvia's observation, by Silvia:

> Miss Farleigh, what do you think? Miss is an examiner. What do we need to do to get the marks, Miss Farleigh? What are you looking for?

These examples suggest a different understanding of Foucault's conceptualisation of the Panopticon. Rather than the power of surveillance coming from the possibility of observation from a visible presence, a 'state of permanent visibility' is instead induced through invisibility (Foucault, 1977, p.201). It could be argued that a state of invisible surveillance is more difficult to conceal. However, in practice repeated reference was made to the exam, thus rendering it visible. As in the examples of invisible visibility above, the teachers had to repeatedly remind the class that the exam was watching for the surveillance to be effective:

> The whole point of this lesson is that you know what you need to know for the exam … I need you to know … what do we need to know … we need to get it right for the exam (Cassandra)
>
> You need to talk about structure for the exam … This was an AQA poem (Silvia)

Yet, in contrast, other teachers chose to make the classroom a space beyond the immediate control of the exam, highlighting the invisibility of the exam's power in the classroom. In challenging the visibility of policy, teachers sought to create a new space in which a 'right reading' became unstable and teachers could deviate from what policymakers 'may visualise' (Mansworth, 2015, pp.125-126), often within the same lesson, when policy wasn't looking:

> *If we got this in the exam and we didn't know what 9/11 was about, what would we do?* You can respond to the emotion, you don't need the context, just justify it structurally – you can't be wrong … hang on. We're not worried about this at the moment, just enjoy the poem. (Silvia)
>
> Are any of you as poetic as Romeo? Compare your thoughts. Don't worry about Romeo. (Lucy)
>
> OK, stop. Find your world maps. Find California on the west coast. America. If you were catching a plane to Japan where would you fly? How long would it take? (Celia)

On occasion there is an illusion of omnipresence was created through the teacher's manipulation of continuous visibility. Yet if the classroom was not always a space of transparent, continuous visibility, neither was it a space of invisibility. The visibility of policy is often rendered discontinuous by factors beyond the teacher's control. Sometimes, the teacher simply fails to engage the students:

> *He could have just rattled down the side of the building, hitting the windows.* Antonio stop – that is not appropriate. (Silvia)
>
> What would you say? What would you think? If you are struggling, go for cliché. You have to write something. (Lucy)
>
> So this is a patriarchal society? Don't dismiss other people's perspectives just because you think it is okay. (Bea)

As emphasised earlier, the teacher can exploit such lapses in surveillance, using them as opportunities for aesthetic response and often as a space for their own transactional response. During the lesson observations, teachers tended to reply with a personal reading response to engage disengaged students, more informally:

> Mercutio is a bit inappropriate here do we think? Tell me why. Who would think this is inappropriate? Boys. What do you think? Anyone? I know that I, being a woman, would take offense. 'Naked weapons'? Are you kidding me? (Bea)

As with discontinuous surveillance, invisibility was often more discontinuous in lessons which permitted more fluid, autonomous use of space by the teacher. This was especially the case in less efferent, more aesthetic discussion, as opposed to learning that focused purely on the 'right response' of the exam.

In conclusion, these examples suggest that teachers have developed the capacity for self-surveillance, monitoring their actions carefully to ensure that the invisible is visible. If this assumption is correct, then the data suggests that teachers do not simply internalise the invisible

expectation of the exam, they seek the discontinuities within it and make them visible in the classroom, on their own terms. This resonates with the conceptualisation of the fragility of power, rather than its omnipotence (Ransom, 1997). As vehicles of disciplinary power, we have the option to 'go off the designated path in directions that frustrate the purpose for which they were originally developed' (Ransom, 1997, p. 36). The data suggests that teachers sought to create a new space in their classroom in which a 'right reading' became unstable and in which they could deviate from what policymakers 'may visualise' (Mansworth, 2015, pp.125-126).

7. Conclusion

This concluding chapter presents the ways in which my study has contributed to both professional and theoretical knowledge, and brings together the analysis from chapters 4, 5, and 6. To summarise: most importantly my research contributes to professional knowledge in that it has challenged professional assumptions about the intentions of the reformed GCSE in English literature and found a hitherto unacknowledged disjuncture between reality and perception. The use of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis and Foucault's social theory has allowed a systematic enquiry of policy and practice in ways that threw light upon assumptions about the reformed GCSE in English literature being a 'memory test' that undermined teacher's expertise; and in this way the study has contributed to the theoretical knowledge base that can be employed by educational researchers.

7.1 Challenging professional assumptions: the power of using FDA

This study contributes to professional knowledge in that it has challenged professional assumptions about the intentions of the reformed GCSE in English literature practice in ways that threw light upon assumptions about policy. While these findings have implications for future practice, there is a tension here because this message could be perceived to be critical of the practice of the teachers in the study. This is because it has been suggested that the teachers in this study are constructing policy as something that it is not and, as a consequence, they are placing themselves in a position of docility. This needs to be challenged. More specifically, in internally constructing policy as something that seeks to undermine a teacher's expertise through accountability, some teachers in this study became over reliant on the 'right reading' and the expectations of the exam. This issue also needed to be challenged.

7.2.1 How do the constructions of literature position the teacher in the classroom?

This study has argued that teachers of GCSE English literature are positioned by policy as experts, but by themselves as accountable. As a consequence, there is a disjuncture between reality and perception. In this case, what policy wants and what teachers think it wants in relation to the GCSE English literature exam.

The AQA examiner reports (2017) published after the exam and therefore after the period of data collection, detail how student responses were insightful and enhanced by the closed book format. However, in contrast to the perception that the exam is a 'memory test' rather than a test of critical reading, the examiner report explicitly states that this is not true. An extract from the document is presented in Figure 7.1. The full document is in the Appendix (Appendix 11).

Evidence that the exam rewards critical reading
• 'student's thought and understanding' is rewarded • 'students showed a readiness to consider the events of the text and used these as a springboard to explore the complex and challenging ideas behind them' • 'students had a grasp of character and plot' • '…go beyond the extract and make connections relevant to the focus of the question, which indicated a grasp of themes and ideas'
Evidence that the exam is not a 'memory test'
• 'students who were led by the question, rather than having a preconceived essay structure for their answer, were generally…more responsive to the task' • '…the avoidance of unnecessary and misplaced subject terminology…unhelpful and, in some cases, obstructive' • 'merely identifying features is of limited interest and value' • 'statements of historical detail 'bolted on' to a response did little to demonstrate any real understanding'

Figure 7. 1 Extract from the AQA Examiner Report, 2017

The examiner report document was not a document that was initially chosen to be part of the data. This was because it is a document that is published after the exam. This means that it did not meet the criteria for informing the initial teaching of literature as detailed in the methodology. However, it was useful to bring this document into the discussion of the wider purpose of the exam in order to address the research questions and their implications.

The examiner report clearly states that the exam is not a memory test. It wants to see that students understand that writing is a construct that effects them as the reader. In particular, it comments that literature as a qualification tests the connecting of language to effect – to ideas, to themes, to contexts. Furthermore, this qualification requires a sophisticated level of emotional intelligence and the ability to read in an empathetic way. This is a skill beyond language analysis (McCabe, 2017). Instead of simply testing a student's ability to memorise quotations, this exam perceives of literature as an examination of human experience. This is a fundamental misunderstanding of what the exam requires by the participants, although it was a brand new exam so some misunderstanding was perhaps understandable. The GCSE English literature exam encapsulates this disjuncture between reality and perception as presented in this study. Fundamentally, this is a conflict between teachers positioned as expert and positioning themselves as accountable.

The implications of this are also addressed by the second research question which asks whether teachers accept or challenge these subject positions, and the limitations of these subject positions. If teachers cannot move beyond a perception of the qualification as simply a test of examined knowledge, then it could be argued that they are privileging the expectations of accountability and so creating their own barrier to expertise, thus accepting docility.

It is unfair to be critical of the participants' practice. As Smith (2015) described, all teachers of English at the time of this study were dealing with the radical series of reforms that GCSEs underwent in 2015. These reforms were never explained and thus were 'widely viewed negatively and fearfully' rather than as an opportunity (p.1). In addressing the first key message that the participants were placing themselves in a position of docility, I would argue that this was partly as a result of a lack of understanding of how the reformed GCSE in English literature was an opportunity to raise the quality of education and to make teaching and learning more stimulating, effective, equitable and enjoyable for teachers and students (Smith, 2015). If the locus of power in the Panopticon is the central tower from which the continuous gaze of surveillance emanates, what happens if that central tower, and the power that it embodies, is relocated in the inmates. If it is the threat of surveillance that induces docility, then the threat can be taken away through knowledge of what the exam, and so policy, wants.

Initially, I had considered running a further focus group session at the end of the study in which I fed back the key messages more formally to the participants as part of this study. However, I decided that this was not appropriate. I did not want to be critical of their practice and was already aware of the potential for the Hawthorne effect. I was concerned that in a more formal setting, the teachers would modify their responses to this feedback to what they thought I would want to hear as both researcher and as their Head of Department. I needed changes to practice to come from their own knowledge and power, not out of compliance with mine. I also felt that (potentially) a single focus group, led by me, was not enough time to implement change with an understanding of the theory behind it. Instead, I decided to incorporate the findings of this study into regular department meeting time as part of our more general work to move the department forward.

7.2.2 What are the implications of these positionings for future practice in the teaching of GCSE English literature?

It was suggested in the introduction that this study was approached from a deficit model. It attributed the scepticism and hostility of teachers to a lack of understanding resulting from a lack of information. It explored the unacknowledged division between the reality of GCSE English literature policy and its perception in the classroom and suggested that communication should focus on

improving teachers' understanding of the subject. However, it is important to challenge the assumption that simply 'knowing more' about policy will improve practice.

One of the key findings of this study in relation to the discursive construction of literature was a tendency amongst the participants to see the teaching of the subject as lacking any real purpose beyond preparation for the exam and the teaching of the right reading, something that has been argued does not exist in policy, only in practice and is at the heart of the disjuncture between reality and perception.

Firstly, for these participants at least, their enthusiasm for the subject was undermined by a perception that its only real purpose was attainment in the examinations. While they acknowledged a bigger picture, they did not accept it. If teachers do not recognise the purpose of what they are teaching, then the value of the subject is reduced solely to the skills that are learned, undermining and negating the 'love' that teachers have for reading which is, for many (Goodwyn, 1999), what inspired them to teach literature in the first place. Indeed, teachers 'love' the literary canon, but only on their own terms.

The implications of this are concerning. GCSE English literature policy states that the purpose of studying literature is to allow pupils to 'develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing and critical thinking' but also that 'through literature, students should have the chance to develop culturally and acquire knowledge of the best that has been thought and written' (DfE, 2013, p.3). Embedded within this statement is the implication that it is the responsibility of the teacher to 'lead children to an appreciation of those works of literature that have been widely regarded as amongst the finest in the language' (Cox, 1989, p.60). Yet, here is the tension: the teachers feel that their literary expertise is undermined by prescriptiveness, a theory posited by Goodwyn nearly 20 years ago (1999) and that still seems to hold true. The implication of this for future practice seems critical as it suggests little progress has been made in 20 years.

Therefore it is important to address this issue. As Celia commented, even within this average-sized department, we all have areas of expertise and enthusiasms pertaining to different eras of the literary canon and these could be shared and explored with pupils. If Bea's expertise is routed in the Shakespearian histories, then she should lead on this; if Lena is an avid reader of Hardy, then she should deliver this module. I have an MA in contemporary literature with a focus on postmodern ghost stories. How can this be integrated into what we teach? In other words, if teachers find value in their own literary canon then a Head of Department should seek to construct it: a departmental literary canon that celebrates the literature that we find inspiring, rather than feels confined by texts that we did not choose. By rotating classes so each teacher taught their particular enthusiasm, then

even within the practical limits of the timetable, the significance of literature would be clear as teachers themselves would see the value of their own literature beyond what they perceive to be required for the exam.

Furthermore, this idea repositions the cultural capital of, for example, Shakespeare as something worthwhile. Learning chunks of Shakespeare off by heart is not a useful type of knowledge as it gives little insight into the human condition, or leads students to appreciate the critical value of a text (Cox, 1989). It is not 'Romeo and Juliet' that is important, it is the talk around it. For the exam, there is not a particular body of knowledge that we have to know (Didau, 2012). But in reading about the human condition in my literature lesson, I will more likely be able to access society in a way that would be difficult if I did not understand ideas about love or masculinity. Thus, in answer to the research question, future practice must recognise this.

Secondly, while it could be argued that all response is personal, this study suggests that while teachers promote the values of aesthetic response in their discourse, in their actual practice it is missing except at times of crisis in the lesson. Again, there is the assumption that it is necessary to teach a single right reading which undermines the aesthetic within critical reading. Rather than teaching a right reading that applies critical reading skills in exam scenarios, teachers could be encouraged to recognise aesthetic readings through responses that are perhaps less 'right'. If teachers build reading skills through challenging discussion of texts in which students are given the opportunity to develop and test their own ideas, then the classroom becomes a dialogic space of noise that can overwhelm the silence of the right reading. This is where understanding is formed, argues Bakhtin (1986), in the 'process of interaction and struggle with others' thought' (p.92) in a classroom that is 'inherently multi-voiced' (Guttierrez, Rymes & Laron, 1993, p.446).

Thirdly, it is important to remember that the new GCSE English literature examinations use more 'challenging' unseen texts than previously, as described by the DfE (2014). It could be suggested that if there continues to be a focus on only the 'right reading', our pupils will not succeed. This is because teaching a 'right reading' is an inefficient method of developing pupils' understanding because it relies on the teacher's reading (Smith, 2015), something that is not useful when pupils are dealing with an unseen text.

This study offered a simple example of this. In recognising creative response as a data collection method, and in recognising the spectrum of response – from aesthetic to efferent to expressive – the 'right reading' was undermined as a multitude of reading responses were heard. In asking the participants to respond to an unseen poem, the responses all called on different readings: Celia wrote a beautiful narrative from the perspective of the Tsunami; Cassandra, a perceptive analysis of

who held the power – tsunami or girl; Bea responded creatively, as poet. The point here is that it is impossible for a teacher to explicitly teach all the information that a pupil will need to answer any question on any unseen text. If the teachers in this example taught their response to the poem, the others would be implicitly wrong. To achieve a higher level response to an unseen text, pupils need regular opportunities to explore the implications of a variety of texts through guidance rather than the instruction of a right reading (Claxton, 2002; Mercer, 2007; Alexander, 2012).

The implication of this for future practice is a return to the reading transaction, the theory of which should be taught to teachers. Teachers should be taught to distinguish between the efferent, the expressive and the aesthetic, and to approach it as a spectrum rather than a binary choice. This approach places the response within the reader rather than the teacher and is thus changeable, variable and different for each reader and for each reading (Rosenblatt, 1995). This could be achieved in practice by teachers teaching both intellectual and emotional response as a valid starting point, out of which comes understanding of the text, with discussion encouraging articulation, clarification and refinement rather than being 'right'. I would also suggest that teachers share their responses to a text, be it more creative or even sat as an exam together with their students.

In conclusion, this study enhances professional knowledge both in the English department in this study and in general. This research contributes to professional knowledge in that it has challenged professional assumptions about the intentions of the reformed GCSE in English literature from the perspective of both policy and practice. In answering the research questions asking how teachers and policy position themselves, and each other, and the implications of this for future professional practice, suggestions have been made as to how to address this in order to reconcile the conflict between accountability and expertise in the classroom. In this way the study has contributed to the theoretical knowledge base that can be employed by educational researchers.

7.3 Limitations

Taking Foucault's writing as a starting point, this study systematically enquired into how disciplinary strategies were deployed and developed in practice, challenging the assumptions inherent within them, and exploring their limitations. This contribution to professional knowledge was helpful in drawing attention to how power, or indeed assumptions about power, was being exercised in the classroom.

