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**Writing for Pleasure and the Teaching of Writing at the Primary  
Level: A Teacher Cognition Case Study**

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## **Abstract**

This research project is a collective case study exploring teacher cognition in relation to the teaching of first language (L1) writing at the primary level in England. The study places particular emphasis on writing for pleasure, which may be defined as writing undertaken for the sake of enjoyment and/or satisfaction. This concept has been less considered than its reading counterpart, especially in classroom contexts, but has recently begun to gain more prominence within this field. The current study contributes to this expanding discourse through a lens of teacher beliefs, a sub-concept to teacher cognition. In exploring this topic, the study employs a qualitative research method, combining traditional (semi-structured interviews) and more experimental methods of data collection (participant-produced drawings).

The findings show that writing for pleasure plays some role in the teachers' reported beliefs about the role of writing for pleasure in teaching writing. This is because the teacher informants, as a whole, placed more emphasis on some aspects of writing for pleasure than others. Particularly, the teachers highlighted practices which they believed would foster volition and a sense of control within their pupils throughout the writing process. Writing for pleasure appeared to play a more limited role in their reported beliefs about teaching literacy than did reading for pleasure. Four factors are suggested to be main influences regarding such reported beliefs about the role of writing for pleasure in their teaching: the influence of their own experiences as learners; their learners' positive or negative attitudes toward writing for pleasure; the collective beliefs of the environment in which the teachers worked; and what is attributed significance at a governmental level. In regard to the latter point, half of the teachers also expressed beliefs that the National Curriculum prevented them from fully teaching in accordance with their beliefs. Furthermore, the teachers' reported beliefs about teaching writing are reflected in their visual self-representation to a significant extent, because features which were described as important in the interviews were portrayed in their drawings or discussed in relation to them. Lastly, the teachers' reported beliefs reflect, to a significant extent, the main theories considered for this study, including learning motivation theories, sociocultural theory, and theories relating to writing, writing for pleasure, teacher cognition and visual research.

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# Table of Contents

<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	<b>VII</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 THE PRESENT STUDY AND ITS AIMS.....	1
1.2 RESEARCH CONTEXT AND RELEVANCE .....	1
1.3 THESIS OUTLINE.....	3
<b>2 TEACHING CONTEXT</b> .....	<b>5</b>
2.1 INTRODUCTION .....	5
2.2 A RECENT HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE TEACHING OF WRITING.....	5
2.3 LITERACY IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM .....	7
2.4 NORWEGIAN CONTEXT .....	8
<b>3 THEORY</b> .....	<b>10</b>
3.1 INTRODUCTION .....	10
3.2 WRITING IN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS.....	10
3.2.1 What is writing?.....	10
3.2.2 Connecting writing and reading.....	11
3.2.3 The developing year 4 writer .....	13
3.3 A SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE OF LEARNING .....	14
3.3.1 What is the sociocultural perspective of learning? .....	14
3.3.2 Scaffolding writing by modelling .....	15
3.4 WRITING FOR PLEASURE .....	18
3.4.1 What is writing for pleasure? .....	18
3.4.2 Why write for pleasure? .....	19
3.4.3 Who writes for pleasure? .....	21
3.4.4 A writing for pleasure pedagogy.....	24
3.5 LEARNER MOTIVATION IN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS .....	25
3.5.1 What is learner motivation in educational contexts?.....	25
3.5.2 Control-value theory of achievement emotions: implications for teaching.....	26
3.5.3 Flow in educational contexts: implications for teaching .....	29
3.6 TEACHER COGNITION: A LITERATURE REVIEW.....	31
3.6.1 What is teacher cognition?.....	31
3.6.2 Writing teacher cognition research .....	32
3.6.3 Teachers' past learner experiences and teacher cognition .....	33
3.6.4 The influence of teacher cognition on classroom practice.....	35
3.6.5 Teacher cognition and writing for pleasure.....	36
3.6.6 Teacher cognition and participant-produced drawings.....	38
3.6.7 Contribution.....	39
<b>4 METHODOLOGY</b> .....	<b>41</b>
4.1 INTRODUCTION .....	41
4.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH.....	41
4.3 CASE STUDIES .....	42
4.4 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS .....	42
4.5 PLANNING AND CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEWS .....	43
4.6 INTERVIEW STRUCTURE.....	44
4.7 PROCESSING AND PRESENTING THE INTERVIEW FINDINGS .....	47
4.8 PARTICIPANT-PRODUCED DRAWINGS.....	48
4.9 PLANNING AND CONDUCTING THE PARTICIPANT-PRODUCED DRAWINGS.....	48
4.10 PROCESSING AND PRESENTING THE FINDINGS FROM THE PARTICIPANT-PRODUCED DRAWINGS.....	49
4.11 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS .....	51
4.12 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY .....	52
4.13 RESEARCH ETHICS .....	54

<b>5 RESULTS .....</b>	<b>56</b>
5.1 INTRODUCTION .....	56
5.2 LAURA .....	56
5.2.1 Educational and qualification background .....	56
5.2.2 Experiences with writing .....	56
1.1.2 Reflections on teaching writing .....	58
1.1.3 Attitudes toward literacy in the current National Curriculum:.....	59
1.1.4 Participant-produced drawing .....	60
5.3 OWEN .....	60
1.1.5 Educational and qualification background .....	60
1.1.6 Experiences with writing .....	60
1.1.3 Reflections on teaching writing .....	62
1.1.4 Attitudes toward literacy the current National Curriculum: .....	63
1.1.5 Participant-produced drawing .....	64
5.4 KATIE .....	65
1.1.6 Educational and qualification background .....	65
5.4.1 Experiences with writing .....	65
5.4.2 Reflections on teaching writing .....	66
5.4.3 Attitudes toward literacy in the current National Curriculum.....	67
5.4.4 Participant-produced drawing .....	68
5.5 MARK .....	68
5.5.1 Educational and qualification background .....	68
5.5.2 Experiences with writing .....	69
5.5.3 Reflections on teaching writing .....	69
5.5.4 Attitudes toward literacy in the current National Curriculum.....	70
5.5.5 Participant-produced drawing .....	71
5.6 BEN .....	71
5.6.1 Background .....	71
1.1.2 Experiences with writing .....	71
1.1.3 Reflections on teaching writing .....	73
1.1.4 Attitudes toward literacy in the current National Curriculum.....	74
5.6.2 Participant-produced drawing .....	75
5.7 ALICIA .....	75
5.7.1 Background .....	75
1.1.5 Experiences with writing .....	75
1.1.6 Reflections on teaching writing .....	76
1.1.7 Attitudes toward literacy in the current National Curriculum.....	78
1.1.8 Participant-produced drawing .....	79
5.8 THE PARTICIPANT-PRODUCED DRAWINGS.....	80
<b>6 DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>81</b>
6.1 INTRODUCTION .....	81
6.2 EXPERIENCES WITH WRITING .....	81
6.3 REFLECTIONS ON TEACHING WRITING .....	85
6.4 TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD LITERACY IN THE CURRENT NATIONAL CURRICULUM .....	92
6.5 PARTICIPANT-PRODUCED DRAWINGS .....	94
6.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY .....	98
6.7 IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING .....	99
<b>7 CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>8 REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>9 APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>131</b>
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE .....	131
APPENDIX B: INFORMATION LETTER .....	133
APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT-PRODUCED DRAWING TASK .....	136

APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM .....	137
APPENDIX E: APPROVAL FROM THE NORWEGIAN CENTRE FOR RESEARCH DATA.....	138
APPENDIX F: PARTICIPANT-PRODUCED DRAWINGS .....	139

## List of Abbreviations

DfE	Department for Education in England
IWB	Interactive Whiteboard
KS1	Key Stage 1 of the current English National Curriculum (ages 4-7)
KS2	Key Stage 2 of the current English National Curriculum (ages 7-11)
L1	First Language
L2	Second/Foreign Language
LK20	Norwegian National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion 2020
MKO	More Knowledgeable Other
NIWB	Non-interactive Whiteboard
NLP	National Literacy Project
NLS	National Literacy Strategies
NLT	National Literacy Trust
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
WAGOLL	What a Good One Looks Like
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development



# **1 Introduction**

## **1.1 The present study and its aims**

This research project is a qualitative case study exploring teacher cognition in relation to the teaching of first language (L1) writing at the primary level in England. The study places particular emphasis on writing for pleasure, that is, any ‘volitional act of writing, undertaken with the anticipation of gaining satisfaction and/or enjoyment’ (Young, 2019: 13). The overall aim of the project is to explore teachers’ current beliefs about the role of writing for pleasure in primary L1 English classrooms. More specifically, the study seeks to explore how writing for pleasure is perceived among teachers and the role it plays in their reported teaching of writing, by investigating teacher beliefs in regard to writing and teaching. Due to its emphasis on the beliefs of teachers, the study explores teacher cognition about writing for pleasure. Teacher cognition is a concept concerned with ‘what teachers think, know and believe’ (Borg, 2003: 81), which seeks to provide an insight into the ‘unobservable dimensions’ of teaching (Borg, 2003: 81). In order to gain a comprehensive insight into teachers’ beliefs, the collective case study is a qualitative research method which combines semi-structured interviews and participant-produced drawings of six year 4 teachers of varying levels of experience from different schools in England. Ultimately, the thesis addresses the following research questions:

- To what extent does writing for pleasure play a role in the teachers’ reported beliefs about their teaching of writing?
- What are the main factors influencing the teachers’ reported beliefs about the role of writing for pleasure in teaching writing?
- How do the teachers’ reported beliefs about teaching writing compare with their visual self-representation as teachers?
- How do the teachers’ reported beliefs about teaching writing and writing for pleasure compare with theory on said topics?

## **1.2 Research context and relevance**

Research from the 1990s onwards became increasingly concerned with how to foster pleasant experiences in educational contexts (Pekrun, Elliot & Maier, 2006: 583). Currently, ‘the conditions that generate and support [positive] learning experiences are important issues for 21<sup>st</sup>-century educators’ (Ainley & Hidi, 2014: 205). This is reflected in the current emphasis on

reading for pleasure, that is, ‘reading that we do of our own free will anticipating the satisfaction that we will get from the act of reading’ (Clark & Rumbold, 2006: 6), in both research and the English educational system. Reading for pleasure is, in fact, currently implemented in the National Curriculum (Department for Education [DfE], 2013). Despite having been found to positively influence writing attainment and attitudes related to literacy (Perry, 1999; Zumbrunn et al., 2019), writing for pleasure has been less acknowledged than its reading counterpart, especially in relation to classroom settings (Young, 2019: 12). This is made especially evident in findings by the National Literacy Trust (NLT) who ‘warrant a call for more attention on writing enjoyment in schools, research and policy’ (Clark & Teravainen 2017: 15). Consequently, the rhetorical questions below remain valuable to consider at present:

In England we are used to the term ‘reading for pleasure’ and indeed most schools seek to foster this, but is ‘writing for pleasure’ also part of our vocabulary? I’m not convinced. Do we plan to nurture young people’s enjoyment in writing? Do we allow them space and time to write for their own purposes? Are they writing for themselves, or for others – their teachers, parents and the assessment system? Do we ourselves see writing as a pleasurable form of self-expression; a way of making sense, a social act of making meaning in an uncertain world? (Cremin, 2016: no pagination).

Writing for pleasure, similarly to its reading counterpart, is writing which is undertaken of free will ‘with the anticipation of gaining satisfaction and/or enjoyment’ (Young, 2019: 13), or writing commenced for external reasons but continued for the sake of enjoyment and/or satisfaction. The term is inclusive in that it encompasses related terms such as writing enjoyment, writing motivation and positive attitudes toward writing, and although these concepts have been considered in previous research to a significant extent (e.g. Graham, Berninger & Fan, 2007), the term ‘writing for pleasure’, or alternatively, ‘writing for enjoyment’, has only recently begun to gain prominence in educational contexts (Clark, 2018; Cremin, 2016; Sedgwick, 2011; Young, 2019).

This teacher cognition research project seeks to add to the limited, although expanding, literature on writing for pleasure, by exploring teacher beliefs in relation to writing for pleasure in L1 primary classrooms. In doing so, the study answers the NLT’s ‘call for more attention on writing enjoyment’ in research (Clark & Teravainen 2017: 15). In particular, the study contributes to teacher cognition research, within which ‘writing for pleasure’ is not yet an established term. This is especially relevant as previous teacher cognition research, concerning literacy as a whole, has generally considered reading to a greater extent than writing. Additionally, the current study contributes to this field of research by way of its creative

research design, which involves participant-produced drawings as a secondary research method to the semi-structured interviews. Although the study is written from an L1 perspective, it aspires to have extended implications and relevance for the teaching of writing in L2 contexts.

Studying beliefs, a sub-concept of teacher cognition, is valuable in considering the topic at hand because they play a significant role in teachers' experiences and practices of teaching. This is because, as Gill and Fives (2015) point out, beliefs 'filter, frame, and guide experience, decisions, and actions' (1). Consequently, teacher beliefs offer an insightful lens from which to explore writing for pleasure and its perceived role in primary classrooms, particularly as it brings to light the 'unobservable cognitive dimensions of teaching' (Borg, 2003: 81). In order to explore this topic from such a lens, the study considers the concepts of, and theory relating to, writing (Graves, 2003; Stotsky, 1995), writing for pleasure (Young, 2019) and teacher cognition (Borg, 2001; 2003; 2012; 2015a; 2015b). In addition, the study explores sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and learner motivation theories (Csikszentmihályi, 1990; Pekrun, 2006). In doing so, the study draws on both L1 and L2 (second/foreign language) research and theory.

### **1.3 Thesis outline**

Following on from the introduction, chapter 2, 'Teaching Context', seeks, as its name suggests, to position the thesis within a contextual framework of teaching writing. To achieve this, the chapter first provides a historical overview over recent developments in the teaching of writing in England. Secondly, the chapter considers literacy in the current National Curriculum in England (NLT, 2013). Lastly, the chapter briefly considers the Norwegian context of the study, as the project is conducted at a Norwegian university. Doing so is particularly valuable as this thesis aspires to have extended implications and relevance for the teaching of writing in L2 contexts.

Chapter 3, 'Theory', provides the theoretical framework for the study at hand. Following the introduction, the second section of the chapter considers writing and literacy. This section explores the nature of writing; the relationship between reading and writing; and how the year 4 writer typically develops. Subsequently, the chapter considers a sociocultural perspective of learning. The chapter then explores the concept of writing for pleasure in some detail, before considering learner motivation in educational contexts. The latter is included to provide an alternative lens through which to consider writing enjoyment. Finally, in its last section, the chapter offers a literature review into teacher cognition to provide an overview into what teacher

cognition is and entails, and to position the current study in relation to previous research. This section also outlines how the research project contributes to teacher cognition research.

