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Abstract

This thesis has aimed at exploring teacher cognition (attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, and practices) in relation to literature teaching in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms at the upper-secondary level in Norway. The data for the research has been obtained through the use of qualitative methods, such as semi-structured interviews and classroom observations with five EFL teachers who teach in the first year of upper secondary (vg1). The study addressed three research questions: what approaches and methods the teachers employ in their EFL literature teaching, how they select reading material and what learning objectives they consider most important, and lastly, how their stated beliefs compare with their actual practices.

Although there is a strong focus on literacy in the Norwegian curriculum (the Knowledge Promotion from 2006), there is no explicit information about how literature teaching at this level should be conducted, nor a specific list of what literary texts to employ in the EFL classroom. Hence, since the teachers are challenged to set their own aims, choose reading material and different methods, the choice of topic for the present thesis grew out from an attempt to study teachers' rationale for literature teaching. In order to investigate the teachers' cognition, their practices have been studied in relation to their attitudes, beliefs and knowledge.

The study showed that the teachers are influenced to different degrees by their own experiences as language learners and their teacher education programmes. Most significantly, the results have indicated that their experiences as language learners have spurred their interest for literature. In addition, there is reason to believe that they incorporate certain elements of their previous experiences, whereas others have been avoided.

Seemingly, the methods and literary texts employed are highly influenced by curricular aims, since three of the teachers claimed to use literature primarily to enlighten these objectives. They are, however, free to select what reading material to employ since there does not appear to be formal restrictions in this regard. Nevertheless, certain factors seem to affect their choices, such as other colleagues, the textbook and previous teaching experiences. Seemingly, the textbook is the most predominant reading material since it is used by all five teachers on a general basis. Their stated beliefs are that its content is well-structured and educational, that it correlates with curricular aims, and that it is preferred by students.

Although the teachers evidently use similar methods in their teaching, the study showed that they have a varied focus. However, they all emphasized the importance of

variation in EFL teaching, which seems to be a belief that corresponds with their actual practices since various methods such as class discussion, teacher presentation and group work were employed in the observed lessons. In addition, their teaching can be linked to the language-, cultural- and personal growth models for teaching literature, and evidently, they also employ aspects of critical literacy to various extents.

Each teacher apparently uses several approaches to literature teaching, as elements from the historical-biographical method, New Criticism and reader response theory seem to be integral in their teaching. For this reason, it may be argued that they have an eclectic approach to literature teaching.

The study showed that the teachers focus on different learning aims, but the ones that were most frequently mentioned are reading for pleasure, intercultural competence, vocabulary, and aims connected to language- and literacy skills, such as accuracy, reading, writing and general language abilities. Four of the teachers consider reading for pleasure as an overall objective, and the importance of extensive and free voluntary reading was explicitly stressed. Nonetheless, doubts were proposed as to whether this aim is realistic to achieve in school settings where students may feel disempowered and unengaged, and where text analysis and tasks deprive them of experiencing a joy for reading. Among the reasons provided by the teachers as to why extensive and free voluntary reading is difficult to conduct, were that this requires a large amount of class time and a wide variety of reading materials, which suggests that contextual factors influence the extent to which teachers are able to make teaching-related decisions according to their beliefs. Moreover, the findings have indicated that teachers' cognitions are shaped and mediated by dynamic interactions among context, experiences from schooling, university education and classroom practices (cf. Borg 2015:259).

Hopefully, this thesis has contributed to research on the relationship between teacher cognition and literature teaching in particular, as well as to that of literacy teaching and foreign language (FL) teaching. It has also aimed to provide an insight into the current situation of literature teaching at the Norwegian upper secondary level.

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1. Introduction

This thesis is a qualitative study of teacher cognition and literature teaching in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) upper-secondary classrooms in Norway. Cognition is defined as “what teachers think, know, and believe and the relationship of these mental constructs to what teachers do in the language teaching classroom” (2003:81). Through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations it aims to investigate five EFL teachers’ cognitions and practices related to literature teaching in depth. The teachers are from different schools, and the focus will be on their teaching practices in Vg1.

In the present study *literature* is considered closely linked to *literacy*, in the sense that students will need to be literate in order to read and comprehend literary texts. Consequently, it is seen as essential that they develop necessary reading- and writing skills and strategies to fully interpret and gain knowledge from the texts they read. Similarly, in order to read and write fluently in their FL, the learners must presumably have access to and experience with reading different types of literary texts, and it is likely that the exposure to these will enhance their literacy skills.

Literature has traditionally been an integral part of FL teaching in upper secondary education in Norway (Fenner 2011:41). Nonetheless, as will be discussed in the following chapter, the Norwegian curriculum (the Knowledge Promotion from 2006) does not mention explicitly how literature teaching at this level should be conducted. Although there is a strong focus on literacy in the curriculum, literature is mentioned explicitly only once in the list of competence aims under the subject area of Culture, society and literature. Furthermore, there is no specific list of literature or restrictions on how the teaching should be carried out. The teachers are thus challenged to set their own aims, and to choose reading material and different methods to conduct literature instruction in the EFL classroom, which undoubtedly makes it interesting to study what they do and believe in this regard.

Although the curriculum aims may be conceived as “open”, teachers do need to make sure that the pupils will have read “[...] a variety of texts in English to stimulate the joy of reading, to experience greater understanding and to acquire knowledge” (LK06, English subject curriculum, English version:3). Needless to say, the individual teacher is left with a significant responsibility in order to find a balance between upholding the Literary Canon and introducing the learners to cross-cultural or newly released literature. Additionally, teachers must equip learners with tools so that they are able to discuss and evaluate a literary work, as

well as engage them so they are enabled to experience a joy for reading (Oshaug Stavik 2015:41). Due to the fact that Vg1 students have been taught literature in primary school, and because they are quite experienced learners of English, the choice was made to study teachers at this level.

Some of the theory employed in this thesis (in chapter 2 and 3) will be discussed both from a first language (L1) and a second/foreign (L2/FL) perspective. It is seen as appropriate to include sources from an L1 perspective such as Hennig (2010) and Børhaug, Fenner and Aase (2005), since some of the theory included can be viewed as *universal* due to the fact that it will be relevant for discussions of literature teaching both in L1 and FL contexts.

1.1 The present study and its aims

The overall aim of the study is to explore the relationship between teacher cognition and literature teaching in the English subject in the upper secondary school in Norway. Five teachers have been interviewed and observed about their beliefs and practices in order to study this relationship closely.

The present study aims to investigate the teachers' cognitions in depth through pre-and post-observation interviews and classroom observations. Hence, the teachers' knowledge, thoughts and beliefs are studied in relation to their actual classroom practices. What is characteristic about the research done with respect to teacher cognition and the teaching of literacy, is the fact that much of it comes from L1 education contexts. Borg (2015:132) states that the limited amount of work available in the area of L2 and FL literacy instruction is a clear gap in our understandings of FL teaching. By studying the relationship between teacher cognition and literature teaching from an EFL perspective, one primary intent of this thesis is thus to contribute to the research area of teacher cognition *and* FL teaching in general, and to FL literature teaching in particular, as well as to that of literacy instruction.

According to Richards and Lockhart (2009:29), teachers' actions in classroom settings are, in fact, reflections of what they know and believe. However, mismatches between their beliefs and practices occur, by reason of certain contextual factors such as limited timeframes, school traditions and financial restrictions. Therefore, one additional aim of this study is to discuss potential challenges that may make the realization of the teachers' pedagogical choices and actions differ from their stated beliefs. This thesis addresses the following research questions:

- What approaches and methods do the teachers employ in their EFL literature teaching?
- How do they select reading material, and what learning objectives do they consider most important?
- How do their stated beliefs compare with their actual practices?

1.2 Outline of the thesis

Chapter 2, “Teaching context”, initially discusses arguments for the teaching of literature in the English subject. Secondly, it explores its position and use in the current curriculum (LK06).

Chapter 3, “Theory”, presents the theoretical foundation for this thesis. It discusses three models for literature teaching in light of curricular aims reflected in LK06. Furthermore, it focuses on literary theory and critical literacy, and on reading related theory. The last sections elaborate on teacher cognition and related studies.

Chapter 4, “Methods”, presents the methodology employed in the project. Initially, it provides characteristics of qualitative data collection, and the two methods employed: the semi-structured interview and observation. The subsequent sections elaborate on how the research was planned and conducted, present the selection of informants, and on how the data was transformed into written summaries. Finally, research ethics, validity and reliability are presented.

Chapter 5, “Results”, presents the findings of the study. The findings from the teacher interviews and observations have been written into summaries, and organized thematically according to the research aims.

Chapter 6, “Discussion”, provides a discussion of the findings, organized thematically and across the data-collection methods.

Chapter 7, “Conclusion”, is a summary of the thesis. Additionally, it draws conclusions about the findings and suggests other areas that may be of interest for further research.

2. Teaching context

2.1 Introduction

First of all, the present chapter discusses the importance of literature teaching for the English subject. Secondly, it explores its position and use in the Norwegian national curriculum from 2006; *Læreplanverket for Kunnskapsløftet* (LK06). It will elaborate on the views on literature expressed in the Core curriculum, which reflects the overall educational objectives and elaborates on the values, as well as the culture and knowledge that is seen as fundamental in primary, secondary and adult education today (Utdanningsdirektoratet 2015, my translation). According to Kramsch (2001:201), a traditional view on culture that was prominent before the Second World War can be defined as “knowledge about great works of literature, social institutions and historical events, acquired through the translation of written texts”. The significance of spoken language and communication across cultures in situations of everyday life, has, however, been considered in definitions of culture in recent years (Kramsch 2001:201). She also mentions that culture is “membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and common imaginings”. (Kramsch 1998:10). In this regard, there will be a discussion about how literature is seen as linked to the notion of *Bildung*. It will also be mentioned how one objective of reading literature in school is to obtain *creative* and *aesthetic* responses to literary texts. Secondly, a section about the position and use of literature in the English subject curriculum of vg1 will be presented, where it is discussed based on the relevant objectives reflected, both in the general part and in the two main subject areas: Written communication and Culture, society and literature, in which literature seems to have an important position. Furthermore, this section emphasizes the connection between literature and three of the basic skills; oral, writing, and reading.

2.2 Why is literature important in language teaching?

Carter and Long (1991:1) claim that the question of *why* teach literature in the language classroom has to be answered before any meaningful discussion can occur concerning the position of literature in EFL teaching. Indeed, many arguments have been made in recent years for including literary texts in language teaching. Kramsch (1993:130) claims that more than any other text, “the piece of literary prose or poetry appeals to the students’ emotions, grabs their interest, remains in their memory and makes them partake in the memory of

another speech community”. She also mentions that there is “now a renewed interest for the individual voice and the creative utterance”, and that her main argument for employing literary texts in the language classroom is “literature’s ability to represent the particular voice of a writer among the many voices of his or her community and thus to appeal to the particular in the reader” (Kramsch (1993:131).

In a similar vein, Ibsen and Wiland (2000:12) express that “literature appeals to emotions, and it thereby paves the way for a more profound and conscious attitude towards language acquisition”. Hence, it could be argued through such a stance that by appealing to the students’ emotions, the reading of literature may provide the students with a renewed interest for language learning in general. Brumfit (1985:103) suggests that one important reason for teaching literature is to make as many people as possible read and enjoy great international works, and that the use of these texts in language classrooms will give students within the western educational tradition an educational and human experience. Seemingly, there is an “attested quality of the experience of reading certain works for many teachers” (Brumfit 1985:103), which may suggest that many teachers as well as scholars seem to advocate the importance and values of reading classical works.

Recent studies have shown that reading literary fiction can prompt personality development that include improvements in abilities in empathy. According to Djikic and Oatley (2014:498), teachers of literature have traditionally argued that reading novels by well-known authors invites us to understand others better. The literary scholar Keen (2007), for instance, is of the opinion that increasing empathy by means of literature made for improvements in the self and society (Djikic & Oatley 2014:498).

In an article that discusses how fictional works nurture empathy and enhance social and emotional lives, Oatley (2005:1) mentions that books, movies, and plays are more than just entertainment. In this regard he argues that one should not always consider reading and the watching of movies as *passive* activities; while this may be true physically, it is not true emotionally. He states that when we watch a film or read a novel, we join ourselves to a character’s trajectory through the story world. Furthermore, we tend to see things from their point of view – feel scared when they are threatened, wounded when they are hurt, pleased when they succeed. As a matter of fact, these feelings are familiar to us as readers or viewers, and our propensity to identify with characters is actually a remarkable demonstration of our ability to empathize with others (Oatley 2005:1).

Oatley (2005:1) also claims that when we examine this process of identification in fiction, we appreciate the importance of empathy – not only in enjoying works of literature,

but in helping us form connections with those around us in the real world. He argues that the feelings elicited by fiction go beyond the words on a page or the images on a screen. Thus, far from being solitary activities, reading books or watching movies or plays actually can help train us in the art of being human. These effects derive from our cognitive capacity for empathy, and there are indications that they can help shape our relationships with friends, family, and fellow citizens (Oatley 2005:1). Quite similarly, Hennig (2010:32, my translation) argues that the reading of literature is an integral part of our attempt to understand the world, and that it can thus affect the perception of self. Evidently, there is a significant link between literature and the notion of *Bildung* (see section 2.3), as he states that literature has a major impact on our socialization, development and upbringing, and to our formation as such.

It has been claimed that boys' motivation to read is strongly influenced by their ability to identify with the texts. Roe (2012:126, my translation) asserts that the literature often preferred by boys is characterized by several factors, such as male protagonists, characters within a certain age group, and a familiar plot that the reader finds interesting. Girls are considered to be more versatile in this regard, and hence their interest in literature may not be as dependent on their ability to identify with content and characters (Roe 2012:127, my translation)

As stated by Birketveit and Williams (2013:164), quality literary texts engage the reader, tell stories and offer psychological insights. In addition, they may be employed to interrogate values and assumptions, and lead to enhanced understanding of global cultures and differences, which can be related to the *intercultural aims* of literature teaching and thus the *cultural model* (see section 3.2). Furthermore, it is claimed that the goal of literature teaching is to achieve lifelong independent reading in English, for continuing and refreshed active language competence and towards global awareness and citizenship (Birketveit & Williams 2013:164).

2.3 Literature in the Core curriculum of LK06

The Core curriculum of LK06 states that education must build upon and demonstrate the contributions of the past that have:

evolved in mankind's great traditions of innovative work, intellectual inquiry and artistic expression", and that "familiarity with these three traditions proves that each generation can add new insight to the experience of previous generations (...) (LK06, Core curriculum, English version: 12).

It emphasizes that learners themselves must take part in the further development of inherited practices and in the acquisition of new knowledge. Moreover, literature is mentioned with regards to the *cultural tradition*, which is “mediated by body and mind, embedded in arts and crafts, in language and literature, in theatre, song, music, dance and athletics”. (LK96, Core curriculum, English version:13). Evidently, there are both *receptive* and *productive* elements to literature reflected in LK06, in the sense that students should not only create and develop their own texts, but also experience the artistic work of others and study different cultural expressions. Hence, it seems appropriate to suggest that the teaching should focus on the *cultural* aspect of literature, which can be argued to involve and require a physical and psychological engagement from the students.

The aims expressed in relation to the cultural tradition may be seen as linked to the notion of *Bildung*, which according to Aase (2003:13), who discusses the concept from an L1 perspective, can be defined as “a socialization process that enables one to understand, manage and participate in regular, highly valued forms of culture” (my translation). In other words, an individual’s development of *Bildung* may be considered as a longer process that enables cultural understanding and participation through interaction with others. Hellesnes (1969:36), also addressing it from an L1 point of view, relates it to practice and interaction in the world; “we are matured in the world, and not in the spirit. We mature through cultural self-awareness by living this awareness into practice (my translation). According to Aase (2005:18), *Bildung* may, based on the definition provided by Hellesnes (1969:36), be regarded as “a collective and individual project concerned with one’s own practice in relation to those values our culture has to offer” (my translation). Hence, *Bildung* can be viewed as a twofold process in which one does not merely develop as individuals, but through interactions with others, and as participants of different cultures.

In addition, it is stated that “pupils must develop an appreciation for beauty both in meeting artistic expression and by exploring and unfolding their own creative powers (LK06, Core curriculum, English version: 13). This may suggest that *aesthetic* responses to texts are considered vital in literature teaching (see section 3.5.2), and furthermore that the students should develop their creative abilities, such as writing, *through* the reading of a variety of literary texts. Consequently, it may be implied that the reading of literature and “the unfolding of creative powers” exist in a mutual relationship. Whereas reading will enhance the students’ creative powers, they could also become better readers through engaging in creative tasks and activities.

It is also reflected that:

(...) a confrontation with creative art can wrench us out of our habitual modes of thought, challenge our opinions and provide experiences that spur us to re-examine prevailing conceptions and break with conventional wisdom and customary modes (LK06, Core curriculum, English version: 13).

“The confrontation with creative art” can arguably be seen as a component to development in that the creative works of others may challenge students’ viewpoints and conceptions. In a similar manner, they may be able to investigate further the cultural heritage of both their own and other cultures, which may apparently be linked to the concept of *intercultural competence*. Byram, Gribkova and Starkey (2002:9) state that the “intercultural dimension in language teaching aims to develop learners as *intercultural speakers* or *mediators* who are able to engage with complexity and multiple identities and to avoid the stereotyping which accompanies perceiving someone through a single identity”. According to Bennett and Bennett (2004:149), “intercultural competence is the ability to communicate effectively in cross-cultural situations and to relate appropriately in a variety of cultural contexts”.

In the summary of the Core curriculum it is also emphasized that education should “provide powerful exposure to the greatest achievements in literature and art”, which presumably indicates that classical works of literature should be covered, and that such works should be approached extensively and in various manners (LK06, Core curriculum, English version: 40).

2.4 Literature in the English subject curriculum (vg1)

In the general part of the English subject curriculum, it is expressed that “language learning occurs while encountering a diversity of texts, where the concept of text is used in the broadest sense of the word” (LK06, English subject curriculum, English version: 2).

Furthermore, it is stated that:

Literary texts in English can instil a lifelong joy of reading and a deeper understanding of others and of oneself. Oral, written and digital texts, films, music and other cultural forms of expression can further inspire personal expressions and creativity (LK06, English subject curriculum, English version:2).

In other words, it can be argued that the *joy of reading* is an important learning objective here. Hence, it apparently emphasizes *extensive reading* (see section 3.5.1), as this is considered closely linked to *reading for pleasure*. Simultaneously, this reflection could be linked to

intercultural competence and *Bildung*, since students apparently are able to achieve an understanding of other people and their own identity, in addition to being able to foster their own creativity further by reading a quantity of texts.

In addition, literature is mentioned explicitly with regards to the following two main subject areas:

“Written communication”:

The main subject area includes reading a variety of different texts in English to stimulate the joy of reading, to experience greater understanding and to acquire knowledge. This involves reading a large quantity of literature to promote language understanding and competence in the use of text. Reading different types of texts can lay the foundation for personal growth, maturation and creativity and provide the inspiration necessary to create texts (LK06, English subject curriculum, English version:3).

Most presumably, the importance of reading for *pleasure* is also reflected in this subject area, since one aim expressed is to “stimulate the joy of reading”. Similarly, it emphasizes that the students should gain a greater understanding and acquire knowledge by reading a variety of different texts in English. Extensive reading (see chapter 3.5.1) is thus seen to enhance the students’ joy of reading, in addition to promote general language skills and competencies. Like in the Core curriculum (2.3), the notion of *Bildung* is reflected on here, as it is mentioned that “reading different types of text may lay the foundation for personal growth, maturation and creativity”. Finally, the attention is focused towards the relationship between the reading- and writing skills, and it is claimed that the reading of different texts may foster creativity and inspire the students to create new texts.

“Culture, society and literature”:

The main subject area Culture, society and literature focuses on cultural understanding in a broad sense. It is based on the English-speaking countries and covers key topics connected to social issues, literature and other cultural expressions. This main area also involves developing knowledge about English as a world language with many areas of use (LK06, English subject curriculum, English version:3).

Apparently, this subject area also relates literature teaching to *intercultural competence* as it is claimed to have a specific focus on cultural understanding “in the broad sense”, and because it covers “key topics connected to social issues, literature and other cultural expressions”.

In the specific subject curriculum for students in their first year of upper secondary school (vg1 general studies’ programme), literature is mentioned explicitly only once in the

list of the competence aims under the area of Culture, society and literature. It is stated here that the students should be able to “discuss and elaborate on different types of English language literary texts from different parts of the world” (LK06, English subject curriculum, English version:11). However, although literature is mentioned both in the Core curriculum and in the English subject curriculum, it may be challenging for teachers to determine how the teaching should be carried out in accordance with the curriculum. Despite the fact that literature’s importance and purpose is elaborated on, the curriculum does not discuss *how* the teaching may be conducted or what types of texts to employ. Hence, the choices of how to approach it in the EFL classroom seem to rely significantly on the teachers and the textbooks. Nonetheless, as the reading of literature may be seen as closely linked to several of the basic skills (writing, reading, listening and oral), the teachers are presumably able to include and interpret other areas of the curriculum while determining their literature teaching, as these may mention literature implicitly or explicitly. For instance, in the list of the basic skills provided in the English subject curriculum, it is described what reading in English is and what this ability constitutes:

Being able to read in English means the ability to create meaning by reading different types of texts. It means (...) to understand, reflect on and acquire insight and knowledge across cultural borders and within specific fields of study. This further involves preparing and working with reading English texts for different reasons and of varying lengths and complexities. (...) Furthermore, it involves reading English texts fluently and to understand, explore, discuss, learn from and to reflect upon different types of information. (LK06, English subject curriculum, English version: 5).

Moreover, the notions of enjoyment and exploration of meaning are not reflected upon. On the contrary, it can be argued that the curriculum describes the reading of texts in English as an *effert* activity, in that it enhances the importance of information and the acquirement of knowledge. Furthermore, it does not mention the significance of *aesthetic* responses to reading (see chapter 3.5.2). However, it seems to be noteworthy that the phrase “create meaning” is used here, as this may imply a focus on reading as a *creative* and *aesthetic* process after all. Quite apparently, there is a difference in how to read a factual text versus a literary text, and this most often requires the readers to employ different strategies throughout the reading process. Therefore, it presumably is a challenging task to interpret how literary texts should be approached and studied in the English subject in vg1, and for what purposes.

3. Theory

3.1 Introduction

The following chapter aims to discuss the theoretical framework of the thesis. In accordance with the main research objective – which is to investigate EFL teachers' beliefs and practices regarding literature teaching - it was considered necessary to include theory about literature *and* teacher cognition. The first section briefly discusses the three models of literature teaching, which are the cultural model, the language model and the personal growth model, in relation to LK06. Thereafter, a section has been included about literary theory, which is seen as necessary so as to gain an overview of its effects on teachers' cognitions and their use of approaches and methods. In this regard *the historical-biographical method*, *New Criticism* and *reception theories (or reader response theory)* will be explained briefly, as these have had a significant influence on literature teaching. Furthermore, *critical literacy* is defined and elaborated on with regards to its pedagogical implications.

Since literature is seen as closely linked to *literacy* in the present study, two sections about reading theory have been included: *aesthetic* versus *effereent* reading and reading in breadth versus depth (or *extensive* versus *intensive* reading).

Due to the fact that the term L2 is seen as highly related to FL, the existing distinction between the two will not be considered during the discussions. In fact, it may be argued that since Norwegian students are taught English from the first grade, and because they are heavily exposed to English in their daily surroundings, it is not considered as a typical FL. According to the Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics (4th ed.), an L2 is described as “in a broad sense, any language learned after one has learnt one's native language. However, when contrasted with *foreign language*, the term refers more narrowly to a language that plays a major role in a particular country or region though it may not be the first language of many people who use it” (Richards and Schmidt 2010:514). Since the English language does play a significant role in Norway, however, it is considered as an L2 in the case of the present study.

Lastly, the research field of teacher cognition is dealt with. The first section contains a brief introduction about what the research field entails, whereas the following one discusses what elements of teacher cognition have been focused on by scholars and researchers during the last decades. In addition, an attempt has been made to describe briefly how this focus has changed from paying attention to processing, decision-making and teacher effectiveness, to

understanding teacher *knowledge*. In the following section, teacher cognition and previous research will be discussed with reference to three constructs: (1) teachers' personal experiences as language learners, (2) teacher education, and (3) teachers' classroom practices. According to Borg (2003:81), the cognitive constructs that make up teacher cognition are unobservable elements in the classroom. However, scholars assert that they manifest themselves in teachers' practices and classroom decisions (Borg 2003:81). Finally, previous studies of teacher cognition and/or literature teaching will be outlined, so as to identify a research gap. In addition, reasons as to why this thesis is a valuable contribution to research on FL teaching in general, and more specifically to the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices regarding literature teaching will be discussed.

3.2 The cultural model, the language model and the personal growth model

According to Carter and Long (1991:2), the cultural-, language- and the personal growth models represent three main reasons for the teaching of literature that have been consistently advanced. They also state that the three models embrace a particular set of learning objectives for the student of literature, and that they should be viewed as tendencies since they are not mutually exclusive. Nevertheless, they do represent distinct models which have been embraced by teachers as purposes for the teaching of literature and they are seen as related to specific pedagogical practices (Carter & Long 1991:2).

Teachers working from the cultural model will aim to focus on the parts of literature that embrace what best has been taught and felt within a culture. Most presumably, an important goal within this model will be to make the students *identify* with different cultures. In turn, as stated by Carter and Long (1991:2), this will enable students to:

understand and appreciate cultures and ideologies different from their own in time and space and to come to perceive tradition of thought, feeling, and artistic form within the heritage the literature of such cultures endows.

This can undoubtedly be connected to the curricular subject area of Culture, society and literature that stresses the importance of cultural understanding in a broad sense (see chapter 2.2). It is also likely that the cultural model could be linked to critical literacy (see chapter 3.4), as students are enabled to express their conceptions and emotions about texts, as well as to understand literature's role regarding the significance of ideologies and cultures. The core curriculum also explains that "a meeting between diverse cultures and traditions can generate

new impulses as well as stimulate critical reflections” (LK06, Core Curriculum, Norwegian version: 8).

Teachers working from the language model, on the other hand, consider literature as a tool to promote language development, and some may aim “to put students in touch with some of the more subtle and varied creative uses of the language” (Carter & Long 1991:2). The proponents of this model argue that language is the literary medium, that literature is *made* from language and that the more students can read in and through language the better able they will be to come to terms with a literary text *as* literature.

One primary goal for the teaching of literature within the personal growth model, is to try to help students achieve an *engagement* with the reading of literary texts, which emphasizes the importance of *reading for pleasure*. Undoubtedly, this engagement cannot be measured explicitly in terms of tests and examinations, but the aim is to make the students carry an enjoyment and love for literature with them *beyond* the classroom, perhaps throughout their lives (Carter & Long 1991:3). This view seems to be supported by Williams (2013:164) as she claims that “the ideal will be a successful, energized English classroom, which foregrounds the importance and role of sustained reading in language learning, and has a positive impact on learners into the future”. What is more, Carter and Long (1991:2) state that in order to encourage personal growth, the teacher has to stimulate and enliven students in the literature class by selecting texts to which students can respond and which they can participate imaginatively. In this regard, it is beneficial to create conditions for learning in the classroom which will make the reading of literature a memorable, individual and collective experience, and a teacher should strive to obtain enthusiasm for and commitment to the teaching of literature *as* literature. (Carter & Long 1991:2-3).

It could be argued that the description of literature in the English subject curriculum (LK06) can be linked to these models for teaching literature. According to LK06 (English subject curriculum, English version:3), working with different types of texts “is important for developing linguistic skills and understanding of how others live, and their cultures and views on life”, which emphasizes both the language- and cultural objectives of using literature in the EFL classroom. It is also reflected here that “reading different types of texts can lay the foundation for personal growth, maturation and creativity (...)”. In addition, in expressing the purpose of the English subject, it is stated that “literary texts in English can instil a lifelong joy of reading and a deeper understanding of others and of oneself” (LK06, English subject curriculum, English version:2), which clearly points to the personal growth model, and reading for pleasure.

3.3 Literary theory

Literary theory (or criticism) may influence the methods and strategies that teachers adapt in the teaching of literature. Throughout the Twentieth Century a shift has occurred in the focus of reading from the text and its author, to the text and its reader (Fenner 2001:20).

Nevertheless, teachers are likely to be influenced by traditions of interpretation from their own time in school as well as theory of didactics and pedagogy (Oshaug Stavik 2015:27). Hence, theories – whether explicitly or implicitly held – can be argued to have significant effects on what educators do, how they do it, and how they determine their professional success (Beach, Appleman, Fecho & Simon 2016:4). Among other scholars, Conchran-Smith and Lytle (2009) argue that teachers need to approach classrooms with an *inquiry stance*, which entails asking fundamental questions about who, how, what and why we are teaching. As a part of a critical inquiry stance, Beach et. Al (2016:5) state, it is essential that educators surface and interrogate their own beliefs and theories about teaching literature, and how these beliefs and frameworks inform their teaching. Moreover, they state that a critical inquiry approach is informed by *sociocultural learning theories* in that it fundamentally involves raising and exploring questions about the texts taught in relation to the communities and social and political contexts within which teaching and literature occurs.