However, there are limitations to Foucault's theory and so this analysis. In particular, there is the assertion that one of the shortcomings of a FDA analysis is that individuals are seen to be positioned largely as passive users of discourse with limited agency (Budds, Lock and Burr, 2014). I would argue that in adopting Willig's procedure for FDA, any passivity to discourse was challenged as the stages

of analysis explicitly examined the discursive contexts of the discourses as well as identifying the construction of the subject (the teacher) as well as the object (the discourse) and the implications of subjectivity. Ultimately, this study contributed to professional assumptions about the intentions of the reformed GCSE in English literature and so was more than a study of discourse; it was a study of teacher and policy in practice as informed by discourse, rather than a study of discourse.

There were multiple factors which may have acted to limit the validity of this study, mostly related to the fact that the data collection took place in the real world – a messy and unreliable place. An issue that was highlighted by the participants themselves was that of collecting data in the classroom; locating them in a classroom may have implicitly positioned them as a teacher, something I did not consider. In particular, the creative tasks took place in a similar format to our department meetings and so the association may have already been there, meaning it was hard to separate their teaching selves from any other.

In reflecting on the research, a key issue that I had was related to working with participants that I knew. As a consequence assumptions were made about the participants that may have impacted upon the methodology. In working from Smith's (2015) statement that teachers of GCSE English literature regarded the new qualificaiton with negativity and fear, it could be argued that I accepted this as an assumption and did not challenge it because of my anecdotal experience with the participants. By not seeking to explore whether Smith's statement was 'true', as much as it could be, I worked with the assumption that there was an element of negativity and fear at the heart of the teaching of the reformed qualification. This could have potentially limited the opportunity for participants to challenge the assumption if they did not perceive the qualification in this way. There was also the opportunity to explore why this was – what had shaped this specific English department in the past that lead to this point. I chose not to explore this because I decided to capture a specific moment in time rather than an historical understanding, but it may have added interest to the context of the study.

Furthermore, I made assumptions about the questions that I asked in interview. In reflecting on the interview, I assumed that all participants had thought, and cared, about teaching literature. Arguably, this assumption was challenged by the fact that the participants were volunteers. Perhaps if they did not care, they would not have volunteered. Similarly, while I acknowledge in the methodology that I knew the participants as colleagues and friends, perhaps there would have been more honesty if the interview was conducted by someone they did not know. It is difficult to predict the impact this may have had, but there may have been less concern about 'what I wanted to hear'. Several of the participants specifically asked if what they said was 'right' and whether that was 'what I wanted'. This will have potentially impacted upon what they said, but it is hard to suggest how.

A further issue that I was increasingly aware of was related to the choice of policy documents. While I stand by the final documents chosen, and the justification that these were the ones that directly impacted upon the teaching of literature in the classroom and thus their relevance, there were a multitude of other documents that could have been brought in. Equally, there could have been a comparative element with the previous GCSE in English literature (A*-U). Whilst this kind of comparative study would have provided a contextual exploration that would, perhaps, have helped to situate this study, I am happy that the focus of this research was on the reformed GCSE as any type of comparison would have diluted this focus. It would also have made it less applicable for future practice as the previous GCSE in English literature is no longer relevant.

A further possible criticism of this study is the lack of consideration of the impact on students' results. While it is cynical to suggest that a school's primary concern is the outcomes of its students, it cannot be denied that it is a priority. Details about the students' perspectives were not gathered and consideration of the impact of future practice on student outcomes was not explored. There were two reasons for this. Firstly, the research had to have boundaries to make it manageable. As discussed in the methodology, it is the teacher's perspective that is often overlooked in studies of teaching literature. As a consequence, in only considering the constructions of literature from the perspective of policy and the impact of this on the teacher, this addressed the gap in knowledge, but was also achievable in a study of this sort. Secondly there is more to teaching that GCSE grades, be they A* to U, or 9 to 1. In considering the purpose of literature as teaching students to be critical readers, in empowering, emancipating, and liberating those readers, then the actual GCSE result seems less relevant.

A final limitation of this study is that it is bound in space and time. It is the study of a very specific group of teachers, a specific moment in policy, a specific school, at a specific moment of time. However, this research never sought to make claims of generalisation and viewed it as 'unimportant, unachievable, or both' (Schofield, 1990, p.202), as explained in the methodology. Instead, this study agreed with the suggestion that research should not seek generalisation as 'when we give proper weight to local conditions, any generalisation is a working hypothesis, not a conclusion' (Merriam, 1998, p.209). Thus, this study sought a thorough exploration of the phenomena in a carefully described and specific context that would be of interest to others conducting similar research (Chalhoub-Deville et al, 2006) and so might inform future practice as well as contribute to the theoretical understanding of this specific area of interest. It is also worth noting that this was a study of only GCSE English literature. It is not unusual for schools to teach English language and English literature concurrently, or to teach language through literature. This study has not explored this potential overlap of the subjects known as 'English' and the implications of this.

7.4 The theoretical contribution to professional knowledge

The GCSE examination is part of an increasing culture of accountability in education which has created a system of disciplinary surveillance (Perryman, 2003), a necessity in order for school standards to be raised (Poulson, 1998). In the school explored in this study, the teachers felt that policy was watching and thus monitoring them. Yet, this surveillance was discontinuous; by this I mean that policy was not always observing the classroom, it was not always judging practice, even if teachers perceived that it was. Policy did not have a continuous power over the teacher's practice.

These findings highlight the importance of identifying the limits and complexities of policy's perceived control over the classroom, and the consequent positioning of both the surveyor and the surveyed, rather than assuming that disciplinary surveillance will be simple and effective. Indeed, in much of the research on the panoptic school, it is argued that teachers are responding to external surveillance in the form of the pressures of accountability (Jeffrey, 2002), or continuous observation in the form of Ofsted (Perryman, 2006), rather than self-regulation in the form of subject-specific GCSE policy, as in this study. Therefore, this study is original in its suggestion that not only does this policy have control over the classroom, but that teachers are complicit in this control, choosing to accept a position of docility. Thus, while teachers are rendered docile by surveillance, such docility cannot be blamed solely on the invisible spectre of policy. Instead, such docility is result of teacher's perceptions of the surveillance, rather than the surveillance itself.

One possible explanation for the discontinuity of surveillance in the classroom is that it was functioning under the teachers' assumption that policy was, in fact, surveying. While this study has aimed to give policy a voice, policy does not have a literal voice or even a visible, physical presence in the classroom. It exists only in reminders of its existence: in textbooks or posters, in schemes of work or worksheets; and, of most relevance to this research, it exists in the discursive construction of literature in practice: in teachers' discourse. In this scenario, disciplinary surveillance is internal; it is in their talk.

It cannot be denied that teachers' outcomes – in the form of GCSE English literature results – are under surveillance, a type of anti-panoptic transparency that holds the power of the teacher to account (Gallagher, 2010). Yet, Chapters 5 and 6 of this study have argued that the discourse of policy itself is not surveying the teachers in the classroom and is not seeking to discipline them. Thus, the teachers' assumption that they were being held accountable by external disciplinary surveillance, an accountability that results in the self-regulation of their behaviour in practice, was seemingly erroneous. Instead of policy positioning teachers' practice under a regime of surveillance, the data suggest that it is the teachers in practice that are in the central tower observing policy. Policy has no way of knowing when these occasions will arise – especially as they have been shown

to be discontinuous – resulting in 'a state of consciousness and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning in of power' (Foucault, 1977, p.201). This is how policy is made visible in the classroom. Teachers become complicit in the construct and participate in the systems of power that oversee their actions (Bushnell, 2003). Instead of resisting surveillance, they are constructing it internally and holding themselves to account.

Therefore, in asking how such surveillance might be overcome, and whether it needs to be, it might be sufficient for teachers of GCSE English literature to develop a more realistic level of surveillance. It cannot be denied that practice must be good enough to achieve the outcomes that students need. A level of internal self-regulation to ensure that this happens is not a bad thing.

It is perhaps this conflict between internal and external (self) regulation that results in the discontinuity of surveillance. One possible explanation for this could be that teachers were not fully committed to either internal or external regulation, through no fault of their own. Foucault's idealised account of discipline depicts it as a comprehensive regime, in which the smallest details are subject to scrutiny. He theorises that the focus is not just on the outcomes achieved, but on the specific procedures that are adhered to: docile bodies that not only do what is wanted, but do it precisely in the way that it is wanted (1977, p.138). In one way, this was true. Teachers were teaching the requirements of the reformed GCSE English literature, in a predefined way. Yet, at the time of this study, the interview data suggested that the teachers were still not entirely sure what those requirements were. Chapter 6 argued that the reformed GCSE exam in English literature was not a memory test, as proven by the exam report that was released in 2017, and also policy itself in Chapter 5. Therefore, it could be argued that teachers thought they were doing what was wanted by the exam board, but that they were mistaken.

In conclusion, surveillance could be thought of as a way for teachers to maintain an illusion of control at a time of GCSE reform when they were feeling a loss of control (Smith, 2015). In the face of change and the continued pressures of accountability, perhaps this is the power at the heart of the Panopticon. When the exercise of power is invisible, teachers are working to make it visible so that they can claim power back from the external forces over which they feel they have no control. This research has uncovered this conflict between external and internal regulation. It has identified the 'invisible' power that operates within the classroom and it has identified how teacher's perceptions of this power are mistaken. It has further examined the impact of this misconception on classroom practice and it has demonstrated understanding of where this misunderstanding came from. Therefore, this research is important because it offers practical suggestions as to how classroom practitioners can work with, rather than against, the reformed policy of GCSE English literature. As a consequence of this, teachers can be supported in regaining a feeling of control over

what and how they teach literature, without sacrificing the self-regulation that supports outstanding practice. At a time of change, these messages about the reformed GCSE in English literature have not yet been heard.

7.5 Impact on professional practice

The main reason for choosing GCSE English literature in education as the subject of my study, was because this is a world I live in, teaching GCSE English literature every day. As a consequence of this study, I now have a more secure evidence-based knowledge of issues surrounding GCSE English literature reform, policy, and its teaching. Rather than only my own assumptions and preconceptions, I can now work with my department to address their assumptions and preconceptions to challenge their thinking about literature, as well as my own. Secondly, undertaking this research project has helped me in my role as HoD. In seeking to understand teachers' perspectives, I understand not only the importance of consulting the teachers in my department, but on manageable ways to do this within the context of a busy school. Finally, I now appreciate the pressures on teachers as they deal with the expectations of accountability, the complexity of their expertise, and the necessity of challenging assumptions about the GCSE English literature exam.

7.6 Possibilities for future research

A priority of this research will be to follow up with this group of teachers as they grow more familiar with the requirements and expectations of the reformed GCSE in English literature. As of this moment (June, 2018), there have already been two cohorts who have sat the new GCSE. As a department, we have worked hard to increase our understanding of the qualification and it would be interesting to find out, for example, if teachers still view the reforms with 'negativity and fear' (Smith, 2015) or whether this was simply a reaction to change. It would be interesting to find out whether these teachers become more or less able to identify their own expertise in teaching literature, or to make connections between the expectations of policy and their own practice as a consequence of increased familiarity with literature as a qualification, as a canon, and as a subject. The impact of this on their teaching of literature would be interesting to observe in practice.

The findings suggest that it might be worthwhile to adopt an approach that is more of action research to consider the practical impact of challenging professional assumptions about the intentions of the reformed GCSE in English literature. The teachers in this study did not have the opportunity to reflect directly on the difference being involved had made to their confidence in teaching literature, for example, or in comparing their views at the beginning and end of the study. Having established the necessity of challenging the professional assumptions around policy, a

valuable line of enquiry would be to work further with the teacher to evaluate the impact of these findings. This might also allow for further investigation of the notion of teacher expertise in light of the reformed GCSE, as little work has been done with such new policy.

Finally, the data has suggested that for these teachers, literature as a qualification, as a subject, and as a canon is rife with assumption. Given the findings from this one small group of teachers, in one school, it would be interesting to compare their experiences to others'.

In my role of researcher, I finish by considering my own potential docility throughout the study. As it concludes, I reflect on the extent to which I sought to explore the potential for creativity in the qualitative process. In my reading, I have enjoyed research studies that used diary apps and written journals (Williamson et al., 2015), that capture lives through photography (Harper, 2002), that encourage creative expression through drawing, clay sculpture, quilting, (Tracey et al., 2006; Or, 2015) or simply seek ways to make focus groups more interesting and successful through games (Chambers, 2002). I find the originality of these studies inspiring and thus ask to what extent was I rendered docile by my own perception of what I thought the study 'wanted' – an ironic 'right reading', perhaps. As this was my first significant piece of research I acknowledge that I accepted the discipline of the research study. I did not choose a more creative approach because there was less research around them, and that made them seem daunting – what if I got it wrong? Ultimately, my priority was to achieve the results that were required (an important consideration) but in reality, I conducted the study in a way that I felt the study wanted to be conducted – the definition of docility. Perhaps now that I am aware of my own docility, I could choose to challenge it and move beyond my own (mis)conception of scrutiny, embracing a more creative qualitative approach, next time. Perhaps this position offers further insights into the specific nature of teacher docility and could therefore support future research aimed at emboldening the profession.

7.7 Final summary

This study has contributed to professional knowledge in that it has challenged professional assumptions about the intentions of the reformed GCSE in English literature. It has found that teachers' perception of policy's surveillance did not guarantee docility, but that teachers, at times, chose to conform to expectations of the exam. It has further suggested that teachers do not always simply internalise exam requirement and accept docility, they seek opportunities to destabilise the expectations of accountability in order to deviate from what they assume policymakers visualise. Through the use of Foucauldian Discourse Analysis and Foucault's social theory, attention has been drawn to these assumptions and the perception of the reformed GCSE in English literature being a 'memory test' that undermined teacher's expertise, has been challenged.

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Appendix 1 Ethical approval documentation

University of Reading
Institute of Education
Ethical Approval Form A (version May 2015)

Tick one:
Staff project: _____ PhD ____ EdD __✓__

Name of applicant (s): Anna Farleigh

Title of project: EdD Dissertation: English teachers' perceptions of English Literature

Name of supervisor (for student projects): Naomi Flynn

Please complete the form below including relevant sections overleaf.