Chapter 4, 'Methodology', offers a description of the methodology chosen to gain insights into the beliefs of six year 4 primary school teachers for the study at hand. In doing so, the chapter is divided into sections which concern the qualitative approach; case studies; semi-structured interviews; participant-produced drawings; and explanations as to how the semi-structured interviews and participant-produced drawings were planned and conducted. Lastly, the chapter considers the validity, reliability and research ethics of the study.

Chapter 5, 'Results', presents the data collected from the interview and participant-produced drawings. First, in chronological order by the times of the interviews, the main interview findings for each participant are presented in summaries categorised by way of the interview guide categories. This section also contains descriptions of each teacher's drawing, based on their respective verbal and written comments. Second, the final section of this chapter presents copies of the participant-produced drawings.

Chapter 6, 'Discussion', places the findings in relation to the theoretical framework of the thesis. Similar to the previous chapter, the chapter is organised categorically, inspired by the interview guide. This section also considers the findings in relation to previous research and between the teacher informants.

Chapter 7, 'Conclusion', draws final conclusions about the findings and theory, and summarises the main information provided throughout the thesis. In addition, this chapter offers suggestions for areas of future research.

## **2 Teaching Context**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter offers an overview of the teaching context in which the current research project is situated. The first section explores trends and strategies related to the teaching of writing in England, from which current trends have developed. Second, the chapter considers literacy in the current English National Curriculum (DfE, 2013) which functions as a framework for the teaching in maintained schools. Lastly, because the project was undertaken at a Norwegian university, the chapter explores the Norwegian research context of writing for pleasure.

### **2.2 A recent historical overview of the teaching of writing**

This section provides a brief outline of approaches and strategies, which have been implemented in relation to the teaching of writing in England in the recent past, and which have been influential in the development of current teaching methods. Firstly, the 1960s witnessed a change in the teaching of writing, both in English L1 and L2 contexts, which was brought forth to some extent by ‘slow [writing] development’ among pupils (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996: 30-31) and discontent regarding the unsatisfactory levels of pupils’ writing performance (Chamberlain, 2016: 13). This change resulted in a shift from emphasising the completed written product, often known as the product-approach, to emphasising the process of writing, known as the process approach (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996: 86). The latter, which is further considered in section 3.4, emphasises the recursive nature of writing, during which the writer revisits various stages of writing, rather than composing text in a linear fashion (Dahl & Farnan, 1998: 5). Although a number of approaches to writing have been introduced into English classrooms following this shift (Chamberlain, 2016: 14), the process orientation to teaching writing has remained particularly prevalent. In addition to this approach, the genre orientation, explored in section 3.3, has been especially influential within English writing classrooms (Chamberlain, 2016: 14). This approach is especially concerned with pupils’ ‘awareness of language’ through systematic organisation of text types and features (Hyland, 2014: 22). Although writing teachers today might employ various writing approaches, they typically reflect one of these two orientations (Hyland, 2014: 23).

In addition to such various approaches, teaching in England has been influenced by implementations at a national level. Significantly, this includes the English National Curriculum, explored further in the subsequent section, which was first introduced in 1988 (Wyse, McCreery & Torrance, 2008: 1). Alongside the National Curriculum, National Literacy

Strategies (NLS), and their preceding National Literacy Project (NLP, 1996), were established by the English government, with the purpose of improving the literacy attainment of primary school pupils (Beard, 2000). These non-statutory guidelines had the aim of changing the teaching of literacy (and numeracy), for instance by including a Literacy Hour which provided ‘a practical structure for time and class management and teaching objectives for each term’ (Beard, 2000: 3). Evaluations of the NLP and the original NLS suggested that they led to significant improvements in children’s literacy skills (Sainsbury et al., 1998; Beard, 2000). Since 1997, various NLS were implemented until 2011, when the ‘fixed-term intervention programme’ ended (DfE, 2011: 3). At the moment of the programme’s end, literacy instruction was considered to be ‘focused, motivating and appropriate in depth and balance’ at the primary level (DfE, 2011: 10).

Presently, in England, there is no one approach to teaching writing. Despite adhering to curricular requirements, teachers in maintained schools collectively use a wide range of ‘pedagogical approaches’ toward writing and follow a number of different writing schemes (Dockrell, Marshall & Wyse, 2015: 425). Indeed, writing teachers might employ several approaches to teaching writing, but typically ‘favor either a process or genre orientation’ (Hyland, 2014: 23). A common strategy employed by teachers at the primary level in England are modelling writing strategies (Dockrell, Marshall & Wyse, 2015: 426). This involves modelling procedures and techniques deliberately used to reach a given goal of writing that provide ‘a course of action for successfully completing the writing task or some part of it’ (Graham, 2011: 12). Additional such strategies include constructing texts together with pupils and employing sentence starters (Dockrell, Marshall & Wyse, 2015: 426). Across all year groups, common features of teaching writing appear to involve particular emphasis on writing at word level and text level, followed by focus on sentence level and spelling (426).

### 2.3 Literacy in the National Curriculum

A National Curriculum, as explained by the House of Commons (2009), ‘sets out the body of knowledge, skills and understanding that a society wishes to pass on to its children and young people’ (9). The current English National Curriculum (DfE, 2013) is divided into key stages (KS), which, at the primary level, consist of KS1 (ages 4-7) and KS2 (ages 7-11). For both key stages in the current revision of the curriculum, the English subject comprises reading, spoken language and writing, which are all considered in separate sections (DfE, 13). As a whole, the English subject is, at the primary level, considered in relation to ‘purpose’ (13) and ‘attainment targets’ (16). The former, purpose, is unique to the most recent curriculum. In relation to writing specifically, this was a shift in focus from the previous emphasis on genres found in the 2006 NLS for the primary level (Chamberlain, 2016: 31).

With regards to writing specifically, the current curriculum focuses mainly on the skills and knowledge to be taught. In doing so, writing is divided into three categories, which together encompass various aspects of writing: transcription, concerned with spelling and handwriting (DfE, 2013: 37); composition, which ‘involves articulating and communicating ideas and then organising them coherently for the reader’ (5); and vocabulary, grammar and punctuation, which includes ‘using commas after fronted adverbials’ (30). The requirements as to what teachers must teach, are, in other words, clear and fixed. In order to assess the three predefined categories of writing, teachers are responsible for ‘ongoing assessments’ of written work (Dockrell, Marshall & Wyse, 2016: 411). In addition to teacher assessments at a school level, however, writing performance is monitored at a national level, for instance by ‘externally marked national curriculum tests including a test of English grammar, punctuation, and spelling’ for pupils at the end of KS2 (411-412).

As well as emphasising the skills to be taught, the curriculum encourages teachers of both KS1 and KS2 to ‘develop exciting and stimulating lessons to promote the development of pupils’ knowledge, understanding and skills’ in all subjects (6). In regard to writing, specifically, the lower KS2 National Curriculum (years 3 and 4) mentions teaching pupils to ‘develop positive attitudes towards and stamina for writing’ (31). With the exception of this sentence, however, no emphasis is placed directly on the promotion on writing enjoyment as a statutory requirement. *Reading* for pleasure, on the other hand, is given repeated emphasis in the current National Curriculum. Following the increasing acknowledgement and emphasis on reading for pleasure in England from 2001 onward (Lockwood, 2008: 4), reflecting research that reading for pleasure is important for both ‘well-being and development’ (Clark &

Rumbold, 2006: 7), reading for pleasure has become a statutory element of the current National Curriculum (DfE, 2013). In this curriculum, the promotion of reading for pleasure among pupils in ‘develop[ing] their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment’ (3) is presented as a main aim of writing for both key stages. For the lower KS2 (years 3 and 4), this entails fostering ‘independent, fluent and enthusiastic readers who read widely and frequently’ (33) and who ‘develop positive attitudes to reading’ (35).

## **2.4 Norwegian context**

This section briefly considers the Norwegian context in which the project is situated, as it was undertaken at a Norwegian university. Doing so is particularly valuable as the thesis aspires to have extended implications and relevance for the teaching of writing in L2 contexts. Although ‘L2’ refers to both second and foreign languages within this thesis, as defined in the introduction, it is worth pointing out that Norway is ‘in transition from EFL to L2 status’ (Gaddol, 2000: 11). This means that English is increasingly referred to as a second rather than as a foreign language (Rindal, 2020). One reason for this shift of status is the extensive use of ‘extramural English’, that is, English with which one is involved beyond educational contexts (Sundquist & Sylvén, 2016), in the greatly digital and globalized country that is Norway.

Due to this central role of English (L2) in Norway, significant amounts of research have been conducted into the teaching of this subject, which is taught from the primary level to the upper secondary level along with Norwegian (L1). One way in which such teaching has been researched is through a lens of teacher cognition. Over the last decade, teacher cognition research concerning language teaching in Norwegian contexts has become increasingly popular, and has employed different terminologies in their discussions of cognition, such as teacher perceptions (Drew, Oostdam & van Toorenburg, 2007; Drew, [1997] 2019), teacher beliefs (Haukås, 2016) and teacher cognition (Hestetraet, 2012). In regard to literacy and English L2 specifically, Norwegian teacher cognition research has primarily explored cognition (Hjorteland, 2017; Mathiesen Gilje, 2014) and beliefs (Charboneau Stuvland, [2016] 2019) in relation to reading; while there has been limited attention placed upon research about writing with regards to teacher cognition. An exception to the latter is that of Drew ([1997] 2019), who found Norwegian student teachers’ perceptions about the teaching of English (L2) writing to show a preference toward teaching methods which differed significantly from those they encountered as learners themselves (70). For explanations and elaborations on teacher cognition, see chapter 3.5.



The latest English subject curriculum, a part of the Norwegian National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion (LK20), is to be fully implemented by August 2020. This subject curriculum considers ‘communication’, ‘knowledge of language’, and ‘exploring English texts’ to be the core elements of the English subject (LK20, 2019: 3, my translation). Writing is considered one of the four basic key skills of English, along with reading, digital skills and oral skills (LK20, 2019: 3). Similar to the English National Curriculum (DfE, 2013), ‘leseglede’, that is, ‘pleasure in reading’, is an accentuated aspect of reading in LK20 (2019: 4, my translation). However, further reflecting the current English curriculum (DfE, 2013), more limited emphasis is placed explicitly on the enjoyment of writing. Nevertheless, the English subject curriculum encourages the teacher to ‘stimulate a desire to learn’ among pupils from primary school into upper secondary school and for years 1-4 specifically (LK20, 2019: 11, my translation), and to allow pupils to ‘be active, play, explore, and use their senses in varied experiences with learning the language’ (6, my translation). This suggests an emphasised role of positive experiences toward English language learning as a whole, including writing, in this English subject curriculum (LK20, 2019).

The fact that ‘skriveglede’, that is, ‘pleasure in writing’ (my translation), is not explicitly emphasised in the curriculum to a significant extent, reflects the term’s somewhat limited occurrence in Norwegian L1 and L2 writing research contexts. The term has been employed occasionally in Norwegian L1 research, reflected as Forsmo and Skar (2016) found increased emphasis on writing in school to foster the pleasure of Norwegian L1 writing. Additionally, for instance, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2015) emphasises the importance of meaningful writing activities, as well as frequent classroom discussions about texts and writing, in fostering the pleasure of L1 writing among pupils (1). More frequently, however, research has focused on topics related to writing enjoyment, such as student writing motivation and engagement (Uppstad, PH, 2019, pers. comm., 19 June). For instance, Håland (2016) found that pupils at the primary level were engaged when completing L1 Norwegian writing with model texts for inspiration. Contrarily, at the upper secondary level, Reppen (2015) reported low motivation and negative attitudes towards L2 writing among vocational students. Such L2 research is particularly important because motivation is crucial in learning to express oneself in a new language (Drew & Sørheim, 2009: 21), especially as L2 writers face greater writing barriers than L1 writers (Frankenberg-Garcia, 1990).

## **3 Theory**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter seeks to outline relevant theory for this study. To do so, the chapter is divided into five main sections, presented by order of specificity. Consequently, the first two sections concern writing and the teaching of writing in more general terms. Firstly, section 3.2, following this introduction, provides an overview of writing by exploring what writing is; how it is linked to reading; and how it might typically develop among year 4 students. Subsequently, section 3.3 provides an outline of the sociocultural perspective of learning, focusing primarily on sociocultural theory and the notion of scaffolding. The succeeding two sections are concerned with theories which are more specific to writing enjoyment. Section 3.4 is concerned with writing for pleasure as a concept. It explores how writing may come to be experienced as a pleasant activity; why writing for pleasure is beneficial for both pupils and teachers; who typically writes for pleasure; and what might be included in a writing for pleasure pedagogy. Next, section 3.5 considers theory related to learner motivation in educational contexts as an alternative insight into how writing can come to be experienced positively in school settings. Lastly, the chapter offers a teacher cognition literature review. This section provides an overview into writing teacher cognition research and outlines the contributions of the current study to this field of research, including that in relation to writing enjoyment.

### **3.2 Writing in educational contexts**

#### **3.2.1 What is writing?**

The concept of writing encompasses a number of meanings. The type of writing in focus for this thesis, however, may be considered as the craft of (L1) writing. The term ‘craft’ was chosen for the purpose of this study as it connotes to the significance and implications of writing beyond its practical functions, placing less emphasis on expertise than alternative terms of defining writing, such as ‘skill’, might be considered to do. The type of writing in focus may be defined ‘as composing and expressing ideas through letters, words, art, or media and print, something that only occurs when mental operations (processes) are mobilized for the purpose of composing and expressing ideas’ (Dahl & Farnan, 1998: 5). The versatile nature of writing, reflected in this citation, makes it an important craft to learn because it is helpful, and largely required, in a number of contexts, for instance in ‘learning and communicating’ (Graham & Harris, 2018: 5).

The above definition by Dahl and Farnan (1998) reflects the notion that writing is a complex, recursive activity during which the writer revisits the various stages of writing, rather than composes text in a linear fashion (5). According to Flower and Hayes' (1981) model of the writing process, the individual switches their focus between these different stages by way of their 'Monitor' (369). This monitor, then, might be considered the writer's 'switching mechanism' (Wray & Medwell, 2006: 11). The stages which are moved between are typically considered to consist of planning, drafting, revising and editing, but in school contexts also include 'three other stages externally imposed on students by the teacher, namely, responding (sharing), evaluating and post-writing' (Seow, 2002: 316). In addition to switching between writing stages, however, the writer must navigate several other aspects of writing simultaneously, such as spelling, neatness, punctuation, and content. In other words, writing 'requires that a number of elements be coordinated or taken into account jointly' (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987: 133). As such, writing is a complex activity.