Instead of following *one* particular critical school, many teachers today use an *eclectic* approach to the teaching of literature, which imply a varied focus in both the choice of reading material and methodology. The eclectic approach is built on the assumption that texts can be approached in various ways, and that they thus might invite focus on for instance historical, social, political contexts, as well as on the theme, author, characters, setting, story and plot, figurative language and motifs in different texts (Birketveit & Williams 2013:213).

The following sections will elaborate on three main branches of literary theory: the historical biographical method, New Criticism and reader-response theory.

3.3.1 The historical-biographical method

The historical-biographical method, with its significant focus on the author and context, predominated literature teaching for a long period of time (Fenner 2001:20). One of the essential characteristics of this theory is the perception that all works of art and literary texts are situated within a historical perspective. This implies that a piece of literature should be understood on the basis of its creation in time and space, and they cannot be torn from history

and analyzed in isolation since they are determined in both their form and content by their specific historical circumstances (Habib 2011:265). The *biographical perspective* is concerned with how insight into the life of the authors can increase one's comprehension of their works. Thus, the objective is to discover the author's intention behind the writing, which is why literary critics and teachers have been interested in the life of the author as well as the author in the text (Aamotsbakken & Knudsen 2011:11).

3.3.2 New Criticism

Das (2005:24) claims that New Criticism is one of the most influential critical methods of our century. According to Bennett and Royle (2014:117), it was especially influential in the middle decades of the twentieth century. Furthermore, they state that new critics are concerned with literary texts as artifacts which transcend the contingencies of any particular time and place, and which resist what they see as a reduction of the aesthetic whole to a specific historical context. Additionally, they are known to believe that literary texts belong to no particular time; that they are universal and transcend history. Hence, the historical context of their production and reception has no bearing on the literary work which is aesthetically autonomous, having its own laws, being a world unto itself (Bennett and Royle 2014:117). Due to its significant emphasis on language functions, the method could arguably be associated with the *language model* (see chapter 3.3). According to Das (2005:25):

The characteristic method of the New Criticism to have a 'close reading' of the text is based on the view that the literary work is a self-sufficient, autonomous object whose success or failure, charm or lack of it are to be sought within the work itself. The merit of a literary work is to be discerned in its language and structure and not outside it in the mind of the writer or in the response of the reader.

3.3.3 Reception theories

As a protest against the historical-biographical method and New Criticism, reader response theory and reception theory emerged. A crucial belief within this approach to literary criticism is that the meaning of the text is created through the process of reading and by the work of the reader (Bennett & Royle 2014:12). Fenner (2001:20) states that it has been especially interesting within the field of FL learning, because unlike the historical-biographical method and New Criticism, it allows for the students to relate actively to the text. Hence, it resembles the *personal growth model* (see chapter 3.3).

Louise M. Rosenblatt is considered an early contributor to the reader response theory, and she emphasizes how the meaning of literary texts is created through the readers' reception (or reading). Consequently, she advocated for the view that there does not exist *one* single literary text or *one* individual reader; everyone interprets a literary work uniquely and there is thus no prime meaning behind a text (Hennig 2010:18, my translation).

According to Hennig (2010), who discusses literary theory from an L1 perspective, the development of reader response theory has had significant implications for literature teaching in recent years. For instance, he states that teachers aim to identify and develop further what happens between a text and its individual reader, and that the *personal response* should be a fundamental part of the students' reading competence. "With the reader's unique and spontaneous response as a basis one will aim to strengthen a reading strategy that both develops and emphasizes the emotional response, which simultaneously becomes more conscious, reflected and educated" (Hennig 2010:167, my translation).

3.4 Critical literacy

Coffey (2008) defines critical literacy as "the ability to read texts in an active, reflective manner in order to better understand power, inequality, and injustice in human relationships". It may also be considered as text critique and how it works ideologically. These practices include "an awareness of how, why, and in whose interest particular texts might work" (Luke and Freebody 1997:218). Aukerman (2012:43) states that a reader who reads critically must read with a sense of textual authority and must recognize that (a) her readings of a text is one of many possible understandings (the multiplicity of perspectives); (b) the readings produced depend on our histories and social locations (the contingency of interpretation); and (c) writing/reading is never a neutral act (the ideological nature of texts/readings) (Aukerman 2012:43). In other words, it is argued that every reader has its own interpretations, which are largely influenced by personal experience, knowledge and surroundings. What is more, the writing- or reading of a text is always - either consciously or subconsciously - written and read on the basis of a set of ideas and beliefs, and thus *ideological* in nature. For the purposes of critical literacy, *text* is defined broadly as a "vehicle through which individuals communicate with each other using the codes and conventions of society" (Robinson and Robinson 2003:3). Consequently, songs, novels, conversations, movies, pictures etc. are all considered texts (Coffey 2008).

3.4.1 Critical literacy and pedagogical implications

According to Coffey (2008), the development of critical literacy skills enables people to interpret messages in the modern world from a critical perspective, and to challenge the power relations within those messages. She also states that teachers who facilitate the development of critical literacy encourage students to interrogate societal issues and institutions like poverty, education, family, racism and equality where the overall aim is to critique the structures that serve as norms. Additionally, a teacher may wish to demonstrate how these norms are not experienced by all members of society (Coffey 2008), and thus emphasize the significance of *heterogeneity* and contrasting values among human beings.

There seems to be links between critical literacy and the cultural model. Beach et al. (2016:135) claim that a crucial goal of literature teaching will be to “help young people understand the social, political, and cultural contexts that shape their lives”. They mention that as a teacher one should do *more* than simply transmit our literary cultural heritage, students should also be aware of the fact that the literary texts are inscribed with issues of power and shaped by ideological influences as they are created and read (Beach et al. 2016:135).

Aukerman (2012:44) outlines problematic aspects of pursuing critical literacy as *outcome*. In a description of this orientation, she mentions that teachers may want students to walk away after reading texts with a particular predetermined understanding of social justice or textual perspective, and that they are hence strongly influenced by the teachers’ communicated beliefs. In this regard, she claims that there seems to be heavy emphasis on having students parrot the teacher’s viewpoint, and of pursuing critical literacy as a *procedure*, where the focus is on adopting the teacher’s analytic toolkit for unpacking texts. She argues that “knowledge is considered fully formed, possessed by the teacher and lacked by students” (Aukerman 2012:44). However, she does assert that one potential benefit of this orientation could be that students who have never considered an alternative perspective can learn an alternative way of seeing things, as they are introduced to the teacher’s textual focus (Aukerman 2012:43).

Aukerman (2012) also seems to be skeptical towards critical literacy as *procedure* and *personal response*. In critical literacy as procedure, teachers want students to have a particular set of analytic tools for critiquing texts, in which an underlying assumption is that they do not have adequate strategies to be critical without step-by-step instruction in analyzing how texts work. She explains that her largest concern regarding critical literacy as procedure seems to

be connected to the students' lack of subjectivity and involvement, and she thus questions if they actually read critically (Aukerman 2012:44-45).

When the emphasis is on critical literacy as personal response, teachers employ texts that are likely to generate strong personal responses and reactions from students, which makes this orientation similar to reader response theory. Hence, Aukerman (2012:45) states, the focus is not on transmission of a particular idea or set of analytic tools, but rather on opportunities for students to offer their own responses. Yet, as argued by (Freebody, Luke & Gilbert 1991), preferred readings may still be privileged by the teacher. Put differently, it may be quite probable that many teachers will expect certain responses from the students in terms of theme, characters and the plot of relevance, and thus this orientation may easily be seen as similar to critical literacy as *outcome* (Aukerman 2012:46). In light of some of the problematic aspects of the aforementioned orientations, (Aukerman 2012:46) presents and describes an alternative orientation which she calls *critical literacy as dialogic engagement*. Although certain that this is not to be considered a "flawless" approach to critical literacy pedagogy, she suggests that it is an important, largely overlooked way of teaching.

A theoretical premise in this orientation is that developing as a critically literate reader depends on the uncontrollable "unfolding of social heteroglossia" (Bakhtin 1981:278), wherein a student's own voice is structured and emerges in dialogues and constant tension with multiple other voices. Hence, the diversity of voices, responses, styles of discourse and viewpoints are argued for within critical literacy as dialogic engagement, and Aukerman (2012:47) argues that it may be "particularly powerful because it potentially evokes conversations in which students have a profoundly personal stake". Student perspectives, however, are not treated as pristine, individualistic ideas; they are personal but at the same time socially constructed and contingent, and this constructedness – the status of a text as something created, mediated and composed – will be the center of attention for both students and teachers. (Aukerman 2012:47).

3.5 Theories about reading

3.5.1 Reading in breadth versus depth; extensive and intensive reading

According to Carter and Long (1991:4), a basic question with regards to the literary syllabus is whether it should contain a broad or a limited amount of texts. Most definitely, this question can be linked to the discussion of reading in breadth versus depth. Similarly, Vicary

(2013:77-78) states that texts can be approached either intensively or extensively. Intensive reading, he claims, occurs when short texts are studied, such as poems, short stories or articles of a few pages, and when the aim is to read closely so as to understand every word and sentence. Extensive reading, on the other hand, implies reading a quantity of literary texts where the focus is on the overall meaning (Vicary 2013:78).

From the early 1990s on, extensive reading has been a focus of attention for a growing number of researchers and teachers who swear by its benefits and who point to studies that support its advantages and importance (Grabe 2009:312). According to Day and Bamford (1998:33), research on extensive reading programs has indicated that students can improve their L2 reading abilities, and develop positive attitudes toward reading and increased motivation to read. In addition, they state, reading extensively may enhance vocabulary and other aspects of L2 learning. Nevertheless, (Grabe 2009:312) asserts that “when we look at reading programs, reading textbooks, and reading reference resources, the role of extensive reading in classrooms around the world is remarkably small”.

Several reasons as to why extensive reading has been less common can be proposed. For instance, fluent reading is often not the goal for a reading class or a reading curriculum (especially not in L2 settings). Rather, the tendency is to focus on the development of language skills, vocabulary, grammar, translation, or study skills. In addition, extensive reading demands a lot of resources, such as class libraries, multiple copies of reading materials and a lot of class time. One may also argue that many administrators and teachers are uncomfortable with teachers not teaching, and students not preparing for high-stakes exams while in school. Consequently, teachers may feel disempowered due to the predominant vision of “teachers teaching something to students” (Grabe 2009:312-113).

It is claimed that “extensive reading exposes learners to large quantities of material within their linguistic competence” (Grabe and Stoller 2002:259). Likewise, it is argued that the extensive approach allows students to accumulate a varied range of responses and relate their reading of one text to their reading of other texts. Moreover, extensive reading usually means silent reading and reading for pleasure and enjoyment (Simensen 2007:149).

Krashen (2004:17) states that “more reading (extensive reading) results in better reading comprehension, writing style, vocabulary, spelling and grammatical development”. Additionally, he argues that free and voluntary reading is one of the most powerful tools in language education (Krashen 2004:1). His proposed pleasure hypothesis states that “pedagogical activities that promote language acquisition are enjoyable” (Krashen 2004:28). He also considers there to be a clear link between the writing- and reading skill, as he claims

that “writing style does not come from actual writing experience, but from reading” (Krashen 2004:132). Day and Bamford (1998:37) also state that “the influence of extensive reading extends to writing, supporting the widely held notion that we learn to write through reading”.

Principles with regards to extensive reading may resemble the *Communicative Approach* to language teaching. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001:155), this approach aims to make *communicative competence* the main objective of language teaching and to develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication. Hymes (1972:277) defines communicative competence as the knowledge of “when to speak, when not, and as to what to talk about with whom, when, where, and in what manner”. According to Richards and Rodgers (2001:160), a pedagogically influential analysis of communicative competence is found in Canale and Swain (1980), where four dimensions of communicative competence are identified: *grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence*, which are also reflected in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Grammatical competence can be described as the domain of grammatical and lexical capacity. Sociolinguistic competence refers to an understanding of the social context in which a communication occurs. Discourse competence refers to an understanding of meaning in relationship to the entire discourse or text, whereas strategic competence refers to the coping strategies that communicators employ to initiate, terminate, maintain, repair, and redirect communication (Richards and Rodgers 2001:160).

Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) mention that the Communicative Approach is characterized by a low degree of drilling, and that any helpful device is accepted – varying according to the learners’ age, interest etc. Additionally, they state that teachers will help learners in any way that motivates them to work with the language, and that fluency and acceptable language is the primary objective. Evidently, the importance of motivation and optionality (in terms of reading material) is focused on within the Communicative Approach, which may be considered as vital components in an extensive and free voluntary approach to reading.

According to Harmer (2015:314) intensive reading is often (but not exclusively) teacher-chosen and directed. It is designed to enable students to develop their ability to read for a number of different purposes, such as getting the general meaning of a text (the *gist*) – sometimes called *skimming*, finding specific details that the reader is looking for – sometimes called *scanning*, or understanding what is behind the words (*inference*). In addition, Harmer (2015:314) states, students should be given a variety of texts and reading purposes, not only

because they need to acquire such reading skills (they may already have these in their L1), but because they need to have these experiences in English.

The advocates of an intensive approach argue that it is always beneficial to study one text in depth rather than several texts more superficially. Additionally, it is claimed that effective reading depends on a detailed, close engagement with the thematic and linguistic particularities of a text. Methods of teaching literature which adopt this approach are connected to the language model, and a crucial aim will hence be that the development of necessary capacities of close reading, analysis and detailed, language-based interpretation will be enhanced (Carter & Long 1991:5).

The main arguments are opposing; those in favor of the depth approach state that once one text has been read *accurately* fluency will ensue, whereas defenders of the breadth approach claim that reading fluency can only be developed through extensive reading. Consequently, they claim, reading a broad range of texts rather than a more limited number of texts will provide the basis from which more accurate reading can be encouraged and practiced (Carter & Long 1991:4-5). Nevertheless, extensive and intensive reading are complementary approaches in the sense that they are both necessary in an L2 teaching program (Simensen 2007:149), and most probably teachers will employ both types of reading for different purposes in their teaching of literature in FL classrooms. As stated by Harmer (2015:314): “to get the maximum benefit from their reading, students need to be involved in both intensive and extensive reading.”

3.5.2 Aesthetic versus efferent reading

A text (literary or fiction) could be read in different ways. As emphasized by Rosenblatt (1994:24), a clear distinction has to be made between aesthetic and efferent reading, since the reader performs very different activities during aesthetic and non-aesthetic (efferent) readings. The contrast between the two types of reading derives primarily from the difference in the reader’s focus of attention during the reading situation. In efferent reading, the reader will focus primarily on what will remain as the *residue* to a problem – the information to be acquired, or the logical solution to a problem (Rosenblatt 1994:23). The term *efferent* is rooted in the Latin word *effere*, meaning “to carry away” (Rosenblatt 1978:15), and it is the information “carried out” of the reading that is essential. Kramersch (1993: 123) describes the efferent reading response as:

(...) an essential skill if you need to know your way in a foreign city, how to bake a cake, how

to be informed about daily news...or how to answer comprehension questions on a reading test.

Furthermore, she explains that skimming and scanning a text can serve as examples of efferent reading and response, allowing the reader to search for desired information, get clues and recognize authorial intention and act upon it (Kramsch 1993:77). One may argue that efferent reading may serve the purpose as pre- and post-reading activities that aim to control and increase students' text comprehension. If employed previous to the reading, such tasks may be suitable for the construction of a "scaffold" to help learners explore a text further. Therefore, efferent reading can be said to provide the clues necessary to start an exciting exploration or investigation, and it may thus be the foundation necessary in order to perform an *aesthetic reading* that requires personal engagement (Steinnes 2015:24).

In *aesthetic* reading, the reader's primary concern is with what happens *during* the actual reading event, and the attention is thus centered directly on what the reader is living through during her relationship with that particular text (Rosenblatt 1994:23-25). Therefore, the focus shifts to the reader's actual experience of reading the text, and to how the multitude of responses and ideas generated by the text enters into the awareness-center of the reader (Rosenblatt 1978:24-25). Coleridge's famous statement about poetry seemingly emphasize the reader's focus on the transaction between her and the text:

The reader should be carried forward, not merely or chiefly by the mechanical impulse of curiosity, (...) but by *the pleasurable activity of mind excited by the attractions of the journey itself*. (Italics added.)

It is reflected in the Core Curriculum that "Pupils must develop an appreciation for beauty both in meeting artistic expression and by exploring and unfolding their own creative powers" (LK06, Core Curriculum, English version: 13). Ibsen (2000:137-138) connects the concepts *art* and *beauty* to aesthetics, and mentions that "the aesthetic dimension is related to the ability to appreciate and respond to art". In addition, she asserts, it is "related to first hand experiences with creative processes". Hence, one may get the impression that aesthetic responses to texts should be linked to the aesthetic dimension, which might imply that students should appreciate reading, as well as engage with and respond creatively to texts.

Ibsen (200:147) mentions that "the developing tasks" are in the aesthetic dimension, and that they should succeed the efferent tasks. She also argues that in order to give form to content, some knowledge behind the work of art is necessary, and that there is a perceived need for creativity and imaginative playfulness to be able to experiment with the text. In order to achieve an aesthetic form through working with literature, central questions will be how to

find rhyme and rhythm, how to sing and dance the text, how to put it on paper, and how to convey meaning to others. The classroom itself is a meeting place, and it can thus be considered a semi-public scene for the presentation of texts to a participating and supportive audience (Ibsen 2000:139).

3.6 Teacher cognition

3.6.1 What is teacher cognition?

According to Simon Borg (2015:6), the study of teacher cognition is concerned with understanding what teachers think, know, and believe in relation to their classroom practices. Thus, he states, its primary concern lies with the unobservable dimension of teaching, which is thought to be teachers' mental lives. Jackson (1968) states that for many decades, however, teachers' cognition was simply not part of the studies of teaching; it was not studied or even acknowledged. The work of teaching was essentially understood as what could be seen and externally documented, such as behaviors and practices. Hence, what those interactions and behaviors meant to participants was not emphasized in research (Burns, Freeman and Edwards 2015:586). The study of teacher cognition within the research field of education stretches back over 30 years, although second and foreign (L2) language teacher cognition is a more recent phenomenon as it emerged in the mid-1990s and has grown rapidly ever since (Borg 2009:163). Borg (2003:81) asserts that key questions addressed in teacher cognition research include the following: what do teachers have cognitions about? How do these cognitions develop? How do they interact with teacher learning? How do they interact with classroom practice?

3.6.2 Development of research focus

Borg (2003:81) states that mainstream educational research in the last 25 years has recognized the impact of teacher cognition on teachers' professional lives, and this has generated a substantial body of research. Accordingly, Borg (2015:9) mentions that the start of a tradition of research into teacher cognition was marked by a report by the National Institute of Education in 1975. Groups of experts in various areas of teaching worked to prepare a plan for research in those areas and one of these groups had its focus on "Teaching as Clinical

Information Processing". The report of this group claimed that:

it is obvious that what teachers do is directed in no small measure by what they think (...) If, however, teaching is done and, in all likelihood, will continue to be done by human teachers, the question of relationships between thought and action becomes crucial (National Institute of Education 1975: 1).

The main argument of this report is that in order to understand teachers, researchers need to study the psychological processes through which teachers make sense of their work. Borg (2015:10) states that this emphasis on cognitive processes marked a significant departure from the views of teaching and teachers dominant at the time. Moreover, teaching was no longer viewed solely in terms of behaviors but rather as *thoughtful* behavior, and teachers were not considered as mechanical implementers of external prescriptions, but as active and rational thinkers, who processed and made sense of a diverse array of information in their work. As a consequence of this report, important research funding for the study of teacher cognition became available to researchers in the US. Hence, early thinking in this research field was powerfully shaped by work in North America (Borg 2015:9-10).

The development of teacher cognition research has been characterized by changing orientations to both how teaching has been conceptualized and why teachers' mental lives should be viewed as a valuable research contribution. From an initial focus on information processing, decision-making and teacher effectiveness, the predominant concern today is with understanding teacher *knowledge*. Nevertheless, Nespor (1987) suggested that beliefs have stronger affective and evaluative components than knowledge, and that teachers often teach the content of a course according to the values held of the content itself. In addition, he claims that *affect* typically operates independently of the cognition associated with knowledge, which may imply that teachers' beliefs are not necessarily dependent on and shaped by the knowledge they obtain, and thus that their *cognition* is a severely complex matter that is constructed of both beliefs (affective and evaluative components) and knowledge. However, *teacher knowledge* is used as an umbrella term for a range of psychological constructs, for its growth and use. Particularly, present research on teacher cognition is closely connected to work in teacher education, and thus a key role for such research is to support teacher learning both at pre-service and in-service level (Borg 2015:33-34).

Borg (2015:6) claims that research on teacher cognition has affirmed teachers' active role in shaping classroom events and highlighted the complex nature of classroom decision-making. Furthermore, it has provided evidence of the way in which teachers' beliefs and knowledge influence what they do in the classroom. Nevertheless, evidence also states that

teachers' beliefs about instruction are not always fully realized in their work. Although research has shown that teacher cognitions and practices are mutually informing, contextual factors play an important role in determining the extent to which teachers are able to implement instruction congruent with their cognitions, which will be discussed further in section 3.6.4. Today it is thus acknowledged that the study of teachers' practices and cognitions must also take into consideration such factors (Borg 2015 34-35).

3.6.3 A framework for language teacher cognition research

Borg (2015:256) states that there has been a lack of an overall unifying framework of theory within the field of language teacher cognition. In this regard he claims that a more structured framework would provide a fuller appreciation of both the issues that have been addressed and the methods applied in investigating these. Additionally, he suggests that this is necessary so that future researchers within the field can gain a sufficient awareness of existing work, which will also remind them of key dimensions in the study of language teacher cognition. Furthermore, it highlights key themes, gaps and conceptual relationships and promotes a deeper focus on these. Therefore, Borg (2015:259) has attempted to create and establish a more unified framework.

Figure 1 (listed below) represents a schematic conceptualization of teaching within which teacher cognition plays a determining role in teachers' lives. It shows that teachers' cognitions are shaped and influenced by constructs such schooling (extensive experience of classrooms), professional coursework, classroom practice, and contextual factors around and inside the classroom that may result in mismatches between beliefs and practices. It is within this framework, based on an analysis of mainstream educational research, that the field of language teacher cognition has emerged (Borg 2003:81).

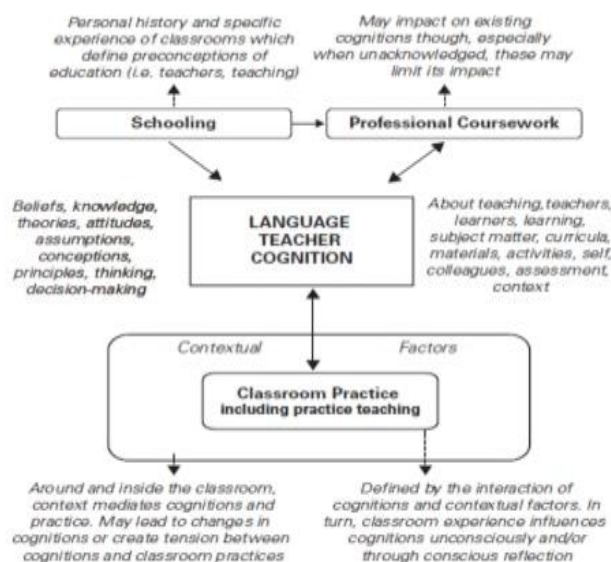


FIGURE 10.2 Elements and processes in language teacher

3.6.4 Constructs of teacher cognition

Teacher cognition can be “characterized as an often tacit, personally-held, practical system of mental constructs held by teachers and which are dynamic – that is defined and refined on the basis of educational and professional experiences throughout teachers’ lives” (Borg 2015:34). Borg (2003) discusses language teacher cognition with reference to three main themes: (1) cognition and prior language learning experience, (2) cognition and teacher education, and (3) cognition and classroom practice, which will be explained in light of previous research in the present section. The inclusion of constructs is seen as relevant to the research aims of the present thesis, as the field of teacher cognition is concerned with the relationship between the mental constructs (what teachers think, know and believe) and classroom practices.

1. Cognition and prior language learning experience

Research, according to Borg (2003:86), shows that teachers learn a great deal about teaching through their vast experiences as learners, which may be related to what Lortie (1975) called their “apprenticeship of observation”. Thus, beliefs established early on in life are resistant to change even in the face of contradictory evidence (Nisbett and Ross 1980), which clearly indicates that teachers create their own perceptions about teaching and learning based on what they experienced as young language learners. Accordingly, mainstream studies illustrate the influence on teachers’ cognition of their experience as learners (e.g., Holt Reynolds 1992); and according to Borg (2003:87), similar findings emerge from research with language teachers.

Bailey, Bergthold, Braunstein, Fleischman, Holbrook, Tuman, Waissbluth and Zambo (1996) describe a project in which seven MA candidates and a teacher educator in the US investigated, through autobiographical writing and reflection on it, the role of their language learning histories in shaping their current teaching philosophies and practices. As a result, several factors were identified connected to teaching and learning situations which had made their own language learning experiences positive. For instance, teacher personality and style mattered more than methodology, and they preferred teachers who were caring and committing and that had clear expectations of their students. Consequently, by exploring their experiences in this manner, the authors of this study were under the impression that, quoting a similar study by Freeman (1992), “the memories of instruction gained through their ‘apprenticeship of observation’ function as de facto guides for teachers as they approach what they do in the classroom’ (pp. 11).

Johnson (1994) and Numrich (1996) have also focused on how prior experience relates to classroom practice. Johnson found that preservice teachers' instructional decisions during a practicum were based on images of teachers, materials, activities, and classroom organization generated by their own experiences as L2 learners. She concludes that:

preservice ESL teachers' beliefs may be based largely on images from their formal language learning experiences, and in all likelihood, will represent their dominant model of action during the practicum teaching experience (Johnson 1994:450).

When working with novice teachers, Numrich (1996) discovered that teachers decided to promote or avoid specific instructional strategies on the basis of their positive or negative experiences of these respective strategies as learners. For instance, 27 % of the teachers reported in their diaries that they attempted to integrate a cultural component into their teaching because they considered learning about the L2 culture an enjoyable part of their L2 learning experiences. Conversely, the teachers noted that they avoided grammar teaching or correcting errors since their own experiences of these aspects of L2 instruction had been negative.

As Borg (2003:88) points out, studies of practicing teachers provide further support for the belief that prior learning experiences shape teachers' cognitions and instructional decisions. Einstein-Ebsworth and Schweers (1997), for example, conducted a study about 60 ESL university teachers' (30 in New York and 30 in Puerto Rico) views on conscious grammar instruction. In a quite similar manner, they found that the majority of the teachers' experiences as language learners were a significant influence. One of the teachers, for instance, explained that "my own education included very formal language study including memorization, reading, writing, and grammar. Now I'm using a communicative approach, but I won't completely abandon the teaching that worked for me" (Einstein-Ebsworth & Schweers 1997:252).

Borg (2003) states that the general impression based on previous research is that teachers' prior experiences as language learners establish cognitions about learning and language learning which form the basis of their initial conceptualizations of L2 teaching during teacher education, and these may be influential throughout their professional lives (Borg 2003:88).

2. Teacher cognition and the impact of teacher education

According to Brookhart and Freeman (1992), mainstream educational research has shown that at the start of teacher education programmes, students may have inappropriate, unrealistic or

naive conceptions about teaching and learning. An example is a study conducted by Cumming (1989), which illustrates this point in the field of language teaching. The study was carried out in Canada, and 37 pre-service ESL teachers' conceptions of curriculum were investigated. It was concluded that these were inadequate as the basis of principled and effective program design in ESL. Students were asked to produce "a schematic chart outlining the curriculum decisions they would consider to be most important in teaching an ESL course" (Cumming 1998:35). The author reported that the charts produced by the student teachers were generally inadequate in terms of the relationships they posited between theoretical and practical issues, the way different components of the curriculum were related and sequenced, and the relative emphasis they placed on particular components.

Another study that shows the impact of teacher education on teachers' cognitions, is Richards, Ho and Giblin's (1996) research on EFL trainees' perceptions of and development during a preservice teacher education program. Moreover, they studied five trainees in Hong Kong and found changes in their cognitions in relation to (1) their conception of their role in the classroom, (2) their knowledge of professional discourse, (3) their concerns for achieving continuity in lessons, (4) common dimensions of the teaching they found problematic (e.g., timing, presenting new language), and (5) the manner in which they evaluated their own teaching.

Borg (2003:90) also states that quantitative studies have been carried out with regards to cognitive change in language teacher education. For instance, Peacock (2001) carried out a longitudinal study into the changes in the beliefs about L2 learning of 146 trainee ESL teachers over their 3-year BA EFL programme in Hong Kong. The beliefs of first year trainees were compared with the beliefs of experienced ESL teachers. Three key differences between trainees' beliefs and those of experienced teachers were identified in relation to the following statements: (1) learning a FL is mostly a matter of learning a lot of new vocabulary words, (2) learning a FL is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules, and (3) people who speak more than one language well are very intelligent.

In each case, the percentage of first year trainees agreeing with these statements was much higher than for experienced teachers. These beliefs were considered by the author as "detrimental to their (trainees') own language learning or to their future students' learning" (Peacock 2001:183) and he hoped that they would be eliminated in the course of the teacher education programme (Borg 2003:91).