	YES	NO	
Have you prepared an Information Sheet for participants and/or their parents/carers that:			
a) explains the purpose(s) of the project	✓		
b) explains how they have been selected as potential participants	✓		
c) gives a full, fair and clear account of what will be asked of them and how the information that they provide will be used	✓		
d) makes clear that participation in the project is voluntary	✓		
e) explains the arrangements to allow participants to withdraw at any stage if they wish	✓		
f) explains the arrangements to ensure the confidentiality of any material collected during the project, including secure arrangements for its storage, retention and disposal	✓		
g) explains the arrangements for publishing the research results and, if confidentiality might be affected, for obtaining written consent for this	✓		
h) explains the arrangements for providing participants with the research results if they wish to have them	✓		
i) gives the name and designation of the member of staff with responsibility for the project together with contact details, including email . If any of the project investigators are students at the IoE, then this information must be included and their name provided	✓		
k) explains, where applicable, the arrangements for expenses and other payments to be made to the participants	n/a		
j) includes a standard statement indicating the process of ethical review at the University undergone by the project, as follows: 'This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct'.	✓		
k)includes a standard statement regarding insurance: "The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request".	✓		
Please answer the following questions			
1) Will you provide participants involved in your research with all the information necessary to ensure that they are fully informed and not in any way deceived or misled as to the purpose(s) and nature of the research? (Please use the subheadings used in the example information sheets on blackboard to ensure this).	✓		
2) Will you seek written or other formal consent from all participants, if they are able to provide it, in addition to (1)?	✓		
3) Is there any risk that participants may experience physical or psychological distress in taking part in your research?		✓	
4) Have you taken the online training modules in data protection and information security (which can be found here: http://www.reading.ac.uk/internal/imps/Staffpages/imps-training.aspx)?	✓		
5) Have you read the Health and Safety booklet (available on Blackboard) and completed a Risk Assessment Form to be included with this ethics application?	✓		
6) Does your research comply with the University's Code of Good Practice in Research?	✓		
	YES	NO	N.A
7) If your research is taking place in a school, have you prepared an information sheet and consent form to gain the permission in writing of the head teacher or other relevant supervisory professional?	✓		
8) Has the data collector obtained satisfactory DBS clearance?	✓		

9) If your research involves working with children under the age of 16 (or those whose special educational needs mean they are unable to give informed consent), have you prepared an information sheet and consent form for parents/carers to seek permission in writing, or to give parents/carers the opportunity to decline consent?			✓
10) If your research involves processing sensitive personal data[1], or if it involves audio/video recordings, have you obtained the explicit consent of participants/parents?	✓		
11) If you are using a data processor to subcontract any part of your research, have you got a written contract with that contractor which (a) specifies that the contractor is required to act only on your instructions, and (b) provides for appropriate technical and organisational security measures to protect the data?			✓
12a) Does your research involve data collection outside the UK?		✓	
12b) If the answer to question 12a is "yes", does your research comply with the legal and ethical requirements for doing research in that country?			✓
13a) Does your research involve collecting data in a language other than English?		✓	
13b) If the answer to question 13a is "yes", please confirm that information sheets, consent forms, and research instruments, where appropriate, have been directly translated from the English versions submitted with this application.			✓
14a. Does the proposed research involve children under the age of 5?		✓	
14b. If the answer to question 14a is "yes": My Head of School (or authorised Head of Department) has given details of the proposed research to the University's insurance officer, and the research will not proceed until I have confirmation that insurance cover is in place.			✓
If you have answered YES to Question 3, please complete Section B below			

Please complete **either** Section A **or** Section B and provide the details required in support of your application. Sign the form (Section C) then submit it with all relevant attachments (e.g. information sheets, consent forms, tests, questionnaires, interview schedules) to the Institute's Ethics Committee for consideration. Any missing information will result in the form being returned to you.

A: My research goes beyond the 'accepted custom and practice of teaching' but I consider that this project has **no** significant ethical implications. (Please tick the box.)	✓
Please state the total number of participants that will be involved in the project and give a breakdown of how many there are in each category e.g. teachers, parents, pupils etc. Approximately 5 experienced teachers teaching GCSE English Literature (Years 10 and 11).	
Give a brief description of the aims and the methods (participants, instruments and procedures) of the project in up to 200 words noting: 1. Title of Project 2. purpose of project and its academic rationale 3. brief description of methods and measurements 4. participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria 5. consent and participant information arrangements, debriefing (attach forms where necessary) 6. a clear and concise statement of the ethical considerations raised by the project and how you intend to deal with then. 7. estimated start date and duration of project EdD Dissertation: English teachers' perceptions of English Literature The purpose of this study is to explore secondary English teachers' perceptions of teaching literature and how they make sense of the aesthetic in the classroom. It seeks to understand the characterisations of the transaction between text and reader and the positioning of the teacher within this. Approximately five participants will be drawn from the English department of a secondary school that is the workplace of the researcher. An awareness of the researcher's role as an insider-researcher will be	

[1] Sensitive personal data consists of information relating to the racial or ethnic origin of a data subject, their political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, sexual life, physical or mental health or condition, or criminal offences or record.

clearly addressed in the methodology and appropriate measures taken. Specifically, promising anonymity and confidentially to participants, an awareness of the issues of challenging the established value system of the school, ensuring voluntary informed consent from participants, and managing the power implications of my position as both researcher and practitioner. I do not hold any position of responsibility within the department and am not line managing any of the participants.

The first aspect of research will involve discourse analysis of the new curriculum for GCSE English Literature in relation to Cox's Cultural Heritage and Personal Growth models. The second aspect of research involves work with practising teachers.

Five English teachers will each be observed in two different lessons. The first lesson will be at the beginning of the Literature unit; the second lesson will be two weeks later, in the middle of the Literature unit. The lessons selected will be the introductory lesson of the unit, and a lesson in the middle of the unit. This will total ten lesson observations. Field notes will be taken using the research questions as a framework.

English teachers will be observed in two lessons over a two week period of teaching Literature. Observations will be recorded using field notes informed by the research questions as a framework, rather than any audio-visual technology, with notes made during the observation and available for the teacher to review. Teachers will be reassured that observation is not a judgement and made aware of its purpose within the research.

Teachers will be interviewed both individually and in a group. Both individual and group interviews will be semi-structured and some suggested questions are attached. Interviews will be digitally recorded for transcription; this will be made available to participants.

Consent will be arranged through a head teacher information and consent form, head of department information and consent form, and a teacher-participant information and consent form. I consider there to be no significant ethical implications. The project will take place during the spring/summer terms, 2017. It is anticipated that the following timescale will be adhered to:

- April, 2017: Individual Interviews
- May, 2017: Observations
- June, 2017: Group Interviews

B Please state the total number of participants that will be involved in the project and give a breakdown of how many there are in each category e.g. teachers, parents, pupils etc.

Give a brief description of the aims and the methods (participants, instruments and procedures) of the project in up to 200 words.

1. title of project
2. purpose of project and its academic rationale
3. brief description of methods and measurements
4. participants: recruitment methods, number, age, gender, exclusion/inclusion criteria
5. consent and participant information arrangements, debriefing (attach forms where necessary)
6. a clear and concise statement of the ethical considerations raised by the project and how you intend to deal with then.
7. estimated start date and duration of project

I have declared all relevant information regarding my proposed project and confirm that ethical good practice will be followed within the project.

Signed: Anna Farleigh Print Name Anna Farleigh Date 22/01/17

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL APPROVAL FOR PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE ETHICS COMMITTEE

This project has been considered using agreed Institute procedures and is now approved.

Signed: … Print Name: Xiao Lan Curdt-Christiansen Date: 28/02/17
(IoE Research Ethics Committee representative)*

* A decision to allow a project to proceed is not an expert assessment of its content or of the possible risks involved in the investigation, nor does it detract in any way from the ultimate responsibility which students/investigators must themselves have for these matters. Approval is granted on the basis of the information declared by the applicant.

Appendix 2 Head teacher information sheet

Head Teacher Information Sheet

Research Project: English teachers' perceptions of English Literature

Dear Mr Smith

I am writing to ask your permission for your school to take part in a research study.

What is the study?

I am conducting the study as part of my Educational Doctorate at the University of Reading. It aims to investigate what English Literature means to secondary English teachers, and to explore whether these perceptions and experiences impact on its teaching. The research is timely because 2017 is the first year in which a cohort of pupils will be examined using the new specifications for GCSE English Literature. It hopes to make recommendations regarding how we can best teach English Literature as a meaningful and interesting subject.

Why has this school been chosen to take part?

This school has been chosen because I am a teacher within the English department.

Does the school have to take part?

Participation is voluntary. It is entirely up to you whether you give permission for the school to participate. You may withdraw your consent to participation at any time during the project, without repercussions to you, by contacting me using the contact details below.

What will happen if the school takes part?

Participants will be interviewed to reflect on their history with English Literature as both teacher and reader. If you give permission, I would then ask to observe them teaching GCSE English Literature on two separate occasions before all participants are asked to take part in a group interview to explore what English Literature means to them and to their teaching. Interviews would be recorded digitally so that I can transcribe and analyse the results. Observations will be recorded using field notes rather than audio-visually. Notes from the observations would inform these discussions.

If you agree to the department's participation, I will seek further consent from the Head of Department, and the teachers in the English Department. All participants will have the right to withdraw their data from the project at any point.

How long will the project take?

The project will take place over the spring and summer terms, from March 2017 to June 2017. This takes into consideration the increased demands on time during the GCSE exam period. Participants will be asked to volunteer approximately three hours of time which will cover two lessons of observation, an individual interview and a group interview.

Will there be any further data collection?

Depending upon the analysis of initial rounds of data collection, it may prove beneficial to conduct additional interviews with participants.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part?

I anticipate that the teachers will enjoy taking part in the study and reflecting on their own relationship with literature, and that the findings of the study will be useful for teachers and the wider education community in planning how they teach English Literature.

The information given by participants in this study will remain confidential and only be seen by myself and my supervisor. Neither you, the teachers, the students, nor the school will be identifiable in any published report resulting from the study.

I will carefully monitor the time taken by the study to ensure that there is not a detrimental effect on the time taken from the participants.

What will happen to the data?

Any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used in this study or in any subsequent publications. The records of this study will be kept private. No identifiers linking you, the teachers, the students, or the school will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Participants will be assigned a pseudonym and will be referred to by that pseudonym in all records. Research records will be stored securely in a locked filing cabinet and on a password-protected computer and only the research team will have access to the records. The data will be destroyed securely once the findings of the study are written up, after five years. The results of the study will be presented within my thesis and potentially at national and international interviews, and in written reports and articles. I can send you electronic copies of these publications if you wish.

What happens if I change my mind?

You can change your mind at any time without any repercussions. If you change your mind after data collection has ended, I will discard the school's data.

What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact my supervisor Dr Naomi Flynn University of Reading, n.flynn@reading.ac.uk.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information, please contact Anna Farleigh

Tel: ___

Email: ___

I do hope that you will agree to participation in this study. If you do, please complete the attached consent form and return it to me.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely

A Farleigh

Anna Farleigh

This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request.

Appendix 3 Head teacher consent form

Head Teacher Consent Form

Research Project: English teachers' perceptions of English Literature

I have read the Information Sheet about the project and received a copy of it.

I understand what the purpose of the project is and what is required of me.

All my questions have been answered.

Name of Head Teacher:
_____

Name of school:
_____

Please circle as appropriate:

I consent to the involvement of my school in the project as outlined in the Information Sheet

YES NO

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Please return this form to AEF.

Appendix 4 Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form

Research Project: Constructions of Literature

Participant Information Sheet

Dear Participant

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project about teaching GCSE English Literature. The project aims to investigate what English Literature means to secondary English teachers, and to explore whether these perceptions and experiences impact on its teaching. It hopes to make recommendations regarding how we can best teach English Literature as a meaningful and interesting subject. The research is timely because 2017 is the first year in which a cohort of pupils will be examined using the new specifications for GCSE English Literature. Thus outcomes will inform future professional responses to this new curriculum for English Literature.

Why have I been chosen to take part?

You have been invited to take part because you are an experienced English teacher who currently teaches GCSE English Literature – the focus for the project.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is voluntary. It is entirely up to you whether you participate in the research project. All of the teachers in the English department are being asked if they would like to participate.

What will happen if I take part?

Along with the other participants, you will be asked to participate in an interview reflecting on your history with English Literature as both teacher and reader. If you give permission, I would then ask to observe you teaching GCSE English Literature before all participants are asked to take part in a focus group(s) to explore what English Literature means to them and to their teaching. These discussions would be recorded so that I can transcribe and analyse the results. Notes from the observations would inform these discussions.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part?

Neither you, your students, nor the school will be identifiable in any way. Time taken during school for the project will be carefully monitored to ensure that there is no negative impact.

I believe that you will enjoy being part of the research process. It is not often that teachers get the chance to reflect not only on their teaching but on themselves as teachers and as readers, and I hope this project will give you an opportunity to do this.

What will happen to the data?

Any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used in this project or any subsequent publications. Nothing linking you, your students or the school to

the project will be included in any sort of report that might be published. The recordings from the focus group discussions will be transcribed and anonymised before they are analysed.

What happens if I change my mind?

You can change your mind at any time in the project and withdraw without any repercussions. During the research you can withdraw permission by contacting me (Tel: ___, email: ___ and I will discard your data.

What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact my supervisor Dr Naomi Flynn, University of Reading, n.flynn@reading.ac.uk

Where can I get more information?

If you would like more information or if you are interested in the research results, please contact me using the above contact details.

I do hope that you will agree to participate in the project. If you do, please complete the attached consent form and return it to me.

Yours sincerely,

A. Farleigh

Anna Farleigh

This project has been reviewed by the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request.

Research Project: Constructions of Literature

Participant Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet about the project and received a copy of it.

I understand what the purpose of the project is and what is required of me.

All my questions have been answered.

Name:

_____

Please tick as appropriate:

	YES	NO
I consent to my interview being used as part of the research project	☐	☐
I consent to being observed	☐	☐
I consent to taking part in recorded focus group discussions	☐	☐

Signed:

_____

Date:

_____

Please return this form to AEF by ____ .

Appendix 5 Finalised Interview Questions

- What is the value of teaching literature?
- What is you role as a literature teacher?
- Should literature be a compulsory subject?
- What is it about teaching literature that you enjoy?
- Is personal response important in teaching literature?
- Is an emotional response to the text important?
- Should the texts that we teach be prescribed?
- Who should prescribe what we teach?
- Do you think that literature teachers should be readers?
- Do you ever talk about the books you are reading when you are teaching?
- Does it matter if we enjoy the books that we are teaching?
- How can we make literature teaching more inspiring?

Appendix 6 Potential Questions for Participant Individual Interview

Potential Questions for Participant Individual Interview

Aim: to explore teachers' experiences and perceptions of reading and teaching literature

Questions related to a teacher's background as a reader

1. Please explain your academic background with English Literature (for example, did you study it at university? Where? What did you study for your dissertation?)
2. When did you last read personally for pleasure?
3. How often, on average, do you read for pleasure?
4. What have you read recently for pleasure?
5. Are you / have you ever been part of a reading group?
6. What is the most important book that you have ever read? Why is it important to you?
7. What are your favourite childhood texts?

Questions related to being a teacher and a reader (in the classroom)

8. Is it important for English teachers to be readers and / or to enjoy reading?
9. How might teachers incorporate their role as a reader in their teaching?
10. How often do you share what you are reading with your classes?
11. What is the potential for this to enhance teaching?
12. To what extent is the aesthetic important in teaching reading?

Questions related to being a teacher of Literature

13. What writers have you found to be both valuable and successful with secondary age children?
14. What is your favourite text that you have taught at GCSE? Why?
15. How do you decide which books to use in the classroom?
16. Is Literature important? Is it as important as Language?
17. What do you perceive your role as a teacher of Literature to be: to promote cultural heritage or personal growth? Both? Something else?
18. Do you think that students should be taught the 'classics', or should the curriculum reflect a more diverse classroom?
19. How can aesthetic response be reconciled with exam requirements?
20. What is the role of the revision guide?

Questions related to the GCSE English Literature specification

21. Why have the GCSEs been reformed? What are your thoughts on this reform?
22. Have you read / are you aware of the rationale behind the revised GCSE English Literature specification?
23. Do you agree with the statement that Literature should be about the 'teaching of the best that is thought and written'? Is this problematic?
24. Are you aware of the increased value of Literature in the accountability measures?
25. How are you addressing this increased value in your teaching?

Appendix 7 Interview Transcripts

Interview One: Cassandra

Why do we teach English literature? What is the point of it?

I think it is important to teach English literature. I think it is to do with culture. I think it is knowing where we have come from. I think it is particularly prevalent in things like Shakespeare as someone who has had to study it and has not always seen the point.

Is there a point to studying Shakespeare?

I do. I am not sure that it should have as much waiting as it does in GCSE literature because it is so far removed from how we speak now, from how they speak now. I think there is a point in teaching it although whether it should be worth as much in the exam as it is, I am not sure about that. But I do think children because also once they get into the story, they do enjoy it as a story.

So why do we have to teach it?

Because there is so much of it, literally so much Shakespeare and it's easy to cover, like if you want one of those type of stories you've got those, romance you've got those, you want a bit of Tragedy, you've got that, comedy, love, what other ones are there, history. There is such a variety of Shakespeare that he is a good person to tackle things through.

Is that why we teach him?

I think it is to do with culture as well, experiencing Shakespeare is fundamental to our culture.