As a result of the complexity of writing, children typically show greater difficulty with the production of narratives in written form than with the production of spoken narratives, due to the higher levels of cognitive demands on the former (Fayol, 2012). Although writing indeed differs from speech, Graves (2003) argues that 'writing, without an understanding of its roots in speech, is nothing. The human voice underlies the entire writing process, and shows itself throughout the life of the writer' (162). Writing is, from this perspective, based to a great extent upon speech in a complex system, reflecting the speech conventions of a particular cultural setting and time. Paradoxically, according to Givon (1993), written English differs to such an extent from oral English, that it may be considered a dialect or even its own language. For instance, written English contains features specific to writing only, which include the mechanical actions of writing and certain textual features. As Kucer (2005) puts it: 'Written language extends and builds on the oral language system but does not replicate it. Both the purposes to which written language is put and the situations in which it is framed differ from spoken language' (46). Nevertheless, at the base of both writing and speech lies an intention of communicating meaning by way of language (Weigle, 2002: 19).

### **3.2.2 Connecting writing and reading**

Both reading and writing concern literacy development, wherein literacy may be defined as 'the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with varying contexts' (Unesco, 2004, cited in Ørevik, 2018: 96). Consequently, it is valuable to consider writing as not entirely separate from reading, but rather

in terms of its connections. In fact, the two aspects of literacy are closely connected, or 'inextricably linked' (Williams, 2013: 14). According to Barrs (2000), '[i]t seems unlikely that there can be any fundamental writing development without reading, and vice versa' (59). For instance, writing has been considered to improve reading skills, as it helps develop one's knowledge about language and its functions and uses, in addition to being a platform with which to discuss and reflect upon literature, working toward better understandings of what has been read (Dahl & Farnan, 1998: 87).

Inversely, Smith (1983) asserts that reading is necessary to learn the many 'intangibles' of writing (558), and Stotsky (1995) considers 'reading experience' a main component for the development of 'syntactic, generic, and lexical knowledge' (773). To consider the effect of reading on writing development further, Hirvela's (2004) proposed models of direct and indirect reading for writing, albeit from an L2 perspective, are helpful. The former, direct reading for writing, concerns how reading might be purposely and directly used to improve writing (129). An example of this is modelling, whereby model texts are employed to teach conventions, styles, and various other aspects of writing (129). Such modelling is further considered in chapter 3.3.2. The indirect model, on the other hand, is concerned with the development of writing by way of acquisition, rather than by conscious efforts. In this model, 'knowledge of writing is seen more as a natural outcome of reading' (Hirvela, 2004: 129). A significant contributor to this mode of thinking is Krashen (1984), who considers (L2) writing, to rely on 'a subconscious "feel" for written language', gained from reading (27-28). To Krashen (1984), then, writing is improved from extensive, preferably voluntary, reading.

Existing literature suggests writing and reading are similar processes. For instance, Chew (1985) argues that the reader is a 'mental writer', as the process of reading, including pre-reading, reading and post-reading, holds similarities to that of writing (170). This process entails that new information, revealed at word-, sentence-, paragraph, page-level, and so on, is continuously readjusted by the reader for them to make sense and connections out of the information presented, similarly to how the writer creates meaning as the writing progresses (170). The idea of such parallels between writing and reading is supported by Langer (1986), who found the two aspects of literacy to share 'underlying processes' (133). More specifically, Langer (1986) found children to use similar cognitive strategies in different literacy tasks, suggesting the two to be 'cognitively related efforts after meaning' (133-134). Put differently, they are both mental operations seeking to produce meaning from written language. However, her study also found learners to approach reading and writing in different ways, and although 'similar skills' were used for both aspects of literacy, they were applied differently by the

learners (134). For instance, Langer (1986) found children to consider genre to a greater extent while writing than reading, and to place more emphasis on content during reading than writing. In other words, despite the similarities between the two processes, approaches to reading and writing remain different.

### **3.2.3 The developing year 4 writer**

Due to its complex nature, writing proficiency requires a long period of time to develop. Lin, Monroe and Troia (2007) argue it unlikely that writing can be developed ‘beyond a maturation-controlled rate’ (225). In order to become a mature writer, new knowledge about, and relevant to, writing must continually be integrated with previous knowledge, as well as adjusted to contexts and purposes in its use (Berman, 1997: 75-76). Consequently, writing is a cognitively demanding activity (Zumbrunn et al., 2019: 2), which poses various challenges for learners. This section briefly outlines some of these challenges, focusing on year 4 writers, in order to provide some understanding as to which writing barriers might be found among pupils in the classrooms of the teacher informants of this study. Such challenges with writing are particularly important to highlight because writing ‘is the subject where pupils perform less well compared to reading, mathematics and science’ in both primary and secondary school (DfE, 2012: 7), and was the subject with the lowest KS2 attainment in teacher assessments (DfE, 2017: 6).

The writing skills of year 4 pupils are in the process of developing and improving significantly (Andersen et al., 2018: 129). Nevertheless, pupils of this age group (8-9 year-olds) typically display a more limited comprehension of writing and less variety in their use of strategies in constructing ideas and meaning than do older pupils (Langer, 1986; Lin, Monroe & Troia, 2007). The spelling of this year group is typically progressing toward the correct spelling stage, which, as the final stage of spelling development, entails that the children hold significant knowledge about the structure of the written language, and are able to spell most, especially basic, words correctly (Andersen et al., 2018: 130). However, despite improving with age, spelling remains a significant challenge for most children (Berninger et al., 2002), which is reflected in the omission of vowels and consonants in the writing of novice spellers (Ehri, 1985: 345). Pupils of the year group in focus have been found to place ‘an overwhelming emphasis upon secretarial aspects’ such as spelling, while older year groups become increasingly concerned with composition (Wray, 1993: 73). He proposes that this is because these ‘secretarial aspects’ of writing are particularly troublesome at this age: ‘When they *do* become aware that these things are difficult, they come to the forefront of children's attention’ (76). Additional aspects of language and knowledge, such as composition, might only become

more prominent in children's writing development once they have overcome the challenges posed by spelling (Andersen et al., 2018: 130). Along with spelling, the NLT found children in England aged 8 to 11 to face a number of additional barriers to writing, namely 'punctuation, having trouble deciding what to write, finding the task of writing in itself difficult, and only writing when they have to' (Clark, 2018: 5).

Ultimately, however, the complicated nature of writing and the diversity between individual writers pose challenges in any attempt to draw conclusions about how writing is experienced by pupils of any particular age group. Writing is a different experience for each individual, and there is no one way in which writing typically occurs for any age group. Nonetheless, this section has sought to provide an insight into the developing writers taught by the teachers in this research project.

### **3.3 A sociocultural perspective of learning**

#### **3.3.1 What is the sociocultural perspective of learning?**

The sociocultural perspective of learning, and by implication of teaching, emphasises the significant role of social interaction and 'the specific experiences' of culturally distinct artefacts in developing skills and knowledge (Lantolf, 2000: 79). More specifically, such a perspective is concerned with 'how human social and mental activity is organised through culturally constructed artefacts and social relationships' (80). A key figure within this line of thinking is Vygotsky (1978), whose sociocultural theory is of primary interest for this section. As pointed out by Lantolf (2000), a major concept within this theory is mediation, which is defined as the use of physical and 'symbolic tools, or signs, to mediate and regulate' one's experiences and interactions with oneself and others (80). In other words, physical (e.g. paper and pen) and symbolic (e.g. speech and written language) artefacts may facilitate mental operations. From a sociocultural perspective, then, 'learning is (...) a mediated process' (Mitchell, Myles & Marsden, 2019: 288).

Among the various types of mediation to exist, one which is particularly valuable to consider for this thesis is 'social mediation' between experts and novices, or, more specifically, teachers and pupils (Lantolf, 2000: 80). As Vygotsky (1978) asserts: 'Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, *between* people (*interpsychological*), and then *inside* the child (*intrapsychological*)' (57). Social mediation implies, in other words, that 'external knowledge and abilities in children become internalized', meaning that what a child is taught may later internally guide them so

that they no longer rely on (the same level of) external mediation (Vygotsky, 1978: 91). Such mediation relies on language as its main symbolic tool of learning, as social interaction is at its centre (Lantolf, 2000). This holds implications for writing specifically, as social interactions are important in ‘the translation from inner speech, or internalized thought, to outer speech in the form of writing’ (Thompson, 2013: 247).

However, in order for (social) mediation to lead to the successful internalisation of information, it must correspond with an individual’s zone of proximal development (ZPD, Lantolf, 2000: 80). This concept refers to ‘the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers’ (Vygotsky, 1978: 86). In other words, it is concerned with the cognitive space between the child’s current abilities working independently and their potential abilities when working in an environment in which they are supported by a more knowledgeable other (MKO).

### **3.3.2 Scaffolding writing by modelling**

One way with which to support social mediation within an individual’s ZPD is by way of scaffolding, a term which has been defined as a ‘process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts’ (Wood, Bruner & Ross, 1976: 90). With the help of an MKO, in other words, an individual may gradually increase their independent capabilities in correspondence with a gradual decrease of external assistance (Bodrova & Leong, 1998: 4). For instance, a student might scaffold the writing of a peer by providing writing feedback and constructive criticism, which might in turn result in the internalisation of knowledge within the peer. In turn, assessment for learning has been considered central in peer interaction contexts (Hattie & Timperley, 2007), particularly because it also allows for the development of skills in employing assessment criteria and an analytical mind among pupils (Dysthe, 2008: 23). Nevertheless, this section is concerned with scaffolding whereby the teacher is the MKO.

Scaffolding can take place, for instance by modelling, in a number of ways (Spycher, 2017; Håland, 2016). Cumming (1995) suggested three categories into which scaffolding writing by modelling might be sorted, albeit in an L2 context: ‘text modelling’, in which texts are analysed; ‘cognitive modelling’ whereby the teacher demonstrates writing processes; and ‘social modelling’. The latter may be divided into two types: ‘teacher-led collaborative writing’, where the teacher and learners compose a text together as a group; and ‘peer modelling’, where the pupils write, in pairs or groups, with a low degree of teacher facilitation (Wette, 2014b). All

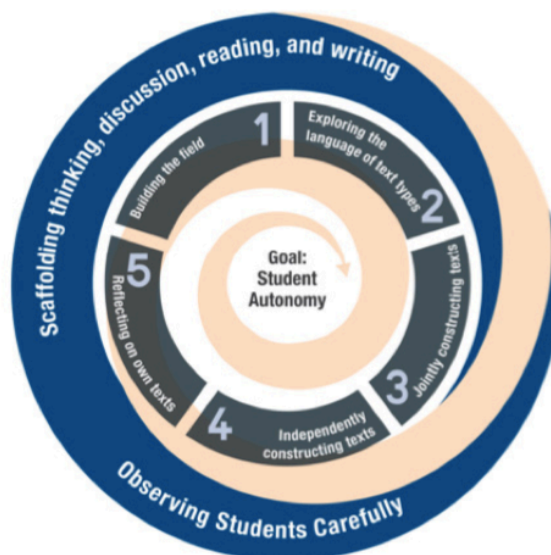
types of scaffolding by modelling have been found to play an important role in teachers' teaching of writing in L2 contexts (Wette, 2014b; Cumming, 1995). Using modelling as a form of scaffolding underlines both the significant role of social interaction and culturally specific artefacts (language and literature/texts) in developing skills and knowledge, which are the two main features of sociocultural theory (Lantolf, 2000: 79).

Due to its typically strong emphasis on text and context, scaffolding writing by modelling is often linked to a genre orientation to writing. This orientation highlights the development of 'students' awareness of reoccurring textural structures' whereby the teacher plays an 'active' role in explaining texts and providing guidelines as to how to write various text types (Ahn, 2012: 3). As opposed to the process orientation to teaching writing (outlined in chapter 3.4.4), to which it is frequently compared, a genre orientation focuses on 'awareness of language' rather than explorations of writing (Hyland, 2014: 22). Genre approaches have been argued to be particularly valuable as they allow systematic organisation of text types and features with which learners can make sense of texts and the world (Paltridge, 2001), and because they emphasise the versatile nature of writing which may be employed and controlled by the learners in various ways (Kay & Dudley-Evans, 1998). In addition, such approaches to teaching writing underline the purposes for writing and how they may be achieved by conveying messages in different text types, attaching meaning to the writing activity (Hyland, 2014). Genre-based approaches are frequently linked to sociocultural perspectives of learning, particularly as they consider writing influenced by 'social constraints and choices that operate on writers in a particular context' (Hyland, 2014: 18).

In order to gain deeper insight into scaffolding by modelling, 'Teaching and Learning Cycles' are helpful. Such cycles, frequently used in relation to the genre orientation (Hyland, 2014: 21), offer a visual insight into learners' gradual move toward independence and responsibility, away from teacher facilitation, in the writing of various text-types. In doing so, model texts which provide information and guidance about conventions and styles of various aspects of writing, serving as inspiration for pupils to imitate or transform and, in turn, explore and practice writing (Håland, 2016: 56), are a key feature. A recent example of a teaching learning cycle is that developed by Spycher (2017), illustrated below in figure 1. In this model, the outer ring symbolises the role of the teacher as an observer throughout five stages of learning toward autonomy, observing their interaction with peers and their independent writing, and from this observation, scaffolding each individual within their ZPD (5). This is an important feature of the genre orientation to teaching writing (Hyland, 2014).



The scaffolding primarily takes place in the model’s first three stages. The first stage, ‘Building the field’, focuses on ‘deep content knowledge’ (Spycher, 2017: 12). This involves building an understanding of the topic at hand or the text-type in focus among the pupils (12). The second stage, ‘Exploring the language of text types’, is concerned with discussions between the teacher and learners regarding the features, audiences, text structures and other elements related to language use of one or several model texts (13). The third stage, ‘Jointly constructing texts’, suggests collaborative writing between pupils and their teacher, facilitated by the latter (16). With the knowledge and practice developed from the previous stages, the teaching learning model encourages ‘Independently constructing texts’ in stage four. This entails the writing of texts either individually or in groups, with varying levels of teacher guidance depending on individual needs (19). This is typically the final stage in many teaching and learning cycles. One of the key reasons for employing Spycher’s (2017) model for this thesis, however, was its additional fifth stage: ‘Self-reflection’. This stage is unique to Spycher (2017), and places emphasis on ‘review, reflection, and revision’ during and/or after completed drafts and the final product (20). Although this model merely offers one way in which scaffolding may take place through modelling, it is valuable due to its dual focus on both the teacher and pupil, and its clear visual representation of scaffolding.