Borg (2003:89) asserts that the impact of teacher education on teacher cognition remains a focus within the research field, and that in most cases researchers have concluded

that it does impact trainees' cognitions. Nevertheless, he states, individual trainees make sense of and are affected by training programmes in different and unique ways, and he proposes that further longitudinal studies of individual trainees' development should be encouraged (Borg 2003:91). What is more, he states that teachers' *behavioral* change does not imply *cognitive* change, and vice versa, which makes the distinction, as well as the relationship between them, crucial to continuing research on this topic. Lastly, Borg (2003:91) mentions that these studies vary in what is considered to be evidence of cognition and cognitive change, since questionnaire responses, repertory grids and in-depth interview responses are very different forms of data. Thus, the extent to which these and other forms of data can capture the content, structure, and change processes of cognitive phenomena is clearly an issue for continuing methodological discussion (Borg 2003:91).

2. *Teacher cognition and classroom practice*

Teachers' classroom practices are argued to be highly influenced by their attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge. As Kubanyiova and Feryok (2015:435) assert:

research has shown that language teachers' practices are shaped in unique and often unpredictable ways by the invisible dimension of teachers' mental lives that have emerged from teachers' diverse personal and language learning histories, language teacher education experiences, and the specific contexts in which they do or learn to do their work.

Borg (2003:94) also states the teaching context, i.e. "the social, psychological and environmental realities of the school and classroom", is also assumed to affect teachers' practice, and the study of cognitions and practices in isolation of the contexts in which they occur will therefore provide partial, if not flawed, characterizations of teachers and teaching (Borg 2015:252). In this regard Burns (1996) argues that greater attention to the social and institutional contexts of classrooms is required in studies of what language teachers do. Examples of these contextual factors are parents, principals' requirements, the school, society, curriculum mandates, classroom and school layout, school policies, colleagues, standardized tests and the availability of recourses (Borg 2003:94). Teachers' cognitions are shaped in response to what happens in the classroom, and language teaching may, in fact, be seen as a process which is defined by dynamic interactions among cognition, context and experience (Borg 2015:252).

There is evidence to suggest that such contextual factors may also hinder language teachers' ability to adopt practices which reflect their beliefs. Spada and Massey (1992), for instance, did a study on three novice ESL teachers in Canada, and explored the relationship

between their instructional decisions, beliefs, and contextual factors. They found differences in the extent to which classroom practices reflected the principles the teachers were taught in their teacher education programme, and suggests that this may have been due to the contextual factors of the school in which the different teachers worked. For instance, one teacher worked in a private school and was given more flexibility than another one who experienced serious discipline problems at a public school (Spada and Massey 1992:33).

Decision-making is the most researched aspect of language teacher cognition (Borg 2003:98), and studies have attempted to identify the reasons most commonly cited by teachers in explaining their instructional decisions (Borg 2003:93). Johnson (1992a) studied six preservice ESL teachers in the US, and one of her findings was that the teachers made most decisions to ensure student understanding and motivation as well as for instructional management reasons. Although Richards (1996) did not analyze actual teaching, he analyzed data from a corpus of teacher narratives and interviews to suggest that teachers accounted for their pedagogical choices with reference to maxims. Some of the maxims explained by the teachers are as follows: (1) involvement: follow the learners' interests to maintain student involvement, (2) planning: plan your teaching and try to follow your plan, (3) order: maintain order and discipline throughout the lesson and (4) efficiency: make the most efficient use of classroom time (Borg 2003:93).

The notion of departures from lesson plans – or improvisational teaching – has also been examined in educational research, and studies of language teacher cognition have looked particularly at the reasons teachers give for departing from their lesson plans (Borg 2003:93). Ulichny (1996), for instance, conducted a case study on the methodology of one ESL teacher in the US teaching a reading course. It was discovered that although she started a lesson with specific plans and principles in mind that aimed at promoting learner-centred reading, she modified her plans during the lesson due to the unexpected difficulties the students experienced in completing the planned activities. The outcome was a lesson in which the teacher engaged in practices which did not reflect her principles, and as a result the lesson became significantly teacher-centered (Borg 2003:93).

Evidence from research suggests that with experience teachers learn to automatize the routines associated with managing the class, and can hence focus more attention on issues of content (Borg 2003:95). In his study of 16 ESL teachers in Hong Kong, Richards (1998b:117-118) found that experienced teachers engaged in more improvisational teaching than inexperienced teachers. He argues that “this suggests that as teachers develop their teaching skills, they are able to draw less on pre-active decision making (the type of planning that

occurs prior to teaching) and make greater use of interactive decision-making as a source of their improvisational performance”.

3.7 Related studies

An amount of research on language teacher cognition has been concerned about how teacher education, interactive decision-making in the classroom and the nature of expertise (the teachers’ knowledge and level of experience for instance), may have an impact on teachers’ cognition (Borg 2015:98). However, as stated by Borg (2015:98), there is also a significant body of work that has examined language teacher cognition in relation to specific curricular domains, such as the uses of technology, and student and teacher preferences for the correction of classroom conversation errors. Nevertheless, in the majority of the studies concerned with curricular areas, attention to teacher cognition has been very limited. In contrast, however, two curricular domains have attracted significant research attention with regards to teacher cognition: grammar teaching and literacy instruction (Borg 2015:98-99). According to Johnson (1992:84), the most productive contributions to our understanding of the relationship between teachers’ theoretical beliefs and practices have taken place in the field of reading. What is characteristic about the research done in the area of literacy, though, is that much of it comes from L1 education contexts. Noteworthy in this regard is the fact that Borg (2015:132) claims that the limited amount of work available in the area of L2 and FL literacy instruction is a clear gap in our understandings of FL teaching.

Most of the studies have specifically examined the teaching of English, mainly in ESL as opposed to EFL contexts, though in several cases teachers of English have been just one of a larger group of FL teachers studied (e.g., Lam 2000; Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard 1999). In a few studies (e.g., Cabaroglu & Roberts 2000; Collie Graden 1996) no teachers of English have been involved (Borg 2003:83).

Young and Sachdev (2011) conducted a study into the beliefs and practices of 21 experienced teachers of English in the UK, US and France relating to the application of a model of intercultural communicative competence (ICC) to English language programmes. The investigation can be described as *multimethodological* or as *mixed methods research*, which according to Dörnyei (2011:163) refers to studies that combine qualitative and quantitative methods and that may attempt to integrate the two approaches at one or more stages of the research process. This study combined the use of diaries, focus groups, and questionnaires. Findings indicated a general consensus across locations, with an apparent

disparity between teachers' attitudes to and beliefs about ICC and their current classroom priorities. In addition, the majority of the teachers reported beliefs that supported the relevance of interculturality to their work and stressed that "good" learners and teachers tended to exhibit high intercultural competence. Nevertheless, they also suggested that ICC was given relatively little emphasis in syllabi which were negotiated with learners (Young and Sachdev 2011).

From a Lithuanian perspective, Kuzborska (2011) conducted a case study about links between teachers' beliefs and practices and research on reading. More specifically, it investigated the relationship between the beliefs of eight English for academic purposes teachers (all from the same university) and their practices in the teaching of reading to advanced learners. The data-collection methods employed were lesson observation, video stimulated recall, along with a follow-up semi-structured interview, as well as document data analysis (i.e., syllabuses, textbooks, and tests). Findings indicated that the beliefs that were identified as congruent with practices of the majority of the teachers reflected a skills-based approach to reading instruction, emphasizing vocabulary, reading aloud, translation, and whole class discussion of texts. However, a metacognitive-strategy approach is largely supported by research and regarded as most appropriate in academic contexts (Kuzborska 2011).

Johnson (1992) conducted a study about the relationship between EFL teachers' beliefs and practices during literacy instruction for non-native speakers of English. She studied the extent to which they possessed theoretical beliefs that reflect the methodological divisions of skill-based, rule-based and function-based approaches towards L2 teaching. Skill-based approaches emphasize the mimicry, memorization and repetition of native language patterns, utilize drill and practice to generate language production, and separate language study into four discrete language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Rule-based approaches view L2 learning as a process of rule-governed creativity, allow comprehension of the language to precede language production, and consider all aspects of language learning as parts of an interrelated whole. Function-based approaches, on the other hand, focus on the use of authentic language within situational contexts, provide functional language use, and prefer meaningful communication over correct structural form (Johnson 1992:86). Additionally, she analyzed the extent to which teachers' theoretical beliefs were consistent with their practices. She found that "(...) the majority of these ESL teachers (60%) possess clearly defined theoretical beliefs which consistently reflect one particular methodological approach to L2 teaching" (Johnson 1992:93). Most notably, the frequency of dominant theoretical orientations clearly favored function-based approaches.

From a Norwegian EFL perspective, Trine Mathiesen Gilje (2011) conducted a qualitative study of teacher cognition in relation to the development of reading in EFL classrooms at the elementary level in Norway. She discovered that although the teachers' cognition and reading-related decisions regarding reading material largely corresponded, their approaches to working with texts varied. For example, only four of the eight teachers in the study said that they activated pupils' schemata through pre-reading activities, such as pupils talking about pictures, making predictions about the text, guessing the meaning of words, or exploring pupils' knowledge of the topic before embarking on the reading of the text. Additionally, only five of the teachers reported that they would prompt their pupils to express their feelings and thoughts about the text they had read, which is an approach that corresponds to LK06. Nevertheless, the textbook was the most predominant reading material in the case of all of the teachers (Mathiesen Gilje 2011).

There is to my knowledge not a considerable amount of research done about teacher cognition and literature instruction. From a Norwegian EFL perspective, however, one contribution is the qualitative MA study by Oshaug Stavik (2015). Although she explores how teachers in upper secondary view the teaching of literature in the EFL classroom, her thesis is not written within a theoretical framework of teacher cognition. The findings show that the teachers have diverse opinions, and that the choices of texts, their methods and approaches vary, in addition to their opinions on which competences they think can be enhanced through literature (Oshaug Stavik 2015). For instance, all of the teachers believe that literature is important for the development of *Bildung*, some claim that one main objective should be enhanced *intercultural competences*, whereas one teacher claims that correct readings of literature where literary devices and their uses will be more important to focus on. The learning aim *reading for pleasure* is also emphasized by some teachers. In addition, some favors the New Critical approach while others lean more towards the reader-response theories. Likewise, the teachers employ different texts in their teaching; some teachers choose texts which are difficult even for adult readers, while others choose young adult novels. Nevertheless, according to Oshaug Stavik (2015), they all use examples they think can lead to a development where pupils acquire new insights about themselves and the world.

Another contribution is the MA study by Ane Herigstad (2014) which investigates teacher perceptions of the position and use of literature in the English subject in Norwegian upper secondary school, as well as what challenges new students meet in the transition to university and how this transition can be eased. The research method employed for the thesis was qualitative, and semi-structured interviews were carried out with seven teacher

informants from three different upper secondary schools in the Stavanger/Sandnes area. The study revealed that the teachers to a large extent considered the focus in the English subject to be on social, historical and cultural topics, suggesting that the subject is getting closer to a social science discipline and that there is too little focus on literature in the upper secondary. One teacher also explained that “literature and other aesthetic subjects cannot be measured and consequently many pupils today do not regard it as valuable” (Herigstad 2015:88). It was also implied that the classroom practice of literature in upper secondary school is very different from that at the university, and accordingly that many teachers do not know enough about how the current teaching is conducted at the university. Therefore, the teachers suggested that more communication between the institutions, visits, introductory courses and more reading in upper secondary would make the transition smoother. It was also found that many of the teachers in her study were critical about the textbooks at their respective schools, and it was claimed that the books did not suit their needs, that they were outdated, and that the texts were childish and unstructured (Herigstad 2014:93).

3.7.1 Contribution

One may argue that the present study will be an important contribution to the field due to its combination of data-collection methods. As will be discussed more in detail in the methods chapter (see chapter 4), this study contains both semi-structured interviews and classroom observations, which is seen as valuable since the two methods are considered complementary. Additionally, each participant will be interviewed twice (both before and after the observations), and hence the relationship between the teachers’ beliefs and practices will be studied and discussed in-depth. In consequence, the teachers’ beliefs and perceptions were enlightened by their answers during the interview sessions, whereas their actual classroom practices were studied through the observations.

In contrast with the studies conducted by Mathiesen Gilje (2011), Oshaug Stavik (2015) and Herigstad (2014), the present study explores the relationship between teachers’ beliefs and practices, which is considered crucial in relation to teacher cognition. As opposed to some of the aforementioned studies (e.g., Kuzborska 2011; Oshaug Stavik 2015 and Herigstad 2014), the present study is built upon theory, previous research and terminology connected to teacher cognition. Doubtlessly, this is considered advantageous since teacher cognition is, in fact, a crucial element of the research aims of the study. Consequently, the findings can be considered more valid since attention to the theoretical framework of what

constitutes teachers' beliefs and practices are dealt with throughout the thesis and used as a basis when planning and conducting the research.

4. Methods

4.1 Introduction

The present chapter describes the methodology employed in the thesis. In order to explore five teachers' beliefs and practices regarding literature teaching, a *qualitative approach* for data collection was chosen for this research. The first section gives an account of the nature of qualitative data collection, whereas the next two focus on the semi-structured interview and the classroom observation. Then, the subsequent sections elaborate on how the interviews and the observations were planned and conducted, present the selection of informants, as well as how the interviews were transformed into written summaries. Finally, research ethics, validity and reliability are presented.

4.2 Qualitative research

A beneficial outcome of employing a qualitative approach to research in the present study is that the data allowed for in-depth analysis and exploratory findings. Additionally, a qualitative study is kept open and fluid so that it can respond in a flexible way to new details or openings that may emerge during the process of investigation (Dörnyei 2011:37-38). In addition, it is concerned with subjective opinions, experiences and feelings of individuals and thus the explicit goal of research is to explore the participants' views of the situation being studied. Hence, to ensure descriptive and in-depth responses, well-conducted qualitative studies typically use considerably smaller samples of participants than *quantitative* ones (Dörnyei 2011:37-38). As a result, by collecting data based on words from a small number of individuals, the participants' views are obtained (Creswell 2012:16). In consequence, an overall aim is to acquire knowledge about concrete people and social processes; about how they think, feel, act, learn or develop. In this regard one would seek to achieve acquaintance with the human conditions from an "inside" perspective - in the local practices, where their lives are lived – rather than from the "outside" and from a distance, for instance from objective methods (Brinkmann & Tanggaard 2012:11-12, my translation).

4.3 Interview

According to Patton (2002:348), the purpose of qualitative interviewing is to capture how the respondents view *their* world, to learn *their* terminology and judgements, as well as to capture the complexities of *their* individual perceptions and experiences. In turn, this allows for an open dialogue between the interviewer and its respondent, which distinguishes qualitative interviewing from the closed questionnaire or test used in quantitative studies (Patton 2002:348).

Borg (2009:168) states that observations on their own do not indicate what teachers think, know and believe, and hence they are often combined with interviews or other self-report instruments. Due to the fact that this thesis seeks to study the relationship between the teachers' practices *and* their beliefs, three in-depth interviews have been combined with three classroom observations. In order for the teachers in the present study to provide personal and descriptive answers about their beliefs about literature teaching, *semi-structured* interviews have been conducted, which is claimed to offer a compromise between to extremes: the structured and the unstructured types of interviews (Dörnyei 2011:136). Brinkmann and Tanggaard (2012) argue that rather than preparing pre-made categories of a phenomenon, the qualitative variations and the many differences and types of perceptions should be expressed through a qualitative interview. Dörnyei (2011:136) states that semi-structured interviews consist of an open-ended format, and they thus allow the interviewees to elaborate on the issues raised in an exploratory manner. Consequently, by relying predominantly on open-ended questions, the data is likely to be more elaborate and qualitatively richer than those generated by closed questions (Borg 2012:187).

4.4 Observation

According to Dörnyei (2011:176), the research method *classroom observation* is a highly developed data collection approach typical of examining learning environments. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:396) stress that observations have the ability to use immediate awareness, or direct cognition, which may yield more valid and authentic data. Additionally, it has been characterized as “the fundamental base of all research methods” in the social and behavioral sciences (Adler & Adler 1994:389), and it is considered advantageous in cases where the researcher is eager to discover what participants actually *do*, and not what they *say* they do in different situations (Jacobsen 2013:159, my translation). According to Creswell

(2012:213), observation is the process of gathering open-ended, firsthand information by observing people and places at the research site. With regards to the field of language teacher cognition, observation is viewed a valuable strategy because it provides evidence of what happens in classrooms (Borg 2013:247).

4.5 Planning and conducting the interviews

Some preparations had to be made before the interviews with the teachers. Firstly, an interview guide was created (see appendix 1) and two pilot interviews were conducted before the actual interviews took place. According to Dörnyei (2011:137), an interview guide helps the researcher in various ways. For instance, it may ensure that the domain is properly covered and that nothing of importance is left out by accident. Secondly, it may suggest appropriate question wordings and offer a list of useful probe questions to be asked if needed, and lastly, it may list some comments to bear in mind.

The language employed during the sessions was Norwegian. Initially, the plan was to conduct the interviews in English, and an original interview guide was thus made in English (see appendix 2). However, because of possible language barriers, and the risk of not obtaining fully elaborated answers, it was decided to use Norwegian. One of the main reasons as to why this was seen as beneficial is the fact that all of the teachers are native Norwegians. In fact, the advantage of conducting research conversations in one's L1 is emphasized by Dörnyei (2010:12) as he states that "(...) the quality of the obtained data increases if the questionnaire is presented in the respondent's own mother tongue". Although he refers to *questionnaire*, there is reason to believe that this statement may also be relevant with regards to different types of interviews, since both types of data-collection methods aim for honest and valid answers. Hence, ambiguity has presumably been limited through clearly formulated questions and answers and successful communication through L1 dialogues during the interview sessions. Correspondingly, it is considered likely that the teachers' cognitions could be accessed more accurately through the use of their L1, and since the context is Norwegian, the language that the teachers employ to describe their working situation and pedagogical implications is usually Norwegian.

The pilot interviews were conducted to "ensure that the questions elicit rich data and do not dominate the flow of the conversation" (Dörnyei 2011:137), and to control that the interview was of a suitable length. Additionally, they allowed for a test of the audio-recording equipment, and ensured that the use of a mobile phone was found sufficient. The post-

observation interviews were not piloted in advance, as they were directed towards the specific classroom actions that were planned and carried out differently by the teachers.

All interviews were conducted at the teachers' workplace, and were recorded by the use of a mobile phone. An attempt was also made to establish a relaxed atmosphere in the beginning of the interviews, and therefore an informal conversation took place. In addition, additional information was noted down during the interviews, in order to gather data that could have been neglected or forgotten if the focus was merely on the recordings. It was of particular interest to write down important key words of what was told by the teachers, in addition to comments and probes to be used as follow-up-questions. For instance, one of the teachers mentioned that she prefers to employ texts with *young* protagonists, and a follow-up question then asked for further explanation as to why she thinks this is beneficial.

In consideration of the fact that the questions in the post-observation interviews were to be based on the findings from each classroom observation, individual interview guides were made. However, some general questions were produced as a starting point for the post-observation interviews, which provided an overview of where and how to add relevant follow-up questions (see appendix 3). Undoubtedly, several purposes for conducting the post-observation interviews can be argued for, which were considered during the planning of each interview. One prime intent was to study each of the observations more closely by asking questions about specific classroom activities and occurrences throughout the lessons. In all probability, one is more likely to get an in-depth impression of the teachers' practice by gaining knowledge about the intentions behind the methods and activities employed. Likewise, it was seen as advantageous to conduct pre- and post- observation interviews so that lines could be drawn between all interviews and observations. Consequently, this allowed for a more accurate study of the relationship between the teachers' beliefs and practices.

4.6 Structure of the interviews

The interview guide (see appendix 1) was divided into five sections to maintain a logic progression and to ensure that the important and relevant themes were covered. The following paragraphs describe each of the sections, with examples from each.

Firstly, a background part was included to start the dialogues and to set the tone of the interviews. Thus, the first questions were about the teachers' biographical background and experiences with teaching English as a FL. They were also asked about their own learning

experiences from the English subject in upper secondary, and to what degree these may have influenced their literature teaching.

According to Dörnyei (2011:137), the first questions in an interview are particularly important because they set the tone and create the initial rapport, which thus could increase the interviewees' degree of openness. Furthermore, it has been asserted that "cognition not only shapes what teachers do but... in turn [is] shaped by the experiences teachers accumulate" (Borg 2003:95). This may suggest that teachers regard their level of experience as influential connected to the pedagogical choices they make, and their actions in classroom settings. In addition, studies comparing experienced and less experienced language teachers also shed light on transformations in teacher cognition which may occur over time (Borg 2003:95), that may also be an indicator that teachers' cognitions develop as they acquire new knowledge and experiences. Hence, the questions that concerned the teachers' formal qualifications in English and experiences as language learners were considered necessary in order to evaluate their cognitions about literature teaching as precisely as possible. Questions about potential challenges were also included since contextual factors within and outside the classroom may mediate teachers' cognitions (Borg 2015:259).

- How long have you been practicing as an English teacher?
- What can you recall from your own experiences as an EFL learner regarding literature teaching?

The second section focused on methods in literature teaching. These are questions labelled as content questions since they are particularly relevant for the current study (Dörnyei 2011:137). Thus, questions about *how* the teachers teach literature, and about *what* they encourage their students to read were included to acquire knowledge about their beliefs and practices.

- How do you teach literature?
- Is there anything you consider to be challenging with regards to the teaching of literature in English as a FL?

The third section dealt with the teachers' selection of reading material, since one aim of the study is to discuss *how* and on what basis teachers select texts for the EFL classroom.

Accordingly, it was considered relevant to discuss what types of texts are employed, and for what purposes.

- Who decides what reading material you can have/use in your literature teaching?
- What types of texts do you use in the classroom?

What is more, it was seen as crucial to study the teachers' beliefs about learning aims/objectives in literature teaching, and to discuss the implications of these on the students' learning in literature lessons.

- When you teach literature, what do you think are the most important aims to focus on?
- What learning objectives do you think can be enhanced through literature?

Lastly, a section about resources, challenges and contextual factors was included. This aimed to make the teachers elaborate on their beliefs about the curriculum and its impact, and about the different materials and traditions at their school that may affect how they plan and conduct their teaching. According to Borg (2009:165), the context in which the teachers work is important for understanding their beliefs and practices.

- To what degree does the curriculum influence your literature teaching?
- Do you cooperate with other English teachers? How often? What do you cooperate about?

4.7 Planning and conducting the observations

Preparations had to be made before conducting the observations. Firstly, the degree of prior information that was to be provided to the teachers about the purposes of the study had to be decided. In this regard, Borg (2015:212) describes disclosure as “the extent to which the purposes of the observation are explained to those being observed”, and he states that disclosure may range from a minimal to a full extent. Denscombe (2002:189) asserts that “(...) if participants know exactly what is being investigated, this might influence the replies they give”. In consideration of the fact that openness and honesty were aimed for,

misrepresentation or disclosure of the purposes of the study to a full extent was avoided. Since the lessons to be observed needed to deal with *literature teaching*, the teachers had to be informed about one of the main purposes of the study, which was to investigate how the teaching of literature is conducted. However, they were not informed explicitly about all the elements that were to be studied, and that the relationship between their beliefs and practices would be studied in depth. Nevertheless, the lessons were observed *after* the first interview with each teacher, and as Borg (2015:217-218) states, “in studies where observations follow interviews, it is possible that the interviews will make teachers aware of the focus of subsequent observations”.

Secondly, the role of the researcher had to be determined, which can be characterized in terms of how overt the observer dimension is and how much the observer participates in the settings under the research (Borg 2015:210). In the present study, the researcher was not involved in the activities of the participants, and can thus be considered an “outsider” who merely watched, noted and recorded the classroom actions. According to Dörnyei (2011:179), the researcher is usually not or only minimally involved in the setting in classroom observations. Similarly, Borg (2015:215) states that there is a very clear preference in language teacher cognition research for *non-participant* observation, in which the researcher typically sits at the back, makes notes and avoids interacting with teacher or students during the events being observed. Consequently, and due to the fact that the *teachers’* instructions and the activities employed were of relevance to observe, the role of the researcher in the present study can be described as the *non-participant* or *complete* observer (Creswell 2012:214-215).

An observational guide was prepared to ensure that the observations would have a certain structure, and to make it possible to maintain focused on the research aims throughout the literature lessons (see appendix 4). However, the observational guide cannot be characterized as a systematic observational schedule or a checklist, as the observations will not be analyzed through preset categories. Moreover, Evertson and Green (1986) describe that an approach to observation which has no preset categories and that allows additional categories to be added to any findings can be defined in advance as *open*. Additionally, one pilot observation previous to the actual classroom observations was conducted, in order to ensure that the mobile phone was an adequate data recorder, that the observational guide was efficient, and lastly, that it was possible to study the teaching methods, teacher instructions and classroom activities thoroughly while writing notes.

As claimed by Jacobsen (2013:160), the setting for the observation must be closely connected to the research objectives. Hence, in consideration of the fact that a crucial aim of this study is to observe the teachers' pedagogical actions in order to acquire knowledge about their actual literature instruction, the observations were placed in vg1 classrooms.

Furthermore, the researcher had to communicate with the teachers before conducting the observations, so as to ensure that they took place during lessons where the learning objectives and activities were, in fact, related to *literature*. The implementation of the observations was thus dependent on each of the vg1 classes' lesson schedule and the teachers' willingness and possibility to have a visitor present.

Previous to the observations, the degree of structure had to be considered. Rather than conducting *structured* observations, in which the researcher knows in advance what to look for and has planned the observation categories, *semi-structured* observations have been carried out in the present study. According to Cohen et al. (2007:397), a semi-structured observation will have an agenda of issues but will gather data to illuminate these issues in a far less predetermined or systematic manner than through a structured observation. An *unstructured* observation, on the other hand, will be far less clear on what it is studying (Borg 2015:2011). What is more, the less structured approach is considered easier to prepare, but data analysis will be far more time consuming due to the open format of the observations (Cohen et al. 2007:398). In consideration of the fact that the research aims of this study implicate what will be of relevance to observe, and since there was an agenda of issues to look for, the observations can be described as semi-structured. Furthermore, the observational data was reviewed before an explanation for the phenomena being observed was suggested.

4.8 Processing and presenting the findings

The data was processed by listening to the audio-recordings from the sessions through earphones. Presenting the interviews and observations in the form of summaries was found to be a clear and precise way of data presentation. Due to the time limitations of the thesis, transcriptions of the entire interviews and observations were not considered an alternative. The audio-recordings enabled the researcher to go back and forth whenever necessary, in order to ensure that valuable information was included in the summaries. However, some detailed quotes from the informants have been included and translated from Norwegian to English in the presentation of findings. These are considered important elements of the interviews and observations for various reasons. If a respondent provided descriptive

examples and thus explained a phenomenon in depth, for instance about his or her teaching practices or selection of reading material, this is viewed as valuable information to include in the presentation of findings due to the thesis' explorative and analytical nature. According to Jacobsen (2013:185, my translation), the central details that give new insights into specific situations or phenomena should be elaborated on, which in the case of the present study implies the teachers' beliefs and practices regarding literature teaching. Creswell (2012:255) argues that the dialogues included should provide support for themes, and that the quotes should capture the participants' thoughts and emotions (Creswell 2012:257). Although the same interview guides and the observational sheet were employed in all cases, the summaries are exclusive as a result of the nature of qualitative data collection, and therefore the focus is varied.

The data material is to be presented thematically, and thus the findings are summarized through the use of categories. Therefore, the presentation of findings is divided as follows: (1) teachers' biographical background, (2) general practices in literature teaching, (3) reading material, (4) learning aims/objectives, (5) resources, challenges and contextual factors. Firstly, the category *general practices in literature teaching* aims to present teachers' beliefs regarding the approaches, methodology and activities they employ in their teaching of literature. Secondly, it presents findings from the observations that enlighten the teachers' practices. The category *learning aims/objectives* presents their beliefs about what learning aims they consider most important (not curricular). *Resources, challenges and contextual factors* was included in order to explore possible aspects that may affect the relationship between the teachers' beliefs and practices. For this reason, the present study has aimed to acquire information about what resources are available at the different schools for the teaching of literature, what challenges the teachers face in their planning and teaching, and about other contextual factors that may influence their cognitions. There has been made a table of each category so as to gain a simplified overview of main findings (see appendix 8).

The findings will be discussed through the use of subheadings to make the presentation clear. As Kvale and Brinkmann (2009:202) asserts, the goal is a development of categories that "capture the fullness of the experience and actions studied". Additionally, it was found that the structure in the interview guide could function as a starting point for convenient categories, but these have been slightly revised. In consideration of the fact that a checklist was not employed during the observations, the findings were coded and categorized afterwards. The data material is presented in chapter 5.

4.9 Selection of informants

According to Creswell (2007:206), we identify our participants and sites on *purposeful sampling* in qualitative research, based on places and people that best can help us understand a central phenomenon. Similarly, as claimed by Patton (2002), qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples that are selected *purposefully*. Due to the fact that this thesis is to explore EFL teachers' beliefs about and practices regarding literature teaching, the selected informants were five upper-secondary EFL teachers. They also worked at different schools which are in three distinct municipalities.

The criteria for the selection of informants were that the teachers are formally qualified EFL teachers, and that they teach at the first year of Norwegian upper secondary school. The rationale behind the sample criterion was firstly influenced by the fact that English in Vg1 is a compulsory subject (later on it is optional). In addition, one may also assume that the teachers in upper secondary will have university degrees, and that they thus are formally qualified teachers of English with a considerable amount of knowledge about literary canons and their relevance to the EFL classroom. Additionally, there is reason to believe that since Vg1 students have studied English both in primary and in lower secondary, they will be better acquainted with the strategies necessary to comprehend and study texts compared to students in lower classes. They should hence be quite experienced EFL learners with developed literacy abilities, which allegedly makes the teachers able to use more authentic reading material in addition to more varied approaches and methods in their teaching of literature. Finally, one can argue that there is a strong tradition for the use of literature in Norwegian upper secondary school (Fenner 2011:41).