Why?

Why is he? Is it as simple as, maybe it is as simple as his stuff survived, or that it was worth making survive? He was the most prevalent I do think. I remember my Grandad used to recite Shakespeare and he used to say there was a Shakespeare quote for everything which there is because there's so much of it. I don't know. What was the question?

Are we studying Shakespeare because he was prevalent? Why else do we study him?

Because he brings the historical concepts of, we start here, because then when you look at An Inspector Calls or more modern day plays, like Blood Brothers, whatever else, it gives it a time scale, you've got a leap of something, it gives it something, this is where we were, this is where we are. Then also with Jekyll and Hyde in the nineteenth century, in the middle, it is almost a spanning of time. The thing that troubles me about it is how long it takes to teach it because it is not easy. Is it worth putting as much time when it is worth only the same as An Inspector Calls which you can do in a month?

So what is the value of Shakespeare?

I honestly don't know.

He was the only named author in the original subject content documents.

Really? Everybody knows Shakespeare. If you think about the cultural world we live in, but also the world we live in, everybody knows his name and therefore it must come from something. Like the Globe is there in London, people go there, even people who don't particularly care about Shakespeare or literature still go to the Globe. I do think it has to do with the stories. I always start when teaching Shakespeare, by saying, by saying that every one of his stories has been done or every story since is based on a Shakespeare story. He does deserve the respect of the masses because he came up with all that.

Is he good? Are they good stories?

Yes, but I think it depends on what you enjoy.

Does that matter, if you don't enjoy it? Or the kids?

No. But it's to do with the different plays and finding the right play for the right person. I've always loved Macbeth. You are going down the route you love because you love reading and you love literature. Romeo and Juliet, hate it. But now that I have studied it with them, I quite enjoy it and so it's about, but I also think it is quite a good tool for teaching children that actually if you persevere with something you can do this. It is hard. There's no getting around it. It is hard not just for the weakest kids, it's hard for some of the strongest kids as well. It's hard for me. It teaches you to be resilient.

Is that something literature should teach them?

Not necessarily, no, a little bit. I think you should read books that challenge you. Not all the time, necessarily, but you shouldn't put a book down because you don't understand some of the words. Because there are modern day issues in Shakespeare, the context changes but its things like with Romeo and Juliet, one thing the kids always grab onto is the fact that she is not yet 14 so, yes, in today's society everything about it is wrong. But it is about teaching them that the context has changed. Girls are not bred for breeding, well, but things change over time.

Ok, so moving away from Shakespeare. What then is the purpose of teaching literature? Why is it a compulsory subject, well at least in our school?

Because reading is really important. Reading is fundamental. It should be fundamental to our lives.

Don't we do that in language?

We do but I always think with language because it is extract and it is snippets that it is valuable to find things out, but I think there is something really good about diving into a novel. Because Jekyll and Hyde, teaching it to my 10y class was amazing because we got to discuss it in huge detail. I hated a Jekyll and Hyde when we first read it but studying it, teaching it with them makes you like it, love it even, but because it's about dual personality and you can talk about such in depth and

personal. It's to do with insight. When they finally get the insight into what they are reading, the deep matters, talking about the deep matters in a safe zone, you can talk about that thing you wanted to do that was a bit naughty, bit bad, but you didn't because society stops you. You can talk about that within the context of a book and it is impersonal and you can make it personal if you want, but you don't have to.

Do you think that in personal response to a text is important?

Yes, because it makes you think. It makes you, it makes you question the way you see people, it makes you question the way that you view the world, its makes you question the way that you perceive people, or yourself, it makes you see beyond the superficial. And I think it's really interesting to talk to people to discuss literature. It's really interesting because you say, no that's not how it is, what about this? what about this? within a safe space. So where someone is saying oh that's right, oh that's wrong, doing it is a step removed.

Is there a place in the exam for that kind of personal response?

Interesting. I think it would be a nightmare to mark. A more personal view on what you believe, a more moral question? I would find that really interesting but I don't know whether it is an English question. Is it an English question?

Is it not a literature question?

No, or maybe it is. I do think that literature is, I think literature is really interesting because it makes you think about things. I think there could be. You know with the Unseen poetry, how does the poet, there is scope within that for a more personal response because you've got nothing, you've been taught nothing. But the way that they did respond to it, but maybe you won't get the higher marks. Like the one we did the other day, they equated it with their phones, even though phones aren't really mentioned and loads of them wrote about their phones and how we should leave them alone and slow down which is what the poem was about. Maybe there is a place for a personal response, like do you like the character? Like, is Romeo an idiot? Indeed.

Does that have more or less value than critically analysing the language Shakespeare uses?

Maybe that is more of a language question. I think it is. In an exam you would have to have very specific expectations how you would mark it because in theory you are always right. As long you can explain your answer. From the very beginning of literature we always say as long as you can explain your answer, you can't be wrong. Maybe it is too much of a moral question. But I think that teaching children to enjoy literature from a personal perspective is really important.

Is that point of view more important than teaching them the history of literature or enjoying it from a cultural heritage point of view?

Yes. I have a massive issue with this nationalism thing that is going on. I do not think it is right to

exclude texts. Yes, we have a wealth of literature in this country, in England, but England is tiny and the thing with, for example Of Mice and Men was that it a great thing to teach about America. It was good for them to think outside of the box. How many of them have ever been to California? That might be the only sample they get of American culture. That is not a bad thing.

Should they be exposed to an English cultural heritage through literature?

I think the GCSE prioritises the culture aspect. Because that is the context they have to write about so having to make the links. So with the Birlings are capitalism and socialism, what's going on in England at that time but also in the world what is actually happening around. It is a way of teaching history and politics. So I guess that is important. I think it is good for people to see the world as a whole. This is what is happening. This is why people were the way they were and even though you are not meant to like Birling, you see why he is the way he is.

What if someone said the Inspector was wrong and they like Birling and their response was more personal?

I had that last year, she said the thing is, Mr Birling worked for his money, why shouldn't he keep it all and everyone in the class gasped. She was a confident girl. She could take it. She said, I'm feeling really judged right now. Why are you feeling judged? But then equally my aunt who was a massive socialist, I remember talking to her about this and she said that most of the world will think that Mr Birling was right. He has worked hard. Why can't he keep his money? But of course it is the way that the book is presented. That is what we have done.

How do you think you should present the book? What is your role as a teacher of literature?

I always do teach it as a moral tale. If you do this, if we don’t do this. It doesn't matter if she is the same person at the end. I have never thought about the fact that I am teaching it as a moral tale rather than as a personal thing. I do think it is worth making their own minds up. It would be interesting to teach it in a neutral way. What do you think of the characters? Tell me what your thoughts are, but then equally will that get the highest marks? That's not what the exam wants. The exam wants them to have sympathy with the inspector. Even if I haven't taught that and that is not the conclusion that they reached. So I need to teach that. What if they are saying that actually this fool is coming in and telling them? So the mark scheme would have to cater for it and I don't think at the moment it does. We are told to read it as Priestley views, he was a socialist. He wanted to impart his knowledge, his views on the world and this is his medium to do it.

Interview Two: Bea

What is the point of English literature? What is its value?

It has so much value though. The thing about literature is, for me, it's about experience, to tie your own experience with something else, or someone else, and make that emotional connection between you and somebody that you have never met and you will never meet. And it doesn't matter because you'll find something in common with someone else, a feeling, an emotion, a something, and you have that and that is never going to go away because it is always in the pages of that book. You can always have that. And, students should be able to find that as well. If there is beauty in that for us, there will be beauty in something for them.

What is your role as a teacher?

To find it for them, to try to find the things, the things that make them go, wow, that is amazing. And to try to show them as many different things as they possibly can and to make them realise that literature isn't, not to be offensive, that literature isn't some stuffy big, thick text, tome, a weighty thing that everyone says, well, this is worthy, but that idea that actually there are so many different things that are worthy that, almost, that it's ok for different things, to enjoy different things, and to find different things. We need to stop saying you need to read just because of worthy things but because they are, that they are massively important for GCSEs.

Does the current GCSE fulfil that definition?

I think it's really hard because within the lessons and the hours that we have to teach, you think about the range of literature that has been written, how we can ever hope in two years to reflect the range of literature that is available to students. But also, you have to ask what's the point? It is impossible. I guess through us directing them to other things, we can find a way to do that but I am not sure that a two year GCSE course will ever truly be able to encapsulate this wide beautiful range of literature that exists. In an ideal world, yes. It is also about trying to encourage students to find that elsewhere and I guess that is the difficulty. Most teachers, I would like to think most teachers, are inspired by literature that they find beauty in literature and we would try to inspire that in our students whether we are teaching them it for an exam or not. But, I don't know, it's very difficult.

Who decides and who should decide what is worthy?

That is a massive thing, isn't it? Up until very recently, it feels, worthy texts were written two hundred years ago by men, in particular, and that was what was considered to be worthy. The things that are in the canon that canonical literature, all kind of tends to be worthy. But that is changing and it is starting to change. It's an interpretation of things and surely if I read something and I find worth in it and I find beauty in it then that makes it worth reading.

Should the GCSE reflect that?

You can't reflect everybody's idea of what is worthy though can it, because we can only teach three books, well three longer texts. Unless you did lots of very short things that was from all over the place and I guess that is down to individual school, if they decide to dictate to teachers what they teach individually, or whether there are lots of different things on the GCSE specs. We all taste the same and whether that's valid or not, I mean it is, it works. I would prefer to teach other things than the ones that I am teaching, Lord of the Flies, Journey's End and that's the thing that I truly believe, if you love something that you teach it better.

How do you teach it better?

I think it's enthusiasm. I think it's understanding. I think if you feel an emotional connection to a text, whatever that is, or in whatever way, whether it is through a character or a theme or whatever, the way that you explore it with the class is going to be deeper and more emotional. I do think that I think that if you mechanically teach the same thing all the time just because it's what you've always done, you do lose that and yet that is easier. This is going to be an awful thing to say as a teacher, it is easier when you always teach the same thing because you've got the resources, you know it, but sometimes you lose that fire, sometimes you lose that fire when you're doing something because you completely love it and it's amazing.

You talk about the beauty of literature and how inspiring it is. Is there a place in GCSE for the canon or texts that are important to know?

Yes, because there is a reason why those things are great or considered to be great. You know my feelings about Shakespeare. I love him very much. There are genuinely people, I don't love Dickens, however, I understand that without Dickens the face of literature would have been different. I understand that without Shakespeare, things would have been different and I don't think there's anything wrong with sharing that with students. But I also don't think there is anything wrong with sharing other things with students which could be as valid to their life experiences.

Should this worth be presented as you are studying them?

Yes. He has changed the face of literature. This is somebody who if we look at the way that literature has developed over the course of time, this is somebody who has had a massive impact. So why is it, why has he had that impact, why has Dickens had that impact in the way he did? We're not necessarily saying to students that they have to love this because I think if you tell students they have to love it, they are not necessarily going to love it but saying this person did something that was truly different, or that changed the way that people thought about literature, what is it about him or her that did that?

Should the exam reflect an understanding of the importance of the writer or should it allow for the importance of the reader?

A difficulty with a personal response is that it is so personal. I could write a glorious essay about my personal response to Journey's End and potentially nobody else would have read it and felt the same way as me, and therefore nobody, therefore how do you judge if that person's interpretation is as good as somebody else's? You have to have that analytical, this is the effect that it has on people rather than on just me. Because, ok yeah, it made me feel like this, well that's great but that has actually got nothing to do with the book and what the writer was potentially trying to do. If it all becomes personal, there is no tangible, the writer is forgotten. They just need to pass the exam. It doesn't matter what I think. I just need to do what I'm told and get it right. Can you imagine if they failed because of me?

Is there a place for the truly personal response in literature?

Yes. You have to have an emotional response to a text, I think. Whether or not, I don't think you could have a whole exam on it but it could be part of what they do. Maybe I'm just so stuck in the confines of what we have to do and the way that I have been taught as well. I remember at school writing things and, you know, having people say, no that's not right. But if that's what I think then why is that not right? And we still do that for kids that we say to them, there's lots of right answers but ultimately gone are the days where you stay as long as you can justify it. No, it gets to a point where you are wrong, you are incorrect and that's how I was taught and I guess that is how I have always stuck in that.

Interview Three: Lucy

Why do you think the GCSE literature qualification was reformed? Did it need to be?

I haven't thought about it in terms of literature but I don't think literature needed to be reformed. I can understand why they reformed language with some of the gaming aspects of IGCSE, coursework, speaking and listening, things like that. But in terms of the literature, certainly the weighting that they previously had, controlled assessment or taking the book in, things like that I think were wholly appropriate and I think the reform is very unfair.

Why is it unfair?

Because it has gone to zero coursework or controlled assessments and 100% exam, I don't appreciate. And I think it is becoming a memory test rather than testing the skills of critical reading. Ultimately it's all just one big competition and all I have to do is make sure my students beat everyone else's students.

What do you think the government thinks literature is?

Studying old people. I think they moved away from, well, I think they wanted to move away from this idea of every child doing Of Mice and Men and every child doing An Inspector Calls but it has just been replaced by some other texts and we know that lots of kids will be doing Jekyll and Hyde. I think they wanted to make it more rigorous. They wanted to make it harder, and in that sense not being able to take the text in makes it harder and not having controlled assessment makes it harder. But I don't feel that the exam process tests the reading skills in a harder way.

Do you agree with the reform that wants to focus solely on English literature in English from England?

I think there is enough in the other texts, you know we have to do this one, this one, this one, there is enough coverage to allow for American writing or to allow for writing from another culture. At the minute the only opportunity for that is in the poetry. There is no other aspect every other aspect is English and old. Even An Inspector Calls is old. It's not modern, like they would class it as modern. I guess we don't have to do that. We could have picked a different text and a more modern text which they have included in. But for teachers' own peace of mind at a time of a huge amount of change they were always going to be sticking to texts that we know because there is so much else to do and I guess as well then you feel like you're doing your students better justice because you know what you were teaching them. I know with teaching Jekyll and Hyde for the second time this year was much better, the poetry second time around was much better, at least with An Inspector Calls last year, I knew what I was doing.

What do you think literature teaches them? What is your role as teacher? What would you like to teach them in literature?

For sure it is about the reading skills and questioning the writer, looking at how language has been used, and structure. But as well, one of the things I love about literature is that you learn so much about life and time and culture and place and whilst the literature that we have now got teaches us about parts of British history, it doesn't teach us about a wide view of viewpoints, cultures, certainly not culture, perspectives at all.

Does literature need to?

For me, that is what I love about literature and it doesn't. But if it is just about the reading skills then it doesn't matter which text you do ultimately, I guess. I also feel like it should inspire reading and inspire you to want to go away and read lots of other texts and I don't think it does that either.

Why is it not inspiring? Are you talking about inspiring you or inspiring the students?

I don't think it inspires the students. In terms of, I think the ideas that they explore are interesting and they engage with the texts for sure. But do they then go away want to read more Shakespeare? Do they want to go and read more plays about socialism? I don't think they do.

How can we make literature more inspiring?

In terms of wanting to go away and read, I think improving the same skills, maybe that's more like language, a bit like we do in Key Stage 3. But having your choice of text, more texts, but we for that. So is the issues that they have told us to do this, this and this? It is possible just for teachers to pick their own text? It wouldn't work. Equally, if they brought in another novel from another culture or a 21st century text and the children were reading 5 or 6 texts then that's unwieldy too.

Do you think it is important to highlight the cultural aspects of what we read in the classroom?

I think it is important to have a relationship, to be inspired, to have a response. I think that is more important than teaching the history of British literature. I think it is appropriate that they are exposed to British literature, of course it is, they are doing English literature, but I think we are more likely to get responses from a modern text then old texts, maybe not just modern, but texts that are different, whether that is time or place or culture or issue. I don't think the literature that the students have to study is very eye-opening.