**Figure 1:** ‘Teaching and Learning Cycle’, in Spycher (2017: 4).

### 3.4 Writing for Pleasure

#### 3.4.1 What is writing for pleasure?

Writing for pleasure is, as its name suggests, the writing equivalent to reading for pleasure. The two concepts are similar but place their main emphasis on different aspects of literacy. In turn, definitions of the well-established concept of reading for pleasure are helpful in further defining writing for pleasure. In fact, Young's (2019) definition offered introductorily as 'a volitional act of writing undertaken for enjoyment and satisfaction' (13), is partly based on the following definition of reading for pleasure: 'at the core of reading for pleasure is the reader's volition, their agency and desire to read, their anticipation of the satisfaction gained through the experience and/or afterwards in interaction with others' (Cremin et al., 2014: 5). Another valuable definition of reading for pleasure is that of Clark and Rumbold (2006), because it widens the concept to include reading undertaken at the request of another but continued for the sake of enjoyment (4). This is a central feature also of writing for pleasure, particularly in educational settings in which writing tasks and time to write is commonly set by the teacher. The tasks set by the teacher should, in order to foster writing enjoyment from a writing for pleasure perspective, allow room for writing which is 'writer-directed and choice-led', two additional aspects of writing for pleasure (Cremin, 2016: no pagination).

As well as being helpful in defining writing for pleasure, reading for pleasure is closely connected to writing for pleasure. As was explored in section 3.2.2, writing and reading are similar, closely linked processes of literacy, and the development in one may help the development in the other (Barrs, 2000). Similarly, engaging in reading for pleasure may positively influence the engagement and enjoyment of writing, and is, in turn, important in promoting writing for pleasure, and vice versa (Young, 2019). Similarly, Sedgwick (2011) argues that literature is an important tool in fostering both reading and writing for pleasure. For instance, according to Young (2019), reading for pleasure 'provides children with models, and continually suggest and inspire ideas and themes for personal writing projects' (2019: 21). In turn, he recommends pupils have access to personal writing projects while reading for pleasure throughout the week in school (2019).

Although the 'specific sources of enjoyment and satisfaction in and of writing are many and varied', Young (2019) proposes two main categories into which experiences of writing for pleasure may be grouped: writing *as* pleasure and writing *for* pleasure (12). The former is 'gained from practicing the craft of writing, from engaging in the process or in particular parts of the process' (13). In other words, writing as pleasure is concerned with the enjoyment which

may be derived from all stages of writing up until publication, including planning, writing, revision and editing (13). This type of pleasure is reflected in renowned author Henry Miller's (1964) description of writing as 'a compulsive, and delectable thing. Writing is its own reward' (104). This quotation particularly reflects the experience of a 'need to write' and of taking 'enjoyment' in writing, which are two key aspects of writing as pleasure (Young, 2019: 13).

Sometimes, however, pleasure from writing may not necessarily derive from the act of writing itself. As depicted by famous author George Orwell ([1947] 1956), writing may not always be experienced as enjoyable: '[w]riting a book is a horrible, exhausting struggle, like a long bout of some painful illness. One would never undertake such a thing if one was not driven on by some demon whom one can neither resist nor understand' (395). In such cases of not experiencing writing *as* pleasure, writing for pleasure may still take place. Young (2019) refers to this as writing *for* pleasure, where the pleasure derives from 'the satisfaction that comes after the act of writing' (13). In other words, such pleasure stems from positive emotions such as satisfaction, pride, or excitement with having improved or completed a written piece of work. He suggests four aspects following the act of writing to potentially lead to writing *for* pleasure:

- Having a sense of purpose fulfilled
- The expectation of a response
- Sharing something to be proud of and feeling you've achieved something significant
- The discovery of your own writing voice (Young, 2019: 13)

These four points suggest writing to be both an individual and a social act. Individually, pleasure can be found in getting to know oneself as a writer, and from feeling like one's work matters. On a social level, writing for pleasure is linked to sharing, involvement with other writers, and with feedback. In either case, writing *for* pleasure is derived from 'a purpose fulfilled rather than the act itself' (13). Perhaps this type of pleasure was the driving force, or 'demon', of which Orwell ([1947] 1956) was speaking?

### **3.4.2 Why write for pleasure?**

Emotions, such as enjoyment and satisfaction, 'are of primary educational importance' (Pekrun, 2006: 333). One reason for this is their influence on several aspects of learners' educational experience, such as, their 'interest, engagement, [and] achievement' (333). Suggested to be particularly important is the enjoyment of writing because of the cognitively demanding nature of this activity, which may be positively influenced by 'positive emotional experiences while writing' (Zumbrunn et al., 2019: 2). In addition to offering an enjoyable experience, which

promotes further writing and improved attitudes toward writing (Perry, 1999; Zumbrunn et al., 2019), in other words, writing for pleasure holds the potential to offer a number of additional benefits for writers. For instance, links have been reported between writing enjoyment and text length and quality (Graham, Berninger & Fan, 2007) and writing grades (Zumbrunn et al., 2019). These are particularly important findings as low levels of writing attainment have typically been found among learners (DfE, 2012; DfE, 2017). In fact, it has been found that ‘eight times as many children and young people who do not enjoy writing write below the expected level compared with those who enjoy writing’ (Clark & Teravainen, 2017: 14). Children who do not find pleasure from writing have been found to face more significant barriers to writing (Clark, 2018: 5).

A number of researchers have argued that writing for pleasure is beneficial, and important not only for learners, but also for teachers (Kendrick & Forler, 1997; Young, 2019). Bearne (2002) argues that teachers should be *writing* teachers, that is, teachers who write, also ‘*in the presence of their classes*’ (30, original emphasis). One reason for this is that teachers who consider themselves to be writers may better understand and relate to the pupils’ experiences throughout the writing processes and may thus explain and demonstrate writing from a writer’s perspective (Augsburger, 1998). This is exemplified well in citation below:

Teachers who write for their own enjoyment understand the frustrating, exciting, and human act of writing. They experience the thrill of inspiration and the paralysis of writer's block. They feel the nervousness of exposing themselves in sharing aloud and the elation of having a piece accepted and praised (Kendrick & Forler, 1997: 79).

Similarly, Young (2019) encourages teachers to be ‘writer-teachers’ (9) who model, from a writer’s perspective, writing and its ‘different processes, behaviours, techniques and pleasures’, and suggests this to be an important aspect of promoting writing for pleasure (16). In order to achieve this, sharing personal writing experiences and ‘writing processes’ with pupils, rather than merely personal written products as ‘exemplar texts’, is key (21). This is because sharing personal experiences with, and strategies for, navigating the writing process with the class is beneficial for a number of reasons. These benefits include providing pupils with self-regulation strategies which may help pupils navigate the writing processes based on their preferences, and consequently allowing them agency over their own writing processes (Young, 2019); demonstrating why the results of writing outweigh its challenges (Augsburger, 1998); and diminishing the air of perfection which pupils commonly attribute to their teachers, and which they may find disheartening for their own identity as writers (Lane, 1993: 145). In fact, the writing performance of pupils whose teachers write beyond school contexts have been found to

improve more significantly over time than that of students whose teachers write less frequently (Whyte et al., 2007).

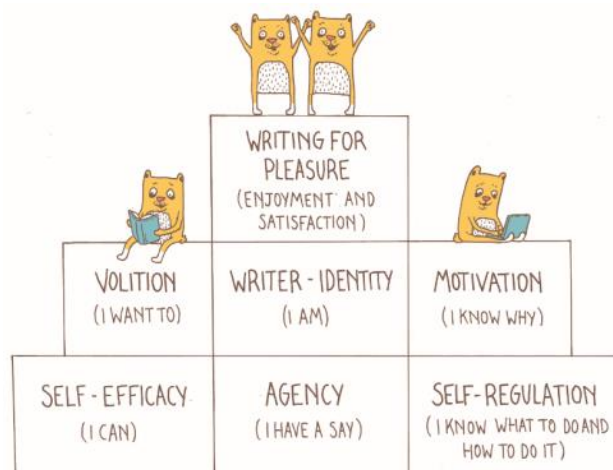
However, ‘Whether or not a teacher sees themselves as a writer, their pupils will see them as a model of one’ (Ings, 2009: 6). As a result, whether or not a teacher writes for pleasure and shares their writing with their class, they hold the potential to positively influence pupils’ attitudes toward writing (Chamberlain, 2016: 15). By observing the teacher’s positive attitudes and remarks toward (writing) topics and assignments, learners can come to attach value towards these (Frenzel et al., 2009: 707). For instance, teacher enthusiasm has been found to be central in transmitting enjoyment from teachers to pupils (Frenzel et al., 2009: 706), and among the number of ways of achieving this is by ‘introducing humor in the classroom’ (Frenzel & Stephens, 2013: 35). In fact, the beliefs about writing held by teachers and their pupils have been found to show a ‘striking similarity’ (Fang, 1996: 255), reflecting the important role of the teacher as a model of attitudes in teaching writing.

### **3.4.3 Who writes for pleasure?**

Current literature holds ‘no consensus’ as to what are the main factors influencing writing enjoyment (Zumbrunn et al., 2019: 3). Nevertheless, Young (2019) has suggested, based on an extensive literature review into writing enjoyment, that writing for pleasure is made up of six main components: self-efficacy, agency, self-regulation, volition, writer-identity and motivation (5). Once the six components are applied ‘in rich combination’, an individual has a significantly higher chance of writing for pleasure (Young, 2019: 5). Young refers to these components as ‘affective domains’ (16). These are, as their name suggest, concerned with affect in writing, whereupon affect refers to ‘aspects of emotion, feeling, mood or attitude which condition behaviour’ (Arnold & Brown, 1999: 1). As is portrayed in figure 2 below, self-efficacy, agency and self-regulation are the building blocks upon which a sense of being a writer, volition and motivation to write, may build. These are, then, perhaps particularly important for writing for pleasure (Young, 2019: 59).

Each affective domain is worth briefly outlining to understand how they work to motivate writing for pleasure. The following definitions are primarily based on those by Young (2019). Self-efficacy refers to ‘the belief that you can write well and realise your intentions’ (17) and is important toward an experience of confidence in writing. Consequently, self-efficacy provides motivation for setting, and persisting throughout, challenging writing activities (17). Self-regulation, on the other hand, is the experience of ‘independence away from continual external intervention’ (17). This entails using learnt writing strategies and writing

resources, related to the various stages of the writing process, to write with (some) independence (17). This is a particularly important factor in engagement (Shernoff et al., 2014: 215). Agency entails making decisions about what and/or how to write and includes making choices about writing topics and how to navigate the writing process based on personal preferences (Young, 2019: 17). According to Young, once these three affective domains are considered, volition and motivation are more likely to occur among the children (5). Volition with regards to writing is described by Young as ‘the need, urge, or internal demand to write’, and occurs when the piece of writing is concerned with something of importance or significant interest to the children (17). The writing project must feel ‘purposeful’ and ‘authentic’ for volition to occur (15). Motivation refers to when the child is moved to write because they experience a sense of the purpose in the writing task or activity itself, or, in Young’s words, ‘they know why they are doing it’ (17). Motivation is further explored in section 3.5. Upon experiencing motivation and volition to write, children ‘begin to identify themselves more as writers’ (5). Identifying as a writer, as opposed to as an individual merely undertaking writing, involves producing work in an environment where the writing is shared, and the writers feel their work is considered both ‘serious’ and ‘authentic’, regardless of their age and ability (18). Together, these elements of affect help condition the behaviour of writing for pleasure (5).



**Figure 2:** ‘The affective domains of writing for pleasure’, in Young (2019: 5).

Regrettably, research suggests that a great number of children and young people do not write for pleasure. Although children typically hold mainly positive attitudes toward writing when starting school (Graves, 1985), their motivation to write and their enjoyment in writing often begin to decrease only a few years into their school careers (Hodges, Wright & McTigue, 2019). The NLT found a 'year-on-year decline' among KS2 pupils regarding their writing enjoyment and writing outside of school contexts (Clark, 2018: 5). In fact, 'half (50.9%) of children and young people in 2017/18 said that they either only enjoy writing a bit or not at all' (1). Such attitudes toward writing are not new. In the 1980s, writing enjoyment was found to decrease with age (Hogan, 1980), and to already be low among younger pupils, aged 6-8 (Shook, Marrion & Ollila, 1989). Nevertheless, among pupils who write for pleasure, this activity is typically undertaken outside of school, for instance when writing for family and friends (Clark & Dugdale, 2009). In such out-of-class contexts, children write more frequently by way of technological devices than with pen and paper (Clark, 2013: 8).

Similarly, a number of teacher candidates and teachers have reported to not write for pleasure (Gardner, 2014; Hodges, Wright & McTigue, 2019; Morgan, 2010). Although teachers have been found to value writing and writing instruction, they have been found to simultaneously 'not have positive feelings toward writing' and to 'not write for enjoyment' (Hodges, Wright & McTigue, 2019: 10). Among teachers who have reported to not typically write for recreational purposes, a lack of time and energy as a result of busy schedules have commonly been listed as restricting factors (Morgan, 2010: 357; Wells & Lyons, 2017: 38). In some cases, teachers have reported to write with lack of confidence and self-efficacy, and consequently experiencing limited writing enjoyment (Gardner, 2014; Hodges, Wright & McTigue, 2019: 10). Other teachers and teacher candidates, however, have reported to write for pleasure (Norman & Spencer, 2005; Wells & Lyons, 2017) and to experience writing enjoyment (Rasberry, 2001). Wells and Lyons (2017), for instance, found writing for pleasure, including 'creative writing, informative writing and reflective writing' to be one of the two main purposes of writing among the teachers in their study (36). Current literature reflects, then, varied experiences with writing and with writing for pleasure among (preservice) teachers, and suggests a number of factors which may limit the role of writing for pleasure in the everyday life of teachers.