According to Cohen et al. (2007:100), access to the sample is a key issue and is an early factor that must be decided in research. Researchers, they state, will need to ensure that access is not only permitted, but also practicable. The informants in the present study all permitted to participate by reading and signing an information sheet, and an application was sent to the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) for a formal approval (see appendix 5). Additionally, access to the sample was provided relatively practicably, due to communication through e-mail and the fact that the schools in which they work are not at a far distance from the town of the researcher.

In selecting the informants for the study, e-mail requests were sent out to school leaders at various upper secondary schools in Rogaland, adding preliminary and brief information about the study and the data-collection methods of relevance. Furthermore, by

reason of various practical constraints, such as a limited time frame and financial restrictions, the sample strategy employed in the present study can be described as *convenience sampling*. According to Dörnyei (2011:129), this is the least desirable but the most common sampling strategy, and it is seen as largely practical since the researcher uses those who are available.

4.10 Research ethics

Prior to the data collection, various ethical issues of the study had to be considered. Firstly, the study was reported to NSD. Secondly, a page was written informing the teachers about the aim of the study in addition to the methods and ethical issues stating that the study was anonymous (see appendix 6). Furthermore, an information sheet was given to the students about the project and its aims (see appendix 7). In addition, it was found necessary to inform the students about the research ethics which stated that the study was anonymous and that the recordings would be deleted after the end of the project. All the participants signed the information sheets, and therefore accepted to participate in the study. They were also assured that their names and the name of the school in which they work would not be published. Moreover, to ensure anonymity, the teachers were given pseudonyms and the names of the schools were not included in the thesis. Additionally, the researcher has aimed to obtain a professional and objective relationship with all three respondents. One of the most significant ethical issues in qualitative interviewing is seen to concern the relationship between the interviewer and its respondents. Moreover, the information that is gathered through the interviews can be affected by the interviewer's ability to create a safe environment for the respondent to answer freely (Kvale & Brinkmann 2012:35, my translation). Consequently, it was considered beneficial to use semi-structured interviews in the present study, which allowed for a well-balanced and open dialogue.

Admittedly, there were ethical considerations with regards to the classroom observations. According to Richards and Lockhart (2009:22), a researcher should always aim to make the observations be viewed as a positive rather than a negative experience to the observed teachers. In order to do so, the observer's function should be limited to that of gathering information, and not to evaluate a class. Hence, it is necessary to bear in mind that a guest's purpose for visiting a class is not to judge, evaluate or criticize, but simply to learn through observing (Richards and Lockhart 2009:22). Consequently, it was considered a necessity to inform both the teachers and students that the aim of the observations was merely to *study* the teachers' individual literature teaching, and not to evaluate their methods or

pedagogical decisions. Additionally, they were assured that their willingness to participate in the study is highly appreciated and that it will be a valuable contribution to the present research as well as to the relationship between teacher cognition and literature teaching.

4.11 Validity and reliability

As stated by Cohen et al. (2007:133), validity is an essential key to effective research, and hence an invalid research could be regarded as worthless. In qualitative studies, for example, validity might be addressed through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation (the mixture of data collection methods), as well as the objectivity of the researcher.

One of the primary strengths of the present research is seen to be its combination of data-collection methods. In consideration of the fact that both semi-structured interviews and classroom observations were conducted, validity was presumably addressed through depth and richness. Not only did the teachers express their perceptions and beliefs connected to literature teaching; they were also observed and asked follow-up questions based on their actions in classroom settings. Due to the fact that they were interviewed twice (both pre- and post the observations), the relationship between the teachers' beliefs and practices have presumably been studied more thoroughly.

The reliability of the study can be said to be slightly weakened by the fact that the teachers knew they were being observed. According to Jacobsen (2013:160), *secret* observations are advantageous since the participants do not feel the need to act abnormal. If people know they are being observed they may change their behavior according to the intended wishes of the observer, and the reliability is considered stronger if the observations are secret (Jacobsen 2013:160, my translation). However, due to research ethics and the fact that the observations were to happen in classrooms, open (or overt) observations was the only alternative. The teachers had to be informed in advance, since openness and optionality are important ideals in research ethics (Jacobsen 2013:160, my translation).

A significant limitation of the study is linked to the low number of participants, which undoubtedly decreases its validity. Therefore, the results of the thesis cannot be seen as generalizable, and the study does not aim to provide concluding universal facts about teacher cognition nor EFL literature teaching. Nevertheless, since it is built on a theoretical framework and explores five different teachers' beliefs and practices in depth, it may be a valuable contribution to both research fields.

5. Results

5.1 Introduction

The current chapter presents the summaries of the interviews and the classroom observations. Through pre-observation interviews, observations and post-observation interviews, attempts have been made to study five vg1 teachers' beliefs and practices regarding literature teaching in depth, as well as the relationship between their stated beliefs and practices, and the contextual factors that may affect this relationship. The teachers and schools are anonymized, and all names in the section are thus pseudonyms. Where considered to support the themes, and found relevant according to the research aims, some of the teachers' quotes have been included and translated into English in the following presentation of findings.

As mentioned in section 4.8, the findings have been categorized across the interviews and observations (see appendix 8 for an overview of findings). Therefore, the structure of the present chapter is divided in accordance with the categories; (1) teachers' biographical background (2), general practices in literature teaching, (3) reading material, (4) learning aims/objectives, (5) resources, challenges and contextual factors. General practices in literature teaching will focus on teachers' beliefs regarding how they teach literature and what they encourage their students to read, in addition to their actual classroom practices (based on the observed lessons). The methodology, instructions and activities employed by the teachers during the observed lessons will thus be presented under this category.

5.2 Teachers' biographical background

5.2.1 Karen (47)

Karen started working as an English teacher in 1995, and has worked for 15 years in two different upper secondary schools. She has taught English and Social Studies both in general- and vocational studies. The current school year she only teaches students in general studies, which she explains is quite rare since she works at a combined school.

During her upper-secondary education, Karen majored in "trade- and office" subjects. Hence, she explains, the traditional literature teaching was quite limited, as the English subject focused merely on factual texts and oral communication related to this branch. Consequently, her literature teaching has been more influenced by her experiences from the university, and especially by the English didactics course. She studied at a Norwegian

university and she has an MA in English (hovedfag), and 90 study points in Comparative Politics and Organization and Administration (mellomfag).

5.2.2 Lisa (49)

Lisa has worked as an English teacher for approximately 27 years. Except for half a year in lower secondary, she has taught English and French both in vocational- and general studies, which she also does this school year.

Lisa remembers her own experiences with literature from upper secondary school clearly, and she states that they typically had written- and oral post-reading activities. She mentions that she does not remember the factual texts read, and she is thus convinced that literature may enhance and cover quite a few learning aims. What is more, she asserts that although she employs different approaches and methods, she tends to use literature in similar manners as her own teachers; by focusing on vocabulary, text analysis and conducting pre- and post-reading activities. Her choice of carrier, she argues, has been highly influenced by the fact that she liked the English subject and especially the literature part. She studied in Norway and has two university degrees; 90 study points in English (mellomfag) and an MA in French (hovedfag).

5.2.3 Paul (31)

Paul has worked as an English teacher for three and a half years and teaches students in general studies. He explains that he has mixed feelings with regards to the literature teaching he experienced in upper secondary, as he had two teachers who approached it differently. The first teacher he had in GK (grunnkurs) had a very low focus on literature, whereas the second teacher – in vk1 and vk2 - focused on literary analysis and had a teacher-centered teaching. Paul enjoyed this teaching since he acquired analytical abilities that could be transferable to the work with other texts. He argues that his experiences from GK function as a template for how he would *not* teach, and although his lessons are not as teacher-centered, he has been influenced by his experiences from vk1 and vk2. This was also where he discovered an interest for literary analysis. However, he believes that the most significant source of inspiration is his MA supervisor, who provided him insight into the benefits of group work and “creative teaching”, which Paul uses today.

Paul attended a one-year study of English, and after having specialized in English and some complementary subjects, he finished his Bachelor’s degree. He then wrote his MA

thesis at the same university in Norway, and studied for half a year abroad. In addition to English, he has formal qualifications in the subjects of Norwegian, gym and music.

5.2.4 Amy (55)

Amy has worked as an English teacher for 30 years. She has worked four years in lower secondary, and the rest of the time in upper secondary, where she has experience with teaching English in both vocational- and general studies. This school year she teaches English only in vg1, and has two classes in different departments at her school.

Amy remembers the literature teaching from upper secondary very well, and she states that she had an “inspiring young teacher” who influenced her choice to study English. She explains that they read classical texts from the textbook – both poems and short stories. In addition, they read novels that were adapted according to the CEFR reference levels. They read quite a lot of crime stories, read out loud in class and answered written questions from the textbook or discussed them orally in class. She believes that her experiences as a student has influenced her literature teaching, especially with regards to the selection of reading material, as she has employed several crime novels in the past. She has an MA in English (hovedfag), in addition to an MA in school administration from a Norwegian university. She also has formal qualifications in the subjects Norwegian and history.

5.2.5 Mary (42)

Mary has worked as an English teacher for approximately 14 years. She has worked in the same upper secondary school throughout her teaching carrier, where she teaches English in vg1 to students in general studies.

Mary mentions that they read literary texts in the textbook when she attended upper secondary, and that they worked to a greater extent with vocabulary learning, as there seemed to be a significant focus on glossaries. In addition, she remembers that they answered questions from the texts, but she cannot recall whether there was a strong emphasis on literary terms. As a teacher she still employs questions to check the students’ text comprehension, but she does not focus as strongly on the learning of single words. She has several university degrees; an MA in Comparative Literature (hovedfag), 90 study points in English (mellomfag), and 60 study points in Norwegian (grunnfag). In addition, she has studied History of Art.

5.3 General practices in literature teaching

5.3.1 Karen

Pre observation interview

When asked how she teaches literature in English in vg1, Karen argues that one of its primary roles is to enlighten and elaborate on the different themes that the students are working with. She also states that it may be used to ensure a *personal perspective* on a particular topic. In this regard, she stresses that one often uses literature in the classroom to study topics in the English subjects from different viewpoints;

If one is to work with a specific historical period or say ... With the theme Native Americans, one could employ texts written by a Native American that tells a story from a personal and first-hand point-of-view to enlighten this topic.

Karen claims that it is vital to focus on the relationship between the author and text, and that it is always “important to place literature in a certain perspective”. For this reason, she usually reminds her students to bear in mind the author’s position in society at the time of writing, and to study whether the story is told from a personal perspective.

In the beginning of each school year, Karen organizes a class discussion about what is important to focus on while reading literature, such as comprehension strategies. She stresses the relevance of literary devices, and mentions that “we use these as a “guide” for what to look for in texts”. She always reminds the students of the function of the literary devices if they are to encounter a new type of text. Karen mentions that there are various ways to introduce literary texts, and that she often connects reading to the *listening skill*. In many cases her students get to listen to the text before, during or after the reading. Additionally, she always aims to activate their former knowledge about a subject before working with texts. “What do *they* know about Native Americans, for instance... What do they remember from lower secondary school... What do they *think about* when they hear the term Native Americans?” Karen mentions that she usually makes the students reflect upon their previous knowledge and experiences either individually, or orally in pairs or in class, before she introduces or describes the relevant topics to them.

Karen prefers to employ various activities in her teaching, which she states is motivating to students. Quite often, she makes them answer questions about the texts both in writing and orally in pairs, groups or in class, where they often start with the written tasks. On some occasions, her students have read short stories and made cartoons based on the stories as homework. She does, however, have the impression that most students prefer to work with

texts in “traditional ways”, and mentions that they seem to favor post-reading activities that involve answering written tasks about the text.

Karen mentions that some activities are more challenging to employ than others. For instance, she has some experience with *role-play* as a post-reading activity, but she conceives this as difficult for several reasons. Firstly, she mentions that “as a teacher you should know quite a lot about how to organize this activity... In order for it to succeed you usually need experience with it”. Secondly, she argues that many students are hesitant to speak out loud in English. Her impression is that the students are often shy or unwilling to speak in English in front of others. As a matter of fact, she explains this phenomenon as a paradox; “although they seem to be better English speakers – perhaps better than students before them - they tend to be even more shy”.

Karen encourages her students to read, listen and gather as much information in English as possible:

I don't usually recommend different novels to my students, but I encourage them to listen to English-speaking television and films... To listen to English song lyrics, or to, for instance, play computer games where they will be exposed to the English language.

She emphasizes that *through* as much exposure to English as possible, the students will become better language users, and that this is her motto as an EFL teacher. In a similar vein, Karen argues that by reading a great amount of texts in English, the students will become better readers, writers and speakers.

Observation

The text employed in Karen's lesson was the short story “Tony's Story”, written by the Native American author Leslie Marmon Silko. The short story is printed in the school's textbook for VG1 – *Gateways* – which is published by Aschehoug, and is about a Native American boy, Tony (the protagonist), and his friend. The text describes that Tony has lived his whole life in the reservation, whereas his friend has more knowledge of the white population as he has lived among them. The story is divided into three parts, and in each part the two boys have encounters with the police.

On the first page of the story, there is information about the author, and it is mentioned that the conflict between the white society and the native way of life is reflected in all her work. The authors are always presented before the fictional texts in the book, and the students are thus introduced to key background information, such as where the author is from, when

the text was written, and to relevant contextual factors that may be of interest regarding the text or the topic(s) of relevance. Before reading this text, the students had worked with the US (which is an aim in LK06 since it is an English-speaking country), and they were about to work further with the topic of the *Native Americans*.

Karen introduces the lesson by asking the students about their knowledge of the Native Americans, and wants them to discuss the term in pairs. She asks them:” What do *you* connect with the term Native Americans? What are your associations?” The students get approximately two minutes to discuss in pairs.

After the students have discussed, they are asked to talk about their associations out loud in class. They mention different aspects of the Native Americans, such as the tribes, Pocahontas, their culture and some of the conflicts they have experienced. Thereafter, Karen informs them that she will present a short Power-Point about the Native Americans, and she asks them to note down the information. As an introduction, she reminds the students that they have worked with the theme *indigenous people* in Social Studies as well (with the Sami people). She then clarifies and explains the term indigenous people.

The Power-point starts with a historical overview. Karen talks about where the Native Americans originally emigrated from and how they travelled to America. She illustrates by referring to the map and she explains the different pictures she has included in her presentation. Secondly, Karen connects the information she provides to the text “Tony’s Story”. In this regard, she focuses especially on religion and Native Americans’ relationship with nature. In addition, she contrasts the Native Americans and the Europeans and elaborates on the conflicts that have occurred between them. Towards the end she discusses the situation before versus now, and talks about the Native Americans’ role in the American society today. Lastly, she gives brief information about the tribes and refers to the map, and emphasizes that reservations today are viewed as something positive due to renewed pride in the Native Americans’ cultural heritage and traditions.

Before the reading, Karen talks about the story’s plot and the main character. She then repeats what literary devices to look for in a short story (setting, characters, theme, narration and point of view). She mentions the structure of the story is divided in three and that she will stop the CD after each part. The students are asked to answer this question after each part: What happens each time Tony and his friend meet the police? She writes “part 1, part 2, and part 3” on the blackboard. She then asks one of the students to read about the author out loud. Afterwards, Karen mentions that the time of the written text is relevant for the students’ understanding of it, and quickly repeats the Native Americans’ situation at that time. She puts

the text in a context of US history, where she mentions that the setting of the text is probably in the 1950s or the early 1960s, and that this was before the Civil Rights Movement.

The class listens to the story while reading from their textbook simultaneously. After each part, Karen stops the CD and asks the students to write one or two sentences about where the characters are, and about their encounters with the police. They have approximately two minutes to answer in writing, and are afterwards asked to discuss their answers in class. Karen writes down some of the answers on the blackboard. After the last part of the story, she discusses possible reasons for its ending: “Can the ending be connected to the way-of-life and mindset of the Native Americans?” She then reminds the students that the discussion of a story’s theme is essential to achieve a deeper comprehension, and that they need to “read the story between the lines” and understand the situation of the Native Americans in order to identify possible themes.

As a post-reading activity, the students are asked to do a written task in their textbook. Karen mentions that this task will prepare them for work in the language lab on the following day, which they will be graded on. They will be tested for approximately three minutes about “Tony’s Story”, in which they will be asked questions about the theme, the character, plot and point of view. Karen reminds them to focus especially on the mindset, situation and culture of the main character in order to discuss the theme of the story, and she stresses the importance of *contextualization*. Lastly, she reminds them to read the text thoroughly as there will be many details of interest to discuss on the following day, and that they should aim to answer in a reflected manner.

Post observation interview

When asked *why* she chose to start the lesson with the discussions about the Native Americans, Karen answered that she did this primarily to activate the students’ former knowledge about the subject. She supplemented that “it is beneficial that students are able to connect topics to as many associations as possible before reading texts”, and added that this would make it easier for them to understand the texts both during and after the reading.

Karen answered that she often uses Power-Point presentations in her literature teaching, especially before she introduces new texts to students. “I think this is a good way to introduce a specific topic, instead of merely writing key words on the blackboard”. She particularly thinks that the use of illustrations such as pictures, short movies, sound-clips and maps make the presentations more interesting to students, and that the learning outcome may be increased if they are exposed to different inputs. However, she mentions that many

students tend to be demotivated if lessons are too teacher-centered, and if the activities are not varied. Therefore, Karen never employs presentations that last longer than 20 minutes.

The reason why Karen chose to stop the CD after each part and discuss the plot with the students, was to make it easier for them to pay attention to the events in the text, especially since “Tony’s Story” is relatively long (about six pages). She explains that some of the students are academically challenged, and that many of them struggle with reading longer texts in English. Hence, she states, by dividing the texts into parts and by making them answer tasks both in writing and orally throughout the reading, the majority of the students were able to follow the reading session. Nevertheless, her students normally prepare by reading at home before attending her classes, and she always reminds them of the importance of reviewing texts.

When asked why she chose to employ the different teaching methods (oral discussions in pairs and in class, in addition to written assignments), Karen answered that they all enhance the students’ language competences. She considers there to be clear links between literature- and language learning in general, and mentions that if students are able to integrate different competences in their work with texts, this will increase the overall learning outcome. Additionally, she argues that:

The more teaching methods you employ, the more students you will meet. Not every student is able to remember or understand *everything* they read, and by listening to the text or to discussions about it he or she might be able to understand it at a higher level.

Furthermore, she argues that the implementation of discussions in pairs or in smaller groups may be beneficial since many students are hesitant to speak or read English in front of a whole class.

Although a group of students refuse to speak about texts or read them out loud in lessons, they seem to manage this well during their time in the language lab, where they are asked to analyze and discuss texts through the use of headphones with microphones. According to Karen, this is a very useful resource with regards to oral assignments, and she often employs it in her literature teaching.

5.3.2 Lisa

Pre-observation interview

When asked how she teaches literature in English in vg1, Lisa states that she uses it to enlighten the different topics in the curriculum. Additionally, she argues, one may use fiction

in order to strengthen and enliven different *factual* texts while working with a specific topic. However, one “rarely teaches literature for the sake of literature, especially not in vg1”. She mentions that one is better able to this in vg3, particularly in the subject “English literature and culture” that is more specialized than English as a compulsory subject in vg1. Thus, she claims, reading for *pleasure* is not something that is easily done or typically focused on in Vg1, since the students are rarely able to read what they prefer. In addition, they are expected to do post-reading tasks in most cases.

She says that she always works with literature *as* literature, in the sense that it should not merely be used as a tool to enlighten curricular topics. For instance, she focuses on literary devices such as *theme, plot, character, setting* etc., and she believes that students will benefit more from the reading if they gain practice with literary devices beforehand. Hence, she focuses on literary analysis throughout the entire school year:

For example, I will ask them about who the characters are, what do they do, what’s the plot... Later on we study more challenging elements, such as the setting, theme, and the different sentences as well as the intentions behind these.

Before introducing new texts to students, Lisa discusses the relevant topics:

For instance, before working with a text connected to *indigenous people* I would prepare them by telling them a bit about what this is...I could give them important key words to focus on, such as “tradition versus modern civilization”, and how to keep this in mind while reading...I usually contextualize a text beforehand.

Lisa encourages her students to read as much as possible, and whatever they come across. She mentions that although she does not advise them to read the “classical works” by authors such as Shakespeare and Dickens, she wants them to study excerpts of their work in school; “I want them to know these names and to have seen their words and their language, so that the reading experience will be more authentic”.

Observation

There were two texts employed in Lisa’s lesson; the short story “Dead Men’s Path” by Chinua Achebe and the poem “Sone of Mine” by Oodgeroo. Both texts are printed in the school’s textbook for vg1 – *new experience* - which is published by Gyldendal undervisning. The texts are from the third chapter called *Intercultural experience*. Information about the authors of the texts is provided on the first page. It is in this regard mentioned that Chinua Achebe is Nigerian, and that he is by many considered to be the “father of the African novel in English”. It is also stated here that “Dead Men’s Path” “deals with the traditional versus the

modern and how it affects people in traditional societies” (Heian et al. 2009:136). “Son of Mine” is written by the Australian Aborigine writer and activist Oodgero (1920-1993), and the students are informed that the poem was written in 1960 to her son, Bejam.

Lisa starts the lesson by introducing the term *indigenous people* and shows examples of where some of them live on the class map. Thereafter, she asks the students to reflect upon their associations, and after a minute she asks some of them to discuss the term out loud. She wants them to answer: “what does it take to be called an indigenous people? Any characteristics, examples”?

After a couple of students have answered the questions, Lisa continues the discussion by referring to the phrase “modern civilization versus old tradition”. She mentions that indigenous people live as their ancestors have done for hundreds of years, and that they live by old, traditional norms and values, compared to the rest of the civilization that is considered modern. “What happens when groups of people living the traditional way meet the people from the civilized world”? She then gives examples of the “modern way of life” such as cellphones, computers and cars, and explains that the relationship between “modern versus traditional” is what they will explore during this lesson. She informs them that first text they are going to read - “A Dead Man’s Path” - can be connected to this theme. “Now we are going to see what happens when a person representing the modern world – the cultivated, civilized world - meets a group of people that live according to old traditions”.

Before reading the text, Lisa asks the students about the author. “Have you heard of the author before? When was he born? Is he still alive”? She instructs them to read the text about the author, and then asks them to answer questions about him out loud. Eventually, she discusses him, and mentions that Achebe is a well-known author, especially with regards to the African novel, and that he has had a significant position in recreating the relevance of African culture and traditions. She informs them that he especially focuses on Nigerian culture and traditions in his texts, since this is his home country, and that a part of the country has not yet become civilized.

As a pre-reading activity, the students do a written assignment from the textbook. They are asked to examine a group of words in which they are to make two columns: one for traditional and one for modern terms. After having completed the columns, they are instructed to compare their columns with a partner. Lastly, they answer the following questions in a small group: “*What does tradition mean to you*”? “*Which traditions do you value most and why*”? “*Are there any customs you feel society should get rid of*”?

Lisa makes one student read the title and the introduction of the text, which tells the readers briefly about the story's setting. Thereafter, the class reads the text while listening to it. After the reading, Lisa instructs the students to skim the pages and make a note of various unknown words; "were there any details in the text you didn't understand? Just skim-read the text and make sure you have understood everything".

Lisa writes "genre, plot and characters" on the blackboard. She then initiates a class discussion where she asks the students how *they* would describe the function of these literary devices in "Dead Men's Path", and some students raise their hands to answer. They are afterwards told that they have ten minutes to close-read the text, and to do a task in the textbook about the plot, the main character and setting, as well as about the theme and the significance of "modern versus traditional". They can choose to answer the questions in writing or orally in pairs. If the students finish earlier, they may draw a picture of the school depicted in the story. Lisa walks around in the classroom and observes, listens, monitors and guides them through their work.

When the students have finished the task, Lisa discusses them in class, and asks individual students to answer two of the questions out loud. She supplements their answers and asks for further explanations, and focuses especially on the significance of "the path": "Why is this path so important to the villagers"? When asked to describe Mr. Obi, Lisa responds to the students by making them elaborate on his actions in the text.

Some of you said he was ignorant... Why do you think so? (...) If one doesn't respect other religions or traditions, does one have to oppose? Could he have done things differently?

Towards the end of the class discussion, Lisa asks the students whether they liked the story, and wants them to elaborate briefly on why or why not. Lastly, the students are asked to do a task in the textbook, in which they are to discuss their drawings and compare two of the characters. Lisa monitors and observes the students while working. At last, she instructs some of them to provide their answers out loud, and asks the rest of the class whether they agree with what has been mentioned. She makes the following argument:

One important advice - if you want change (like Mr. Obi), do not tell people what to do, but guide and advise them ... This is a far more effective method if you want to achieve something.

Lisa introduces the other text – the poem "Son of Mine" – by discussing the picture placed above it. This is a photography of two Australian aboriginal men, where one of them speaks in a cellphone. She discusses the significance of it and relates it to the theme "traditional

versus modern”, and to the previous text the class read. “The man in the picture does what Mr. Obi didn’t understand... He combines the traditional and modern ways of living”.

Before asking a couple of students to read the text out loud, Lisa talks a bit about the author, and states that the poem is written to her son. After the reading, Lisa asks the students “what genre is this”? She also mentions that it is organized and traditional due to its rhyming scheme. Thereafter, she asks what the theme of the poem is, and says that they will discuss this together. She re-reads the poem out loud slowly, stanza by stanza, while asking the students about the significance of the different expressions and what is communicated in each stanza. She mentions that the theme is probably connected to *hope* and *mutual respect* between blacks and whites, as it is mentioned that the author does not want to tell her son about the experienced tragedy of the Aboriginals, but about “when lives of black and white entwine”. Lisa ends the lesson by asking questions related to the theme of the poem:

Does that mean that you should forget about the horrible things that have happened in the past, and just focus on the future? (...) But can you move forward as a nation if you just look backwards, and not forward?

Post-observation interview

Lisa states that she chose to start the lesson with a discussion about *indigenous people* in order to contextualize the topic, which in turn will help the students to comprehend the text:

We usually have a class discussion before reading texts... Sometimes I also employ a quiz—most frequently while introducing new topics - or we may watch video clips, listen to a song (...)

Lisa mentions that it is especially important to introduce texts that are written by or about indigenous people, since “one has a tendency to remember background information about English-speaking countries, because one might have learned a great lot about these before.” She had introduced the topic indigenous people to the students in a previous lesson, in which she employed a Power-Point presentation with illustrations.

Lisa argues that she does not favor teacher-centered lessons. In order for the students to stay concentrated and to get a sufficient learning outcome, she thinks it is essential to conduct discussions of different kinds, for instance in class or in small groups or pairs. When asked if she thinks it is beneficial to have students answer questions about literature in whole-class groupings, she states that this is necessary in order to maintain a certain class dynamic; “I should not be the one talking all the time”. She personally favors whole-class discussions and says that this is an “ideal method” while working with literary texts:

I think the most fun part about teaching literature is to be able to talk about texts together with the students (...) Hence, I enjoy better to teach classes where the students are willing to participate in class discussions.

However, she does have the impression that most of the students she teaches are hesitant to answer and discuss in a whole-class grouping, and that the majority seem to work better in smaller groups. Nevertheless, she states that many students are able to discuss texts in whole-class groupings if they are given written tasks beforehand so that they know what they will be asked about.

Although Lisa uses Power-Point presentations on some occasions, she believes that the students tend to get demotivated if the teacher never varies the teaching:

I mostly use teacher presentations to introduce new topics or to illustrate certain elements (...) With regards to literature, I include key words about the author's significance, about the genre or different literary terms (...)

Nevertheless, Lisa thinks it is very beneficial to employ pictures and other illustrations with regards to literary texts:

I did not discuss the picture employed in the textbook connected to "A dead Man's Path" because this does not illustrate what the text is about (...) But I find that the picture connected to the poem is *genius*, as it really describes the relationship between "modern versus traditional".

5.3.3 Paul

Pre-observation interview

Paul mentions that his literature teaching in English in vg1 resembles his teaching in the Norwegian subject. Firstly, he says that he connects literary texts to the different curricular themes, where he aims to concretize the competence aims expressed in LK06. "If for instance, we work with the US, I could employ a text that enlightens African American history". He also mentions that he tries to introduce the texts in different and "creative ways", for instance by singing the text if they are lyrical, and states that "this is also something that I can connect to my musical background".

Before his students do text analysis, Paul wants them to discuss what is described *explicitly*. However, when he introduces texts, he reminds them of the significance of literary devices, and how these may help them understand and comprehend them:

I usually tell them that everyone can understand a text's *concrete motif* - or what the text is about... But in order to comprehend it at a deeper level - to understand the *meaning* behind it - one must analyze it through the use of literary devices (...)

Due to the fact that it may be challenging for many students to understand the functions of literary devices, Paul introduces and explains them gradually. In order to avoid long text introductions, he does not provide examples of each device beforehand, but he points to and describes specific examples from the texts they work with in the lessons. What is more, Paul usually varies the level of difficulty when it comes to tasks connected to literary devices, so that the students may gain a sense of achievement and motivation to work further with text analysis.