What about you as a teacher? Is it is it important for you to be inspired by what you are teaching? Or should they be inspired?

I think it is very hard to deliver something when you are not inspired by it. I know that I don't get excited by Romeo and Juliet as perhaps I do the other two texts, because as much as Jekyll and Hyde is harder, I have got my head around it. I have enjoyed it. There are some really good bits to explore and I love An Inspector Calls. The problem, I guess, is a reaction or response that I might have, as much as that might be really really positive and I might to connect with it, doesn't means that the 30

kids in front of me are going to connect with it. Rather than asking what we understand, for example, we'd look at images of tsunamis and compare them with the images in the poem. We'd imagine we were the tsunami, maybe do a sensory description to capture the power. I would want the poem to inspire them.

Do you share your responses with them? Have you talked through your reading of the texts?

I talk about my responses to characters and how I have personally been engaged with them. I guess when I am trying to get them to think about why they have been presented in a certain way, like Romeo at the start being presented as confused before being presented as the love at first sight and it being something really special and true when ultimately we all think he's a bit of a loser at the beginning because all he moans about it love. Same with An Inspector Calls and Sheila. I think that's quite easy to do in terms of character and the connections you make. With Jekyll and Hyde in particular, when I read it through that first time with Year 11 that was quite good to share with them. Reading it for the very first time before I thought to study it was difficult and reading chapters again and going back, I think it helps them to realise that we are readers together. I think it helps them more than it helps me but maybe the fact it helps them, helps me because they're more patient and they realise they don't have to get everything first time.

Do you think it is important for English teachers to be readers?

Yes, ultimately we explore and try and teach the word and the power of the word to achieve something or to work out how someone has used the word, and if we don't enjoy putting words together, and don't enjoy breaking down words, then I think we can teach the processes, but how can we have that dialogue, like I struggled at that bit or when we put a piece of writing together and these are the decisions that I am making. You can't have that dialogue. You can teach the mechanics of it, but in terms of the creativity part, the creative response to something, all the questions you might have. Like when you're teaching poetry for example, today I said about Ozymandias and the heart that fed, I said I thought that was a really positive image first of all, who wants to argue with me? Because that was my gut feeling, the heart gave something but actually then is it the heart that was feeding off of and they were able to question that. But then I still have a couple who asked which one is right. But that's the idea. You are kind of on a journey with them in that sense that they are not just going to click, you can have three different ideas but that one is more credible. So I think it certainly helps. I think the best English teachers, maybe don't sit at home and write, but equally if you give me half an hour just to respond, I would really enjoy that. If you gave me a poem and asked me to analyse it, I would love it. The amount of times I see us when we have mock exams and we're sat at the back annotating the unseen poem, ready to tell them that this is how I would do it, how I

would have dealt with it, when we had the IGCSE texts, going through it and then talking to the kids about how they would do it, I think it helps massively.

Should literature be the teaching of the best that is thought and written?

I think it is important to recognise that there are pillars of literature but on the other hand I also think it is important to recognise diversity.

Who should make that decision?

Not someone who has been to Eton and has a first class honours in literature, or maybe not even that. Who would be best? I'm loathe to say the teacher because we would just bring one of our favourite books in and make kids read them, so how is that different to what the government is doing? I think there is a place for recognising that some literature is better than others and I'm not sure that even that is right.

Is some literature not better than others?

I don't think that that's appropriate actually. For example, look at Shakespeare when there are lots of other playwrights. I am sure even at Key Stage 2, they have to look at Shakespeare, at Key Stage 3 you have to look at Shakespeare, previously at Key Stage 3 SATs you were tested on Shakespeare. It just seems like nonsense and when we are getting further and further away from the language, and to study a whole text, and that is what the new literature spec has gone to where you have to know the whole text without the text in front of you, I think that's really unfair. I think that is more than GCSE level. That's not critical reading. It's not the right skill with the focus is on remembering things. But I get that in the previous GCSE, the A* candidates would have had to go in and they have to know their stuff, but if you didn't know the right quotation you had the time, you have the opportunity to find it. Now if you don't know a quotation, your understanding of a character could be brilliant but if you don't remember the quotation then you are going to be penalised and that's not fair.

Interview Four: Lena

What do you think is the value of literature as a subject? Does it have value as a subject?

Yes, it definitely has values as a subject for me. Thinking long-term about where some students might take that, they might question the value of it. But the skills that you take from it, the ability to analyse, the ability to make links between things, the ability to empathize, the ability to see things from different angles, understand how something is crafted, just look at writing, look at how things are put together, look at a piece of work that has so much that has gone into it the structure it, from start to finish. I would like to think that looking at all these things give them an appreciation of it, although I am not sure that that is the reality, but you know

All of these things are very much a student's personal response to a text. You didn't talk about the cultural value of literature. Is there are reason for that, do you think?

Perhaps I don't, maybe that is to do with being South African. Perhaps that does make a difference. The context is not the initial thing that I think about, but I do think it is important.

Why?

It is interesting and important to see, certainly historically, and then but although we don't do that much in terms of literature of other cultures. And Of Mice and Men, as lovely as it was was only a snapshot of a specific time in history. Whether it actually helps them understand an element of cultural heritage, I'm not sure.

Do you think that literature should incorporate an element of cultural history? Maybe not from other cultures specifically, perhaps the cultural history of literature?

As an English teacher, I feel like we should talk about the history of literature. But I think my initial reaction is to go back to look at it from a crafting point of view and how credible it is, and how amazing a text is, and culturally what does it teach them? I don't entirely know? I think it's interesting.

Should what we teach be prescribed? We have to teach Shakespeare. We have to teach something from the nineteenth century…

It should be because otherwise we would all just two things that we find interesting and it might not give us the broadest range. They might miss out on something.

Why do they need a range?

I think it is important to see things from an historical point of view and when you are looking at things historically I think it is quite interesting to bring in the context.

How often do you look at things historically?

Probably not as much as I should.

But who says you should?

I think to enjoy and appreciate a text you should have an understanding of it contextually, to me, I find it much more enjoyable if I understand the context of a piece.

Do you think that that is the expectation of the qualification?

Only in the sense of, to increase their understanding and enjoyment of a text. I guess it is hard for me to see to truly see the motivation apart from increasing our understanding and enjoyment of the text itself.

Do you think they should enjoy the texts?

It really saddens me to think but they wouldn't. It really saddens me because sometimes I feel like the way that we teach it makes them really not enjoy it. I just think it's also the nature of school of being forced to do something that you are not choosing to do because someone else has chosen to teach it to you. It's quite passive. Whereas, if they had come with a text they wanted to learn that would be very different. So it's that kind of prescription, that sort of prescribed approach.

Is the teacher quite passive because it is prescribed?

We teach Romeo and Juliet because there are lots of copies of it. I like to think, hopefully, because I am an English specialist that I like English so I like whatever I teach. Even Jekyll and Hyde I have chosen to teach it in previous years when I have had other options. I think having it prescribed is interesting because, on the one hand it makes you quite passive, but whatever you teach you do get into it, because the more you teach it and the more you explore yourself, the more interesting it becomes.

Do you share these explorations with your students?

I think I am quite good at this, you know, I have been going over this and I am not quite sure. These are my ideas, what do you think? I don't get this bit, does anyone else have any ideas? What might this lead to? It makes them respond better to it when you admit that you don't know what's going on, they give you a whole load of ideas you might not agree with and then you think, ok how do I steer this, how do I steer away from this?

Do you agree that literature should have increased value?

I think it should be weighted the same as language. Although on the language papers you can see the skills that are going to be far more useful for them, writing an email, writing a letter, communicating. But when they are reading literature that also give them understanding of how to communicate and an understanding of how to broaden their minds, their perspective, and how to see things from different angles. It is not necessarily that they are all going to go on to be writers but at least then you have that bank of things to draw on. Most people who teach English did literature at uni so why is language more weighted at college even when most people went on to do

literature? If you are going the route you love because you love reading and you love literature you are more likely to go with literature because you enjoy it.

Is loving reading important?

I think so. I don't, I really really don't think I could be an English teacher if I didn't love reading because if you are not excited by words and how they are put together, and ideas, and meanings how could you possibly enthuse them?

How can you enthuse them, if words didn't excite them?

It's tricky, I would find some texts that I find really interesting. But at GCSE, if you have the time, you could find texts that were more engaging for them and I think they find it as well. I'm sure of it. The more they unpick it, the more interested they become in it, because when they first read it, particularly with poetry they are not that interested but then you begin to pick it apart and you start to get excited by it, and they get excited by the connections they are making and by the things they are seeing. I can't see how I could ever do a full text with them, ever. I don't see how I would ever do anything other than extracts at GCSE though as there isn't time. I would love to share whole texts just from the point of view of trying to share an enjoyment and a love of literature but I don't honestly think I could fit one in unless it was a short story or something.

So are you not sharing a love of literature at the moment?

I am hoping still in the text that I am teaching but I suppose you can still show your love of it if you are showing extract but I certainly don't feel that I am sharing my passion for reading. But I feel that having a child has stagnated my love of reading.

Do you still read?

Definitely nowhere near as much as I used to. Probably holidays. I used to read every day. Now I read blog posts about being a mum.

Have you noticed that that has impacted upon your teaching at all?

It's hard to say because obviously it is bound up in having less time. Probably because, so many of your ideas for lessons come from something that you have read, that is going to work really well for this, and that links to that. So if you are not reading widely, that does potentially jam your creativity a little bit.

What are your thoughts on GCSE reform?

I like doing what I am told so I know that I am not getting it wrong.

Do you care?

I really oppose not taking the text in and memorising quotations. It is a memory test and that is not what we are trying to look at here. I see the value of learning and using your memory because the more you use your memory, the more it improves but I really cannot see the value in learning tens

and tens of, I was trying to look for a unit that was not as dramatic as hundreds, of quotations, just to be regurgitated. I think as it was before was much better where you had the extract and then you had to show your analysis skills and link it to other parts of the text, potentially. But having just a memory test. I loved teaching the course work because I loved feeling like we had all approached this question together. There was a real sense of understanding the text on a deep level and pulling it apart together in lots of detail whereas with this, I don't feel like with picking it up part in great depth because we have no idea which bit is going to come up and we're looking at a whole text. So I like that about the course work but it is so open to, it is not a fair system. Even the controlled assessments, how can you monitor that? It's not possible, is it? I understand why it had to change but I feel like now teachers cannot seem to escape the exam.

Interview Five: Silvia

Why do we teach English literature? Why is it a compulsory subject?

I just love it. I think it is one of those subjects that you can embed just about anywhere. It teaches, not necessarily morals, but different perspectives on how society was and how Society could be and it encompasses every aspect of society. So I look at it in terms of it being culturally enriching. It encompasses more open ideas for children. They can experience different cultures. It allows for individual freedom. It allows for them to express their own ideas and for them to understand that you can actually have a different interpretation but as long as you can support it and understand that this may be somebody else's interpretation or presentation of how society was or what society is. It's one of those things you can look at from so many different views. It can be a bit subjective but that's a type of freedom as long as they follow the mark scheme.

Do you think anything should be prescribed or should it be more free?

I think it should be more free. You know, to sit there and say a writer uses a technique for this purpose, sometimes I find it destroys it because you are looking at a simile rather than the whole picture. The very bright children will understand that the author is trying to put things across but they can do it in a way where they understand that that is not just it. Higher ability students will look at it from the perspective of the author. Lower ability students will just see the simile and say what do you think, miss?

Do you think that you, as a teacher, should have more choice in picking what you teach?

I don't like texts being prescribed. You have to look at the class. I think that sometimes when you look at a particular group of students that you have got, Jekyll and Hyde could be appropriate but perhaps not. One of my year 10 classes love it, the others do not. Jekyll and Hyde, I have grown to love it. I have reread it for enjoyment, to think about different ideas, just think about how I can get them the higher grades with different interpretations. I say to them when I was rereading it I thought of this. Could that link? They say, that's really good and all of a sudden we are reading it together and they realise you can read a book more than once and still learn new things, but also for your enjoyment. But you do need to look and see who you have in front of you. You have to meet the needs of your client base. For the students that struggle A Christmas Carol, even though it has a simple idea, has so many structural values to it, and concepts. It's like Of Mice and Men, the fact that it has been taken off the syllabus did not annoy me at the start because I hated it. I thought by escaping New Zealand I wouldn't have to teach it again and the first thing I have to teach when I arrived in this country was Of Mice and Men. But now not teaching it a year, looking at some of the kids we shouldn't be teaching them literary devices we should be teaching them values, what Lennie represents, what Candy represents. I'm showing them that actually there is nothing wrong with

being different or unique, or growing old, or being a female, it is how you deal with it yourself. So I am beginning to think I would like to go back to it. It's like To Kill a Mockingbird, what a beautiful book, so beautifully written. Looking at different cultures and being from a different culture brings a different perspective.

Do you agree with the government's decision to only include English literature in English in the new specification?

I think in a way, at one stage I found it to be insular as if to say this country is the only country that has got amazing authors. However, being from New Zealand there is nothing wrong with looking at the authors from your own country. You have to look after your own heritage, your own culture. I think that is important. Giving the children a pride in their cultural heritage, there is nothing wrong with that. However I do think prescribing it just to British texts does narrow it. I understand what they are doing. In some British texts the social and historical aspects are so enriched, especially for the higher achievers who get so much out of it. You can't lose that, the Brontes, Wuthering Heights, these are my favourite texts. I think they have a place in this culture although perhaps not in year 11. Most of the authors that we prescribe are generally male. Where are the female authors? What? That is the bigger issue. I love that we have introduced The Mill on the Floss at Key Stage 3.

Why do you think they changed the exam?

It was stagnant. A new exam allowed for a new freedom of females, Mary Shelley, Jane Austen, Katherine Mansfield. Until the children start loving reading, like we love reading, in terms of not just looking at extracts but looking at a whole book and really taking it in. I will read a book and I'll think, oh that's a really good piece and I have to stop and ask why can't something just be read because it is beautiful? Why can it not just be this is a beautiful text and not be over analysed? So I sometimes think, you know, we shoot ourselves in the foot because we sometimes over analyse so maybe that is why they don't love reading. But that is because we are controlled by the education system which is very male oriented. But equally they are influenced by what they have read and what they were taught so it goes without saying that it is going to be pushed down onto us and what we have to do.

Do you share what you are reading with your classes?

I very much do especially since having William. I say to Ricky that he has to read and William will go and sit beside him and read beside him. It is actually really nice because we are trying to get him to read, without saying to him you've got to read, he will pick it up off us. I am a reader through the summer holidays, you know, with marking and stuff, now it takes a month rather than a week to read a book, the practicalities of it. I always tell them what I am reading.

Interview Six: Celia

What is the value of teaching literature? Why do we do it?

It sounds like the question that the kids asked, what is the point of this? Are we ever going to need it in the future? But literature teaches lessons, it teaches life lessons. I prefer teaching literature to language, if I'm honest. I don't know whether I'm better at it but I prefer it. I love getting into the place. I love getting into the novel. Probably, poetry is my weakest the area of literature but I still enjoy teaching it because it leads you into discussions. It leads you into debates. It illustrate points that you can't necessarily get through reading prose or looking at piece of language from that perspective.

What is it about it that you enjoy? What do you mean by life lessons?

I suppose what I enjoy is the fact that, take Romeo and Juliet for example, my year 11s when we started asked, what's the point of studying this? It's so old. It's written in such a way. But once they have got the message of the story they come back to you and they say, well actually, this theme is still relevant today and actually I am learning something about how this character reacts in comparison to somebody I've seen reacting in exactly the same way. I don't want to say if you teach it right, but the way in which you teach it sometimes gets them to think through the implications in their own lives of what they are seeing in the literature and also broaden their horizons. If you think about it from the context point of view, you know it's exasperates me when we do a short story reading and we say that nursery rhyme, that fairy tale, and they don't know it and you say, what do you mean? Where have you been your whole life? And then you can build on that and say, this is the intertextuality of this or they've taken this idea from here and you're almost backwards teaching them things they should have known in primary school that they perhaps haven't done that you can still build that into your lesson.