### 3.4.4 A writing for pleasure pedagogy

Young (2019) encourages teaching writing by way of a writing for pleasure pedagogy, which he defines as ‘any research-informed pedagogy which seeks to create the conditions in which writing and being a writer is a pleasurable, purposeful and satisfying experience’ (13). This is based on his research project *What is it Writing for Pleasure teachers do that makes the difference?* in collaboration with Goldsmiths University and the United Kingdom Literacy Association. This research concluded that such a pedagogy is ‘highly effective’ because the writing of the involved students showed remarkable progress (Young, 2019: 54). For this mixed-methods research project, Young (2019) explored how teachers who considered themselves to be writing for pleasure teachers taught writing that was both affective and effective, and their experiences were considered in relation to aspects, or, ‘principles’ of teaching which have been ‘strongly associated with high levels of student achievement and pleasure in writing’ in current literature (4). These principles of teaching included, for instance, connecting reading and writing and being a writer-teacher, briefly outlined previously in this section.

Among the other principles of writing for pleasure considered in the study, Young (2019) concluded that ‘reading, sharing and talking about writing’, ‘teaching self-regulation strategies’, and ‘explicitly teaching the writing processes’, appeared to be among those most central (53). Consequently, these are worth briefly outlining further. First, ‘reading, sharing and talking about writing’ involves class discussion and the sharing of texts, both read and written. This allows pupils to begin to develop their identities as writers by making sense of texts from a writerly perspective within a supportive writing community. For instance, he highlights ‘constructive criticism’ from, and celebrations of achievement with, both peers and the teacher (19). Second, ‘teaching self-regulation strategies’ (Young, 2019: 53) is concerned with self-regulation, which was outlined in section 3.4.3 as an essential affective domain of writing for pleasure. This principle entails, as its name suggests, the teaching of strategies that may help pupils manage their writing projects and evaluate their progress. This is important for the learner’s sense of confidence and control in writing (20), as self-regulation is an experience of ‘independence away from continual external intervention’ (17).

Lastly, ‘explicitly teaching the writing processes’ includes the scaffolding of the various stages involved in the writing process, from pre-writing to post-writing stages (19). By way of ‘demonstration, discussion, modelling and sharing exemplars which they have written themselves’, writing for pleasure teachers seek to foster increasingly independent writers who



can navigate the various stages of writing based on their own preferences (19). From this emphasis on the processes of writing, the writing for pleasure pedagogy may be viewed to promote a process orientation to teaching writing, at least to some extent. Such an approach to teaching writing places particular emphasis on the cognitive processes of writing and their recursive nature (Hyland, 2014: 12). In turn, it especially focuses on the teaching of strategies for navigating the various stages of writing, typically considered to consist of planning, drafting, revising, sharing, evaluating and post-writing (Seow, 2002: 316).

### **3.5 Learner motivation in educational contexts**

#### **3.5.1 What is learner motivation in educational contexts?**

As the above overview of Young's (2019) affective domains suggests, motivation, which may be defined as a driving force which 'leads individuals to take action to achieve a goal or to fulfil a need or expectation' (Gopalan et al., 2017: 1), is central for writing for pleasure. The remaining sections of this chapter explore, in greater detail, why and how this is the case, by considering learner motivation in educational contexts. This type of motivation concerns the motivation of learners in relation to their studies and enjoyment of learning (Liao, 2006: 45). It is, therefore, greatly valuable for the exploration of writing for pleasure in the current thesis. In school contexts, two types of motivation are necessary: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Li & Lynch, 2016). Extrinsic motivation provides the activity with purpose, while intrinsic motivation fosters an internal drive to undertake, continue or complete an activity (4). This distinction is particularly relevant for the two theories related to learner motivation contexts which are considered in the subsequent subsections and are therefore worth outlining further.

Intrinsic motivation may be generated by a 'challenge, curiosity, control and fantasy', and, in learning contexts, fosters experiences of pleasure and helps develop and/or maintain positive attitudes toward the activity (Gopalan et al, 2017: 2). This type of motivation is particularly closely linked to enjoyment, as enjoyment may be defined as 'a state of arousal and intrinsic motivation' (Larson, 1990: 278). According to Ryan and Deci (2000), two main factors of intrinsic motivation, also in educational contexts, are 'feelings of competence', or, self-efficacy, and 'a sense of autonomy' (58). The former entails that receiving confidence-building feedback and working within optimal challenge-levels are predictors of intrinsic motivation. This point is further explored in the two subsequent sections. The latter, autonomy, refers to an individual's 'experience' of behaviour as 'self-determined' (58), for instance by way of 'choice and the opportunity for self-direction' in an activity (59).

Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is driven by external factors such as rewards and punishment (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In educational contexts, ‘it appears that intrinsic motivation becomes weaker with each advancing grade’ and that motivation becomes increasingly extrinsic due to various increasing requirements and demands (Ryan & Deci, 2000: 60). Ryan and Deci (2000) however, propose that there exist various degrees to which an individual perceives the extrinsically motivated activity as autonomous (60). From heightening an individual’s sense of ownership and value toward the task, they argue that pupils may be motivated to greater extents without relying on ‘external pressure’ (60).

### **3.5.2 Control-value theory of achievement emotions: implications for teaching**

This section is concerned with Pekrun’s (2006) control-value theory of achievement emotions. This theory offers an explanation as to how different emotions, and consequent levels of enjoyment, arise in achievement contexts. The theory is applicable to all learning domains (subjects). These subjects should be explored separately, in domain-specific contexts, rather than in more general learning contexts (Pekrun, 2006: 325). Although writing has only been considered as a domain through a lens of the control-value theory to a limited extent (e.g. Bohn-Gettler & Rapp, 2014), the theory is helpful in exploring writing for pleasure because it provides an alternative way to consider how the writing activity and its outcomes can come to be experienced positively. Particularly, this theory is valuable for the study at hand as it considers how pleasant emotions may arise in educational achievement contexts, in which writing is often initially undertaken for performance and achievement, rather than pleasure. Pekrun (2006) describes the theory from an educational research and practice perspective, making the theory particularly relevant for this thesis.

As well as outlining the theory, the current section seeks to outline some of Pekrun’s (2006) suggested implications of achievement emotions in teaching. As Pekrun (2006) points out, ‘[t]he control-value theory implies that students’ emotions can be positively influenced by fostering their perceptions of competence and control over academic activities and outcomes, and by shaping their appraisals of the values of these activities and outcomes’ (334). Although achievement emotions experienced by teachers have been explored as well (Frenzel & Stephens, 2013), this section is concerned with achievement emotions among pupils. This decision was made due to the didactic nature of this thesis, where emphasis on achievement emotions among pupils offers an alternative insight into how teaching writing may help foster experiences of writing for pleasure in their classrooms.

Pekrun's (2006) control-value theory draws on the appraisal theory, which suggests that emotions are not 'caused by situations themselves, but rather by how we interpret situations. This interpretation is referred to as an "appraisal"' (Frenzel & Stephens, 2013: 16). According to this theory, people experience situations differently based on variations in their appraisals which generate different emotions (Roseman & Smith, 2001: 6). Appraisals have been suggested to stem from 'personal beliefs' through which an individual interprets events, people, contexts, and themselves (Frenzel & Stephens, 2013: 16). Pekrun's (2006) control-value theory considers achievement emotions in relation to appraisals. More specifically, this theory assumes 'that achievement emotions arise based on how achievement activities and outcomes are interpreted' (Frenzel & Stephens, 2013: 19). Achievement emotions are emotions 'tied directly to achievement activities or achievement outcomes' (12), with an 'object focus' on either the activity itself or its outcome, and a consequent temporal focus of either the present moment or a past or future achievement situation (13). For instance, feeling upset or happy about a test-score is linked directly to an achievement outcome. This example reflects how achievement situations are characterized as such because 'they involve standards for individuals' behaviour in terms of success versus failure' (12).

According to this theory, as its name suggests, the main appraisals which determine the emotions linked to an achievement activity or its outcomes are an individual's 'subjective control' and their 'subjective values' in relation to this activity or outcome (Pekrun, 2006: 317). In turn, positively valuing the activity and/or outcome, as well as experiencing control, are important in order to experience pleasant emotions in achievement settings (320). For instance, such emotions include enjoyment during an activity (activity-related emotion); anticipatory joy from one's 'certainty about the occurrence of success' (prospective outcome emotion); and/or joy or pride following success (retrospective outcome emotion) (320). Importantly, appraisals concerning value and control, affecting such achievement emotions, are not fixed. Rather, as aforementioned, the theory 'implies that students' emotions can be positively influenced by fostering their perceptions of competence and control over academic activities and outcomes, and by shaping their appraisals of the values of these activities and outcomes' (334). The following paragraphs explore how teachers may help to positively influence their pupils' achievement emotions and elaborates on the meaning of value and control within the theory.

The attached value of any activity or outcome 'refer to one's perception of whether an activity or outcome is judged as positive or negative' (Frenzel & Stephens, 2013: 20). Value-appraisals can be intrinsic, like valuing success and/or education in and of itself, or they may be extrinsic, in which case an activity or its outcome is 'instrumental' to achieving something

else, such as to pleasing a parent (Pekrun, 2006: 318). Frequently, value appraisals are a combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic values as they focus on both the value of success and the value of achievement (318). Importantly, Pekrun (2006) believes teachers hold the potential to positively influence their learners' values concerning academic activities (334). In doing so, he argues, the materials and methods used in assignments and instruction are central and should respond to the learners' 'needs' and challenge levels (334). This has been argued to be the case also for writing explicitly, for which it is important to provide 'writing tasks that are of interest to students and that students find valuable' (Bohn-Gettler & Rapp, 2014: 451). In addition, Pekrun (2006) emphasises the role of social interaction in positively influencing the pupils' attitudes toward the learning activity. Teachers, for instance, may convey excitement in presenting and engaging with both instruction and assignments (334). Teacher enthusiasm has been found to be central in transmitting enjoyment from teachers to pupils (Frenzel et al., 2009: 706). Importantly, 'both verbal and nonverbal ways' of communication conveys attitudes and opinions which may potentially influence those of learners (Frenzel & Stephens, 2013: 17).

'Subjective control', on the other hand, is an individual's perceived potential in exercising control over an achievement activity and/or its outcome (Pekrun, 2006: 317). For positive activity-related emotions (such as writing enjoyment) to occur, the activity must be 'perceived as being sufficiently controllable by the self' (Pekrun, 2006: 323). One way in which pupils may experience a heightened degree of control is by providing them with 'clarity' and 'structure' in relation to the presented tasks and the instruction itself (334). For writing, explicitly, the tasks should, from a control-value theory perspective, only be challenging to an extent where they remain manageable (Bohn-Gettler & Rapp, 2014: 451).

Because the control-value theory (Pekrun, 2006) suggests that students' emotions might be positively influenced in the various ways outlined in the paragraphs above, the theory demonstrates that writing enjoyment may occur in achievement situations although the writing activity was not necessarily undertaken for pleasure initially. For instance, by providing writing tasks which allow the pupils to retain a sense of control, and which the pupils value, the writing activity may, from a temporal focus on the present, and an object focus on the activity itself (Pekrun, 2006), come to be considered 'writing *as* pleasure' (Young, 2019). Similarly, from a retrospective temporal focus, with an object focus on the outcome, positive retrospective achievement emotions, such as pride, may arise (Pekrun, 2006). This requires that the individual perceives responsibility for success to a significant extent, and positively values the completed task (320). This can be linked to the satisfaction of 'writing *for* pleasure' (Young, 2019).

### **3.5.3 Flow in educational contexts: implications for teaching**

Another theory which gives insight into how pleasure may derive from writing is Csikszentmihályi's flow theory (2008). This theory belongs to the branch of positive psychology, concerned with 'positive subjective experience', including enjoyment and contentment, and 'positive personality traits' (Seligman, 2002: 3). The theory is valuable for the current study as it offers an additional angle from which to consider the promotion of intrinsic motivation in relation to classroom writing, with particular emphasis on the role of the teacher. Additionally, the theory is consistent with Pekrun's (2006) control-value theory in several ways and the two studies consequently provide support for the main points about enjoyment in educational contexts raised by the other. It is worth noting, however, that Csikszentmihályi's (1990) flow theory is not explicitly concerned with writing and has primarily been used in relation to other school subjects and educational contexts more generally. Nevertheless, it has been found to be useful in regard to writing (Perry, 1999). Education research, however, is just one area of discourse which has employed the concept of flow. Flow theory has also been used in considering the optimal experience of a diverse range of activities such as reading (Mcquillan & Conde, 1996), dance (Hefferon & Ollis, 2006), and work (Csikszentmihályi, 2008).

Flow, or, 'optimal experience', is defined as 'a psychological state in which the person feels simultaneously cognitively efficient, motivated, and happy' (Moneta & Csikszentmihályi, 1996: 277). More loosely defined, flow is the experience of being absorbed in one's engagement with an activity and experiencing pleasant emotions as a result. In order for flow to be experienced, deep concentration towards the activity, devoted for the activity's own sake rather than for extrinsic motivation, is required (Csikszentmihályi, 2008). To employ Pekrun's terms, the 'object focus' of flow, is the activity, and in turn, the 'temporal perspective' is the present (Pekrun, Elliot & Maier, 2006). Flow is, then, a result of intrinsic motivation. When writing in flow, according to Perry (1999), 'you become so deeply immersed in your writing (...) that you forget yourself and your surroundings' (1). As a result of this immersion, the writer experiences feeling 'good' and tends to write for a longer period of time (13). Additionally, from flow, a desire to write more frequently is likely to form (13). In other words, writing in flow generates both writing volition and pleasant emotions while writing, which are two key aspects of writing for pleasure.

Although flow experiences do occur among pupils, even down to the primary level (Andersen, 2007), research suggests that it does so only to a limited extent (Shernoff &

Csikszentmihályi, 2009: 138). According to Csikszentmihályi (2008), education is, to many, almost entirely ‘extrinsically motivated’ (141). A great number of children grow to dislike certain activities which are imposed on them, without acquiring intrinsic motivation based on the enjoyment of the activity itself (68). The reported low levels of writing enjoyment among many children and young adults in England (Clark, 2018) may suggest this to be the case also for writing. However, as similarly suggested in the control-value theory (Pekrun, 2006), an activity originally undertaken against one’s will or based on extrinsic rewards, may still generate an experience of flow so long as the focus shifts onto the activity itself:

Often children – and adults – need external incentives to take the first steps in an activity that requires a difficult restructuring of attention. Most enjoyable activities are not natural; they demand an effort that initially one is reluctant to make. But once the interaction starts to provide feedback [a sense of success] to the person’s skills, it usually begins to be intrinsically rewarding (Csikszentmihályi, 2008: 67).