In general, Paul encourages his students to read as much as possible, and to read what they find interesting. “I aim to connect literature to joy whenever possible”. Nevertheless, he states, when students read texts in school settings, the potential learning outcomes must be considered at all times, which means that one should not *only* stress the importance of reading for joy. “It is crucial to motivate students to read, and to make them aware of the possible *benefits* of both reading and analyzing texts”. In fact, Paul’s impression is that the majority of students need to be motivated to read longer texts, and in order to study texts in depth, they have to be reminded of *why* this should be considered important and interesting to their learning as a whole. In addition, Paul mentions that students seem to lack interest in learning activities they do not get evaluated or graded on, which may make them dislike discussions and tasks about literature because they do not consider it to be “necessary”. Hence, Paul aims to make literature teaching relevant by always stating the potential learning outcomes in relation to texts, and he mentions to his students how literature may enhance vocabulary, knowledge of ourselves, other people, the world, and likewise how it may help us see the world from the perspectives of others.

Paul believes that since many students dislike to read and refuse to do it on their own initiative, they have to be “forced” by the teacher. He mentions that in most cases, the students’ inner motivation to read and learn has to be developed. Hence, Paul usually connects the texts he employs to a possible exam, where the students are reminded that the work with literary texts will help prepare them to a great extent.

Observation

The texts employed in Paul’s lesson were the song “In the Ghetto”, written by Mac Davis and made famous by Elvis Presley, and the poem “The Rose That Grew From Concrete”, by Tupac Shakur (Lesane Parish Crooks). Paul had copied “In the Ghetto” from another textbook, and he used this in relation to the themes *The US* and *Canada*. The students had

worked with these themes for a period beforehand, and they had read and discussed texts that could be related to “the American Dream”.

Paul starts the lesson by introducing the texts and the different activities, and tells the students to read the texts and tasks he has handed out. He writes the following on the blackboard: “concrete motif → literary devices → abstract themes and messages”.

After the students have read through the texts, he asks them what genres they think they are: “Do you have any ideas? What do the texts look like?” One student raises his hand and answers that they both look like poems, and Paul asks him to clarify. The student mentions that “In the Ghetto has small lines... There are few of them, and the lines rhyme”. Paul continues the class discussion:

You have now said what a poem looks like. Good. But can you say anything about what separates a poem from – say – other texts – such as novels, short stories or a play?

As one student explains the structure of poems, Paul corrects her and states that one does not refer to paragraphs, but to *stanzas* while analyzing poems. He then mentions that it is possible to sing poems, due to the fact that they contain rhythm and rhyme. Therefore, he states, he will sing “In the Ghetto” to the students. When the song is finished, Paul argues:

So...Poems could be sung, and that’s hard to do with a novel... If you find a Harry Potter novel and you try singing it...Well, you would have some difficulty doing that. But poems and songs... Well – songs *are* poems, right? If they have rhythm and rhymes, it is possible to sing them.

Thereafter, he mentions that he will talk briefly about some of the literary devices that can be identified in the two texts, and he starts with “In the Ghetto”. He asks the students to look at task two on the sheet; “What is the concrete motif in this poem? Can you describe the setting and the environment?”), and refers to the key terms written on the blackboard.

Before dividing the students into groups in order to analyze the texts, Paul gives them information about *why* they should be able to study texts in depth:

Analyzing texts is not as difficult as some of you would think (...) I hope you’ll figure that out during this session. So *why* do we have to analyze texts? Well – first of all- in exams and in tests you will need to show that you understand the texts we read ...And then you will have to analyze these to show that you understand them. So - if we were outside of a school setting we could have just discussed them and had fun... But here you need to go in depth - you need to analyze them (...) Hopefully it will not kill the joy of reading, or singing or – whatever – because literature is actually meant to be fun and provide insight of the world and who we are as human beings. Because literature is *about* human beings, right?

Afterwards, Paul reminds the students that they read both of the texts in class on the previous day, and that they had discussed briefly what they were about. He then asks them what happens “In the Ghetto”, and states that this is something most people reading the poem could be able to figure out. “If you were to explain the poem in *one* sentence only – what happens in it”?

Paul states that this is a *narrative* poem, and thus that one is able to describe it as a story. When none of the students raise their hands to answer what the poem is about, Paul asks: “*who* is it about? A student then explains in two sentences who the story is about and what happens. “Good. So that’s basically what you read *directly*. Do you agree with that? That’s the *concrete motif*”. Paul then moves on to talk about the theme of the text:

This story is *about* something – there is a *theme* here. Is there a reason why Mac Davis has created this poem? What was he thinking about? (...) That’s the abstract themes and messages. You have to work out the meaning for yourselves.

He then explains the difference between the two terms *concrete* and *abstract*, and says that “love” is an example of an abstract term. “you can’t *touch* love, if you see what I mean (...) Understanding the deeper meaning of texts is what analysis is all about”. Furthermore, he explains that text analysis moves from the concrete to the abstract, and he mentions literary devices: “metaphors, symbols, rhyme”. At last, he explains that the students must not only point out the different devices, but that they should be able to explain the effects of them, and how they create a meaning to the text as a whole.

Paul divides the students into groups of four and five – based on where they sit. He reminds them that they will discuss the tasks orally. Each group will have one group leader who will answer the questions in class afterwards. He stresses that everyone must participate, and says that the group leader will write down key information. During the group discussion Paul walks around in the classroom and listens, answers questions and monitors the students.

As all of the groups are finished, Paul states that everyone must pay attention while he asks questions to each group. He asks them the ten questions in a chronological order, and makes follow-up questions. When each group has provided their answers, he asks whether the rest of the class have additional information or comments to the answers.

There is now only 20 minutes left of the lesson to work with “The Rose That Grew From Concrete”. Thus, Paul states that instead of conducting group discussions, they will have a class discussion where one student at a time raises their hand to answer each question. During the discussion, Paul focuses on the significance of the rose depicted in the poem, and states several times that it is very unusual for roses to grow out of concrete. The students are

asked to describe how the tone in the poem is different from “In the Ghetto”, and in this regard Paul mentions that the tone in both poems are significant to the themes and messages conveyed. The students get two minutes to discuss the rhyme and the effect of this in small groups. Afterwards, Paul gives examples of rhymes, and connects his discussion to the literary device *alliteration*: “some of the words in the poem sound alike”.

Thereafter, the students discuss in groups whether they find clues suggesting that the rose depicted is no ordinary rose, and they explain the effect of these clues. Paul clarifies that the rose in the poem is given human abilities, and he wonders if the students know the name of this device. They answer in Norwegian, and Paul states that the English term is *animation*; “the rose is able to do things that a human can do”. He connects the effect of this device to the theme of the poem:

Animation (...) helps us see that this poem is actually not about a rose, but about a man or a woman who manages to do well in life - despite a difficult background. Because *the concrete* is the difficult background... The rose is the *person* and the concrete becomes *the ghetto*, for instance...

One of the tasks asks which theme the students find most fitting to the poem, and they are asked to explain their choices (invulnerables/superkids, the music career of Tupac Shakur, survival of the fittest, ghetto life, and the self-made man). Paul states that all of these examples can be regarded as themes, and he relates the statements to the notion of “the American Dream”. He mentions that the carrier of Tupac can be a possible theme since the rapper grew up poorly and made it as an international rapper *despite* of his challenging background.

Lastly, the students are asked to study differences and similarities between the two poems. Paul says that they seem to describe “the American Dream” very differently, and asks the students “do we understand which one has a *positive* and which one has a *negative* view on the American Dream? He mentions that whereas “The Rose That Grew From Concrete” has a positive tone, “In the Ghetto” presents the American Dream as something that is “very difficult to achieve”.

Post-observation interview

Paul answered that he wrote the key words on the blackboard in the beginning of the lesson to make the students see how their analysis would be structured. Additionally, he wanted them to understand what the texts were about *explicitly* before they started to analyze.

The students had read both texts previously, which Paul prefers due to time-effectiveness. He states that if the students have read the texts either in class or at home as homework, the reading does not take up too much time in class, and they thus have more time to spend on text analysis. He mentions that although some students do not read the texts at home, they will benefit from attending the lessons by paying attention to the discussions by those who have read. Similar to the observed lesson, Paul often lets his students read out loud. In order to vary, they also have silent reading, or read out loud in small groups. For instance, he sometimes divides the students in groups of three and assign them different roles; one reads a paragraph, one summarizes and the last one notes down important key words or difficult words. They would then rotate after each paragraph.

Paul often employs oral discussions in his literature teaching in order to achieve variation. He believes that the use of written tasks can be considered monotonous if not varied with oral assignments, and that it is more productive to have students discuss literary texts with their peers:

My experience is that it can be rather dull to analyze something on your own, but if the students get to talk to each other about these things and exchange their interpretations, they would be introduced to different perspectives (...)

Paul believes that not *every* student will benefit from answering written tasks. He stresses that the more challenged students would struggle to discuss texts individually, due to their lack of analytical competence and text comprehension. He believes that they would gain a greater learning outcome through group assignments where they are exposed to their peers' viewpoints. Additionally, he believes that most students seem to be engaged while working in groups; "of course – not *everyone* contributes to a great extent, but it seems as though they all contribute with *something* during group discussions".

Paul mentions that he likes to be somewhat spontaneous in his literature teaching, and that he is hence not very dependent on pre-written lesson plans. Although he always plans a set of activities and decides what elements of the texts to focus on in the discussions, he might discover new or additional information that he would like to explore further in the lessons. For instance, he might get influenced by the students' comments about the texts, and thus he never teaches the same texts in the exact same manners.

5.3.4 Amy

Pre-observation interview

When asked how she teaches literature in English in vg1, Amy mentions that it does not have a dominant role in the English subject per se, but that it is often used as a foundation for the teaching of writing, for instance. However, she mentions that she always employs at least one novel during the school year. In this regard, she prefers to let her students choose what novels to read themselves. In the past she always chose novels for them, but she explains that she now finds it advantageous to encourage student autonomy in relation to text selection:

The main benefit of having the students choose is that they can read something *they* like, and hence what they read is not based on the *teacher's* interests... However, I do try to think about what they would enjoy to read when I select texts.

In addition, Amy argues that it seems as though students favor self-chosen novels. Likewise, she states that; “when we discuss the novels after the reading, they are able to advice each other about the ones they have read (...) This may make them read more novels.

Besides connecting literature to analysis, Amy finds it necessary to place it in different contexts, and she thus likes to study it with regards to society, and to focus on what we can learn about human beings and history through texts. What is more, she is under the impression that students should be able to identify with the texts' main character – especially in the work with novels. She does not think that this necessarily makes it easier for the students to grasp the texts, but that the identification may enhance their impressions and joy of the reading. “However, if they like the novel or find it entertaining – then *this* is more important than identifying with the characters”. Additionally, she often reminds the students of the *importance* of reading, and that reading extensively may enhance their language fluency, writing, oral abilities and so on.

With regards to what types of assignments Amy employs in literature teaching, she mentions that she often bases her choices on previous experiences; on whether or not these turned out to be successful with vg1 students. Nevertheless, she aims to plan “creatively”, so that the lessons are not merely based on “retellings or traditional questions about the text”. She believes that written tasks are employed too often in literature teaching, and that the use of these may be considered as “uncreative”. For instance, her students have dramatized events from texts, made board games based on what they have read, made cartoons and audio-taped radio programs. In this regard, she mentions that “literature can hence be used as a device to create a product”.

Amy explains that she rarely makes her students have oral presentations about the texts they read. She believes that this is not productive, as only the students who present seem to be engaged, while the rest of the class quickly seem to lose an interest in what is presented. In addition, she states that many of them merely read from a manuscript and that they hence do not develop their oral skills as expected. As an alternative to oral presentations, Amy employs “book-café”, where the students are enabled to express themselves orally in a “free” manner. These are organized and carefully planned by Amy beforehand, in which she creates the groups and makes questions for the students to base their discussions around. She describes this as a more “lively and educational” activity in relation to literature teaching. Additionally, she stresses the benefit of the teacher’s role in such an activity; “the students are able to show what they know and can do, while I get to observe them closely”.

Amy encourages her students to read as much as possible, and to read about what interests them – either fictional or non-fictional texts. When it comes to what texts the students seem to enjoy, Amy believes that boys and girls tend to be drawn towards different genres – girls to “typical girl novels” and commercial releases and boys to action, science fiction and crime stories - and that this can be viewed as very stereotypical. In addition, she has the impression that boys tend to read less than girls, and that more boys than girls state that they have never read an entire book. When discussing her students’ reading habits with them, she aims to encourage those who do not like to read to start with shorter texts. She informs them that these may be just as educational as longer ones, and that they should aim to choose what they think they might find interesting. “Since I have read a great deal myself, I feel competent enough to advise them about different genres and novels that I think could be of interest to them”.

Amy mentions that she sometimes works with different texts in depth, and she finds it crucial that her students are able to do close reading, to analyze, and that they have an understanding of the different literary devices. Nevertheless, she has the impression that most students seem to favor extensive reading over intensive reading:

It seems as though they associate intensive reading with the *Norwegian* subject as this is clearly marked by analysis... Therefore, I think it is important that they also get to read for pleasure *only*, and that they do not have to read between the lines at all times. However, I think that students who *like* literature find literary analysis exciting – because it allows one to be a “detective” and look for clues in the texts.

Observation

The text employed in Amy's lesson was the novel *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*, written by the British author Mark Haddon. All of the students had read this novel, and worked with it in the lessons during the previous period. They were given time both at home and in school to finish the novel, and they were informed that they were going to discuss it with their peers in a book-café at the end. The book-café is to be evaluated by Amy and the students will be graded on their language use, knowledge and reflections about the novel, as well as on their oral performance in the discussion. They were divided in groups of approximately four students, and they had been informed about what questions and elements of the novel to organize their discussion around. The observed lesson is divided in three, as only one group of students attends the book-café at a time. The researcher thus observed three groups of students in total, for approximately 90 minutes. The rest of the class that did not attend the book-café this lesson, worked with a set of written tasks about the novel.

Amy starts the lesson by introducing what the students are going to do. She reminds them that although they will be observed and evaluated, the book-café discussion should be regarded as informal. She thus stresses that the students should try to be relaxed and speak freely with one another. She refers to the last book-café session that the students had in the autumn semester, and that they should aim to perform it in a similar manner, except that this session will last a bit longer.

All of the three groups of students seem to carry out a fluent and active conversation during the discussions. Except from the cookies brought by Amy, the students do not have anything on their desks. They are free to start with what elements they would like to focus on, and in each group one of the students takes the first initiative. The first group starts with a discussion about the main characters, where they give examples of monologues, dialogues or events in the novel to support their claims. The other group starts by discussing whether or not they liked the story, and they give reasons to support their answers. The third group starts by discussing what the novel is about, where all of the students use the main character – Christopher – in their descriptions.

During the discussions, most of the students ask questions about the novel to their peers. Although this has not been decided beforehand, each group has one or two dominant students who seem to lead the discussion forward and towards different directions. The students constantly comment on each other's arguments, elaborate, discuss their opinions and interpretations, and state what they liked about the novel and not. In addition, each student

reads a quote from the novel out loud, and argues why the exact quote has been included. Their discussions evolve around the main characters, theme, point-of view, setting and language function.

Amy has several roles during the book-café lessons. First of all, she is an *observer* of the students' oral participation. She looks at them and nods during the discussions, and writes down information about each students' performance. In addition, she functions as a *monitor* as she introduces the task and informs them about how they should conduct the discussion. Moreover, she asks questions to the different groups; either to the group as a whole or to individual students during the discussions, and reminds them about the time limit when they have five minutes left to end their discussion. For instance, she asks them about specific episodes or events from the novel, about the main character, theme, and about what they liked best about the text. At last, she asks the students whether they were able to identify with the protagonist, and why. In consideration of the fact that she has planned, made and handed out questions and guidelines to the students beforehand, her role may also be described as an *organizer*.

When each group has finished their discussions, Amy talks briefly about her impression of the book-café meeting, and about the students' overall participation. During the first group there seems to be a lack of balance in the students' degree of participation, since two of them are less active than the others. One of the students in this group is the first to answer the questions from the others and is primarily the one to initiate new questions and topics. When the remaining two groups meet, Amy reminds them that the group should consist of equal members, and that everyone should aim to speak and encourage each other during the discussions. She also stresses the importance of asking questions to the other members, as this may lead the discussion further.

Post-observation interview

Amy says that she aimed to start the lesson in a clear manner by introducing the activity, the time frame and what she expects of the students during the book-café. Although she always reminds them about the texts they will read and about the different activities, this lesson was particular in its case since the students would get evaluated on their performances.

Amy states that she employs the book-café as an alternative to individual student presentations. If a student present individually, she has the impression that the rest of the class does not gain a sufficient learning outcome. By conducting discussions in smaller groups, Amy argues, every student will be able to contribute to a certain degree. Additionally, she

says, the students are able to “talk freely” and to interact in “real-life dialogues”, which will enhance their oral- and communicative abilities to a greater extent. The majority of the students also seem to be more confident and comfortable while discussing and presenting in smaller groups, where the setting appears to be less formal. Thus, Amy also employs group discussions on a regular basis in her literature lessons. She has also had group presentations where the students have presented individually in smaller groups.

When Amy’s students (the observed class) had book-café’s in the autumn semester, they had chosen the novel themselves, and thus everyone talked about different ones. As every student had read *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*, the structure of the dialogue was more loose and open. When they had read different novels, on the other hand, each student presented what their book was about individually, answered questions from their peers, and they switched turns. Hence, Amy considers it to be more challenging to employ book-café’s where the students have read the same novel for several reasons. Firstly, since every student is familiar with the plot and the main characters of the novel, they would have to work with it more in depth and look at more challenging elements such as theme, point-of-view and language function. Secondly, it may be more challenging for the students to keep the conversation fluent as *they* are in charge of asking questions, stating comments and introducing new topics. Lastly, one may discover that a few students seem to be dominant participants, and that the more challenged or shy students tend to be less active. Amy claims that she could aim to monitor the discussions more closely in the future when she conducts book-café’s with the same novel:

I could perhaps have asked them more questions to point the discussion in new directions. However, since they talked about the comments I had written down beforehand, I figured it was OK... It is important to keep the natural conversation fluent – this is why I didn’t want to interrupt them (...) But it is necessary to get everyone to talk – it is not right if the students consider this as a competition where they should speak as much as possible.

Although some students were less active during the discussions, Amy believes that the comments and tasks she had made beforehand made it easier for them to contribute.

“Everyone can talk about *some* elements based on these questions – for instance about the plot or characterization.” She also states that she thinks it is particularly productive when the students speak about what they liked and disliked about the book, whether they recommend it or not, and about the themes. She had, however, imagined that they would speak more about language function and how this can be linked to the plot. Nonetheless, Amy thinks it is likely that language function can be more easily dealt with in written tasks, and that discussions

about plot, characters and other interpretations may be viewed as less challenging elements for the students to discuss with their peers.

Amy says that she had to plan the grouping thoroughly in advance. Since the students will be graded on both their oral abilities, language skills and the content of the discussions, she needs to pay close attention during the lesson. Thus, she states, in order for the teacher to study all student performances simultaneously, there should be no more than four students in each group. Furthermore, she mentions that:

It was easier to assess the students the last time, since the discussions were more structured then. The conversational structure makes it more challenging to pay attention to the individual student performance.

After each book-café session, the students were to fill out a self-assessment sheet. Amy explains that she uses self-assessment sheets when they are to be evaluated and graded on their work. In addition, she thinks it is beneficial to use these when she plans lessons in the future:

This is also why I chose to have another book-café with the students – because they told me through the self-assessment sheets that they enjoyed it and that it gave them a great learning outcome.

5.3.5 Mary

Pre observation interview

Mary states that her literature teaching has a tendency to focus on literary devices- and analysis, and that this resembles her teaching in the Norwegian subject. She usually teaches her students about devices in the beginning of the school-year, and she focuses especially on characters (whether they are dynamic or static, for instance) and on language style (formal or informal). In addition, she claims that her teaching is very textbook-oriented, and that she thus employs many of the texts that are printed in the school's textbook. What is more, she and her class have access to the Internet based version of the textbook, which she says she employs to achieve varied teaching. She also uses NDLA (Norwegian Digital Learning Arena) as a resource with regards to literature, where there are articles and video-clips about literary analysis and devices.

Mary describes her literature teaching as quite “traditional”, since the students often read and review texts and answer written or oral questions afterwards. She states that they seem to enjoy predictability and that they thus “feel more comfortable when they know what types of questions they may be asked regarding literary texts”. Nevertheless, she believes that

her teaching should focus more on student responses. During the recent period of reading the novel *Of Mice and Men*, for instance, the students got to work with some repetition questions from the textbook, and were able to discuss these orally in class. “They were, however, expected to speak more freely during the oral assessment I organized, where I asked them questions about their interpretations and literary devices and wanted them to answer”.

Mary claims that she aims to make her literature teaching more varied. She states that she was recently influenced by a colleague who made and hung up a poster in the classroom, that contained literary terms such as plot, theme, character, and point of view. Mary created a similar poster, and the students got to work with the literary devices in class by writing down examples from *Of Mice and Men*, and put these on the poster. Additionally, her students have made fake Facebook-profiles to the main characters in the novel, through the online resource called “Fakebook – ClassTools”.

Mary states that she rarely encourages her students to read in English:

I must admit I am not good at encouraging them to read (...) I encourage them to read news-articles and to gain information about English-speaking countries – but these are not fictional texts (...) I do this more in the Norwegian subject.

She does, however, employ at least one novel a year in her literature teaching, where she works closely with this novel over a longer period of time. The students will be assessed during the work with the novel, and sometimes they are able to choose whether they will be assessed orally or in writing, and what types of tasks to carry out.

Observation

The texts employed in Mary’s lesson were the novel *Of Mice and Men* written by John Steinbeck and the movie *Dracula* from 1992, based on the novel by Bram Stoker from 1897. The students had read and worked with *Of Mice and Men* for a longer period, and watched the movie in class. Afterwards, they were given the opportunity to choose between different assessment tasks; they could either have an oral presentation in a whole-class grouping where they were to compare elements from the novel with another text, write an argumentative essay or have an oral hearing (or conversation) with Mary where they would be asked questions based on *of Mice and Men*, in addition to terms such as setting, character, conflict, and theme. With regards to the oral presentations, the students were asked to a) compare the friendship between the two protagonists in the novel with two protagonists in another literary text, or b) compare the setting in the novel with the setting in another literary text. They were informed that the other text must have been read in the English subject in vg1, and that they had to

include quotes from the texts. In the written assignment the students were asked to discuss a quote and reflect on “how the novel *Of Mice and Men* might still be entertaining even though it makes you angry or upset”.

Mary starts the lesson by informing the students about the upcoming activities. She says that some of the students will be assessed during this lesson, and that they will be divided into groups after a while, based on what types of assignments they have chosen to carry out. She informs them that she has evaluated the written texts, and that they will be handed out towards the end of the lesson accompanied by oral feedback from Mary.

Firstly, one student conducts his oral presentation, where he compares the setting in *Of Mice and Men* (using examples from both the novel and the movie) with the movie *Dracula*. He starts by introducing both texts separately, and he mentions that *Dracula* is based on Stoker’s novel. Throughout the presentation, he has included several pictures and uses these to describe the settings. Towards the end of his presentation, he starts to compare the two texts. His presentation lasts for approximately 15 minutes.

After the student presentation, the rest of the class leaves the classroom in order to read and work with a text about the Australian Aborigines, while the student who presented is asked questions about his presentation by Mary. She asks him the following questions: “what is a setting?” “Why is the description of this room important to the story?” “Do you have anything to add/comment on?”

Mary calls in two other students for an oral hearing. They both bring their computers with key words and phrases, and Mary sits across them and asks them about the text individually. The students use a couple of minutes to answer each question. Mary conducts a conversation with them, as she comments on what they answer and asks follow-up questions. She focuses especially on the texts’ characters, and moves on by asking how the American Dream can be related to the novel. She then asks one of the students to elaborate on the main characters’ dreams, and discusses whether they have anything in common with the American Dream. Thereafter, she asks the students to discuss the theme of the novel and to provide examples from the text to support their claims.

After conducting the oral hearing with two students, the students who handed in the written assignment are called in. Mary tells them that they will get more time to work with their texts, and that their results are generally weak due to the lack of time to finish the task. They are told that they have approximately half an hour left to work with it in school (in this lesson), and that they may work with it at home and hand in the final text one and a half week later. In addition to the written comments, Mary gives each student oral feedback and answers

their questions. During the rest of the lesson Mary monitors and helps the students with their written assignment. The feedback is focused on their grammatical mistakes, language use, text structure, content and use of references. As some of the students ask questions about the different literary devices and their functions, Mary informs the class about what they have learned in the Norwegian subject. She reminds them that what they have learned about literature and literary analysis previously, can be connected to their work in English; “your knowledge and experiences are transferable”.

Post-observation interview

Mary says that she had a presentation about the different literary devices before this period, where she introduced the terms *characters (dynamic and static), theme, and setting*. Additionally, she mentions that she thinks it is beneficial to introduce and focus on only a few devices and at a time – so that the students are not confused about their functions. In fact, she usually limits her teacher-centered lessons, as the students are not used to long theoretical lectures conducted by teachers. She also made the poster about the literary devices in order to prepare the students for their assignments with regards to *Of Mice and Men* and the other texts they chose to include.

Mary mentions that the students who had the comparative presentations and the oral hearings, had one week to prepare. The students who wrote did not have time to prepare any written work at home. Although Mary’s initial thought was to grade the papers after they were handed in, she realized that she had expected too much of them since they were only given 90 minutes at school to finish their assignments. She has not used *process-writing* to a great extent in the English subject previously, but she has the impression that it is motivating for the students to be able to work further with a written text, and that this makes it easier for them to grasp and understand the teacher’s feedback.

Mary considers oral hearing, in which students are asked questions from the teacher individually, to be a beneficial activity because they are able to show their text comprehension and English skills spontaneously. She mentions that some students managed this task well with regards to *Of Mice and Men*, whereas others seemed to struggle more. If students are not able to speak fluently or are more shy, they will consider an oral hearing more challenging:

I noticed that I had to get one of the students started during the conversation - he stopped and didn’t know how continue... One feedback it may be wise to give them is that they should speak as much as possible.

Moreover, she believes that students should be able discuss literary texts in pairs or in groups. “This may be beneficial because they can reflect together – *help* each other understand”. After this period, she noticed that the graded results were generally better for the students who did the oral tasks, but she says that there must be a clear balance between oral- and written assessment throughout the school year, since the students only get one final grade in English. She has never tried optionality in terms of assessment previously in the English subject, but she thinks it worked well because it promoted student autonomy and made the literature teaching more varied.

5.4 Reading material

5.4.1 Karen

Pre-observation interview

When asked *who* decides what reading material she can use in her literature teaching, Karen answers that she is mostly free to employ by her own choice. However, she states that:

When you cooperate with other teachers as we do at this school it is very useful that we employ the same texts, have similar tasks and tests, and that we sometimes cooperate with correcting student texts. We teachers use similar teaching strategies, and we tend to use the textbook quite a bit.

Karen mentions that she aims to vary what types of texts to employ. She states that her reasons for using the textbook are that it provides a good overview of the different subjects, and that it contains complete texts based on the topics that the students are going to work with. Additionally, she thinks that the students are exposed to various viewpoints through these texts, as these are written by and about people from different cultures and English-speaking countries. Nevertheless, Karen mentions that she does not feel *obligated* to employ the textbook; “If there are texts that the teacher does not feel comfortable using, one can choose another text from the book instead, or not use it at all”. She does, however, believe that the school should renew the textbook after some years’ usage, in order to “gain variation for both teachers and students”.

In addition to the textbook, Karen uses the novels that are available for Vg1 in the school, and sometimes lets her students choose what to read from the library. She also employs short stories and other texts from NDLA, and may occasionally use movies as an alternative to written texts. Nonetheless, she asserts that she could never use the Internet only,

as she believes it is best to vary the use of books and screens. Additionally, she has the impression that quite a few students prefer to read on paper and from the textbook.

Post-observation interview

Karen mentions that the short-story “Tony’s Story” was employed because this is the only literary text in the textbook about *Native Americans*. She argues that although she used the text in vg1 both last year and now, she does not believe it is the best text with regards to the topic of *Native Americans*:

I don’t think the students are engaged while reading it, and I think it can be a bit hard to familiarize yourself with (...) The story deals with the theme of superstition quite a bit, and it depicts a person who has lived in a reservation his whole life, and who has grown up in a very superstitious environment (...) I don’t think the students manage to really grasp the plot.

Nonetheless, “it seemed as though the students had understood the theme and the story better than I had expected, based on their results in the language lab”. Karen believes that texts about well-known events, such as “The Trail of Tears”, could be more interesting to the students:

Tony’s Story” is not about how the Native Americans were treated - its theme is not *as* directly linked to the Native American way of life as a text about “The Trail of Tears”, for instance.

In addition, she argues that one might be able to find information about such events and use this in regard to pre- and post- reading activities. She identifies *language use, plot and theme* as important elements when it comes to selecting texts to vg1 students, and she stresses that the students should understand and be able to familiarize themselves with what is being communicated in texts.

5.4.2 Lisa

Pre-observation interview

Lisa states that she is free to choose what texts to employ in her literature teaching. She mentions that she has done some selections with regards to the textbook before the school year starts, but she does not *merely* employ the textbook. “We might decide what to employ in teams – but we do have our personal favorites and then we use these”. She explains that she is not obligated to use the same texts as her colleagues, but they always aim to cooperate so that they can give the students the same tests.