When you say things they should have known, do you think there is a value in having some texts prescribed that they should have learned at primary?

That is a hard question because part of me thinks that would be an awesome idea because then we know where they are coming from and what they have got as their background knowledge. But also, it is very limited to say that you have got to know this by the age of such and such. To be that prescriptive to say you can't go off on tangents and you can't do literature or short stories from another culture in year 6 because we haven't covered this, it would limit it. However, I don't know whether it's an age thing. Maybe we've been teaching for long enough that the things that we reference are starting to become less relevant like fairy tales or nursery rhymes, or talking about a certain program they might have watched. For example, we were talking the other day about 9/11.

When it becomes out of their sphere of understanding then suddenly you get to that point where what I'm teaching them has to have more context otherwise it isn't relevant. So you've got to teach the context alongside the literature as well.

Which do you think is more important? That understanding that literature has come from somewhere or having a personal response to it, even if it is not relevant?

You cannot have one without the other. We were talking about this with poetry the other day. However much you read the poem and you make connotations and associations to do with it, things must be taught because the examiner is ultimately going to want to see, we have no choice, and we as teachers are going to want to see, the student personally interact with the poem and make their own associations that is worthy of their own life. To say that you should just have a personal response to the literature without any awareness of the context, I think would devalue it but from the other perspective just talking about the context of it and they don't appreciate it and they don't interact with it personally, then again it becomes a pointless exercise and it just becomes ticking boxes. You just have to do what the exam wants.

Should there be any prescription in what we teach and if so, who should prescribe?

The easy answer is yes, because then as a teacher you don't have to learn hundreds of new texts every couple of years whenever the specification changes and so on. But I think in all honesty, as a teacher you should develop and therefore text that you haven't studied or don't know as well, it is a good thing for you to do to teach new things, to learn new things that you might be learning alongside your students or just ahead of your students, but you are still improving your knowledge of literature. And you might see some intertextuality in something that you are teaching, if you continue to broaden what you do rather than sticking with the same texts. For example, when things like Of Mice and Men go off the syllabus and everyone says, oh this is awful, because we used to love teaching it to a lower ability, or we used to love teaching it because it was short enough that you could get it done and do lots of practice of things, yes, it's a shame that it is going but in the same breathe you are also thinking this gives us a chance to put something else in. And even when we have discussions in department meetings, haven't we, about how somebody loves Dickens, somebody loves Hardy, where somebody else thinks both of those are shocking, to have it so prescriptive that you have to teach the same texts limits the teacher because they have got their area of skills and their area of passion.

What do you think about the guidance that said you must have something from the 19th century, for example, is that a good compromise from the exam boards?

Personally, I suppose I am a bit of a traditionalist when it comes to that, I would cry if they got rid of pre-1900 because I really think, even though it's tough, and maybe there are ways of approaching how difficult it is in the language used and so on, I think there is value in it looking at society, looking at how it was written then, looking at what was important then versus what we think is important and even the more modern texts. I would similarly cry if there was no Shakespeare on the syllabus and again that goes back to my point of how relevant it still is despite the fact that students will initially go, but I can't read it. Once they get beyond that, and once they're lying on the floor re-enacting the murder of Paris by Romeo, then they feel the value in it, why characters do what they do and the reflection of that on everyday life. I guess I would always be an advocate for a wide range of literature texts and from my background as well that would include literature from other cultures and longer pieces of literature from other cultures because I think the title of English literature just because we are in England does not mean we should stick to that. I have had experience of teaching novels that have been written by authors from New Zealand and authors from South Africa and so on, so I think I suppose coming full circle, do I think it should be prescriptive? Actually, if you've got somebody that has got the skill of a certain area of world literature or something like that, maybe we should develop that and bring it into the curriculum.

Why do you think the government has narrowed it to literature from England in English?

I don't know. Part of me thinks it is a bit irresponsible because it does narrow experiences and it narrows what you can do. But then, actually if you think of the makeup of a class even in even somewhere like Tadley, we have students coming from, I have a student from Malaysia in my tutor group so you are almost limiting their understanding and limiting how they feel valued and what they can input into a lesson if you are saying that this is how we do it in England and this is what Britain is like 40 years ago and what Britain is like 150 years ago.

So are you saying that their personal interaction of the text should be prioritised over the literature of England? Does your Malaysian student need the opportunity to experience a Malay text?

I think so. Although, I don't think it has to be their country. I guess, I am contradicting myself a little bit here because I'm thinking like, across the entire literature syllabus, or curriculum, I would like to see older pieces, the Shakespeare, The Hardy, the Dickens, but I would also like to see the wider pieces. I do not think that narrowing the curriculum so that you've got to study certain authors and like the stuff with Of Mice and Men where they have kicked out the American influence writers, I don't think that that will have any influence on results or even enjoyment of literature.

So do you think that we need to change what literature is? Should literature be the teaching of the best that has been thought and written?

That is a subjective quotation, isn't it? The best according to whom? There is the government that is saying that teaching literature should be about teaching the best literature and here are the texts that we think that they are. Well, in ten years' time that is going to change and if you ask every English teacher in the country, they will come up with a different list of who they think the best writers, the best playwrights are. To narrows that to, it's only people who were born in Britain, I think is missing so much opportunity when you have got, even if it's not a translated text even if it's a text from New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, it's still a different perspective on life and a bit more of a wider context to help students understand and to look at from.

When you are teaching, do you ever talk about books that you are reading?

I probably speak less about the ones that I find difficult or have given up on, mainly from a perspective of I would talk to them about the ones I like or have finished or are passionate about in to enthuse and to inspire them to read in the same way. I think especially in Key Stage 3 classes and maybe by Key Stage 4 they have made their own decisions as to what they like to read. But if you talk to students that are not naturally readers you don't want to spend too much time talking about what you found tough or what you haven't finished because they won't hear the I tried hard with this part, they will hear that well, even English teachers don't finish what they're reading. I kind of want to inspire and to enthuse and say that I loved this one and I read this whole series, those kind of ideas because then they would get into the mindset that miss is a reader and miss likes this. I think they would listen to me more as I know what I am doing.

How does this impact upon what you are teaching?

And it impacts on your teaching because the more inspired and passionate you are about something that you have read and about something that you are using in your lesson that reflects, doesn't it, on your teaching. Whereas if it is something difficult, would I say with year 11, would I say that poetry is the area that I find most difficult? I don't know? I don't know. With our current syllabus I have certainly said that my favourite thing to teach is An Inspector Calls and Romeo and Juliet. I don't know if I have gone as far as to say I really don't like the Anthology or I find Jekyll and Hyde really taxing to teach to you. I think probably I go more the other way and say if we were to rank them, these are the ones that I love the most. Does that reflect on them? Do they get better marks in the ones that I am a bit more passionate about? I'm not sure.

Do you think that we should be passionate about what we teach? How does that impact on how we teach it?

Somewhat. I wouldn't say 100%. I don't think I put in more effort and enthusiasm with the texts I like next to the texts I don't like. Equally, I don't think it works the other way. I don't think I try any harder with the ones I am not as keen on. I think you've got to be there for your class. There has to be a sense of justice about have I done the right thing by what I have taught. Would I read around it as much? Would I be as creative? Maybe not. Would I make sure that they text ticked all the boxes, yeah, it's a balance I suppose, not a straight answer.

Is there a place for teaching the history of the literary canon?

I would love to see us teach something like that. Colleagues of mine in a previous school used to dedicate their classroom to the history of literature, so they would literally have in this period of time Chaucer was writing, this was when this seminal text was released. It would be really interesting to teach that. Is it the absolute best use of time? That is another question. Could you dedicate some time to it? Could we have something like that that we dipped into to build up their contextual awareness but that wasn't necessarily a unit? I don't know if that is because of my enthusiasm for it or because the more novels and plays and poems that we teach over our career, the more I think it would be so interesting for the kids to see where things are placed in a Continuum so they have that awareness, so they don't say 50 years ago and mean 200 years ago. This was how things were. They don't have a cultural awareness that matches the literature context. I would love to do something like that but I don't know how much real value it would have.

Appendix 8 'Tsunami Girl' by Harriet Torr

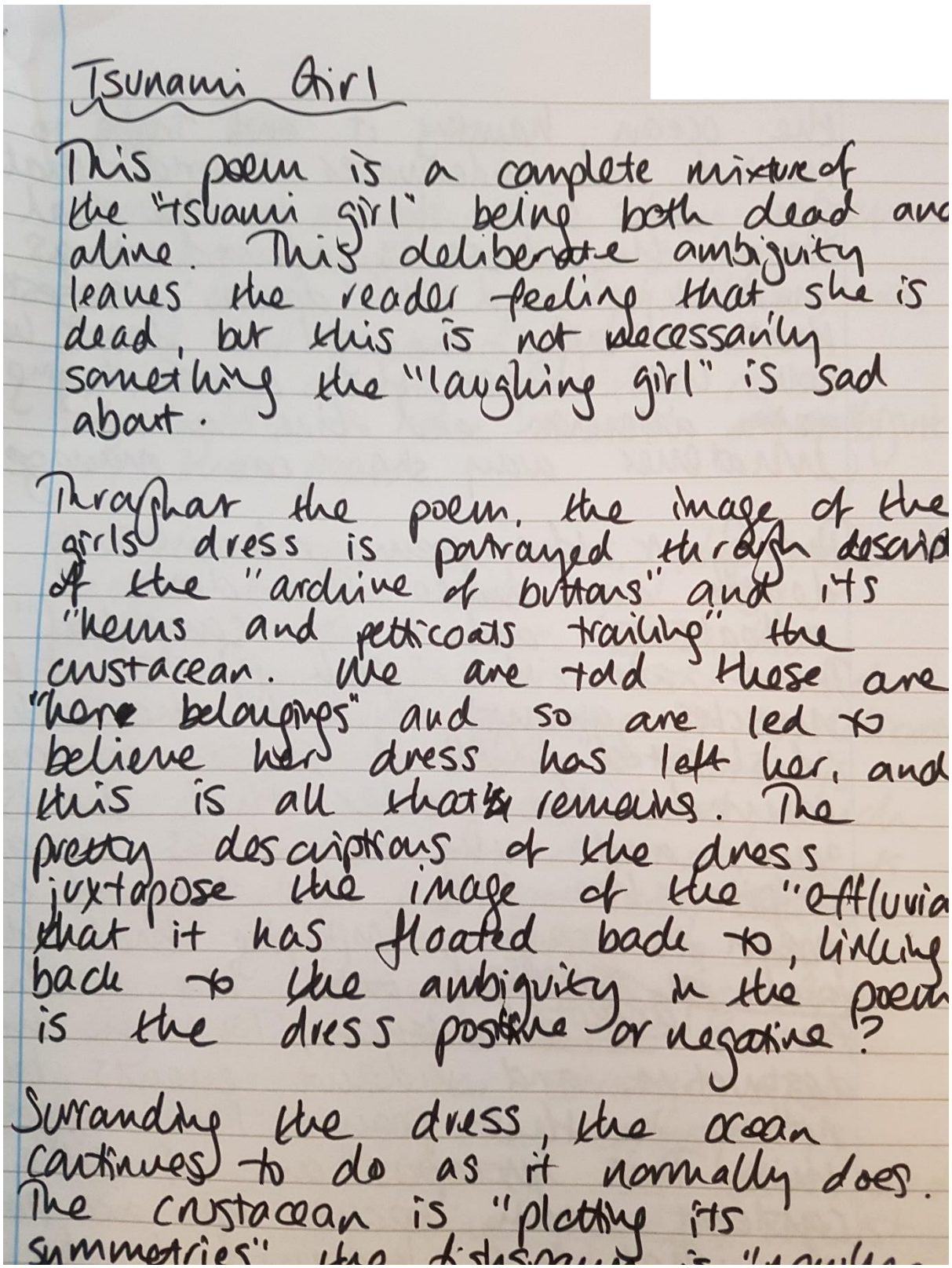
Tsunami Girl by Harriet Torr

Her belongings, like skins,
float back to the original effluvia of ocean beds.
An archive of buttons, newly dyed with fishspawn,
congealed with masonry skill,
disturbs the isotopes of an ocean's plan.
A crustacean, plotting the symmetries of a world
between its kelp stones, stares at the hems and petticoats trailing him.

The pink ghosts of muscles still fasten
round the dress and an occasional sea bird
dips its beak into its folds, deciphering its smells,
the idiosyncrasy of its shapes, the neck stem displaced,
the dislocated spine of its buckle digging the waist
where a strong hold of sea lice thrill to its curves.

TV men with diving suits and tanks
return for a second take;
the satin dress holding itself up to the poles of the waves
like origami dancing, twitching lace mimicking breath,
sand filled pouch, its warmth.
It dances past the slow differential of a fin
its acrimony of scales, its Mache print of skin
to the laughing girl shedding herself
like Narcissi in the tsunami wave.

Appendix 9 Creative responses to 'Tsunami Girl'



Tsunami Girl

This poem is a complete mixture of the "tsunami girl" being both dead and alive. This deliberate ambiguity leaves the reader feeling that she is dead, but this is not necessarily something the "laughing girl" is sad about.

Throughout the poem, the image of the girls dress is portrayed through descriptions of the "archive of buttons" and its "hems and petticoats trailing" the crustacean. We are told these are "bone belongings" and so are led to believe her dress has left her, and this is all that remains. The pretty descriptions of the dress juxtapose the image of the "effluvia that it has floated back to, linking back to the ambiguity in the poem is the dress positive or negative?

Surrounding the dress, the ocean continues to do as it normally does. The crustacean is "plotting its symmetries" the dismount is "graceless

Madam Eye.

Cautiously at first, I rise from my self-induced temporary coma and prepare for battle. This time, no-one will survive. It fills me with pride that, as my wrath builds, my heart rate increases until I have worked myself up into an all eclipsing rage.

At this point, they are still clueless. If only they knew what was coming; how their days, or even lives, would end. If only they knew how much I loathed them all for what they've made me. What I've become. Yet how could they? Some of them don't even believe in me.

I've changed my mind - cruel I know - but I don actually care that most will be 100 % defenceless they deserve it.