In educational contexts, the teacher plays an important role in promoting intrinsic motivation among pupils (Csikszentmihályi, 1990; Shernoff et al., 2014). According to this theory, the notion of ‘optimal learning environments’, that is, ‘learning environments empirically shown to foster engagement’ is central (Shernoff, Tonks & Anderson, 2014: 168). One aspect of such environments is the provision of activities where the challenge level is high yet matches the pupils’ perceived skillset (Shernoff & Csikszentmihályi, 2009: 132). This way, during an activity at the optimal challenge level, the learners are challenged while retaining a sense of control (Csikszentmihályi & Wolfe, 2014: 175). This challenge level should increase as the pupil develops, because, as Csikszentmihályi (2008) explains, ‘[o]ne cannot enjoy doing the same thing at the same level for long’ (75). In order for pupils to confidently navigate the challenge, optimal learning environments require ‘environmental support’, for instance in regard to any emotional or practical needs the pupils may have (Shernoff, Tonks & Anderson, 2014: 168). Consequently, the theory has been linked to Vygotsky’s (1978) notion of the ZPD, which similarly requires a high challenge level that is manageable with the support from another, in order to ultimately increase student autonomy and independence (Basawapatna et al., 2013; Shernoff & Csikszentmihályi, 2009).

Furthermore, consistent with Pekrun’s (2006) control-value theory, flow writing opportunities should be interesting and, preferably, choice led when possible. This statement is based on flow reading but may be justified in relation to writing as reading is, to some extent, a similar process to writing (Langer, 1986; Chew, 1985). Whereas there is more limited

literature in relation to flow writing, ‘reading is the most widely reported flow activity in the optimal experience literature’ (Mcquillan & Conde, 1996: 114). Mcquillan and Conde (1996), for instance, differentiate between ‘assigned’ and ‘self-selected’ (127), ‘obligatory’ and ‘optional’ texts (126); a distinction particularly relevant in educational contexts. In their studies, findings suggested that in order for assigned texts to produce flow, their reader required ‘some prior interest’ in them (127). Importantly, however, the participants reported experiencing flow more frequently from ‘pleasure reading – or at least having a choice in the text they read’ (127). Aligned with the notion of reading for pleasure, then, their studies underline the importance of interest and choice in improving the reading experience. This, in turn, offers implications for assigned and obligatory writing, as interest and/or choice in the writing classroom are important aspects also of writing for pleasure (Young, 2019).

### **3.6 Teacher Cognition: a literature review**

#### **3.6.1 What is teacher cognition?**

Teacher cognition is ‘a branch of applied linguistics’ (Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015: 435) concerned with what ‘teachers think, know and believe’ in educational contexts (Borg, 2015b: location [loc] 25). Other aspects of teacher cognition include mental constructs such as ‘attitudes, identities and emotions’ (Borg, 2012: 11). Consequently, ‘teacher cognition’ is a broad term, covering a wide range of concepts, and research within this field may, therefore, contain different terminologies, including ‘*knowledge (and its subtypes), beliefs, attitudes, conceptions, theories, assumptions, principles, thinking and decision-making*’ (Borg, 2015b: loc 5075). Although there is a lack of clear definitions separating these terms (Fives & Buehl, 2012: 471), establishing such clarifications is beyond the scope of the current study, which primarily investigates teacher beliefs. Beliefs may be defined ‘as a set of conceptual representations which store general knowledge of objects, people and events, and their characteristic relationships’ (Hermans, van Braak & van Keer, 2008: 128). This terminology was decided upon for this study because it reflects the current practice of teacher cognition research to a significant extent, as the term is among the most frequently employed in this field (Borg, 2015b).

Studying teacher cognition is valuable because it allows ‘the unobservable dimension of teaching’ to be put into light (Borg, 2012: 11). One reason why studying teacher beliefs, more specifically, is important is because, as Gill and Fives (2015) point out, ‘teachers frequently rely on beliefs, particularly those that underlie their intuition, automaticity, and habit,

to meet the demands of practice. Teachers' beliefs can facilitate or hinder practice by serving to filter, frame, and guide experience, decisions, and actions' (1). In other words, they play a significant role in teachers' experiences and practices of teaching (1). The following subsections seek to further explore how this is the case, by considering how teacher beliefs might be influenced, and how these beliefs might influence teaching practices. For the purpose of the study, the literature review is primarily based on research related to literacy, especially writing.

### **3.6.2 Writing teacher cognition research**

Studying the mental lives of teachers is a relatively new phenomenon as, for a number of decades, the 'public activity' of teaching was the main focus of teaching research (Burns, Freeman & Edwards, 2015: 586). Catalysed by a 1975 report concerned with the mental lives of teachers and their effects on teaching (National Institute of Education, 1975), however, teacher cognition emerged as a field of research (Borg, 2015b: loc 113). This report was a 'major departure' from the 1970s perspectives on teaching, as 'teachers were [no longer] being viewed as mechanical implementers of external prescriptions, but as active, thinking decision-makers' (loc 113). From this point onwards, the influence of cognition on teachers' professional lives has been acknowledged and widely explored in research (Borg, 2003: 81). Consequently, teacher cognition research has explored a range of subjects and 'curriculum domains' (Kubanyivoa & Feryok, 2015: 441). For instance, such research has explored a variety of aspects in relation to literacy, wherein which there has been predominant emphasis on reading (Borg, 2015b). In L1 contexts, this research has typically investigated teachers' beliefs and practices in regard to reading (Borg, 2015b: loc 2810). Similarly, in Norwegian teacher cognition contexts, reported beliefs and practices have been studied with particular emphasis on reading, whereby, for instance, textbooks have been found to play a significant role in English L2 teaching practices (Charboneau Stuvland, [2016] 2019; Hjorteland, 2017; Mathisen Gilje, 2014).

The more limited research into L1 writing teacher cognition has explored, as a main area of research, writing as conceived by teachers undergoing teacher education (Borg, 2015b: loc 2975). Mainly, such research has found teacher education to influence teacher beliefs about writing and writing instruction in various ways (Borg, 2015b: loc 3286), such as fostering more positive attitudes toward writing (Chambless & Bass, 1996). Similar studies have also been conducted with focus on established teachers, with findings similarly indicating positive effects of teacher learning incentives on attitudes toward writing and teaching writing (McCarthy,



1992; Mosenthal, 1995). Other strands of L1 writing teacher cognition concern specific aspects of writing or of the teaching of writing, including beliefs about process writing (Lipson et al., 2000; Simmerman et al., 2012) and technology in writing instruction (Ertmer, Ottenbreit-Leftwich & Tondeur, 2015; Ihmeideh, 2010). A significant portion of the current literature on writing teacher cognition is undertaken from L2 perspectives, for instance in relation to feedback (Lee, 2009) and the changing beliefs about writing and writing instruction among preservice L2 writing teachers (Sengupta & Xiao, 2002).

Lee (2018), a key figure in research into writing teacher cognition, provides a helpful summary of central aspects considered in writing teacher cognition research, which reflects those highlighted above:

(1) the factors that influence writing teacher cognition; (2) the relationship between writing teacher cognition and classroom practice; and (3) the role of teacher education in impacting writing teacher cognition (Lee, 2018: 2).

The subsequent sections of this chapter are inspired by the first two points listed by Lee (2018), and consequently, explores personal learner experiences as a factor influencing teacher cognition, and the influence of teacher cognition on teacher practice. Next, the chapter outlines these two points with particular emphasis on writing for pleasure. Lastly, the chapter considers teacher cognition research which has employed participant-produced drawings as (part of) their data collection, before placing the current study in relation to teacher cognition research and outlining its contributions to this field.

### **3.6.3 Teachers' past learner experiences and teacher cognition**

According to Borg (2015b), teacher cognition is likely to be influenced by beliefs formed prior to beginning to teach. Particularly, previous experiences in education, both as a pupil and during teacher training, commonly influence teaching practices (Lee, 2018). Borg (2015b) claims the consideration of such experiences to be valuable in order to gain a greater comprehension of the 'teachers' mental lives' (loc 5156). In fact, teacher cognition research suggests the experiences of teachers as learners influence cognitions about teaching to a significant extent, as they 'may continue to exert an influence on teachers throughout their career' (Borg, 2015b: loc 5151-5156).

This is the case also for writing teacher cognition, specifically. Lee (2018: 2) employs Lortie's (1995) term 'apprenticeship of observation' to explain that a teacher's experiences with learning and writing tend to affect their practices as writing teachers, for instance in whether

they lean toward a focus on process or product writing (2). Frequently, teachers attribute importance to elements of writing which they themselves were taught to be important as learners, while in other cases, 'teachers give students what was missing in their own ... writing education' (2). In other words, teachers may include or exclude teaching methods and practices which they themselves were exposed to as learners, based on their own experiences of such methods and practices (2). Drew ([1997] 2019), for instance, found Norwegian student teachers' perceptions about the teaching of English (L2) writing to show a preference toward teaching methods which differed significantly from those they encountered as learners themselves (70).

Teachers' beliefs, developed as learners in early school years, have been found to be, in some cases, resistant to change. Gupta (1995) discovered that many teachers had retained traditional beliefs about literacy instruction, developed as learners in their early school years, despite having undergone teacher education which emphasised different approaches (359). This reflects that, as Nisbett and Ross (1980) explain, once beliefs are established, they are often resilient and in turn do not yield easily despite being confronted by conflicting information (169). This reflects a widespread view within teacher cognition research that beliefs require significant effort to undergo change (Calderhead, 1996; Kagan, 1992; Mansour, 2009). Such a 'cognitivist epistemological tradition' of cognition (Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015: 437) considers beliefs to be 'temporally and contextually stable reifications' (Skott, 2015: 18).

Nevertheless, this tradition is evolving, as it 'has been challenged by suggestions that there is a more dynamic and reflexive' nature to beliefs' (Skott, 2015: 19). This is reflected in studies in which teachers' established beliefs about literacy have been found to change from experiences and knowledge gained in teacher education. Hollingsworth (1989), for instance, found 'changes in preservice teachers' thinking from global views of teaching in classrooms to understandings about context-specific student learning' (168). This example reflects that, as Skott (2015) points out, teacher beliefs may be considered 'dynamic and evolving outcomes of individual and communal acts of meaning-making' (24).

### **3.6.4 The influence of teacher cognition on classroom practice**

Writing teacher cognition has been suggested to influence a number of aspects related to the teaching of writing, including, but not limited to, assessment (Sheehan and Munro, 2019), the use of technology (Ertmer, Ottenbreit-Leftwich & Tondeur, 2015), and grammar (Grossman, Wilson & Shulman, 1989). One way in which such aspects of teaching may be influenced is by way of the teacher's beliefs. A number of researchers have found strong correlations between practices and beliefs related to writing (Gaitas & Alves Martins, 2014; Poulson et al., 2001). For instance, teachers whose beliefs about writing aligned with a whole language theoretical orientation were found by Poulson et al. (2001) to hold different approaches to teaching, including a process approach to writing, than did teachers without similar such beliefs (288).

Another aspect of teacher cognition which may influence classroom practice is the teachers' perceived subject knowledge. Borg (2001) points out, for instance, that a teacher's perceived knowledge in relation to language features such as 'grammar, vocabulary, phonology, [and] discourse', all central elements to writing, influence how classroom activities relating to such features are perceived and approached by that teacher (28). For example, Grossman, Wilson and Shulman (1989) found teachers to rarely encourage pupils' questions about grammar because the teachers lacked confidence in their ability to answer them and found teachers to even avoid teaching grammar to the extent possible for the same reason (28). This suggests that teachers' perceived subject knowledge might influence their classroom practice.

However, the relationship between teacher cognition and classroom practice is influenced by a number of factors, and, as a result, teacher practice may not always reflect teacher cognition (Phipps & Borg, 2009). In fact, research has found that, although 'teachers' beliefs do affect their decision-making, other factors often exert a stronger influence on these decisions' (Borg, 2015b: loc 2768). Such factors are often contextual, and may either initiate changes in teacher cognition, or influence teachers' 'practices directly without changing the cognitions underlying them' (Borg, 2015b: loc 5145). In the case of the latter, a 'lack of congruence' may arise between stated and practiced beliefs. For instance, on a national level, teachers in maintained schools teach in accordance with curricular requirements, school regulations and policies, and needs specific to their taught class(es), of which 'teachers' beliefs are viewed as a filter, interpretive device, and transformer of curricular intentions developed elsewhere' (Skott, 2015: 17). In turn, practices might not always reflect teachers' beliefs, for instance as 'Curriculum standards create pressure for content coverage' (Buehl and Beck, 2015: 78). This is reflected in a longitudinal Greek study, in which a primary school teacher in her

first year of teaching experienced the curriculum as constraining her practices in that it limited the amount of time she could spend on fun activities such as mathematical games, which she deemed important for learning and practicing maths (Potari & Georgiadou-Kabouridis, 2009: 19).

Additionally, teacher beliefs might be shaped by social factors, such as interactions within the school environment. This involves, for instance, interactions with colleagues and school leaders. As explained by Tschannen-Moran, Salloum and Goddard (2015), teachers' 'beliefs are shaped by interactions with others in the environment in which they work and the collective beliefs that grow out of these interactions' (301). Similar to contextual factors, such social factors might also affect the extent to which a teacher practices in accordance with their beliefs. For instance, learners' reactions to their teacher's practices 'may support or hinder teachers in acting on their beliefs' (Fives & Buehl, 2012: 483-484). Similarly, so may pupil attitudes (Bullock, 2010).

A great extent of research into teacher cognition has suggested inconsistencies between stated and practiced beliefs in relation to writing (Lee, 2018: 2-3). For instance, writing teacher practices in relation to feedback has been found to allow pupils to take charge of their own learning only to a limited extent, despite the teachers' beliefs that pupils benefit from taking on more responsibility (Lee, 2009). Similarly, Whitney (2009) found in a case study that an experienced teacher's practice of teaching writing included less creativity than her reported beliefs about how writing should be taught (242). Findings of such inconsistencies have typically been perceived in a negative light, while consistencies have been considered to be positive (Poulson et al., 2001). Phipps and Borg (2009), however, argue that such differences between teacher practices and beliefs should be viewed in a more positive light than has been done traditionally (380). They consider such 'tensions' to be 'a valuable focus for both research and teacher development' (381). In either case, however, inconsistencies between beliefs and practices are far from always the case. Research has also found instructional practices to adhere to teacher beliefs of writing, both in L1 and L2 contexts (Johnson, 1992; Mangano & Allen, 1986).