Lisa mentions that she employs movies in her literature teaching, and that she tends to use more factual texts and online video clips. In addition, she often selects texts that she has read herself, and which she believes may work well with regards to vg1 students. Hence, her selection of texts may vary from one year to another, based on what type of literature she has come across. “Although I do have a certain set of texts that I usually employ, I tend to vary the learning activities and methods”.

Lisa explains that she employs the textbook whenever she finds it relevant, and that a good textbook may strengthen one’s teaching. She believes that the students may find the use of a textbook as more predictable, and that it could be easier for them to prepare for different tests if the texts they are assessed on can be found in the book. In addition, she states that its content is quite varied, and that there is a fine balance between fictional and factual texts. Since Lisa is one of the authors of the textbook, she thinks that she uses it more than her colleagues do; “I do think I use the textbook about 80 % of the time”.

Post-observation interview

“Dead Men’s Path” was selected primarily because it was written by a well-known African author, and because Lisa wanted to introduce her students to African literature. She also believes that the text enlightens the topic *Indigenous people*. The poem “Son of Mine” was also selected with regards to the same topic, and Lisa thinks it clearly depicts the relationship between “traditional versus modern”. She does, however, believe that “Dead Men’s Path” is a bit unclear when it comes to the topic as it is not directly about indigenous people. Nevertheless, there seems to be an implicit focus on “traditional versus modern”, and Lisa thinks that some students may have discovered this on their own. It is more clear that “Son of Mine” is about indigenous people, as it is written by an Aboriginal woman. In addition, Lisa states, “although the situation of the Aborigines is not mentioned explicitly, the author is able to tell some of their history by mentioning the things she will not say”.

Lisa has the impression that “Dead Man’s Path” was too difficult for the students to understand, and that it did not engage them properly. “The last short story I employed seemed to work better as this was about a girl who shot her lawyer. There seemed to be more suspense in that one”. She also states that the students were probably better able to identify with the main character in the text about the girl, and that this may affect the students’ text comprehension and engagement with texts. Lisa also believes that the plot and theme of the other text were more familiar to the students. Consequently, Lisa says that she aimed to focus on the main characters in “Dead Men’s Path”, as “students are more likely to be engaged and

understand the text better if they obtain a relationship to the characters”. She also explains that she could have re-played the story in the lesson, in order to repeat it and make it more clear. Nevertheless, she has employed this text in several classes previously, and she believes that this class may contain more academically challenged students than she is used to.

Lisa says that she usually employs more short stories than poems, and that she uses more time when she teaches short stories. “Short story is a genre that is more easily available (...) Poems may be harder for the students to understand – one would need to work more with them”.

5.4.3 Paul

Pre-observation interview

Paul mentions that he is free to select what texts to employ in his literature teaching, and that he selects them based on curriculum aims and the topics that the students are to work with. He mentions that he especially likes to use movies in his literature teaching, and that the main benefit of employing movies is that more students are able to pay attention. “Many students struggle with remembering everything they read, and are thus not able to contribute in discussions (...) Visualization is important”. Paul says that he uses movies in a similar manner as novels; his students get to watch movies related to the topic of relevance, and they often get a sheet of questions before they watch it, which would function as leading analytical questions. “In school you would always have to connect reading to theoretical terms, such as literary devices”.

Paul says that he also uses literature that the students are familiar with, and he mentions that he has used Harry Potter, The Lord of the Rings and Divergent. He thinks it is beneficial to connect literature to the students’ experiences and views on the world. Moreover, Paul mentions that he only uses the textbook when he finds the texts to be especially relevant with regards to the topics. He argues that since the textbook the school uses is from 2008, it can be regarded as “outdated” when it comes to certain topics. In addition, he states that “I do not follow the textbook slavishly as I have some bad experiences with textbooks I have employed previously (...) I therefore find a lot of additional texts”. However, he could not exclude the textbook completely, as he thinks it would be too time consuming to find educational texts from different resources. He also believes that many students prefer the systematic structure of the textbook.

Post-observation interview

The texts for Paul's lesson ("In the Ghetto" and "The Rose That Grew From Concrete") were selected because the students worked with the themes the *US* and the *American Dream*. He had discovered "In the Ghetto" in an older textbook that the school has at its availability, and made copies for the students. According to Paul, one aim of employing the texts is that the students will be able to critically reflect and discuss what "The American Dream" is, and who might be able to achieve it, and the texts evidently approach it from different viewpoints. One possible interpretation in this regard may be, as stated by Paul, that "In the Ghetto" is seen as *contradictory* to the typical view of the dream due to its negative and dark connotations, whereas "The Rose That Grew From Concrete" may be said to heavily support it. Furthermore, Paul believes that "The Rose That Grew From Concrete" functions well as an introduction to the work with poems in general:

it is very short so one can be able to finish working with it in one lesson (...) End rhyme, animation and alliteration are also easily available and can be discussed in addition to the concrete and abstract messages.

Paul has the impression that poems may be more difficult for students to comprehend since they can be even more abstract than other types of texts. Nevertheless, he thinks they are useful to use in single lessons due to their short length and the fact that one can be able to address the majority of its details.

5.4.4 Amy

Pre-observation interview

Amy explains that she selects what texts to employ herself, although her choices are affected by the textbook. In addition, she states that "I have never been criticized about the texts I have employed, since there are no literary canon or texts that one has to use". She previously excluded the textbook and used NDLA, but now she uses both the textbook and other Internet resources. In addition, she tries to select texts based on what is popular among adolescents, and she aims to think about their interests; "When Harry Potter was popular, for instance, these novels were relevant to read and discuss".

With regards to literary texts, Amy uses quite a few short stories, some poems, and at least one novel a year. In addition, some of her previous English classes have written their own blogs in English, where the students shared their experiences about reading and different texts with their peers. She did, however, get some negative responses from students about this

method last year, and she thus decided to make this voluntarily for the students she teaches now.

Amy mentions that she does not usually prefer to use the textbook with regards to literary texts, because she thinks it is beneficial if students are able to write notes and mark in the text, which you cannot do in school textbooks. She explains that she tries to connect literary texts to factual texts and topics, and to discuss these in relation to one another: “what makes a stronger impression on you (the students)?” Although she aims to combine and mix the reading material as much as possible, she has the impression that students like to use the textbook since it is more predictable. She argues that “I use the book mostly to prepare the students for an oral exam, where they can be asked about different texts”.

Post-observation interview

Amy says that she chose *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* because it is available as a class set. In addition, one of her colleagues had used it previously, and told her that it worked very well. The colleague had also made a set of tasks and questions about the novel, and hence it was time effective for her to employ this novel. Amy mentions that she used her colleague’s tasks as a starting point, but that she revised them slightly.

Although Amy usually employs one novel a year, she chose to use one more and conduct another book-café with her students since they seemed to enjoy it and find it educational. “In addition they read very little, so I thought that they could get the chance to read this one”.

Amy believes that the novel engages some of the students. She claims that one of the reasons why she employed it was due to the protagonist’s interesting personality and thoughts, and that these elements could engage the students in the discussions. She mentions that some finished it quickly, whereas others found it hard to complete. What is more, she personally does not like this novel, and she says that she will presumably never use it again. Although she thinks it is very interesting due to the storytelling and point-of-view, she believes that it is advantageous if a teacher likes the novel employed.

5.4.5 Mary

Pre-observation interview

Mary states that she chooses what texts to employ in her literature teaching, but that she is also influenced by the textbook. Additionally, she consults the schools’ librarian when selecting novels. The librarian also facilitates with regards to loans, and is able to order new

material if requested. Mary usually uses one novel a year, some short stories and a few poems. She mentions that it is possible to go through a short story during a double lesson, which makes this type of text easily available. In addition, she mentions that her students like to select texts themselves, for instance when it comes to the reading of novels.

Mary is also an advocate of using movies or movie clips in literature teaching. Most frequently, she employs movies after having gone through the written text, but due to pedagogical considerations this may vary. In relation to *Of Mice of Men*, for instance, the students watched the movie after having read the first two chapters of the book. Mary explains that the academic level in this particular class is significantly varied, and that some of the students would struggle with their reading comprehension, especially with regards to this novel since it is very descriptive in the beginning. According to Mary it is beneficial to show the movie first, or in this case simultaneously with the reading, in classes where struggling students may not be expected to follow the progression of the novel as fast as the others. Since the class saw the movie before completing the book, all of the students seemed to understand the plot and setting more clearly. When she is to show a new movie to the class, however, she aims to choose one that her students have not seen previously, so that they are introduced to new plots, themes and characters.

Although Mary uses the textbook to a great extent because she finds the literary texts appropriate according to the different topics, she uses complementary texts if she has them available. "If I have short stories I like and I know where to find them I use these as well". In addition, she uses NDLA and states that "I like to be able to combine and use different texts, and to renew my choices". Mary explains that she could never consider excluding the textbook: "I like the combination of both digital and analogue resources".

Post-observation interview

Mary explains that *Of Mice and Men* was selected on the basis that she wanted her students to read a novel and that the school had it as a class sets. The student who presented in the observed lesson chose to compare the setting in *Of Mice and Men* with the one in the movie *Dracula*, since the students had read the short story in their textbook and watched the movie in class. One of the reasons why Mary chose to employ *Dracula* is that previous students have expressed an interest in vampires, and in this regard she has employed *Twilight* on previous occasions. In addition, she finds it relevant to study *Dracula* with regards to the literary device *character*, as the protagonist – Dracula – clearly changes throughout the story and can be discussed as a dynamic character.

Mary expresses doubts as to whether the students were engaged while reading the two texts. She believes that the texts can be considered “old-fashioned”, and hence she does not regard them as popular choices among the students. She thinks that this is the case with some of the other texts in the textbook, but she does think that most of her students are able to gain *some* interest in each text. She mentions that there are some elements in the different texts that may engage the students, and that as a teacher one should aim to actualize each text and connect it to society and social criticism. For instance, in the work with *Of Mice and Men*, Mary found it relevant to inform the students that it may be read from a feminist perspective: “based on what you have read in this novel, can you say anything about how women were treated at this time?”

5.5 Learning aims/objectives

5.5.1 Karen

Pre-observation interview

Karen states that she considers *intercultural competence* to be an especially important learning objective with regards to the teaching of literature in English in vg1. She mentions that reading literature may introduce students to different cultures, and that this is something she considers when selecting what types of texts to employ. In addition, she claims that students may gain intercultural competence by reading texts *about* different groups of people, and from various viewpoints. Moreover, she thinks that reading for *experience* is an important aim, and says that this may be possible to achieve if the students are able to engage with texts, as well as experience a *joy* for reading. Hence, “I think it is important that the students get to read for pleasure”.

Although Karen does not explicitly focus on grammar when she teaches literature, she believes that the students will learn more grammar through reading; “this is a natural consequence of reading literature...The more students read, the more grammar they will learn”. She also mentions that she thinks they will enhance their vocabulary, be better readers and more independent writers if they read extensively. When asked what learning objectives she thinks may be enhanced through literature, she says that “I definitely believe that reading for experience may be achieved (...) One may learn by reading about another person’s thoughts and life situation, for instance”. Karen also claims that, “unconsciously, I think that the students will be better language-users in general by reading (...) not just through reading literature, but through all kinds of texts”.

Post-observation interview

Karen believes that the students' intercultural competence were enhanced, and that they achieved reading for experience during the observed lesson. She states that since the story is told from a personal perspective, the students were able to familiarize themselves with another person's situation, and thus *experienced* something. Due to the fact that the story is about the situation of the Native Americans – their culture and traditions – Karen states that “I absolutely think that intercultural competence was achieved because the students were introduced to these cultural elements”. Although she does believe the students gained an experience from reading “Tony's Story”, she thinks that they could have gained a stronger experience if they had been able to familiarize themselves even more with the protagonist, plot and setting.

5.5.2 Lisa

Pre-observation interview

Lisa believes that the most important learning objectives with regards to literature teaching, are connected to cultural competence and social issues. “These are elements that occur in the texts I introduce to the students (...) For instance, I believe that ethnicity, gender and racism are important themes to discuss with the students”. In this regard, Lisa states that issues regarding equality and racism are important to address, and that:

After all, school has an educational role, and thus the teachers must introduce students to important social issues (...) A significant part of the literature teaching will in this case be to give the students impulses that concern for instance democracy, who is in charge, freedom, relationship to parents – and so on.

Additionally, Lisa stresses the fact that the students are affected by social mediums such as Facebook and Snapchat, and that these may make them feel “empty” and in turn influence their psychological health. “This is important to me when I teach – and if literature can enlighten such issues this is very positive”. Lisa mentions that she connects these objectives to the notion of *Bildung*, and asserts that “English is a subject of *Bildung* – the students are going through a learning process in school *and* in life, and they are maturing”.

Lisa also believes that increased vocabulary is an important aim to focus on in literature teaching, and that it is important to inform the students that they can learn new words from texts that they may transfer to their oral- and written communication.

Lisa states that fiction tends to be left out in most of the English teaching, and that it hence may be difficult to achieve *reading for pleasure*: “due to the fact that much of the reading happens online, articles and shorter texts will be the main focus”. Although she does not think that every student will achieve a sufficient learning outcome through reading literature, she believes that “the issues connected to society may be enlightened and worked with although not every student is able to comprehend properly”. Additionally, she believes that most students may be able to learn about culture through reading literature from other nations and cultures. When it comes to the objective of *Bildung*, Lisa thinks that literature may function as a counterbalance to the increased digital development in the Western society:

I believe that if students read and work with literature they will be more conscious of society, while at the same time have an increased understanding about what it means to be a human being.

Post-observation interview

Lisa expressed doubts as to whether the learning aims connected to literature were enhanced during the observed lesson:

To be honest, I am not sure how much they really understood this lesson... But with that being said – the texts are about cultural- and intercultural competence (...) Many of them probably had an idea what they were about – but I do not think everyone got the messages conveyed.

When it comes to *Bildung*, Lisa believes that this can be related to the topic “traditional versus modern” since the students are able to reflect upon their own culture and society and compare them to indigenous ones. She also thinks that some of the students were able to understand the class discussions, and that both texts were relevant in this regard.

5.5.3 Paul

Pre-observation interview

Paul believes that *reading for pleasure* is one of the most important aims to focus on in literature teaching. He also thinks that the students may achieve a joy for reading if they experience an understanding for the certain ideas and messages conveyed. Furthermore, he states that language *accuracy* – for instance to be able to use the correct words/terms in different contexts, is another important objective. Likewise, he mentions that cultural competence and communication are central learning aims with regards to literature. In addition, he mentions that reading literature in English should enhance the students’

understanding of the subject in general, and provide them with analytical skills that they may transfer to other subjects.

Paul does not believe that all of the objectives mentioned above are necessarily achieved; “it is not realistic that one is able to achieve every learning aim at all times”. However, he seems confident that most students will, to varying degrees, achieve some of the objectives during each lesson. He also states that the students in many cases control and decide what objectives to focus on, and that they are responsible for their own learning. Whether or not they are able to achieve the expected learning outcome, he claims, also depends on their degree of previous knowledge; “in most lessons the students use their previous knowledge to construct new knowledge”. Due to the fact that the students have to read in school settings where text analysis is required, Paul believes that it is challenging to achieve *reading for pleasure*. Since the majority of students do not enjoy to analyze texts, Paul mentions, it will be difficult for them to achieve joy while reading.

Post-observation interview

Paul believes that the aforementioned learning aims were achieved by most of the students during the observed lesson. He states that the students were introduced to texts written by and about different cultures (the US), which can be linked to cultural competence. In addition, the students got to communicate with each other about the texts both in smaller groups and in class, and hence the objective related to communication was presumably achieved. He also introduced the different analytical devices and gave the students tasks about their functions, which made them able to develop their analytical skills.

5.5.4 Amy

Pre-observation interview

Amy states that she focuses mostly on the different language competences when teaching literature. “For instance, I focus a great deal on developing the students’ writing skills – where they answer questions and communicate in writing and learn the English language through reading”. She also states that she focuses on syntax and vocabulary. Although she mentions *reading for pleasure* as an important objective, she argues that this is not usually accomplished in school settings where reading is most often accompanied by tasks or tests. “Once you start to analyze a text, it will be harder to experience pleasure”. An alternative in this regard, Amy claims, may be to comment on whether or not one has enjoyed the novel or not. What is more, she argues that literature teaching generally focuses too little on reading

for pleasure, and that the curriculum could have specified this as a learning aim. “As I am very fond of reading literature myself, I want others to experience the joy of it”.

Amy believes that students do get an increased vocabulary through reading literature. She also believes that there is a clear link between reading and writing; “those who are good writers are also good readers”. She states that when students read extensively, they simultaneously study “model texts” that may influence their own writing style and increase their skills. However, Amy states that each student’s motivation will determine whether they will be able to achieve the expected learning aims, and that they employ different strategies “But I do believe I facilitate so that every student who wants to, can increase their English skills”.

Post-observation interview

Amy does not think that every student was able to experience *pleasure* while reading *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*:

During the book-café, some students said that they both liked and disliked it – they liked parts of it... But maybe this was a reading experience for them – to be able to enjoy some parts better than others.

In consideration of the fact that the students discussed the novel in groups, they were able to achieve objectives connected to the oral competences. In addition, they had answered questions about the novel in writing beforehand, and filled out the self-assessment sheet after the lesson, so they were also able to develop their writing abilities. Amy says that most of the students seemed to be familiar with the literary devices and their use, which may imply that they have increased their vocabulary and analytical abilities throughout the work with the novel.

5.5.5 Mary

Pre-observation interview

Mary considers *reading competence* to be an important objective in literature teaching. She wants her students to become more confident readers, and to be better able to comprehend what they read. In addition, she focuses on the teaching of literary devices, and states that the students will increase their reading abilities if they gain practice with text analysis. She refers to this as “knowledge about literary devices”, and that the students’ “literary vocabulary” should be enhanced. Although she thinks *vocabulary* should be an important learning aim, she mentions that she no longer employs glossary tests to assess the students’ vocabulary

knowledge. She also identifies *reading for pleasure* as an important objective, but states that this is very difficult to achieve in the English subject; “there seems to be something about the texts we employ that makes it difficult for the students to gain pleasure while reading in school... unless they choose what to read themselves”.

Mary thinks that some of the aforementioned aims are achieved through literature teaching. For instance, she mentions that most of the students will have an increased vocabulary, and that their “literary vocabulary” will be developed through the work with the literary devices and text analysis. “I do believe that several learning aims will be achieved through reading literature – but language competence will be the most important one”. In this regard, Mary states that reading will help students enhance their reading-, writing-, oral-, and listening skills simultaneously.

Post-reading interview

Mary states that the learning objective regarding “literary vocabulary” was achieved during the observed lesson. In addition, the students showed an understanding of the term “the American Dream” throughout the lesson (both the student who presented and the students who had the oral hearing), which may imply that they had learned new terms. Mary had instructed them to read and gain an understanding of this term at home, and they were told that they could be asked about it during the hearing. She does, however, believe that some of the literary devices are more challenging than others – such as point-of-view and setting, for instance, and that some students do not quite understand their functions.

Mary is not sure whether the students achieved *reading for pleasure* during the lesson:

Well I do not know if I can answer this with certainty... I think that if we had read novels that were more... “up to date”, it might have been easier for the students to experience joy while reading.

However, Mary states, because they watched the movie *Of Mice and Men* in addition to reading the book, she thinks that the majority of the students were able to enjoy parts of the story – such as the ending. She also thinks that there were some emotional moments that made an impression on the students, and that some of them were able to connect this to some sort of pleasure.

5.6 Resources, challenges and contextual factors

5.6.1 Karen

Pre-observation interview

Karen's school has class book sets, and hence a set of novels that they use with the students in vg1. She explains that the teachers are free to use which novels to employ, based on for instance their individual reading experiences or what they think will be appropriate reading materials for the students in vg1. In addition, they can use the school library when students are to choose their own novel. According to Karen, there are usually not many copies of each book due to budget limits, but the librarian tries to renew and have as varied material available as possible. Nevertheless, Karen states, the school's economy will most often determine what is available, and thus the teachers aim to vary between using the textbooks, the books in the class sets, and free voluntary reading.

Karen says that the curriculum is always considered and used closely in her planning of literature teaching. She has not received any specific information about how to implement it from her school, but due to the teachers' cooperation they always discuss the aims in the English subject groups that meet regularly. She mentions that the competence aims in vg1 give the teachers ideas about what *should* be covered through literature in the classroom. "At least it tells us about what directions the teaching should take". However, she does have the impression that the aims are quite open and that one as a teacher is free in this sense, especially when it comes to what texts to employ.

Karen says she is constantly affected by other teachers and what they do in their teaching, either through conversations or by sharing each other's experiences and teaching material. In addition, she is influenced by the resources that can be found on the Internet, and uses this to vary her literature teaching more now than previously. There are no typical traditions in her school, though, but Karen mentions that the use of film and Internet have become more common in recent years to enlighten different social issues and politics, for instance. Additionally, she and her colleagues use quite a lot of the material on NRK's (Norsk rikskringkasting AS) webpages, which she argues can be useful to the students' understanding of different topics, while at the same time make the teaching a bit more exciting and varied. She cooperates with the other teachers to a large degree in order to ensure variety and that the curricular topics are covered, especially in the beginning of the school year. Likewise, they discuss what reading materials could be employed, and what they think the students should be able to know after reading the different texts.

Karen finds it challenging to vary the teaching, and she hence often uses the same activities because they have worked well in the past, such as written post-reading activities. When the teaching is not varied enough, Karen thinks the students will be less motivated. Another potential challenge is to be able to engage *every* student, as everyone has different interests and preferred genres. She explains that the intent of her literature teaching is to make everyone gain an experience from reading, but that this also becomes the most difficult part. In addition, Karen believes that the school's economy is a challenge when it comes to decisions of what reading material to employ, since the school is rarely able to renew its resources: "I think it is healthy for both students and teachers if one is able to use new material from time to time".

5.6.2 Lisa

Pre- observation interview

Lisa's school has many class sets of novels, audiobooks, and quite a lot of movies. In addition, they have a textbook collection of several older books, and their school library has a collection of easy-readers' books. They also have cartoons of Shakespeare available, that they have collected over several years. However, Lisa believes that it is not as important that one has a lot of resources available at school, as the Internet becomes more used in literature teaching. Hence, the school does not purchase as many resources compared to previously, especially not movies, since many teachers use Netflix and other resources online. Nonetheless, they do get requests from the librarian who asks if they want to order new reading material. Additionally, the school arranges reading competitions, which may be used as a source of inspiration and motivation in the teachers' literature teaching. The students who have read the most novels and written comments about these, will win. Quite a few students read in English as well.

Lisa states that the teachers in her school work with the curriculum in teams during the school year. "It is, after all, the starting point of our teaching". She also shows it regularly to her students and make them aware of the aims they work with. "I also tell them that I select texts based on the curriculum". What is more, Lisa believes that she automatically implements the curriculum since she has a long experience as a teacher, and because she has contributed in the writing of English textbooks. She believes that one should always keep focused on the guidelines provided by the curriculum.

Although Lisa does not think the school has any particular traditions that influences her literature teaching, she states that she is constantly influenced by her colleagues. “We are several teachers who have worked here for many years, and I do think we influence each other to a large degree and give each other ideas”. Nevertheless, she states that the teachers often decide to do things differently from the other teachers. She finds it crucial that whenever she adopts teaching activities and methods, this has to be based on *her* beliefs and intents. Hence, Lisa states that although the English teachers cooperate regularly, the schools’ collaborative culture is not always clear. They always meet early on in the school year and share potential reading material, and aim to plan what topics to work with. In addition, they exchange different plans and may help each other assess student papers.

Lisa believes that the biggest challenge with regards to literature teaching in vg1, is to be able to engage all of the students, as “many of them do not like to read”. In addition, she states that it is difficult to find texts that will appeal to all of the students, and that she considers boys to be the most difficult group to engage, as they seem to read less literature than girls. She has the impression that girls tend to identify with both male and female main characters, and that boys usually need a male protagonist in order to enjoy the text. She also thinks that it is more difficult to teach literature today, because many of the students are not used to reading hard copies. She explains that more students today use social media *instead* of reading literary texts.

Lisa explains that it is challenging to employ novels, since this requires a lot of time and planning from the teacher’s side, and many of the students will need a long time to finish the novel (if they are even able to). Additionally, she finds it challenging to renew her reading material, as it may be quite time consuming to discover educational texts online that also fit the curricular aims and the students’ academic level.

5.6.3 Paul

Pre-observation interview

Paul’s school has old textbooks available. It also has class book sets with five different novels, and a school library. Paul mentions that the librarian provides introduction courses to the students, and that these are very useful to both students and teachers.

Paul believes that the implementation of the curriculum should be every teacher’s own responsibility. He states that he has not been given information about how to implement it in his school, but he mentions that this is clear to him because of his teacher education. “We did,

after all, learn about the curriculum and its significance at the university”. He explains that he would not feel comfortable if he were to instruct or guide his colleagues about how to use it in their teaching:

Of course, it is very useful to discuss this together if one is in doubt about certain competence aims and how to implement these (...) But there is no right or wrong here.

Paul does not believe that teachers should be forced to cooperate, and that it should only be done when it feels “natural”. However, he states that cooperation may be a strength to their teaching, and that new teachers may influence the more experienced ones, and vice versa. He mentions that the teachers in his school work rather independently of each other, more so, he believes, than in other schools. Nonetheless, they do have subject meetings throughout the school year, and the English teachers meet once a month. Paul also meets three other teachers once a week since they use the same textbook, where they often share teaching material. “Although the four of us cooperate and share a common vision, we tend to control a lot ourselves and choose different methods and strategies”.

One of the most noteworthy challenges in literature teaching, Paul states, is to be able to motivate the students to read. He believes that the students generally do not care about reading literature in school, unless they will be evaluated on their work. In addition, the academic level of the students in vg1 is quite varied, and Paul states that it tends to be challenging to adapt the teaching so that every student will understand and be able to analyze literary texts. He also thinks that it is quite difficult to find literature that enlightens all of the topics that they are to go through in vg1. For instance, he mentions that it is challenging to find entertaining and educational literary texts to fit the curricular aim “discuss and elaborate on the growth of English as a universal language”. Paul argues that it is easier to employ literary texts in English in vg2 or vg3, since these topics are more concrete and thus easier to enlighten with literature. Another major challenge, Paul mentions, is the time limit one faces as a teacher. “You rarely have the time to work with one text in depth, which I believe is important”. What is more, he says that students may struggle with text comprehension, and that they often are not able to make solid arguments, which he conceives as a challenge.

5.6.4 Amy

Pre-observation interview

Amy’s school has several old textbooks, movies and class book sets available. In addition, she mentions that the teachers employ many digital resources that are not dependent on what the

school has at its availability. The teachers also have a teaching resource on ITS Learning where they share various material, and a school library that the students use when they are able to borrow self-selected novels.

Although Amy has not received information about how to implement the curriculum, the teachers discuss it when they work in teams, and hence they use it actively in their planning. Amy explains that she knows the curriculum very well due to her many years of teaching, and that she especially connects it to writing – and reading competence. However, she explains, these function more as practical tools employed by students in order to achieve the various aims. Hence, when planning the teaching, one will necessarily employ the aims reflected in Culture, society and literature, Amy says.

There is no specific literary tradition in Amy's school, and she explains that the teachers employ texts and teaching methods based on their own beliefs. She states that since she is new in her school she aims to listen to the other teachers' experiences, and she is thus influenced by this communication. Nevertheless, she tries to make teaching-related decisions based on her own personal experiences and beliefs, since she thinks that a teacher should like the material employed. The English teachers meet every other week, where they discuss plans, student essays and different novels. Nevertheless, Amy believes that there is a low degree of cooperation in her school compared to other schools and that this makes the teachers rely heavily on their own experiences, attitudes and beliefs.

She mentions that it is especially challenging to motivate boys to read, and that many students do not understand nor like to analyze texts – especially poems. In addition, she finds it challenging to find texts that appeal to this particular group of students.

5.6.5 Mary

Pre-observation interview

Mary's school has a collection of analogue textbooks, as well digital ones. It also has class sets of novels, and a school library. She mentions that the school's economy makes it challenging to renew the class sets and the textbooks available.

Although she has not received any clear guidelines in her school about the implementation of the curriculum, Mary states that she has worked with and analyzed it on her own initiative, especially since she has contributed with designing exam tasks. She believes that the teachers discuss the curriculum more in the Norwegian subject. She mentions

that no curriculum aim is excluded in her teaching, since they can always be worked with simultaneously. However, she states:

I think that the literature part of the teaching is the most important, so I thus think I focus a little bit more on this than on the other parts of the teaching.

Mary believes that one of the school's tradition is its focus on independence; "every teacher is able to control his/her teaching (...) We have a lot of freedom to choose ourselves".

She states that it may be difficult to cooperate at a regular basis when the teachers have different class schedules and teach in various branches, and hence there will be factors that affect whether cooperation is possible. She explains that for several years, she has taught when the other teachers have had meetings. In addition, she claims that although the teachers sometimes share teaching material, they rarely have team meetings or cooperate about what texts to employ. She believes that one should not be "forced" to cooperate, but states that it is important that teachers renew their teaching strategies and materials, and that they are able to discover new ideas to employ in their teaching.