It's time to begin my unpredictable approach. Inwar I smile. The exterior, though, should be a sight to behold for the very few who pay attention to su things. My gut feeling is that they don't belie I can wipe them out. That destruction will come from above or "out there" rather than from within.

escalating the tumultous

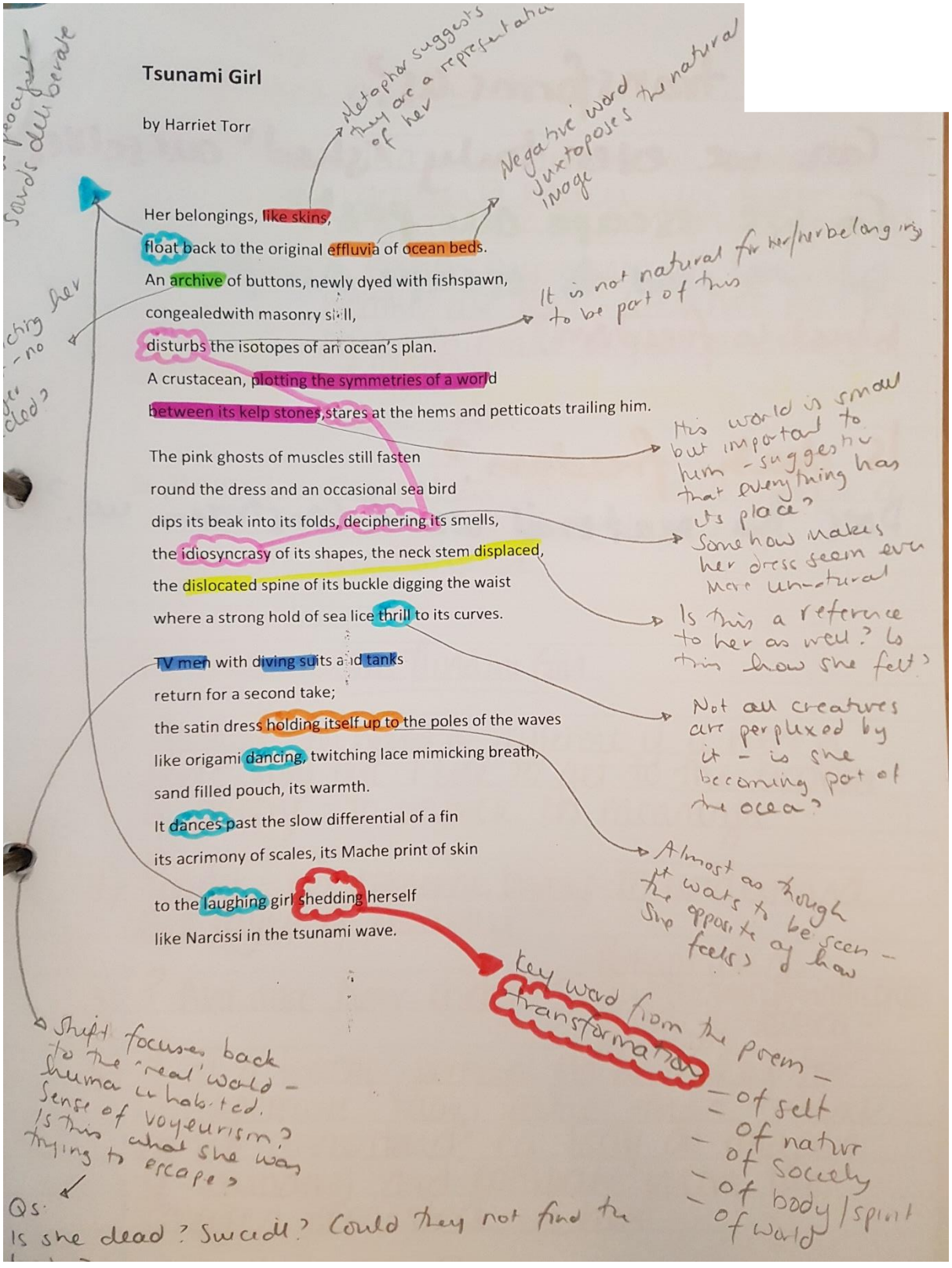
Tsunami Girl.

Tarr could be expressing her desire to remove the control of the patriotic society we live in and this could be shown in her opening 'Her belongings, like skins float back to the original effluvia of ocean beds.' With the removal of her belonging it creates an aspect she is shedding her identity that was constructed on her by society, and replenishing her life.

With the ocean being a force of natural it is natural for her to want to be cleansed, she is an unknown identity travelling in a world of uncertainty and the concept of freedom is one in which she craves. With the use of the variation of stanzas and with them reflecting shapes likes waves establishes this view of rebirth.

Reflection

I like to think through and enjoy pulling apart written texts I responded in the way of the environment


Tsunami Girl
by Harriet Torr
Her belongings, like skins,
float back to the original effluvia of ocean beds.
An archive of buttons, newly dyed with fishspawn,
congealedwith masonry still,
disturbs the isotopes of an ocean's plan.
A crustacean, plotting the symmetries of a world
between its kelp stones,stares at the hems and petticoats trailing him.
The pink ghosts of muscles still fasten
round the dress and an occasional sea bird
dips its beak into its folds, deciphering its smells,
the idiosyncrasy of its shapes, the neck stem displaced,
the dislocated spine of its buckle digging the waist
where a strong hold of sea lice thrill to its curves.
TV men with diving suits and tanks
return for a second take;
the satin dress holding itself up to the poles of the waves
like origami dancing, twitching lace mimicking breath,
sand filled pouch, its warmth.
It dances past the slow differential of a fin
its acrimony of scales, its Mache print of skin
to the laughing girl shedding herself
like Narcissi in the tsunami wave.
Metaphor suggests they are a representation of her
Negative word juxtaposes the natural image
It is not natural for her/her belongings to be part of this
His world is small but important to him - suggests that everything has its place?
Somehow makes her dress seem even more unnatural
Is this a reference to her as well? Is this how she felt?
Not all creatures are perplexed by it - is she becoming part of the ocean?
Almost as though it wants to be seen - the opposite of how she feels
key word from the poem - transformation
- of self
- of nature
- of society
- of body/spirit
- of world
Shift focuses back to the 'real' world - human uninhabited. Sense of voyeurism? Is this what she was trying to escape?
Qs:
Is she dead? Suicide? Could they not find the

Tsunami Girl

By Bea

I have no name.
All I once was, all I owned
Now gone
Returned to the earth,
Decaying in the depths.

And yet I am captured here, forever,
Immortalised in print and yet
I have no name.
In some way, I will continue,
I will remain.

I will remain a girl.
Never aging.
Never changing.
I will remain.
A girl. Tsunami girl.

Defined by two things
Over which I have no control.
Defined entirely by circumstance,
An event,
An accident of birth? An acccident.

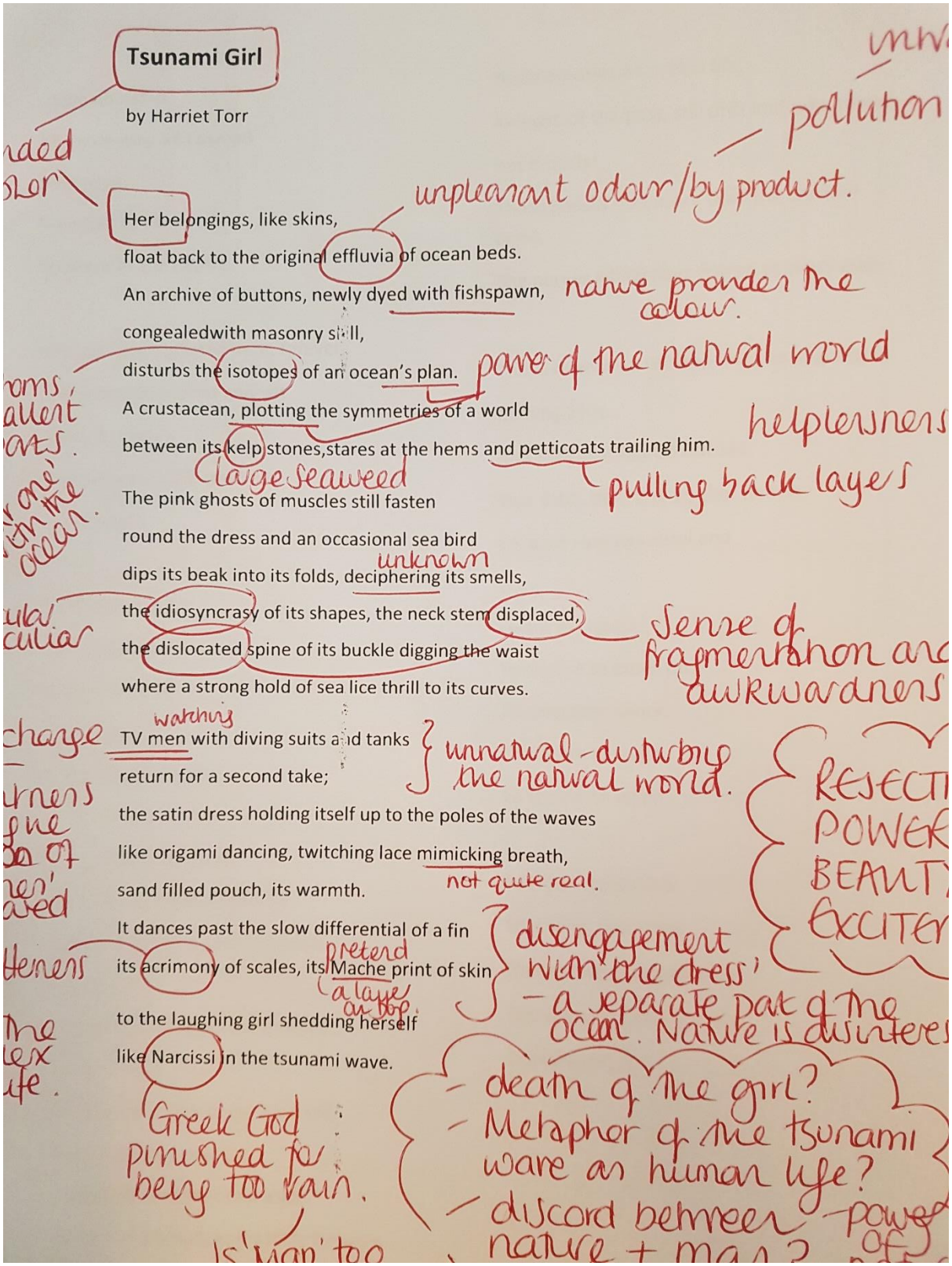
As I scatter, my flesh decayed and
Torn, becomes new life.
Nurturing, my self is cast aside,
A wave of triviality as my body becomes more.
Disturbing, disrupted, in this great plan.

The memories from that life,
An echo of the past, still drift and take shape.
But it hurts!
Those ghosts hurt more than the crack of bone,
The nerves hurt more than the crack of bone,
The nerves which have frayed at every edge.

Those memories recreate me – taking shape,
Coming alive…
And they look but do not see,
That thrill, that feeling, that dance.
Because I am beautiful and

I want to choose.
To choose to move on.
To choose to dance.
To choose to laugh.
To choose to let go.

As I listen to the sea.
That song, that wave.
That moment, that chance.
This chance to remain a girl.
Tsunami girl.


Tsunami Girl
by Harriet Torr
pollution
unpleasant odour/by product.
Her belongings, like skins,
float back to the original effluvia of ocean beds.
An archive of buttons, newly dyed with fishspawn,
nature provides the colour.
congealedwith masonry still,
disturbs the isotopes of an ocean's plan.
part of the natural world
A crustacean, plotting the symmetries of a world
between its kelp stones,stares at the hems and petticoats trailing him.
helplessness
large seaweed
pulling back layers
The pink ghosts of muscles still fasten
round the dress and an occasional sea bird
unknown
dips its beak into its folds, deciphering its smells,
the idiosyncrasy of its shapes, the neck stem displaced,
Sense of fragmentation and awkwardness
the dislocated spine of its buckle digging the waist
where a strong hold of sea lice thrill to its curves.
watching
TV men with diving suits and tanks
return for a second take;
unnatural - disturbing the natural world.
RESECTI
POWER
BEAUTY
EXCITER
the satin dress holding itself up to the poles of the waves
like origami dancing, twitching lace mimicking breath,
not quite real.
sand filled pouch, its warmth.
It dances past the slow differential of a fin
its acrimony of scales, its Mache print of skin
pretend
a layer or two.
disengagement with the dress, - a separate part of the ocean. Nature is disinteres
to the laughing girl shedding herself
like Narcissi in the tsunami wave.
Greek God punished for being too vain.
- death of the girl?
- Metaphor of the tsunami ware as human life?
- discord between nature + man?
- power of

Appendix 10 Initial analyses of first research question taken into observation

Theme: choice

1. There is a vast amount of literature
2. This vastness means that people can find their own
3. Response to literature is inspired by freedom of choice
4. This is not always a choice that can be made
5. Literature has become a memory text

Theme: inspiration/engagement

1. Inspiration is something personal
2. Inspiration can manifest physically as well as intellectually
3. Being inspired as a reader is at odds with being inspired as a teacher
4. Literature is brought to life in the imagination of the reader
5. Different people imagine different things

Theme: emotion

1. Literature evokes a deeply personal response
2. Maelstrom
3. Teachers want students to have an emotional response

Theme: knowledge

1. Knowledge is a journey of discovery
2. Literary knowledge is intimidating
3. Complexity
4. Knowledge equates to an answer

Appendix 11 Field Notes from observations

24/05/17: Cassandra

On board: The characters' first moment in the play – how has Shakespeare chosen to introduce them? Synopsis of Act 1 and Act 2 (you need to know for both what key events happen and how the characters respond)

What is happening?	Thoughts and questions
I want you to look at the bullet points – you need to know them	*knowledge? explicitly identified*
I need you to know	*why? know*
I am going to ask you things at different points – the whole point of this lesson is that you know what you need to know for the exam… what do we need to know … we need to get it right for the exam	*knowledge again – continually mentioned, Shakespeare reduced to knowledge FOR THE EXAM*
the whole thing is Shakespeare has chosen to introduce the character in this way – Ollie how does Shakespeare introduce the Friar? What technique does he use to make us trust him?	*reading already defined – no chance for discussion. targeted question but for predefined answer*
how does he introduce Lord Capulet? what do we need to know? what does he ask for? Benvolio? what does he hate?	*know – questions not encouraging dialogic discussion*
what happens in act one? Eve – what happens in Act One? Do you feel sorry for Juliet? What is she like? Where does romeo go? can you remember? why does he lock himself away? what do we find out about Juliet in act one? who goes to the party? should they? who stops them fighting? what happens at the end of act one? how does it start? which scene is famous? what do they declare to each other? what does romeo see? what does the nurse say? what happens at the end of act two?	*lack of enquiry. pupils not actively participating. questions looking for recall. assumptions not challenged. knowledge of anonymous 'expert' prioritised*
right. That is your synopsis. This is what happens. You need to know this.	*yes – they do need to know a synopsis upon which to build critical reading but this is not mentioned – no 'why'*
What is Juliet like? What word did I use? Pragmatic. Which quotes show she is pragmatic?	*recall of answer. no opportunity for critical dialogic talk of challenge or disagreement*
any big questions about this?	*…yes! but none – missed opportunity to model anyone who has changed their mind about the character or other perspectives about her pragmatism*
Do you think Shakespeare thinks women are weak? Do they need men? Is it because Juliet is a virgin? do you want help? you know what the Friar says – he could be talking contextually, that women are weak and need men? men have different experiences of virginity, if Juliet was not a virgin that was a big deal. if romeo was not,	*'could be' – opportunity to explore personal response to this – misogynistic? or not? feminist? why?*

then it was not really a problem. It's not the same now. Or is it? I don't know. There is no right answer.	
you need to soak in this knowledge like a sponge – like a sponge – you are creating your revision resources for next year – we need to get it right for the exam	*reducing the complexity of human experience into a wet sponge dripping with predefined knowledge of the 'right answer' for the exam*

move to working on cue cards

on white board*: who is there? what are they saying and why? what is happening in this scene? how has Shakespeare presented them? what contextual factors could you link to this? what techniques has Shakespeare used?*

18/05/17: Celia

On board: The Family Supper: Kazuo Ishiguro

What is happening?	Thoughts and questions
I love this story – it reminds me of my time in the far east – we are going back next week – I actually get to talk about it	*emotion – context – personal connection makes reading relevant*
start with the author: read through the biography on the board – pick out four pieces of information that you think are important about the author – we start with the author	*choosing to start with author as person – emphasise of his importance*
what is important about the author – why is his dream to be a musician significant?	
obviously the story we are going to study has a Japanese cultural element to it – this is important	*is it obvious? what about those who don't know about Japan? can they still access the text? do they need cultural knowledge – capital?*
note down as many ideas as you can about Japan – what do you know, what have you heard, what words are Japanese, what cultural ideas do you know, what do you know	*capital linked to knowledge?*
Tell me about Japan: something other than sushi or Mount Fuji – what do we know	*moving beyond stereotype – sharing personal knowledge – stories of holidays*
all these points are going to be relevant about our story	
cultural references on the board	*anticipating relevance*
what you need to know before we start studying a story about Japan is about their culture and about their traditions so we understand what the writer is trying to tell us	*'need to know' – understanding linked to knowledge. what about the emotion/feeling of the 'love' at the start?*
to student from the Phillipines have you heard of Fugu?	*out of context could be perceived as racial assumption but teacher knows student*
It's important to know about Fugu to understand the story	
whose point of view is the story coming from? who is telling the story?	
so in the story you did it in your own kitchen – this is compared to the information about the Fugu fish we just learned – it is more personal	*moving away from analysis of technique back to personal connection*
(a student) Japanese culture is based on respect so if you don't eat the food it is disrespectful	*personal nuggets from experience*
Tatami floor? what is it?	*nice work in linking teacher's experience with students' (or lack of)*