### **3.6.5 Teacher cognition and writing for pleasure**

The term 'writing for pleasure' has not received much attention in teacher cognition research. Nevertheless, without necessarily employing this term, and without primarily considering how to promote writing enjoyment educational contexts, research into teacher cognition has explored teachers' experiences, beliefs, and attitudes related to writing and writing enjoyment.

The current subsection seeks to provide examples as to how teacher cognition research has explored writing and writing enjoyment in relation to recreational and personal purposes; the influence of teachers' past learner experiences in forming such beliefs; and how these beliefs may influence teaching practices.

In Norman and Spencer's (2005) qualitative study of preservice teachers, a great number of participants reported writing creative and personal texts, with 91% of the participants expressing positive perceptions of themselves as writers. However, recent research has also found contrasting results. In Morgan's (2010) mixed-methods study of 42 preservice teachers as writers, only 6 participants described taking enjoyment in writing and frequently writing for recreational purposes. A number of the remaining 36 participants mentioned time and energy restraints as factors preventing them from writing outside class (357). Similar findings were reported in a study of 115 pre-service teachers' conceptions of writing conducted by Gardner (2014), employing both qualitative and quantitative methods. In this study, '[o]nly 1.8% frequently wrote for pleasure with a further 48.7% occasionally writing for pleasure. The remaining 49.5% reported they never gained pleasure from writing' (135). Ultimately, varying beliefs in relation to writing (for pleasure) have been found.

As explored in section 3.4, reasons behind writing for pleasure are many, varied and complex. In teacher cognition research, for instance, teachers' learner experiences have been found to greatly influence cognitions related to writing (Lee, 2018). For instance, Daisey (2009) found, in a mixed-methods study, a correspondence between negative past experiences in school and low levels of writing enjoyment among teacher candidates (161-162). In another study, teacher students who did not perceive themselves to be writers had had negative writing experiences throughout their educational career, whereas the students who *did* perceive themselves as writers had had positive learner experiences with writing, particularly at the primary level (Draper, Barksdale-Ladd & Radencich, 2000: 194). Teachers, according to Cremin and Oliver's (2017) literature review, 'often linked enjoyment or dislike of school writing with particular writing pedagogies' (283). Together, these findings suggest that teachers' beliefs about writing and their self-perceived writer-identities are influenced by their experiences with writing during their school years.

Teacher cognition research suggests that cognitions in relation to writing might influence teacher practice. For instance, teachers with negative attitudes toward writing have been found to create fewer opportunities to write in the classroom than do those who enjoy writing (Claypool, 1980). A quantitative study by Hardré and Hennessey's (2013) found a greater willingness among teachers to consciously attempt to motivate pupils upon believing

that learner engagement was malleable by their effort. However, there is limited research performed in this area through the lens of teacher attitudes (Cremin & Oliver, 2017: 291) and teacher cognition more generally, so one should be careful in drawing any conclusions on this topic.

### **3.6.6 Teacher cognition and participant-produced drawings**

Drawings have been used extensively in ‘social sciences research more generally’, but its prevalence in research relating to teacher cognition has been more limited, despite its potential (Borg, 2015a: 497). According to Zweifel and van Wezemael (2012), participant-produced drawings are ‘a new way of exploring complexity’ of a broad range of situations within various disciplines (14). The use of participant-produced drawings as a research method in relation to teaching specifically, has been suggested to offer ‘an excellent forum for necessary (self-) reflection by bringing to light nuances and ambivalences in teaching identities that might otherwise remain hidden’ (Weber & Mitchell, 1996a: 303). In addition, participant-produced drawings in qualitative studies have been found to generate more open and honest verbal communication than from verbal communication alone within a wide range of disciplines (Pain, 2012), as well as education research specifically (Kearney & Hyle, 2004). Drawings have been found to be particularly useful because, as Weber & Mitchell (1996a) claim, they have the potential to allow expression of that which may be difficult to express verbally: ‘the ineffable, the elusive, the not-yet-thought-through, the sub-conscious’ (304).

In educational contexts, drawings have been found to produce valuable information about classroom experiences and practices of both pupils (Iddings, Haught & Devlin, 2005) and teachers (Kalaja, Dufva & Alanen, 2013). Such research has typically explored prospective teachers’ beliefs about teachers and teaching, either in general (Sinclair et al., 2013) or relating to specific subjects, such as science (Ambusaidi & Al-Balushi, 2012). Such studies have typically found teacher education programmes to change, to some extent, the beliefs (and visual depictions) of the prospective teachers (Ambusaidi & Al-Balushi, 2012). Drawings have been used to an increasing extent also in L2 learning and teaching contexts (Kalaja, 2015). Such research has to a significant extent considered depicted communication and interactions, such as peer interaction (Mäntylä & Kalaja, 2019) and teacher-learner interactions. Findings have varied, reflecting beliefs that teaching should be teacher-centred, emphasising the teacher as either alone or in the centre of the depicted action, primarily featured as smiling (Alanen, Kalaja & Dufva, 2013), or student-led, in which the teacher is a classroom facilitator (Kalaja, 2015), such as when peer interaction is in focus (Mäntylä & Kalaja, 2019).

In addition, such L2 studies have focused to a significant extent on the depiction of classroom environments, primarily considering the portrayals of classroom structures and artefacts. Findings showed that the drawings typically reflect teacher practices in which teaching is typically set in the classroom, employing desk-based tasks and interactions (Kalaja, 2015), and the portrayal of ‘textbooks or other media’, found in approximately half of the drawings (Alanen, Kalaja & Dufva, 2013). Teachers’ depictions of classroom interactions and artefacts have also been considered in L1 teaching research. For instance, Weber and Mitchell (1996b) found pre-service teachers to depict ‘teachers as traditional, usually pleasant ... figures of authority who point out or explain’ (122-123), often in front of a board, and suggested this to be based on stereotypes and childhood experiences as learners. They suggested, then, that teachers’ visual images of teachers may be somewhat rooted in stereotypes and past experiences with teachers, which might, in turn, influence how participants draw themselves or others as teachers.

In relation to writing and writing enjoyment specifically, drawings have been primarily employed to explore children’s beliefs. Kendrick and McKay (2004) found drawings to be a useful tool for children to demonstrate their understandings of writing and reading. Zumbrunn et al. (2017) employed drawings to explore fifth graders’ beliefs about writing and found that experiences with writing at this age ranged from very positive to very negative, for instance as the various pupils drew themselves writing with a range of different facial expressions, from smiling to scowling.

### **3.6.7 Contribution**

From studying teacher beliefs, the study seeks to contribute to the limited, although expanding, discourse on writing for pleasure in classroom settings. Within teacher cognition research in particular, the study offers an important contribution in that it emphasises the term ‘writing for pleasure’, which is not yet an established term within the field. In addition, teacher cognition research regarding writing enjoyment has not typically considered, as its main focus, beliefs in relation to how it is promoted within the classroom, as does this study. Moreover, the study is especially relevant as previous teacher cognition research concerning literacy has shown a tendency to focus on reading to a greater extent than writing, both in international and Norwegian contexts (Borg, 2015b; Charboneau Stuvland, [2016] 2019; Hjorteland, 2017; Mathisen Gilje, 2014). Writing teacher cognition research has also tended to focus on the cognitions of preservice teachers, rather than of practicing teachers, especially in relation to

writing enjoyment (Gardner, 2014; Morgan, 2010; Norman & Spencer, 2005). Consequently, the current study is valuable because it places emphasis on the beliefs of practicing teachers.

Furthermore, the study adds to the more traditional approaches typically employed in teacher cognition research by way of its creative research design, which includes participant-produced drawings as a secondary research method. This research method has only been employed within teacher cognition research to a certain extent (e.g. Alanen, Kalaja & Dufva, 2013; Kalaja, Dufva & Alanen, 2013). With regards to writing research in general, this approach has primarily explored children's beliefs, as opposed to those of teachers (Kendrick and McKay, 2004; Zumbunn et al., 2017). The current study then, adds to the more limited research exploring the drawings of writing teachers. Moreover, the study at hand employs a qualitative collective case study research method, involving a relatively small number of participants. In turn, the project contributes to teacher cognition research which has, to a significant extent, considered writing enjoyment from mixed qualitative and quantitative approaches (Daisey, 2009; Gardner, 2014; Morgan, 2010) and qualitative methods (Claypool, 1980; Hardré and Hennessey, 2013), typically employing larger sample sizes, and less typically employing case studies. For further elaborations concerning the research method employed for this study, see chapter 4.

Furthermore, although the study is written from an L1 perspective, it aspires to have extended implications and relevance for the teaching of writing in L2 contexts. For instance, the term 'skriveglede', that is, 'pleasure in writing' (my translation), is an unestablished term within L1 and L2 writing research in Norway, both for research in general and from a teacher cognition perspective, specifically. This is particularly relevant as the current project was undertaken at a Norwegian university. For more detailed information about the Norwegian context of the current study, see section 2.4.

Lastly, in addition to its contribution to research, the study at hand might serve as a contribution for future professional development initiatives in relation to the teaching of L1 and L2 writing. This is because teachers' beliefs are a valuable source for developing future initiatives which aim to improve the situation for teachers and their pupils (Skott, 2015). Particularly, the study seeks to provide insight into teacher beliefs in relation to writing for pleasure, which may be valuable for future teacher development initiatives concerned with writing enjoyment. Such incentives might, for instance, consider 'professional learning', such as teacher training and teacher education programmes (Avalos, 2011: 11). Alternatively, the initiatives might consider collaborations within the school, such as 'teacher co-learning' and 'school culture' initiatives (12).



## **4 Methodology**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The present chapter concerns the methodology employed for the current research project concerning teacher beliefs about writing for pleasure in the teaching of L1 writing at the primary level in England. The chapter seeks to explain why the chosen methodological means were selected for gaining insights into the beliefs of six primary school teachers. In doing so, the chapter is divided into six additional sections to this introduction, starting with the qualitative approach chosen for this project. The subsequent sections are concerned with additional features important for gaining an overview into the methodology of the project, namely its use of the case study, semi-structured interviews and participant-produced drawings, and elaborations as to how the latter two were planned and conducted. Lastly, the chapter considers the project's validity, reliability and research ethics.

### **4.2 Qualitative research**

The study employs a qualitative research method which combines semi-structured interviews and participant-produced drawings. Qualitative research methods are typically 'open-ended, non-numerical data which is then analysed primarily by non-statistical methods' (Dörnyei, 2007: 24). In turn, qualitative research methods allow for in-depth explorations of topics, uncovering 'insider perspectives' (38). Quantitative research methods do not offer in-depth explorations to the same extent, as they are more concerned with 'quantifiable measurements' (Krishna, Maithreyi & Surapaneni, 2010: 2321), and in turn, qualitative research was deemed more appropriate for this study. In qualitative research, especially in semi-structured interviews, the researcher is an 'instrument' (Galletta, 2013: 75). This involves that the interviewer plays an active role during the data collection, such as adding to the verbal exchange in the interview. This entails asking further questions or rephrasing them as necessary, or, alternatively, knowing when to remain quiet, depending on the flow of the conversation (75). In turn, the researcher plays a significant role in optimising qualitative research. An important aspect of the role of the interviewer is neutrality, which entails that 'the interviewer should try to be neutral, without imposing any personal bias', creating an interview environment in which the participants do not experience judgement or disapproval (Dörnyei, 2007: 141).

### **4.3 Case studies**

Case studies vary in nature and are used across disciplines, so one should be cautious in accepting ‘precise definitions’ of case studies (Stake, 1995: 2). Nonetheless, a helpful definition in considering the study at hand is that by Schramm (1971): ‘The essence of a case study, the central tendency among all types of case study, is that it tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result’ (6). This is pertinent to the study of teacher cognitions, as teachers’ decisions, influenced by, as well as an influencer of, the classroom, are a crucial aspect of their way of teaching.

Because of the broad nature and use of case studies, various critics have identified a number of different styles and types of such studies. The research study at hand is a ‘collective case study’, which is a case study consisting of multiple cases, where the cases are ‘instrumental’ in exploring the chosen topic (Stake, 1995: 4). For this research project, the six cases, or teachers, are instrumental in exploring teacher cognition about the role of writing for pleasure within the teaching of writing. In other words, this method is particularly useful for this study as the complex nature of teaching and teacher cognition is intertwined with their context. In such cases, where the concept explored and the cases studied are inseparable, collective case studies are frequently used (Yin, 2003). The below citation further explains this concept:

We will have a research question, a puzzlement, a need for general understanding, and feel that we may get insight into the question by studying a particular case ... This use of case study is to understand something else. Case study here is instrumental to accomplishing something other than understanding [the particular case] (Stake, 1995: 4).

This quotation emphasises the great level of in-depth study allowed by the collective instrumental case study. For this study, gaining such an insight was achieved by the qualitative semi-structured interviews and participant-produced drawings, which gave rich information about the teaching of writing and writing for pleasure.

### **4.4 Semi-structured interviews**

The main research method of the proposed study, serving as the principal basis of data collection and consequent discussion, is the semi-structured interview. Such interviews are, according to Borg (2015b: loc 3857), a widely used strategy for gaining access into teacher cognition. They are also the most popular qualitative research method in applied linguistics in general (Dörnyei, 2007: 136). This is due, in part, to the flexibility of the ‘loosely defined series

of questions' asked by the researcher, which creates a springboard for various responses, while also ensuring relevant information (Borg, 2015b: loc 3857). For the same reason, this method of data collection complimented the purpose of the study at hand.

There are, however, various other types of interviews, including loosely structured and fixed interviews. Of these, semi-structured interviews are often considered 'a compromise between the two extremes' because they use some guiding structure, yet they are open to unplanned elaborations on interesting points (Dörnyei, 2007: 136). Common to all, however, is, as Seidman (2006) explains, 'an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience' (9). Qualitative interviews allow, in other words, for the complexity of human experience to be captured to some extent. It is for this reason that qualitative interviews are particularly valuable. As Brinkmann (2013) explains, they 'seem uniquely capable' of providing insight into 'qualitative features of human experience' (4). In fact, Brinkmann (2013) suggests that qualitative interviews allow for 'the most *objective* method of inquiry' if concerned with such qualitative features, so long as objectivity is considered as 'being adequate to a subject matter' (4). This advantage of interviews is made possible from their conversational nature, as conversations are 'a rich and indispensable source of knowledge' (3).