Mary thinks that it is challenging to study texts in depth in the English subject. She believes that it is easier for students to study texts closely in their L1, and that language barriers and undeveloped language skills makes it more difficult for students to read closely in English. However, she mentions that if students read in their L1, their extended reading competence and vocabulary may be transferred to their knowledge of the English language. She suggests that extensive reading (in any language) will strengthen the students' language skills. Furthermore, she believes that it is challenging to motivate her students to read due to a lack of engaging class set of novels:

Imagine having a novel – like for instance Harry Potter – that had worked well...A novel that the students would have wanted to read...I think this would be very fun.

She explains herself as a very engaged reader, and she wants her students could experience a *joy* for reading. Additionally, she states that it is challenging to adapt the literature teaching, as the students are at very different academic levels. "I tend to repeat information in Norwegian and make different tasks to some students". She also mentions that she prefers to be present in the classroom when the students read, so that they may ask her for help with unknown words or difficult sentences. "In addition, the students struggle with reading for a double school lesson, which is challenging if we are to go through longer texts".

6. Discussion

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings based on pre- and post- observation interviews and classroom observations, seen in light of relevant theory and research. Five upper-secondary teachers' beliefs and practices with regards to literature teaching, as well as the relationship between their stated practices and beliefs have been investigated. Hence, it has explored the teaching approaches, methods and activities employed, as well as their selection of reading material and views on what learning aims (not curricular) are important in literature teaching. Furthermore, it has aimed to identify the potential resources, challenges and contextual factors that may affect the relationship between their beliefs and practices.

The discussion will focus on findings that are relevant according to the research aims, and it attempts to enlighten corresponding or contrasting findings on the same issues from the various informants. The structure of the chapter is arranged in accordance with the research objectives and the categories defined in the last chapter: (1) teachers' biographical background, (2) general practices in literature teaching, (3) reading material, (4) learning aims, and (5) resources, challenges and contextual factors. There will be a discussion across the different data-collection methods, as all findings will be discussed simultaneously within the categories.

6.2 Teachers' biographical background

Research on teacher cognition indicates that there is a clear link between teachers' cognitions and prior experiences as language learners (Borg 2003:86). Four of the teachers consider their own experiences from the English subject in upper secondary as influential with regards to their literature teaching today, whereas Karen believes that she has been inspired by her university education, especially the English didactics course. Lisa, Paul and Amy expressed that their experiences from upper secondary have affected their motivation and joy for literature to a significant extent. Research has shown that teachers learn a great deal about teaching through their vast experiences as learners (cf. Bailey 1996; Johnson 1994 & Numrich 1996). Due to fact that Amy characterized her teacher as "young and inspiring", one may have reason to believe that a teacher's personality and style could matter more than methodology, as suggested by Bailey et al. (1996). In addition, these findings correspond with

the framework presented by Borg (2015:259), in which schooling is identified as an influential factor with regards to teachers' cognitions.

Paul claimed that he has been especially influenced by some elements of his language learning experiences, whereas he has aimed to abandon others (his teaching is not, for instance, as teacher-centered, but he still focuses on literary analysis like one of his teachers). In a somewhat similar vein, Einstein-Ebsworth and Schweers (1997:252) found that a teacher in their study could not completely abandon the formal language study that had worked for him as a student, although he used the communicative approach. This could indicate that teachers are influenced by their own language learning experiences to various degrees, and that they might incorporate the elements of teaching that they found beneficial as language learners. Similarly, there is reason to believe that they leave out the elements that did not work for them. Moreover, this could correlate with the findings by Numrich (1996), who discovered that teachers decided to promote or avoid specific instructional strategies on the basis of their positive or negative experiences of these respective strategies as learners.

6.3 General practices in literature teaching

Three of the teachers employ literature in the EFL classroom to enlighten curricular topics. Amy uses it primarily as a foundation for the teaching of writing, whereas Mary is highly textbook-oriented and focuses mostly on text analysis. These findings suggest that the teachers have different focuses when teaching literature, and that their approaches may be dissimilar. In fact, similar discoveries were identified by Mathiesen Gilje (2011) and Oshaug Stavik (2015), as the teachers they studied expressed diverse opinions about how reading and literature should be approached, and about what methods to conduct. However, all five teachers in the present study agree that one should employ various methods, and that creativity and variation may increase the students' motivation and engagement. What is more, various activities were employed by all teachers during the observed lessons (they combined written- and oral tasks, for instance), which could indicate that their beliefs about varied teaching corresponds with their actual practices in this regard. It is seen as likely that these cognitions have been influenced by their own classroom practices, which is in congruence with Borg's (2015:259) framework. He has suggested that teachers' experiences from their own teaching influence cognitions either unconsciously and/or through conscious reflection, which seems to be the case with the notion of varied teaching. It is likely that the teachers have experienced positive outcomes of the employment of various methods and tasks in the

classroom, and that they hence have incorporated this practice in their teaching. Due to the fact that all five teachers indicated a varied focus, and that they apparently use several approaches and methods (for instance they vary between elements connected to the historical-biographical method, New Criticism and reader response theory), it may be considered likely that they have an *eclectic* approach to literature teaching.

The importance of “creative teaching” was emphasized by the teachers. Arguably, this could be seen in relation to the reflection in LK06 that states that students must explore and unfold their own creative powers, and that confrontations with creative art may challenge pre-existing conceptions (LK06, Core Curriculum, English version: 13). However, the ability to teach in a creative manner seems to depend on the type of task or activity employed, and whether these enable students to respond critically and independently to art. Most presumably, Amy’s students were able to explore their own creative powers and respond critically to the novel they had read during the book-café activity, and it could be argued that this is an example of “creative teaching”. In addition, Amy stated that literature should be used as “a means to create a product”, which could also possibly be seen with regards to “creative teaching”. Based on the teachers’ stated beliefs and the observed lessons, it also became apparent that they focus on student interpretations. The students were enabled to respond to texts either orally or in writing during the observed lessons, which may indicate an experience of “a confrontation with creative art” (LK06, Core Curriculum, English version: 13). In addition, it was mentioned that they want the students to be active during their lessons, and that communication and interaction among students will enhance learning. Mary claimed that through group or pair discussions, the students may “help each other understand”. The students got to discuss and cooperate with their peers in four of the observed lessons, which may indicate that the teachers’ beliefs about group work is congruent with their practices.

Only Karen and Lisa mentioned that they employ pre-reading activities to activate and contextualize the students’ pre-knowledge. In the observed lessons, Karen conducted a class discussion and a teacher presentation, whereas Lisa employed a teacher- and class discussion before the reading. This arguably suggests that their beliefs correspond with their actual practices with regards to this issue since they claimed that these discussions activated the students’ knowledge before the reading. Mathiesen Gilje (2011) discovered a similar finding, as only four of the eight teachers in her study said that they activated pupils’ schemata through pre-reading activities. A possible reason why the other teachers did not conduct pre-reading activities in their lessons, however, is that the students were expected to have read the texts beforehand. Nevertheless, it could be viewed as noteworthy that they did not mention

pre-reading activities during the interviews. This may indicate that they usually expect their students to read the texts before attending literature lessons, and that they focus more on the importance of during- and post-reading activities. Furthermore, it could be argued that the use of pre-reading activities could be linked to the notion of *effeferent reading*, which Kramsch (1993:77) connects to skimming and scanning a text, as it allows the reader to search for desired information and clues, which may also be the case for post-reading activities.

All five teachers expressed beliefs about the importance of oral communication in literature teaching, and oral activities were employed in all of the observed lessons. Lisa mentioned that she considers class discussions to be the “ideal method”, and that she prefers to teach classes where students are orally active. Karen argued that many students are hesitant to speak out-loud in English, and that this is a paradox since most of them actually speak English well– even better than previous students.

Paul stated that his teaching tends to be spontaneous due to unexpected outcomes or interesting comments made by the students during such discussions. This also seemed to be the case during the observed lesson, as he occasionally changed the focus of the teacher- and class discussions, and asked the students follow-up questions based on their answers. This might imply that although his lessons are pre-planned, Paul has a tendency to depart from his plans if found to enhance the students’ learning outcome. Borg (2003:93) states that studies of language teacher cognition have looked particularly at the reasons teachers give for departing from their lesson plans. In the study by Ulichny (1996), for instance, it was discovered that a teacher started a lesson with conducting learner-centered reading activities, and ended with a significant teacher-centered focus due to the students’ lack of understanding (Borg 2003:93).

Findings could suggest that the teachers use elements from *the historical-biographical* method in their teaching. This approach implies that a piece of literature should be understood on the basis of its creation in time and space, and they cannot be torn from history (Habib 2011:265). The *biographical perspective* is concerned with how insight into the life of the authors as well as knowledge about the intentions behind their writing, can increase one’s comprehension of their works (Aamotsbakken & Knudsen 2011:11). Although this was not focused on during the interviews, Paul and Mary discussed how the texts employed could be interpreted based on societal norms and conditions that were evident at the time they were written, and the relationship between author, society and text during their lessons. Likewise, Lisa, Karen and Amy stated that societal issues and the relationship between author and text are of prime interest in their teaching, and that they always aim to contextualize literature. In the observed lessons, Karen and Lisa emphasized to the students that the authors are known

for their stories about people from different cultures, and that they write about situations that may resemble their own experiences. In addition, it was mentioned in the post-observation interview that they employed these texts due to the authors' own cultural heritage and their focus on intercultural elements, which could suggest that their beliefs and practices connected to the relationship between author and text correspond.

Apparently, the teachers use aspects of *critical literacy* in their literature teaching, which is defined by Coffey (2008) as "the ability to read texts in an active, reflective manner in order to better understand power, inequality, and injustice in human relationships. Both during the interviews and the observed lessons, the teachers focused on the significance of active and reflective student participation. Additionally, all of the teachers except from Amy seemed to emphasize inequality and injustice in human relationships with regards to the texts employed, as they addressed challenges related to for instance intercultural encounters, racism and poverty. This might be in congruence with the assertion of Beach et al. (2016:135) that a crucial goal of literature teaching will be to "help young people understand the social, political, and cultural contexts that shape their lives". Most probably, this could also be related to the teachers' focus on intercultural competence and social issues, and hence to the *cultural model* of literature teaching that aims to make students "understand and appreciate cultures and ideologies different from their own in time and space" (Carter & Long 1991:2). The fact that the teachers employ aspects of critical literacy in their teaching suggests that they are aware of newly established practices within literature teaching. Supposedly, this indicates that their cognitions are influenced by professional experiences and beliefs about teaching (cf. Borg 2015:259), in that they pay attention to developments and new focuses within their profession.

It is probable that some of the teachers employ critical literacy as *personal response*, which according to Aukerman (2012:45) implies a focus on the students' opportunities to offer their own responses. Since this requires an active reading process and work from the reader (Bennett & Royle 2014:12), this could presumably also be associated with the *reader response theory*. Karen, Lisa and Paul used group- and class discussions as well as written tasks in their lessons and encouraged the students to elaborate on their personal responses. Mary focused on the students' capacity to respond through conversations (oral hearings) with her, whereas Amy conducted the book-café in which the students were assessed on their ability to provide individual responses.

Aukerman (2012:45) also asserts that within this approach to critical literacy, the teacher employs texts that are likely to generate strong personal responses and reactions from

students. Amy, for instance, mentioned that one benefit of employing *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime* was that the protagonist's personality and thoughts could prompt the students to engage and respond actively during the lessons. In a similar vein, Paul argued that he selected the two texts so that the students could critically reflect and discuss the notion of "The American Dream".

All of the teachers expressed a focus on literary devices, and how literary form and language are used in texts to attain literary effects, which may be linked to the *New Criticism* approach. They all introduce their students to literary terms early on in the school year, and explain that they occasionally employ close-reading techniques in their teaching. During the observed lessons, Karen, Lisa and Paul mentioned the significance of literary devices, and reminded the students of what textual elements to study with regards to the various genres. Mary focused on literary devices such as *setting* and *character*, and asked her students follow-up questions to gain an impression of their understanding. Therefore, it seems appropriate to suggest that there is a congruence between the teachers' beliefs and practices regarding their focus on literary devices and language functions. It also appears that the focus on literary terms is an established practice among the teachers. Moreover, it is possible that their classroom practices, contextual factors such as traditions or available resources in the schools and their own university background (with a focus on close reading and literary analysis) have mediated their cognitions regarding this point.

Karen, Lisa and Amy encourage their students to identify with literary characters, and stated that this may determine whether they enjoy and understand texts. These beliefs may be linked to the arguments made by Oatley (2005:1), who claims that one tends to see things from the characters' point of view, and that this process of identification demonstrates one's ability to empathize with others (Oatley 2005:1). All three teachers also focused on the characters' situations and personality during the observed lessons, and they seemingly wanted the students to identify and empathize with them. It is also reflected in LK06 (English subject curriculum, English version:2) that literary texts can instil a "deeper understanding of others and of oneself", which could arguably be linked to "the process of identification" proposed by Oatley (2005:1) and to the teachers' beliefs and practices regarding this issue.

All five teachers seem to employ an *intensive approach* to reading, as they focused on language functions- and textual comprehension during the interviews and observations. This indicates that their students perform occasional close reading. Four of the teachers also expressed positive attitudes towards *extensive reading*. They encourage their students to read as much as possible in English so as to achieve language fluency and accuracy, and to

increase their literacy skills. Furthermore, they mentioned that they consider it beneficial when students are able to *choose* what to read, and if they read what interests them. These views may be seen with regards to the *communicative approach* to language teaching, in which students are active participants, enabled to speak in natural settings and where motivation and optionality are key proponents (Finocchiaro & Brumfit 1983). Amy, for instance, expressed an interest for teaching methods that are in congruence with the communicative approach, as she for example conducts free-voluntary reading to enhance optionality and the students' interests, and book-cafés because they get to participate in "real life dialogues".

Correspondingly, Mary mentioned that her students got to "speak freely" during the oral hearing she conducted, and that she considers this to be advantageous because they get to show their English skills and comprehension in a spontaneous manner. A similar assertion has been made by Hennig (2010:167), who mentions that "the reader's unique and spontaneous response may strengthen a reading strategy that both develops and emphasizes the emotional response, which in turn becomes more conscious, reflected and educated" (my translation). The notion of "speaking freely" seems to indicate that students are able to express themselves individually, without a considerable amount of effort or helping aids, which was emphasized by both Amy and Mary. What is more, in both lessons their students were expected to speak spontaneously and participate in "natural conversations", which may suggest there is a congruence between their stated beliefs and practices regarding this point.

6.4 Reading material

The five teachers explained that they are free to select what reading material to employ in the EFL classroom, which suggests that they are quite autonomous in this regard, and that they may choose texts based on their own beliefs. Nevertheless, Karen and Lisa tend to be influenced by colleagues (Lisa to a less extent). Paul's decisions are affected by the guidelines provided by LK06, whereas Amy and Mary are influenced by the textbook. They all mention that their students are able to choose what to read on certain occasions, and that they use the school library in these situations. They employ at least one novel a year, various short stories, movies and some poems. In addition, they combine analogue texts with the Internet, as they consider this to be a useful resource in literature teaching.

Karen, Lisa and Mary described that their literature teaching is highly textbook-oriented, and they all employed material from the textbook in the observed lessons. They find

that the textbook employed by their school is useful, and that the texts selected are appropriate according to curricular aims and the academic level of vg1 students. Although Paul and Amy do not find the textbook as beneficial, they do employ it on a general basis. For a period in the past Amy did not use the textbook at all, but Paul argued that he employs it when found relevant to the curricular topics, and that he could never omit it completely since selecting texts is a time consuming matter. Lisa, Paul and Amy also stated that students seem to prefer the use of textbook since it is seen as “predictable” and well structured. In consideration of the fact that all five teachers use the textbook on a regular basis, it could be argued that there is a strong tradition for the employment of the textbook in Norwegian EFL classrooms. It furthermore seems as though this tradition impacts the teachers’ cognitions about approaches, methods and text choice, as they seem to employ a low number of texts, focus on literary terms and analysis and use few learner-selected texts.

The fact that the textbook is seemingly the most pre-dominant reading material among the teachers, which correlates with the finding presented by Mathiesen Gilje (2011). This might imply that the textbooks used by the five schools are considered educational by both teachers and students. It also seems to be the case that teachers decide whether or not to use the textbook and to what extent, and additionally, that their choice depends on their students’ attitudes towards it. However, it could be considered likely that teachers in general have diverse opinions about the use of textbooks, which might limit the validity of the proposed finding. Herigstad (2014:93), for instance, found that many of the teachers in her study were critical about the textbooks at their respective schools, and it was claimed that the books did not suit their needs, that they were outdated, and that the texts were childish and unstructured.

There seems to be a correlation between the teachers’ decision-making and their beliefs about students’ experiences with reading literature. Karen believes that students should be able to familiarize themselves with the main characters, which she aims to bear in mind when selecting reading material. Lisa explained that she selects texts based on her own reading experiences and what has worked previously, and hence that she varies what texts to employ from one year to another. Quite similarly, Amy considers it beneficial if she personally likes the texts employed (especially novels). She also aims to choose literature that is popular among adolescents, and believes that such texts can be more engaging to the students, which may also be seen in relation to free voluntary reading. Paul considers what he perceives as appropriate according to the students’ experiences and views on the world, thus often employing texts that he knows are familiar to them. This might be related to one finding proposed by Oshaug Stavik (2015), as all of the teachers in the study use texts they think can

lead to a development where pupils acquire new insights about themselves and the world. The aforementioned beliefs and practices may also be seen as congruent with Johnson's (1992a) suggestion that teachers make most decisions to ensure student understanding and motivation. Similarly, Richards (1996) discovered that one reason behind the teachers' pedagogical choices is *involvement*; to follow the learners' interests in order to maintain student involvement.

6.5 Learning aims

The teachers focus on various learning aims while teaching literature. All except Lisa mentioned that reading for pleasure is an overall objective. In addition, they mentioned intercultural competence, grammar, vocabulary, literacy- and language skills (accuracy, syntax, general language competence), and analytical abilities. The objectives related to intercultural competence may be linked to the cultural model, whereas the aims emphasizing language enhancement can be considered as related to the language model.

Due to the apparent focus on culture in LK06, it was not considered expected that only three of five teachers emphasized the importance of intercultural competence. Neither Amy nor Mary expressed beliefs about cultural aspects and they both seemed to focus to a significant degree on language competencies and written-and oral communication in particular. Evidently, this points to the fundamental differences between the language- and cultural model of teaching literature, and could indicate that some teachers may lean more towards one of the models. It might also suggest that teachers who focus to a greater extent on language competences strongly implement the curricular aims connected to the basic skills, rather than the ones reflected in the subject area Culture, society and literature.

One striking finding in Oshaug Stavik's (2015) project was that all of the teachers considered literature to be important for the development of *Bildung*. In the present study, only one teacher mentioned this learning objective during the interviews, which was considered somewhat unexpected due to the apparent emphasis expressed in the curriculum. Lisa stated that she finds cultural competence and increased knowledge of social issues to be the most important aims – and that she connects these (and the English subject as such) to the notion of *Bildung*. It may also seem as if she describes it as a learning objective that can be achieved through a short period of time (even through one literature lesson). On the contrary, Aase (2003:13) defines *Bildung* as a “socialization process”. As mentioned, one implicit interpretation is that an individual's development of *Bildung* may be considered as a longer

process that enables cultural understanding and participation through interaction with others. Although Lisa focused on *Bildung* as an important learning objective in literature teaching, she did not explain it as an ongoing process, nor that students achieve it through interaction with one another. Nevertheless, she emphasized the importance of *cultural understanding* as she mentioned during the interviews that intercultural competence is an important aim, and focused on cultural traditions- and differences during the observed lesson.

Although they express a significant focus on reading for pleasure, the teachers seem to express doubts as to whether this objective is realistic to achieve through literature teaching in the EFL subject. Karen did not believe that this aim was achieved during the observed lesson as the students probably did not manage to identify with the main character. Lisa stated that the opportunity to read for joy in Vg1 is rare, whereas Paul and Amy mentioned that it is difficult to read for pleasure if one has to analyze texts. It may be argued that Krashen's (2004:28) pleasure hypothesis and views on free voluntary reading could be in congruence with this belief, as he states that "pedagogical activities that promote language acquisition are enjoyable". His views imply that students do not experience a joy for reading if they have to analyze or answer questions about the texts. According to the teachers most of the reading in school requires text analysis and post-reading activities, and in consequence, reading for pleasure seems to be generally difficult to achieve. Paul stated that students need to be "forced" to work with literature in school settings, and that they do not tend to see its purpose clearly. A similar finding was discovered by Herigstad (2014), as one of the teachers in the study "explained that literature and other aesthetic subjects cannot be measured and consequently many pupils today do not regard it as valuable" (Herigstad 2014:88).

Mary believes that students need to be *engaged* with texts in order to experience reading for pleasure, and that the texts employed in most EFL classrooms could be considered outdated. Furthermore, she stated that since most of the reading materials she conducts are factual texts, her students rarely get to read for enjoyment only. This may suggest that non-fiction texts are not considered to enhance the students' joy for reading, and that teachers focus on a different set of learning aims when teaching literature versus non-fiction texts.

6.6 Resources, challenges and contextual factors

Evidently, the five schools have some learning resources in common. They all have class sets of novels available as well as a school-library. Some mentioned that they have old textbooks at their disposal. At Karen's school the teachers can employ the language-lab in the work with

texts, whereas reading competitions are used to increase the students' motivation to read, both in Norwegian and English, in the school where Lisa works. Paul emphasized that the school's library introductory courses are highly valued, and that these may engage students and give them knowledge about reading material. In Amy's school the teachers use It's Learning to share reading material and to cooperate, also regarding literature teaching. Mary explained that since her school uses analogue and dialogue textbooks she combines these.

The teachers seem to agree to a certain extent about possible challenges in EFL literature teaching. Firstly, they mentioned that they find it especially challenging to motivate and engage every student. One of the suggested reasons is that many students struggle to comprehend the texts employed, and hence that their overall interest in literature is reduced. It was also mentioned that some students are not engaged by the texts, and that they are not motivated to read literature since they do not see its purpose clearly. Lisa and Amy stated that they consider it to be particularly challenging to motivate boys to read, and that there are more boys than girls who have never read an entire novel. Lisa mentioned that one possible reason for this phenomenon may be that boys tend to identify with male protagonists only, whereas girls usually identify with both genders. Evidently, these views are supported by theory and research on adolescent reading, as it is claimed that boys tend to prefer literature that is characterized by several factors, such as male protagonists, characters within a certain age group, and a familiar plot that the reader finds interesting. Girls are considered to be less dependent on their ability to identify with content and characters (Roe 2012:126-127, my translation).

The fact that all of the teachers find it challenging to motivate, and that many students dislike the texts employed, may suggest that there is a low degree of free voluntary reading and extensive reading in most EFL classrooms in Norway. According to Simensen (2007:149), extensive reading usually means silent reading and reading for pleasure and enjoyment. None of the teachers emphasized silent reading, and apparently, they agree that students rarely get to read for pleasure only, and that there is a general lack of interest among them. Arguably, this could be linked to Grabe's (2009:312) statement that the role of extensive reading in classrooms around the world is remarkably small. What is more, the teachers all seem to believe that their students can develop positive attitudes toward reading and increased motivation to read (cf. Day and Bamford 1998:33), if they were able to employ extensive reading to a greater extent.

The reasons suggested by Grabe (2009:312-313) as to why extensive reading has been less common can be linked to arguments proposed by some of the teachers. For instance, they

mentioned that they focus on the development of language skills, vocabulary and study skills, which may be a potential reason why they do not carry out extensive reading to a significant extent. What could be considered noteworthy in this regard, however, is the fact that extensive and free voluntary reading is seen to enhance such skills. In congruence with Krashen's (2004:1) argument that free voluntary reading is one of the most powerful tools there is in language education, several of the teachers also mentioned that they consider reading a large quantity of texts helpful (or even necessary) in order to develop aspects such as vocabulary and literacy- and language skills. Although the teachers have established beliefs about the beneficial outcomes of extensive and free voluntary reading (presumably gained through professional coursework and experience), there is clearly a lack of correspondence between their beliefs and practices regarding this issue.

Grabe (2009:312-313) also mentions that extensive reading demands a lot of resources, such as class libraries, multiple copies of reading materials and class time, which were also mentioned by the teachers during the interviews as contextual factors that influence the selection of reading material. It also seemed as though short stories, movies and poems are more easily available and less time consuming to teach than novels. Karen and Mary believe that the school's limited budget is a determining factor, and that this may also be one of the largest challenges related to literature teaching, as there might be a lack of available materials. This finding was rather anticipated since research on teacher cognition has suggested that a lack of available resources may hinder language teachers' ability to adopt practices which reflect their beliefs (Borg 2003:94). It seems that the impact of contextual factors on the teachers' cognition is more significant than the influences gained from professional coursework regarding the employment of extensive and free voluntary reading in the EFL classroom.

Although the teachers do not seem to employ extensive reading on a regular basis, Paul and Mary expressed that they find it challenging to study texts in depth. This could indicate that teachers do not exclusively employ an extensive or intensive approach to reading in the EFL classroom, due to challenges and contextual factors. Paul stated that it is difficult to study texts in depth due to students' lack of analytical skills, whereas Mary explained that text analysis is more easily conducted in the students' L1. However, she stated that literacy- and language skills may be transferable from one's L1 to the FL. This belief may also be linked to the stated benefits of extensive and free voluntary reading, in which it is argued that reading in breadth may enhance vocabulary, as well as literacy- and language abilities (Day and Bamford 1998:33).

Only three of the teachers discuss the curriculum aims in teams while planning, but they all claimed to use it actively. Furthermore, they agree that quite a few curricular aims are open to interpretation, and that they combine and employ various aims in their literature teaching – especially connected to the literacy skills. Paul argued that he implements the curriculum based on the knowledge and experiences gained from his teacher education, which may be in accordance with research that has suggested that teacher education have an impact on teachers' cognition (Borg 2003:91). It has been asserted that pre-service teachers make sense of and are affected by training programmes in different and unique ways, and that either cognitive or behavioral changes may occur in this regard. Mary stated that she has gotten acquainted with the curriculum based on her work with designing exam tasks for upper secondary, whereas Lisa and Amy argued that they use it automatically due to their many years of experience with teaching according to national curricula. This might suggest that teachers' practices are highly influenced by their obtained professional knowledge, and as stated by Kubanyiova and Feryok (2015:435), "the specific contexts in which they do or learn to do their work", can influence teachers' mental lives. As a matter of fact, language teaching is seen as a process which is defined by dynamic interactions among cognition, context and experience (Borg 2015:252), and hence it seems probable that the teachers' beliefs and practices are affected by these factors to varying degrees.

Paul and Lisa argued that the curriculum aims for the subject of English in vg1 challenge their selection of reading material and textual focus, which might indicate that although the curricular aims are conceived as open, literature teaching at this level can be viewed as restricted by teachers. They both believe that it is easier to employ engaging literary texts in the vg3 subject "English literature and culture", as this is more specialized than the compulsory subject in vg1.

There seems to be varying degrees of cooperation at the different schools. At Karen's school the teachers meet regularly, plan together and share their reading material, which suggests that they have a very cooperative culture. Paul and Lisa's schools have a moderate degree of collaboration, whereas the teachers at Amy and Mary's schools seem to work rather independently of each other. Moreover, it may be implied the schools' cooperative environment does, in fact, influence the teachers' beliefs and practices regarding literature teaching, and Borg (2003:94) identifies *colleagues* as a contextual factor that may influence this relationship. The teachers' willingness and ability to meet regularly, for instance, seem to affect their choices of methods, reading material and tasks. Karen stated that she is constantly influenced by her colleagues, and that they share previous experiences and teaching material.

Amy suggested that teachers at her school plan their work merely on their individual beliefs, attitudes and experiences due to the low degree of collaboration among colleagues. Mary believes that cooperation may be challenging due to limited time frames and different schedules among the teachers in her school, which may point to the assertion that contextual factors do play an important role in determining the extent to which teachers are able to implement instruction congruent with their cognitions (Borg 2003:81).

6.7 Limitations of the study

The principal limitation of the study is seen to be its low number of participants, which is also one of the characteristics of qualitative research. Due to the small number of participants that were interviewed and observed, generalizations about the entire population of teachers cannot be made, and only tentative conclusions and impressions about the teaching of literature in upper-secondary EFL classrooms can be argued for. Doubtlessly, if the sample had been larger, the trends could have appeared clearer and the picture might have turned out more complex. Furthermore, if a quantity of observations had been conducted (perhaps over a longer period of time), the teachers' practices could be explored more closely, which in turn would increase the study's validity and reliability.

6.8 Implications and recommendations

It could appear as though there is a need for more extensive and free voluntary reading in Norwegian upper-secondary EFL classrooms. Such a conclusion is based on the teachers' arguments that students seem to be demotivated and unengaged when working with literature in school settings. A shared perception among the teachers seems to be that students in general lack an interest for text analysis and close reading, and that this makes it challenging to conduct engaging literature lessons, since texts are most often approached in depth. Evidently, this might imply that the majority of students could benefit from reading more extensively. If students are able to read a quantity of texts without having to perform tasks before and after the reading, it would seem that they are more likely to read for pleasure, which could also enhance their overall interest in literature. Another recommendation could be to encourage student autonomy and motivation by allowing them to select their individual reading material even more frequently, so that their personal interests are met in the literature they read.