What is a samurai? (shares knowledge)	
If you think about it from a Japanese perspective, think about this man, and his disgrace – I wonder if Japanese employment is quite low?	
How does the narrator feel about Japan compared to the rest of the world?	
Find your world maps – find California on the west coast. If you were catching a plan to Japan where would you fly? How long would it take?	*moving beyond efferent to position Japan in reality – nice touch – lots of talk about how far away it is from here – engagement*

Japanese cultural artefacts – kimono wrapped around Lottie – Is that yours miss? Game with chopsticks and coriander seeds with Connor and James are those your chopsticks? – you need the Wagamama ones put chopsticks on your spider diagram, put rice, put sushi

25/05/17: Lena

On board: London: connotations; post-its on table

What is happening?	Thoughts and questions
you have got three minutes to write down as many connotations as you can for the word London- they don't have to be amazing – the person with the most gets a house point	*assumption based on school's proximity to London although prob wrong to assume all have been – not addressed – learning incentivised*
what are connotations? you tell me	*teacher not positioned in discussion*
can you find one word from your list that you think is the key, the main connotation to the word London	
we are going to make a list of connotations that we associate with London	*'we' together yet teacher has not shared her connotations or moved to her feelings, associations, connection to London – does she need to?*
this is going to be interesting because we are going to look at our view of London compared to blake's view of London – we are going to think about his view of London and what is happening at that time, how that links in to our view of London	*'we' again but not teacher 'we' – she is excluding herself*
pick a character *chimney sweep, harlot, new-born baby, soldier, royalty, priest*	
imagine that you are one of those characters and write as if you are that person – I would be interested to see how you would write as a new born baby – describe London either in present time or nowadays	
imagine you are a harlot, you are now a harlot,	*to one student – disengaged – going for humour and more aesthetic response*
(how am I meant to know that) I don't know – imagine!	*…what a harlot would feel….*
what is the technical term for stating the obvious? Don't forget we need the method for the exam	*link to exam but only briefly – although tempering aesthetic with more efferent 'what we need'*
(why would you have to clean a chimney?) to get all the soot out, to clean it, we don't have it so much now	
I like these ideas	*but no personal response to poem or to London itself*
the soldier as the protector, on the streets like in the news at the moment, protecting us	*link to an emotional response but not pursued*
the way he explains things and the perspectives that he has on things is really inspiring	*link to inspiration as motivation*
what is the most interesting point that they made and why? you have to justify it – pick one point that you think is really interesting and explain why	

can you write down what the most interesting point you heard and why – what did they say that was interesting	
the one I picked up on and that I really liked was the one where he said he wanted to peel back the veneer, that was a really interesting image	*opportunity to discuss and challenge teacher's choice not taken – does she feel her response is not valued? important? necessary?*
what did they say about that? about the blood running down the palace walls? that's a line from the poem – what does it suggest? why the palace?	
who haven't I spoken to today? Catie?	*encouraging all to discuss – long term strategy?*
what did he say about that? what was his view about that?	

23/05/17: Lucy

On board: You have found love at first sight. You pass them a note. What compliment do you pay them? Music from R&J playing – fishtank scene

What is happening?	Thoughts and questions
Music to get you in the mood – imagine that you have just seen the one, you see them, your love at first sight, your love, what compliment would you pay them?	*immediately not like an exam – no criteria, no paper – engagement*
Don't write your name on it; keep it personal but secret	*mystery, anonymity, safety*
what would you say? what would you think? if you are struggling, go for cliché.	*assumed knowledge of cliché but, again, safety in the familiar – nobody is excluded because of how personal the task might be*
you have to write something	*'have to' – engagement slightly undermined, reinforcing authority – why do they have to? implicit*
what I would like you to consider – these are modern ways of showing your love, but how does romeo show his love	*link back to text*
what images do you use, what modern images do you use? Then we will compare this to the images that romeo uses	
(Read out post-it notes – the things that are important to you guys are very different to the things that were important to me, 15 years ago when I was dating)	*teacher shares her own experience – they ask follow up questions and engagement is immediate*
what common themes do we notice? are we saying that love at first sight is all about what someone looks like? remember we did that kahoot that measured your opinion – what you think	*no mention of the exam or what we must do – explicitly them and their thoughts*
I will remind you about what romeo says. I want you to consider how romeo's language of love matches what you said *(reads Romeo's Oh she doth teach the torches to burn bright speech)* How does he convey his love, how does he compliment Juliet?	*'you' – focus is still not romeo – it is them and their reactions*
does he fall into the trap, talking about appearance like we did? does he use cliché like we did? how does this compare to the language we used and the language romeo used previously?	
are any of you as poetic as romeo? compare your thoughts. don't worry about romeo	*moving away from text completely – I am thinking about the requirements of the exam – why?? this encourages a creativity beyond any assessed response*
what are your thoughts? what does romeo say?	

'she teaches the torches to burn bright; did any of us make that comparison? any references to light? anything about colour? brightness?	
we have some context there – Ethiopia, diamonds, shining in the darkness	*personal context*
stop – what evidence do you have that Juliet is upset? I don't want to use the word upset, I will put a question mark to look for her later on.	*fluid – thoughts are evolving, up for discussion, encouraging thoughts that are not ready*
these are all his thoughts, he has not met her yet	
you are getting really analytical – you are bringing in contextual information, like the reference to weddings, like the references to the diamonds – it's all about using the world around you to help you understand	*'all about' for what? exam is implicit*
moves to luhrmann version – fishtank scene – phone rings putting a damper on all the atmosphere that I am trying to build here	
do you see how they see each other – love at first sight – let's look at how they meet	
as we continue we are going to read the whole exchange. I want you to look for the same ideas – the light and dark, her being precious, the idea of peace with the dove – is there any more foreshadowing – or weddings? of death?	*building up of their confidence as readers using teachers' confidence – she believes in them*
now read it again on your own, what is romeo offering her – how does she respond?	
why are they talking about pilgrims? it is about religion and religious beliefs - pilgrims go to Mecca, pilgrims go to... what about the saints? what is a saint?	
romeo has taken a beautiful image and turned it into something fun	
what do you notice about the words exchanged between romeo and Juliet? Just within this extract – look at all these words and how often they are used. Can you go through this extract and find these words? Why use the semantic field of religion? Why? did romeo use the semantic field of religion when he was talking about Rosaline? no. he did not use this imagery when he was talking about Rosaline and his love for her. if this semantic field was not used before hand, was does this suggest about his love for Juliet over Rosaline?	*cleverly drops in some of Shakespeare's method without explicitly mentioning method or exam – becomes solely understanding what shakes is doing and appreciating it as literature rather than for the exam*
What does the semantic field of religion reveal about his second love, Juliet? why might we know that he has a stronger belief in religion as an Elizabethan?	
he has faith – that is his culture. everyone in Shakespeare's time would have dedicated themselves to God, to devotion – the idea of being devoted to something, Christianity whatever religion it is about	*'whatever religion is about' – this is a space of ideas, thoughts, discussion, conflict rather than things that are 'right'*

23/05/17: Bea

On board: You have found love at first sight. You pass them a note. What compliment do you pay them? Music from R&J playing – fishtank scene

What is happening?	Thoughts and questions
can you get out your sheets from yesterday that we looked at when we started to think about gender	*immediately not like an exam – no criteria, no paper – engagement*
we got as far as discussing the questions about gender – we talked about how men do not talk about women in the same way as women do – how do men damage women by the way that they talk about them?	*teacher thinking out loud – her concerns? her questions?*
it all snowballs from that - do you think that that is the women's fault? whose relationship might be damaged by Juliet?	*immediate link to text but through class' ideas*
do you think that the behaviour of Juliet is expected or not expected so far?	
what is expected at the time? does she do anything that would be expected of her at the time? does she conform?	
a student after reading the opening of this extract has commented that Shakespeare is sexist. To what extent do you agree.	*evaluation question – knowledge presented through evaluation*
Cards handed out – do you think Shakespeare is sexist? Yes, because.... No, because...	*encouraging them to argue with each other*
You need to think about your own opinions but also how someone else might interpret this, some people might argue that the introduction is violent, some might argue it is funny, what did Shakespeare want me to think? What do I think?	*alternative interpretation – knowledge not fixed. gender negotiatible? does it matter what they think really? does the exam reward that? do we know what shakes thinks – bigger question*
so this is a patriarchal society? don't dismiss other people's perspectives just because you think it is okay	*teaching evaluation skills through discussion*
hands up if you think Shakespeare was a product of his time...that he was pioneering... that women were treated as objects... what was different about this time compared to Henry's reign – we had a queen – do you think people didn't approve of having a woman as queen	
she was a pioneer, some people were critical and wanted to throw her off the throne, but most supported her	*moves to conversation with a group who want to know more about the context – teacher obliges – teacher v. knowledgeable and speaks with passion and enthusiasm*
what suggests Shakespeare isn't sexist? does anyone disagree?	*return to whole class – building argument – this lesson is teaching*

	critical thinking first, through literature, after literature?
what do they tell us about gender? don't write 'fighty' in the exam	*link to exam requirement – explicit reminder that this is all for an exam rather than for, for example, building knowledge of masculinity – is that a bad thing?*
'draw if you men' questioning masculinity, only men fight, women cannot fight	*deliberate provocation – trying to get students to bite*
Mercutio is a bit inappropriate here do we think? Tell me why. Who would think this is inappropriate? Boys. What do you think? Anyone? I know that I, being a woman, would take offense. 'Naked weapons'? Are you kidding me?	*personal reading – bawdy humour- gets some back on task – teacher's personal response transaction with the text*

key statements example: Shakespeare included misogynistic characters who joked about the brutalisation of young women

15/05/17: Silvia

On board: Aim: to explore language in the poem 'Out of the Blue'

What is happening?	Thoughts and questions
my favourite poem – I love Simon Armitage	*teacher immediately positions herself – opening line – 'favourite' – strong words*
Is it important that we know the background of the poem? Is it any more important to its meaning?	*big question – to what extent is contextual knowledge/cultural capital important to appreciate lit?*
Do you care? Does the poem make you care?	*inviting personal response – a difficult class – some comment they do not care*
I still think you need to care, to have a personal response. The exam wants you to care	*teacher responds 'I think you need to' – not judging lack of engagement but challenging it*
(It is not personal – you don't need to care – I have never been to New York) Does that matter?	*using own experience to encourage engagement*
(I wouldn't know what it was about if you hadn't told us) Is the poem still powerful	*what is meant by 'powerful' to her? to them? to society?*
You need to talk about structure for the exam – link it back to the text	*EXAM. feels like 'caring' is rerouted to 'caring' because it is an exam rather than a more human response*
(Why do we learn about prepositions?) We need them for the exam	*why?*
What is the poem about? Is there a personal story to it? (Is it a falling man, or the falling man)	
Where were you when 9/11 happened? How old were you? We (Silvia and Anna) knew this poem was about 9/11. We were alive when this happened. We knew. As soon as we started exploring the poem, we knew. We remember where we were when the tragic events happened. The pain	*brings me into it! I actually don't know this poem – assumption made about my literary knowledge –BLAG!*
Miss Farleigh, what do you think? Miss is an examiner. What do we need to do to get the marks, Miss Farleigh? What are you looking for?	*my presence as GCSE examiner highlighted – why?*
Look at the numbers of how many people died. But this poem zooms in. It makes us feel something.	*'makes us' – not sure emotion works like that – or maybe literature does?*
What is the most significant line in the poem? What is its impact on the reader? Who is the reader? Two minutes to find a line that you find effective.	*'who is the reader' – great question but not discussed*

It doesn't matter if you can't name the device – just tell me why you like the line	
Why did you like it? Can you remember when we were looking at that type of sentences?	
When you are reading it, he is talking to you, you are the reader	
(he could have just rattled down the side of the building, hitting the windows) Antonio stop – you are being really rude – this is a poem about people dying – be respectful	*some (boys) disengaged – not making personal connection to poem. why? lack of understanding of context? aversion to poetry as genre? not explored – just told off*
(Why use a quatrain) I don't know? Any ideas from anybody?	*'I don't know' encouraging discussion – denying teacher expertise in order to encourage theirs? or genuinely don't know?*
It doesn't really matter – it is open to interpretation – it could mean anything	
If we got this in the exam and we didn't know what 9/11 was about, what would we do? You can respond to the emotion, you don't need the context, just justify it structurally – you can't be wrong … hang on. We're not worried about this at the moment, just enjoy the poem.	*response moves away from exam to reassurance about critical reading*
how is the language, the –ing, what is happening to the man? is he scared? the verbs are coming through – look at the device	
How does the poet present the speaker's desperation and fear in 'Out of the Blue'?	
This is where you analyse the poem, where you use your PEA paragraph and don't forget to SMILE (Structure, Meaning, Imagery, Language, Effect) (I don't get what I have to write about – how do I link it to the devices?)	

prompt questions on the board: Read the poem thoroughly/ What is it about? Does it have a purpose?/ Annotate any key language that help you understand the poem/ Identify any linguistic devices employed by the poet/ Identify any structural devices employed by the poet/ Consider the effect of these devices on the reader/ What is the tone of the poem overall? What does that tell us?

Appendix 12 Notes made from AQA GCSE English literature examiners report, 2017

Evidence that the exam rewards critical reading

Page 3

- 'student's thought and understanding' is rewarded
- 'students showed a readiness to consider the events of the text and used these as a springboard to explore the complex and challenging ideas behind them'
- 'students had a grasp of character and plot'
- '…go beyond the extract and make connections relevant to the focus of the question, which indicated a grasp of themes and ideas'
- 'the absence of the text has encouraged students to make their own connections and construct their responses from their own ideas'
- 'those students who appreciate the text as a means of considering and expressing the writers' ideas are those that are the most successful'

Page 4

- 'students explored complicated ideas and emotions with care and understanding which implied that…the plays had resonance for them as well' (p.4)
- '…responses such as these took the big themes and ideas of the play, identified in the question, as their starting point and showed their understanding and appreciation by developing their interpretation of the play and its message for them' (p.5)
- 'examiners are looking to identify the student's understanding and appreciation of the text as a whole…and their ability to demonstrate their engagement with this' (p.6)
- 'Understanding the text as being deliberately created by the writer, and the characters as constructs within this to convey the writer's ideas, is at the heart of doing this effectively' (p.7)

Evidence that the exam is not a 'memory test'

- 'students who were led by the question, rather than having a preconceived essay structure for their answer, were generally…more responsive to the task' (p.4)
- '…the avoidance of unnecessary and misplaced subject terminology…unhelpful and, in some cases, obstructive' (p.4)
- 'merely identifying features is of limited interest and value' (p.4)
- 'statements of historical detail 'bolted on' to a response did little to demonstrate any real understanding' (p.5)
- 'a rigid and formulaic attitude to context tends to show students have been taught some contextual information and have learned and recalled this' (p.6)

- ‘there is no prescribed or preferred structure for answering questions’ (p.6)
- ‘some examiners reported almost excessive use of quotations, as though students had learned lots of quotations and were determined to include them, whatever the focus of the question’ (p.7)
- ‘It is not about the number or length of quotations’ (p.7)
- ‘You don’t get extra marks for more quotations’ (p.8)