Undoubtedly, the employment of extensive and free voluntary reading is dependent on time limits and resources available. For this reason, it appears that teachers use the textbook to a significant extent, and that they often employ intensive reading with shorter texts such as poems and short stories. The combination of available resources, for instance the school library, class sets and older textbooks could be advantageous so as to vary the genres and types of texts. Since the students have different reading preferences and interests, variation should be aimed for in order to meet as many types of learners as possible. It could be recommended that teachers select texts that the adolescent age group presumably find familiar to their own situations and views on the world. Moreover, it seems to be a shared view among the teachers in the study that students enjoy *some* parts of texts better than others, and if these parts were given a stronger focus in the teaching, the students' engagement and comprehension could supposedly increase. It is also probable that the use of measures such as introductory library courses and school reading competitions could enhance students' knowledge, motivation and interest for reading. The introductory courses might provide them with information about how to select appropriate texts according to interests and academic levels, whereas participation in reading competitions might be viewed as entertaining and "purposeful" for many students.

Students' effort to read and work with literature seems to depend on the perceived "usefulness" of reading. It seems as though quite a few students do not see the purpose of reading literature in school settings, and that they are less motivated due to the fact that they are not necessarily assessed, which might be linked to the personal growth model, where learning is not easily tested in terms of examinations. It could be recommended that teachers strongly emphasize the benefits of reading to their students, as well as actively connect the potential learning outcomes of reading literature to other aspects of language learning, such as literacy skills vocabulary learning. Literature should presumably be conceived as a means to achieve learning in various areas, and it is likely that students would be more engaged if they were fully aware of how reading different types of literary texts may implicitly increase the aforementioned abilities, and for instance their intercultural competencies.

There is an implied need for a more "creative teaching", in which students are able to unfold their creative abilities. As mentioned by one of the teachers in the study, literature could very well be employed as "a means to create a product". In this regard it could also be argued that teachers should aim to treat literature as art, and hence prompt the students to respond critically and emotionally in order to engage them at a personal level. As stated by Carter and Long (1991:2-3), a teacher of literature should:

create conditions for learning in the classroom which will make the reading of literature a memorable, individual and collective experience, and, above all, strive to obtain enthusiasm for and commitment to the teaching of literature *as* literature (Carter & Long 1991:2-3).

When teachers are unable to meet regularly, conduct dialogues with one another or share reading/learning material, a mismatch between their practices and beliefs might occur. It could also be implied that their cognitions are mostly influenced by schooling (previous experiences with learners and learning) as well as contextual factors if regular encounters with fellow teachers are not obtained. Most probably, it could be recommended that teachers cooperate frequently so that their cognitions are also influenced by professional coursework through influences by fellow teachers. It seems likely that this would enhance their abilities to develop and vary their teaching approaches, methods and strategies further.

7. Conclusion

This thesis has aimed at exploring the teaching of literature among upper-secondary EFL teachers in Norway. Furthermore, it has investigated teacher cognition, and hence studied the relationship between five teachers' stated beliefs and practices regarding literature teaching in vg1. Few studies have been conducted about teacher cognition and literature teaching in the past, and consequently, the choice of topic grew out from an intent to explore this relationship further. An additional attempt was to gain valuable insight into the current situation of literature teaching as well as teachers' rationale for conducting various methods and activities in the EFL classroom. The following research questions have been addressed: "What approaches and methods do the teachers employ in their EFL literature teaching?", "How do they select reading material, and what learning objectives do they consider most important?" and "How do their stated beliefs compare with their actual practices"?

The data was gathered through in total ten semi-structured interviews and five classroom observations. The decision was made to conduct two interviews with each teacher (pre- and post the observation) in order to gain a thorough insight into their stated beliefs, whereas the observations were carried out so as to study their actual practices.

The interview sessions indicated that the teachers' beliefs and practices have been influenced by their own experiences as language learners to varying degrees, suggesting that schooling (cf. Borg 2015:259) has affected the teachers' cognitions. Moreover, it appears that they have incorporated certain elements of this teaching, whereas they have avoided the ones that did not work for them. Some results also indicate that teacher education has an impact on teachers' cognition, as two teachers are of the opinion that their teacher training programmes have influenced their literature teaching to a significant degree.

The teachers' approaches and methods and the employment of literary texts in the EFL upper-secondary classroom, seem to be highly determined by curricular aims. Nonetheless, these are explained by the teachers as open, as they tend to combine the different subject areas (Language learning, Oral- and Written communication and Culture, society and literature) when they plan and conduct their teaching. It was also suggested that the curriculum aims in vg1 challenge literature teaching at this level because they are conceived as too general. In this regard it was mentioned that the more specialized subject "English literature and culture" in vg3 is better suited for the employment of various literary texts.

Although the teachers have different beliefs and practices regarding literature teaching, they seem to agree that the methods employed should be varied. For instance, they

claim to use class- and group discussions combined with written assignments, and since the methods and activities employed in the observed lessons appeared to be varied, it is likely that this belief corresponds with their practices. Additionally, all five teachers seem to use elements of teaching that are congruent with the historical-biographical method, New Criticism and reader response theory, which most presumably indicates that they have an eclectic approach to literature teaching.

The teachers seem to use elements of critical literacy in their classrooms, which due to its focus on cultural, social and ideological issues, could be associated with the cultural model for literature teaching. All of the teachers emphasized the importance of intercultural competence and social issues both during the interviews and in the observed lessons. What is more, one expressed rationale for the selection of texts is that they should prompt students to engage emotionally and critically, which resembles critical literacy as personal response and the reader response theory. It could be argued that their choice to use elements of critical literacy could be seen as a result of their professional focuses and experiences.

The teachers' beliefs about what learning objectives are important, can be related to the three models of teaching literature: *the cultural-, language- and personal growth model*. For instance, three teachers mentioned that one crucial aim of literature teaching is to increase the students' intercultural competence, which relates to the cultural model. Furthermore, similarities have been detected between this model and the notion of *Bildung*, which only one teacher emphasized. The learning aims connected to language abilities – such as accuracy, vocabulary, writing and reading – can be seen in relation to the language model, whereas the objectives emphasizing student engagement and personal response are presumably connected to the personal growth model. It could appear as though the teachers who focus to a greater extent on language competences implement the curricular aims connected to the basic skills more frequently. Although there is an apparent focus among the teachers on the students' personal growth and their responses to texts, literature within this model could arguably be seen as more difficult to assess in school settings. It was also discussed by one teacher that students are less motivated to read texts if they are not evaluated and graded on their work. Hence, it is likely that some teachers lean more towards the language- and cultural models, since literature here may be measured explicitly in terms of tests and examinations (Carter & Long 1991:3).

Three teachers encourage their students to identify with the protagonists in literary texts, since this “process of identification” (cf. Oatley 2005:1) may seemingly enhance their comprehension and joy for reading. It is also likely that their beliefs are congruent with their

practices in this regard as they all focused on the protagonists' personality and situation during the observed lessons. In a similar vein, it was mentioned that literary texts should reflect the students' experiences and views on the world, and that the employment of commercial texts (that are popular among adolescents) can be beneficial. Based on these findings one could argue that teachers make most reading-related decisions to ensure student understanding and motivation.

Two teachers pointed out that it is especially challenging to motivate boys to read. It was stated that fewer boys read on a general basis, and that they tend to identify with male protagonists only, whereas girls are easier to motivate since they are able to identify with both genders. This view is supported by research on adolescent reading (cf. Roe 2012:126-127).

The teachers expressed positive attitudes towards extensive and free voluntary reading. They seemed to swear by its benefits, as they believe it could enhance student motivation and autonomy, as well as language- and literacy skills. Undoubtedly, these views can be associated with the learning aim reading for pleasure, which was also identified by the teachers as an important aim. It nevertheless appears that they find it difficult to conduct this approach to reading at a general basis, due to contextual factors such as a lack of class time, available resources and reading material. For this reasons it can be argued that contextual factors have had a greater impact on their cognitions than their professional coursework, and that the context in which teachers work (inside and around the classroom) mediates cognitions and practices (cf. Borg 2015:259; Kubanyiova & Feryok 2015:435). It was also emphasized that it is difficult to carry out in school settings since students are most often expected to analyze and respond critically to texts, and consequently that reading for pleasure is challenging to achieve. Therefore, there is reason to assert that there is a mismatch between teachers' beliefs and practices regarding extensive and free voluntary reading and reading for pleasure. It was, however, also indicated that the employment intensive reading may be time consuming and challenging due to a lack of engagement and analytical skills among students. Nonetheless, the findings indicate that the teachers use shorter and more easily available texts such as short stories, poems and movies rather than novels, and that close reading is carried out to a significant extent.

Evidently, there is a strong tradition for the employment of the textbook in EFL teaching in Norway. It was argued that the books are well-structured, that the texts are varied and educational, and that the content reflects the curriculum aims for vg1. Additionally, one conception shared by the teachers is that students tend to prefer the use of a textbook, since it provides them with predictability and a collection of shorter texts that are easily available.

Hence, the teachers' decision to employ the textbook at a regular basis seem to be influenced by the textbooks' presumed quality and the fact that it is preferred by students. It was also argued that the dominant use of the textbook might influence the teachers to employ intensive reading on a frequent basis, as there is an apparent focus on literary terms and text analysis. They also seem to use a low number of texts, although their stated beliefs suggest that they clearly see the potential learning outcomes of extensive and free voluntary reading. Furthermore, it appears that most texts are teacher-chosen rather than learner-chosen.

The degrees of cooperation at the five schools seem to vary considerably, and in consequence, the teachers experience different sources of inspiration. Whereas some of the teachers collaborate frequently with their colleagues, others are less influenced by fellow teachers. Apparently, the schools that have a strong collaborative environment enable teachers to meet regularly, discuss curriculum aims, share reading material and tasks, and it is hence likely that the teachers' beliefs about literature teaching are somewhat shaped by their colleagues' views. Two of the teachers' beliefs appear to be more affected by previous experiences and personal attitudes since the degree of cooperation among colleagues is lower. When there is not a strong collaborative culture among teachers, their cognitions are presumably more likely to be influenced by factors such as schooling and classroom practice, rather than professional coursework (cf. Borg 2015:259).

There seems to be a congruence between the teachers' beliefs and practices regarding most of the decisions of the use of approaches, methods, reading material and learning aims in literature teaching. Nonetheless, there are two areas in which mismatches apparently occur in the case of all teachers, which have been identified as the employment of extensive and free voluntary reading and the learning objective reading for pleasure. Although all teachers stress the importance of reading extensively and for joy, the context within the school setting seem to trump the impact of professional coursework and previous teaching experiences (classroom practice). Moreover, the study has indicated that teachers' cognitions are shaped and influenced by dynamic interactions among context, experiences from schooling, university education and classroom practices.

One limitation of the study is its low degree of participants, which undoubtedly decreases the validity of its results. Although the teachers' beliefs were presumably addressed in depth due to the employment of pre- and post-observation interviews, the relationship between their beliefs and practices should ideally have been studied more carefully. Due to a quite limited time frame and resources available, it was decided to observe each teacher's

practices for 90 minutes, although several observations (perhaps over a longer period of time) would be highly preferable so as to gain a better acquaintance with their practices.

It has been asserted that there is a limited amount of work available of teacher cognition in the area of L2 and FL literacy teaching (Borg 2015:132). Since few studies have investigated teacher cognition and literature teaching, the present study will hopefully contribute to the relevant research fields. Moreover, it has been built on a theoretical framework of teacher cognition, and its qualitative nature has allowed for detailed and in-depth descriptions of the teachers' beliefs and practices. Additionally, its combination of data-collection methods is seen as beneficial so as to study this relationship closely. Furthermore, by providing insights into teachers' mental lives and into the complex ways in which these relate to their classroom practices, this study has attempted to contribute to our understandings of the process of becoming, and being, as well as developing professionally as teachers (Borg 2009:163).

Teacher cognition is a relatively young research field, and consequently, a sufficient and unified theoretical framework has not yet been established. In accordance with Borg's (2015:259) arguments, it seems appropriate to suggest that such a framework should be further developed for several reasons. Most presumably, future studies should be carried out based on such a framework in order to gain an overview of important themes, dimensions and conceptions of teacher cognition, and to get acquainted with how previous studies relate to existing work within the field. Furthermore, since teachers' cognitions are a matter of complex relationships, future studies should aim to investigate these in depth. Consequently, a combination of data-collection methods is to be preferred, and it may additionally prove valuable to the field if future research included other methods of data collection. If quantitative methods were carried out, such as questionnaire surveys, a larger proportion of the teaching population could be reached, and statistical averages could be made. Moreover, it could be considered beneficial if classroom observations were video-taped, so as to gain a thorough and first-hand impression of the teachers' actual practices and teaching-related decisions. In order to gain representative results, it would also be useful for future studies if the participants were of mixed age, genders and from urban as well as rural areas. Additionally, measures should be taken to study teacher cognition and literature teaching in primary- and lower secondary school.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Intervjuguide (norsk utgave)

1. Lærernes bakgrunn

1. Hvor gammel er du?
2. Hvor lang erfaring har du som engelsklærer?
3. Hvordan er din faglige bakgrunn i engelsk? (Type utdanning, antall år, studiested)

2. Undervisning

1. Hvordan underviser du i litteratur? (Oppfølgingsspørsmål om metode hvis relevant)
2. Hva oppmuntrer du elevene dine til å lese? (Her kan spørsmål om tilnærminger stilles, som f.eks. *ekstensiv* og *intensiv* lesing, og om forskjellige fokusområder i arbeidet med tekster.
3. Er det noe du synes er utfordrende med litteraturundervisningen i engelskfaget på vg1?

3. Utvalg av litterære tekster

1. Hvem bestemmer hvilke tekster du kan bruke i litteraturundervisningen din?
2. Hvilke typer tekster bruker du i undervisningen?
3. Hva er holdningene dine til å bruke læreboka i litteraturundervisningen?
4. Hva er holdningene dine til *ikke* å bruke læreboka? (Dersom ubesvart ovenfor)
5. Er det noe du synes er utfordrende ved det å velge ut/bruke litterære tekster i undervisningen?

4. Læringsmål og læringsutbytte

1. Hva synes du er de viktigste læringsmålene å fokusere på når du underviser i litteratur?
2. Hvilke læringsmål tror du kan bli oppnådd gjennom å lese litteratur?
3. Tror du at noen av læringsmålene er utfordrende å oppnå?

4. Ressurser, utfordringer og kontekst

1. Har du fått informasjon om hvordan du kan implementere læreplanen i engelsk på skolen din?
2. I hvilken grad påvirker læreplanen din litteraturundervisning?
3. Finnes det tradisjoner på skolen som muligens påvirker din litteraturundervisning? (f.eks bruk av film, drama osv.)
4. Hva slags læremateriell er tilgjengelig på skolen?
5. Samarbeider du med andre engelsklærere? Hvor ofte? Hva samarbeider dere om?

Appendix 2

Interview guide (English version)

1. The teachers' background

1. (If you do not mind me asking), how old are you?
2. How long have you been practicing as an English teacher?
3. What are your formal qualifications in English?

2. Methods in literature teaching

1. How do you teach literature? (follow-up questions may be asked regarding methodology)
2. What do you encourage your students to read?
3. Is there anything you consider to be challenging with regards to the teaching of literature in English as a FL?

3. Reading material

1. Who decides what reading material you can have/use in your literature teaching?
2. What types of texts do you use in the classroom?
3. What are your attitudes towards using the textbook?
4. What are your attitudes towards *not* using the textbook?
5. Is there anything you consider to be challenging with regards to the employment of reading material?

4. Learning aims/objectives

1. When you teach literature, what do you think are the most important aims to focus on?
2. What learning objectives do you think can be enhanced through literature?
3. Do you think that any of these learning aims are challenging to achieve?

5. Resources, challenges and contextual factors

1. Have you received any information about how to implement the English curriculum in your school?
2. To what degree does the curriculum influence your literature teaching?
3. Are there any traditions at your school that may influence your literature teaching? (follow-up questions may be asked about film and other types of media)
4. What types of materials are available at your school for the teaching of literature?
5. Do you cooperate with other English teachers? How often? What do you cooperate about?

Appendix 3

Generelle spørsmål (intervjuene etter observasjon)

1. Hvordan ble teksten(e) for timen valgt ut?
Oppfølgingsspørsmål om teksten stilles. Om f.eks. tematikk, hovedpersoner, tema og tekst i forhold til læreplan og samfunnet. Elevenes forhold til teksten.
2. Tror du at noen av læringsmålene knyttet til litteratur ble oppnådd da elevene jobbet med teksten? Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke?
3. Hvorfor valgte du å innlede timen som du gjorde?
4. Hva er holdningene dine til å bruke den/de undervisningsformene du brukte?
5. Hvorfor valgte du de ulike arbeidsmetodene? (skriftlige oppgaver, muntlige spørsmål, diskusjon i par, i grupper, klassevis)
6. Pleier du å velge disse undervisningsformene og arbeidsmåtene? (Dersom ubesvart)
Oppfølgingsspørsmål: hvorfor, hvorfor ikke, utfordringer.
7. Annet relevant – spesifikt for timen

Appendix 4

Observation guide

- The observation notes will elaborate especially on the teaching methods used during the class, in addition to what reading material is employed. All that can be related to the teacher's teaching of literature will be of relevance to note.
- The observations will be relatively open, which means that decoding and categorizing will be done *after* the observations. However, since the focus of the observations will be linked primarily to the research questions, they could be considered as *semi-structured*.
- A checklist will not be used.
- Audio-recordings of the observations will be made to ensure reliable findings.
- The researcher will not be participating in the lesson, and will thus aim to note consistently.
- The data material from the observations will be analyzed qualitatively.

Appendix 5

Approval from the Norwegian Social Science Data Services



Torill Irene Hestetraet
Institutt for kultur- og språkvitenskap Universitetet i Stavanger
Postboks 2557 Ullandhaug
4036 STAVANGER

Vår dato: 21.12.2016

Vår ref: 51148 / 3 / ASF

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 16.11.2016. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

<i>51148</i>	<i>A Study of Teacher Cognition and EFL Literature Teaching at the Upper Secondary Level</i>
<i>Behandlingsansvarlig</i>	<i>Universitetet i Stavanger, ved institusjonens øverste leder</i>
<i>Daglig ansvarlig</i>	<i>Torill Irene Hestetraet</i>
<i>Student</i>	<i>Siri Hjorteland</i>

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 12.05.2017, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Kjersti Haugstvedt

Amalie Statland Fantoft

Appendix 6

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjekt

"A Study of Teacher Cognition and EFL Literature Teaching at the Upper Secondary Level"

Bakgrunn og formål

Dette prosjektet er en masteroppgave ved Universitetet i Stavanger. Formålet med denne oppgaven er å studere lærerholdninger i forhold til litteraturundervisning i engelskfaget på VG1. Problemstillingene som vil bli behandlet i denne oppgaven er følgende: Hvordan er forholdet mellom læreres holdninger og deres litteraturundervisning? Hvilke utfordringer kan drøftes i forhold til litteraturundervisningen i engelskfaget? Hvilke undervisningsformer og aktiviteter bruker lærerne i deres litteraturundervisning, og hvordan blir de ulike litterære tekstene valgt ut?

Utvalget er blitt til ved at studenten har tatt kontakt med ulike skoler via telefon og e-post og forhørt seg om deres interesse av å være med i studien.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

Deltakelse i studien skjer ved at studenten gjennomfører to intervjuer med lærerne, samt én klasseromsobservasjon. Et intervju vil ta plass *før* observasjonen, mens det andre vil være basert på funnene under observasjonen. Begge intervjuer vil være semi-strukturerte, som krever aktiv deltakelse. Intervjuobjektet blir oppmuntret til å svare ærlig og utfyllende, mens studenten stiller oppfølgingsspørsmål underveis. Spørsmålene vil i hovedsak dreie seg om lærernes litteraturundervisning; om deres holdninger og tanker rundt ulike aktiviteter, undervisningsformer, samt om utvalg av litterære tekster og utfordringer knyttet til disse områdene. Klasseromsobservasjonene vil vare i 90 minutter, og studenten vil ikke delta i undervisningen. Intervjuene og observasjonen vil registreres ved hjelp av lydopptak, og det vil tas notater underveis.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Kun studenten og veileder vil ha tilgang til datamaterialet. Informantenes navn vil erstattes med pseudonymer, slik at de ikke er identifiserbare. Deltakerne vil dermed ikke kunne gjenkjennes i publikasjon.

Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes 12.05.17. Opptak og notater vil da bli slettet. Ingen personopplysninger er tilgjengelige da alt av data forblir anonymt.

Frivillig deltakelse

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om deg bli anonymisert.

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS.

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta

----- (Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Jeg samtykker til å delta i intervju

Jeg samtykker til at studenten observerer én av mine undervisningsøkter

Jeg samtykker til at opplysninger om min alder, erfaring som engelsklærer og faglig bakgrunn kan bli publisert og lagret etter prosjektslutt

Appendix 7

Til elever på VG1,

Undersøkelse om lærerholdninger til litteraturundervisning i engelskfaget på vg1

Jeg ønsker å invitere deg til å delta i mitt forskningsprosjekt. Mitt navn er Siri Hjorteland og jeg er mastergradsstudent ved Universitetet i Stavanger. Mitt mastergradsprosjekt er om lærerholdninger og litteraturundervisning i engelsk på vg1. Hensikten er å studere hvordan læreren arbeider med litteratur i engelskfaget på dette trinnet. Målet er å bidra til forskning om forholdet mellom lærerholdninger og litteraturundervisning.

Siden prosjektet innebærer observasjon av to klesstimer med lydopptak vil jeg gjerne informere og innhente samtykke fra dere elever. Deltakelse i prosjektet er frivillig, og all informasjon vil forbi anonym slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes. Det er ingen andre enn meg som vil få tilgang til lydopptakene, og opplysningene vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Prosjektet er planlagt ferdig innen utgangen av 2017, og det er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS. Etter prosjektslutt vil alle lydopptak bli slettet.

Ta gjerne kontakt med meg pr. epost dersom dere har spørsmål (s.hjorteland@stud.uis.no)
Takk for din deltakelse til dette forskningsprosjektet!

Vennlig hilsen,

Siri Hjorteland.

Undersøkelse om lærerholdninger og litteraturundervisning i engelsk på vg1.

Jeg har mottatt skriftlig informasjon og jeg samtykker til deltakelse og lydopptak

Dato

Elevers signatur

Appendix 8

Tables of the categories (main findings)

1. Teachers' biographical background

Teacher	Formal qualifications	Teaching experience
Karen	MA in English 90 STP Comparative Politics & Organization and Administration	15 years General- and vocational studies
Lisa	MA French 90 STP English	27 years. 1 year in LS. General- and vocational studies
Paul	MA in English formal qualifications in Norwegian, gym and music	3,5 years General studies
Amy	MA in English MA in school administration, formal qualifications in Norwegian and history	30 years 4 years LS (out of 30) General- and vocational studies
Mary	MA in Comparative Literature, 90 STP English 60 STP Norwegian; History of Art	14 years General studies

2. General practices in literature teaching

Teacher	Beliefs and stated practices	Methods and activities employed in the observed lessons	Post-observation interview (beliefs about practices)
Karen	Literature enlightens curricular topics Identification important Pre-reading activities to activate SS' pre-knowledge Oral and written tasks Class-discussion, teacher presentations and group work Focuses on literary devices Focuses on extensive reading	Audio-recorded text and textbook Students read out loud Teacher presentation, pair-discussions, whole-class discussions, written tasks	Aimed to activate the SS' pre-knowledge through discussion and teacher presentation Aimed to engage as many SS as possible,
Lisa	Enlightens curricular topics Literary devices Pre-reading activities activates the SS' previous knowledge Extensive reading	Audio-recorded text and textbook SS read out loud Teacher discussion, pair-discussions, whole-class discussions, written tasks	Aimed to actualize and contextualize the topic Does not favor teacher-centered lessons, aimed to make SS active Favors whole-class discussions
Paul	Similarities between teaching in Norwegian and English Enlightens curricular topics Introduces texts in various ways Literary devices Extensive reading SS' inner motivation for literature needs to be developed teacher	SS read the texts individually + asked questions in whole-class Sings one of the texts ("In the Ghetto") Group work Teacher discussion	Aimed to engage students by singing Aimed to vary the activities SS are more motivated through group work + peer discussions productive Likes to teach spontaneously
Amy	As a foundation for the teaching of writing	Student-centered teaching SS communicates through dialogues about novel	Employed book-café based on student feedback

	Favors free reading + aims to enhance student autonomy Places literature in contexts Extensive reading Creative and varied teaching Favors communicative methods Literary devices	Focuses on literary devices	Has employed written tasks before the book-café Uses book-café instead of student presentations
Mary	Different forms related to text analysis Textbook-oriented NDLA – resource (analysis) Literary devices Written and oral tasks – “traditional” teaching	SS analyzed movies, novels and short-story Focuses on literary devices Written and oral tasks	Made poster to prepare SS for the work Employed process-writing due to limited time frame of assignment Favors group discussions and oral hearings Aims to have a more varied teaching + promote student autonomy

3. Reading material

Teacher	Employment of reading material	Observation	How and why texts were selected
Karen	Free to select, but highly influenced by colleagues Finds the textbook useful, would not exclude this Uses NDLA movies, class set of novels and school library SS should familiarize themselves with main-characters	Employed short-story from the textbook	Only literary text in the textbook about <i>Native Americans</i> Identifies language use, plot and theme as important elements
Lisa	Free to select, but somewhat influenced by colleagues Very textbook-oriented Movies, but more factual texts and online videos Selects texts based on personal experiences	Employed two texts from the textbook	Text selected to enlighten topic <i>indigenous people</i> Text no. 1 written by famous African author, text no. 2 by an Australian Aboriginal
Paul	Free to select, but influenced by the curricular topics Movies – visualization advantageous Selects texts based on SS’ experiences and views on the world	One poem found in an older textbook. The other poem self-selected.	Texts employed to enlighten topics <i>the US</i> and <i>Canada</i> Used them to discuss the “American Dream”
Amy	Free to select, but influenced by the textbook Selects based on SS interests and what is popular among them One novel a year, short-stories, some poems Uses the textbook and Internet resources Does not like to employ textbook, but SS seems to favor this	Employed the novel “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime”	The novel was available as a class set Influenced by colleagues Second novel this year Will not use it again since she does not like it (teachers should like the employed material)
Mary	Free to select, but influenced by the textbook Consults school librarian One novel a year, short-stories and a few poems Movies, online texts Likes combination of analogue and digital sources	Employed the novel and movie version of <i>Mice and Men</i> , and the short-story and movie version of <i>Dracula</i> .	The novel was available as class set Movie seen to support weaker students <i>Dracula</i> selected from the textbook

4. Learning aims

Teacher	Pre-observation interview (Important learning aims in literature teaching)	Post-observation interview (what learning aims were achieved during lesson)
Karen	Intercultural competence Reading for experience and pleasure Grammar Vocabulary, writing- and reading skills Increases general language abilities	Intercultural competence and reading for experience
Lisa	The most important: cultural competence and social issues – connects these to <i>Bildung</i> Vocabulary SS responsible for their own learning – hence only some achieve aims	Doubtful as to whether SS gained sufficient learning outcome <i>Bildung</i> connected to discussion about “traditional vs. modern” – some SS understood this
Paul	Reading for pleasure – most important Language accuracy Cultural-competence and communication Analytical competence – transferable to other subjects SS decide what aims to focus on and not every S is able to achieve them	Communication, cultural- and analytical competence presumably achieved by most SS
Amy	Language competencies – especially writing skills Syntax Vocabulary Reading for pleasure important, but difficult to achieve SS responsible for their own learning – their motivation will determine what aims are achieved	Reading for pleasure not achieved by all SS Oral- and writing skills developed Increased vocabulary and analytical skills
Mary	General language competence- the most important Reading competence – wants SS to be more confident readers Analytical skills Vocabulary – especially regarding analytical terms Reading for pleasure, although difficult to achieve	SS’ literary vocabulary enhanced Increased vocabulary Reading for pleasure presumably not achieved – but most SS seemed to enjoy parts of the texts

5. Resources, challenges and contextual factors

Teacher	Resources	Challenges	Contextual factors
Karen	Class- sets and school library Use film and Internet more now	To vary the teaching + engage every S Limited school budget	Discuss curriculum in teams and with colleagues Open curriculum – teachers are free High degree of cooperation
Lisa	Class- sets, audiobooks, movies, older textbooks, school library, Internet more used School reading competitions	To engage all SS + find texts that appeal to all (boys more difficult than girls, tend to identify with male protagonists only) SS read social media instead of literature To employ novels due to limited time frame and + find educational texts	Teachers work with curriculum in teams Implements this automatically Influenced by colleagues, although independent

Paul	Old textbooks, class-sets and a school library with introductory courses	To motivate SS, adapt teaching + find literature that enlightens all topics To work with texts in depth due to limited time +SS struggle with text comprehension	Teachers should decide how to use curriculum Uses information from his education Cooperation may be a strength, but should not be "forced" Moderate degree of cooperation
Amy	Old textbooks, movies, class-sets, school library + teacher resource on ITS Learning	To motivate SS (especially boys) + find texts that appeal to SS Many SS do not manage nor like to analyze texts	Uses curriculum actively + discuss it in teams Connects literature to writing and reading Teachers' employ materials and methods based on own beliefs Low degree of cooperation
Mary	Analogue and digital textbooks, class-sets and a school library	To study texts in depth (easier in the SS L1, although reading competence may be transferable) To motivate SS + adapted teaching School economy	Analyzed curriculum herself Combines curriculum aims Low degree of cooperation Cooperation should not be "forced" on teachers', although important