#### **4.5 Planning and conducting the interviews**

Prior to conducting the interviews, preparations and planning were necessary to ensure that the collected verbal data would be relevant and rich, and that the interview setting would allow for the participants to feel comfortable (Dörnyei, 2007: 137). Firstly, an interview guide was created to guide and direct the teacher respondents while allowing for additional questions, topics, and developments in conversations to arise naturally. Interview guides, as described by Dörnyei (2007), offer various ways of assisting the interviewer, such as in minimising accidental omissions of questions and topics, as well as offering 'appropriate question wordings' and potential 'probe questions' to gain further information or change the course of the interview if necessary (137). Another advantage of employing interview guides is that they allow all (teacher) informants to be asked similar questions to some extent, which ensures a similar starting point for comparison between the various responses (136).

Two pilot interviews took place prior to the authentic interviews. These were conducted to detect an approximate timeframe for the interview, as well as to become familiar with the audio-recorder to be used. Moreover, the pilot interviews were run to determine whether the interview guide stimulated 'sufficiently rich data' and to ensure it would not dictate 'the flow

of the conversation', as suggested by Dörnyei (2007: 137). One of the pilot interviews took place in an office-environment, while the other took place over Skype, to practice both potential interview settings.

In determining the setting of the authentic interviews, certain considerations were prioritised: a relaxed atmosphere; a preferably familiar location to the interviewee; and a quiet location. These factors were important to ensure that the participants felt safe and comfortable, and that the data could be gathered with a minimum of distractions. In all six interviews, an attempt was made to create a comfortable atmosphere through small talk and friendly body language, while still maintaining a professional image. Ideally, all interviews should have taken place in a similar setting, such as the teachers' school (classroom/office). However, at the request of some of the participants, and due to practical restraints, four of the interviews were conducted outside of this setting, via online video call services. This setting reduced intimacy and, to some extent, the opportunity to read body language. Although only sound was recorded for this study, body language was still relevant for the immediate communication and interpretation of the interview situation. By ensuring a stable internet connection prior to the interview and requesting the participant to conduct the interview in a quiet room, however, the conversation had a natural flow, while still being, 'to a certain extent at least, a 'face-to-face' experience' (Hanna, 2012: 241). This ensured that significant body-language was picked up, such as one of the teacher's mimicking of a moving a chair around her head when describing a comical situation in class. Despite its limitations, the online setting allowed for a relaxed atmosphere, as well as quiet, practical and familiar settings to the interviewees, and thus fulfilled the pre-set requirements for the settings of the interviews. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes.

#### **4.6 Interview structure**

The interview guide consisted of five sections, which served as the basis for the structure of the interview. This structure was also employed in organising the findings for each case in the findings chapter (5) and in considering the findings in the discussion chapter (6), due to its useful emphasis on categories and themes significant for the research topic and research questions of the study. For the interview guide, each section included questions and suggested prompts related to its theme. The various sections are outlined below along with respective examples. As the interview was semi-structured, however, the various sections sometimes overlapped depending on the flow of conversation. Lastly, it is worth pointing out that, prior to commencing the interview, the purpose of the interview and its content were underlined in order

to ‘increase the motivation of the interviewee to respond openly and in detail’ (Dörnyei, 2007: 140). The participants were also reminded of additional information from the participation invitation, such as their anonymity and rights.

The first section was concerned with the teachers’ background and qualifications. These simple personal questions were asked first in an attempt to make the participants feel secure in their ability to answer the questions presented to them. According to Dörnyei (2007), a sense of competence upon answering the introductory questions will ‘help them to relax and consequently encourage them to open up’ (137). The questions included:

- For how long have you practiced as a teacher of English (writing)?
- What are your educational qualifications?

The second section inquired about the experiences of the teacher, as well as the perceived experiences among pupils in regard to writing. This section placed particular emphasis on writing enjoyment to ensure an insight of teacher cognition linked to writing for pleasure, specifically. To avoid social desirability bias, that is, when the experiences and beliefs are reported in a light which the participant considers socially desirable, Dörnyei (2007) suggests wording questions in a way that presents the behaviour in focus as ‘rather common’ (141). In an attempt to do so, a quote from the NLT (2018) about the low levels of writing enjoyment in UK schools was included to reduce the chance of teachers feeling required to portray themselves or their pupils in a non-realistic light. Thus, the questions in this section included:

- What is your personal experience with writing?
- According to a nation-wide study by the National Literacy Trust, ‘Half (50.9%) of children and young people in 2017/18 said that they either only enjoy writing a bit or not at all’ (Clark, 2018: 1). What are your attitudes towards these findings, and how do they correspond with your experiences as a teacher?

The next section emphasised the teachers’ reflections on their teaching of writing. This focus was important to gain an insight into the teachers’ perceived role as a teacher of writing, their methodology, and experiences. As no observations were undertaken as a part of this study, the questions in this section included one which related specifically to occurred events in the teachers’ experience:

- In your opinion, what is your main role as a teacher of English writing?

- Can you describe one particularly valuable experience you have had as a teacher of writing, and one particularly challenging one?

To gain an alternative insight into the teachers' reported teaching practices and beliefs, the participant-produced drawings were discussed during the interview. Discussing the drawings was also important to reduce 'omissions' and 'misinterpretations' in the researcher's descriptions and interpretations of them (Kearny & Hyle, 2004: 377), and as a safety measure in case one or more participants did not provide a written account of their drawing. This section was placed relatively early on in the interview session to allow the teachers to refer back to it if desired, and to reduce social desirability bias of links being drawn between the drawing and previously discussed topics. The questions included:

- Can you give a description of your drawing?

The following section was about the teachers' opinions regarding the current 2014 revision of the National Curriculum. For instance, one question concerned its treatment of reading for pleasure, while the other concerned its lacking mention of writing for pleasure. Once again, quotes were included to neutralise the questions asked.

- According to the current National Curriculum, pupils should 'be encouraged to read for pleasure. Schools should do everything to promote wider reading' (DfE, 10). What are your opinions on this?
- The current National Curriculum does not emphasise pleasure of writing to a similar extent. What are your opinions on this?

Finally, the interview offered the teacher respondents the chance to raise questions or make any final comments. The question was also included to signal the approaching end of the interview.

- Would you like to make any final comments, raise any questions, or add anything which you feel has not yet been brought up?

#### **4.7 Processing and presenting the interview findings**

To process the interview findings, the audio-recordings were transcribed manually in Word while listening to the interview through headphones. In order to present the statements of the teacher respondents in a clear manner, an ‘intelligent verbatim transcript’ style was employed (Eppich, Gormley & Teunissen, 2019: 92). This approach entailed that half-sentences, discourse-markers (e.g. ‘you know’) and discourse fillers (e.g. ‘hmm’) were reduced and the sentences were written to make sense without these components of speech production (92). For privacy reasons, these transcripts are not included in the appendix. However, particularly relevant passages are presented in the findings section. Consequently, this type of transcription was chosen to ensure that the participants’ reported statements was presented in a coherent and reader-friendly manner, while it was simultaneously respectful toward the teachers’ valuable efforts at conveying meaning. For instance, in one of the interviews, where verbs were repeatedly discussed by the participant as adjectives when discussing an example of their teaching experience, this mix-up of word classes was corrected. However, laughter and nonverbal sounds were included in the intelligent transcripts to express the mood of the conversations, although this is not always the case in this type of transcripts (Eppich, Gormley & Teunissen, 2019: 92). As Fairclough (1993) asserts, ‘it is always a matter of judgment, given the nature of research questions, what sort of features to show [in a transcript] and in how much detail’ (229).

According to Creswell (2009), themes or categories from the interviews should be identified and used to structure the presentation of the findings. In qualitative research, he claims, the most common way of doing so is through ‘a narrative passage’ where themes or categories are either explored separately, or interrelatedly (189). This thesis presents five main categories which are explored in some detail for each participant: (1) background and educational qualifications; (2) experiences with writing; (3) reflections on teaching writing; (4) attitudes towards the National Curriculum; (5) the participant-produced drawing. These categories were based on the different sections of the interview guide. Some of the topics within the various categories overlapped, however, as the categories all place emphasis on similar themes related to the teachers’ beliefs about writing and writing for pleasure. The same structure was employed in organizing the discussion chapter.

In order to provide ‘specific evidence’ in presenting the data in the findings chapter, and to a more limited extent in the discussion chapter, quotations from the transcribed interviews were included. The quotations were chosen based on their relevance and insightfulness into the

different categories. Particularly, examples of experiences described in great detail served as fruitful lenses into teacher cognition. Ultimately, the various categories explored in detail, supported by diverse quotations, were deemed to fulfil ‘the researcher’s task’, as explained below:

the researcher’s task is to present the experience of the people he or she interviews in compelling enough detail and in sufficient depth that those who read the study can connect to that experience, learn how it is constituted, and deepen their understanding of the issues it reflects (Seidman, 2006: 51).

#### **4.8 Participant-produced drawings**

The participant-produced drawings were used as a secondary method of data collection for two reasons. First, to offer an alternative non-linear method for the teachers to express themselves, as participant-produced drawings have been suggested to be ‘an excellent forum for necessary (self-) reflection by bringing to light nuances and ambivalences in teaching identities that might otherwise remain hidden’ (Weber & Mitchell, 1996a: 303). Second, the drawings were employed to catalyse further verbal discussion in the semi-structured interview, as participant-produced drawings in qualitative studies have been found to generate more open and honest verbal communication than from verbal communication alone (Kearney & Hyle, 2004; Pain, 2012). For further explanations of participant-produced drawings and their value, see chapter 3.6.

#### **4.9 Planning and conducting the participant-produced drawings**

The teacher informants were provided with a visual task sheet in advance of their respective interview, whereby the phrasing of the task was considered an ‘important influence’ in what the participant-produced drawings would depict (Kalaja, Dufva & Alanen, 2013: 14), as different tasks ‘elicit particular kinds of responses and conceptualizations’ (16). With this in mind, the teachers were tasked to do the following: ‘Draw a picture of yourself giving a writing lesson in the recent past and write, on the reverse side of the task sheet, a brief explanation of what is going on in the drawing’. This question was inspired by that of Kalaja (2011) in his study on visual narratives in language teaching (18), as it allowed for responses linked to a real-life teaching scenario. The phrasing of the task was to some extent open, to ensure that the participants could interpret it how they saw fit, and, in turn, create the possibility for a broad range of drawings. On the task sheet, the participants were informed of the drawing’s purpose in the study, as well as practical information concerning the task. The latter included that the



drawing could be made by hand or digitally; it could be simple or comprehensive; it should not disclose any personal information such as names, realistic faces or school logos; and that their artistic abilities would not be judged or assessed in any way. As pointed out by Mitchell et al. (2011), it is important to ensure the participants that attention will be paid to the ‘content’ of the drawing rather than its ‘quality’, particularly because the participants may not all be confident in their ability or talent in completing the task (23).

The participants described and interpreted their own drawings. The teacher respondents were asked to describe their drawings in written form prior to the interview on a specified page of the drawing task sheet (see appendix C). This was done to avoid time-restraints in completing their description in an environment less likely to generate researcher bias as encouraged by Kearney and Hyle (2004: 378). In addition, however, the drawings were discussed in the respective interview to ensure that the researcher’s interpretation of the drawing was as similar to that of the participant as possible, and to reduce ‘omissions’ and ‘misinterpretations’ in the descriptions and analysis of the drawings (Kearney & Hyle, 2004: 377). This may be referred to as ‘respondent validation’ (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018), and is in visual research particularly important to gain an understanding of the ‘inevitable difference between the depicted (the referent) and the depiction (the visual representation)’ (Pauwels, 2011: 11). In other words, there might be differences between what is meant to be depicted by the artist and that which is actually visually portrayed.

#### **4.10 Processing and presenting the findings from the participant-produced drawings**

In order to process the participant-produced drawings, the drawings were first and foremost interpreted by the teachers in both written and verbal form. With this starting point, further interpretations and a suggested analysis of the drawings was offered by the researcher. This entails that findings of the drawings are discussed against the general theory chosen for this study but also emphasise the depicted artefacts and the social interactions between the represented subjects, inspired by similar research studies (Alanen, Kalaja & Dufva, 2013; Kalaja; 2015). In analysing the drawings in the current study, then, the contents of the drawings, rather than elements such as production or audience, were the ‘analytical focus’ (Pauwels, 2011: 10). More specifically, in considering the contents of the drawings, two aspects were the main focus: (1) ‘materials-that-matter’, focusing on the materials and artefacts depicted which are considered significant ‘within the world view of an individual or group’ who created the visual data (Wagner, 2011: 79), or, for this study, the depicted materials which were considered important by the teachers in relation to teaching writing; and (2) narrative and conceptual

structures, which are, in part, concerned with the characteristics and interactions of the represented participants of the images (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

The former approach is argued to be useful ‘in collecting information from subjects about their surroundings, behavior, technologies, and concerns’ (Wagner, 2011: 79), and recognizes that there may be differences between the levels of, and reasons for, attributing significance to the depicted materials (78). Rather than offering ‘concrete methodological tools’, this approach is a theoretical framework of visual data which does not appear ‘to suggest any method of investigation and leave it to researchers to incorporate their views in a more or less systematic qualitative’ method of analysing the contents of drawings (Pauwels, 2011: 13). The concepts of narrative and conceptual structures (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) *do*, however, offer more analytical tools for analysis, which include various ways in which images may be considered in light of narrative and conceptual structures. Nevertheless, these two concepts are for this study considered only in their broadest sense in order to limit the scope of data analysis due to time restrictions. An additional reason for this decision, and for not employing supplementary elements from Kress and van Leeuwen’s (2006) ‘grammar of visual design’ in analysing the drawings, was that several such elements did not necessarily apply to participant-produced drawings produced for a research project as they would to other types of visual data.

The decision to employ the concepts of conceptual and narrative structures in their broadest sense was also inspired by Kalaja, Dufva and Alanen (2013) who describe and employ these concepts in this way. In doing so, ‘Conceptual structures’ (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) were considered as structures which describe the represented participants of images, ‘in terms of their characteristics’ (Kalaja, Dufva and Alanen, 2013: 4). These might be ‘symbolic processes [which] are about what a participant *means* or *is*’ (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006: 105). For instance, a smile might function as a symbol of enjoyment or happiness, and be a significant characterising tool (Kalaja, Dufva & Alanen, 2013: 4). ‘Narrative structures’, on the other hand, are defined as ‘a visual representation of a process of interaction between objects and other processes; it implies directionality and dynamicity’ (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006: 46). A key word here is ‘interaction’, which may for instance be ‘indicated by gaze or thought bubbles’ between the represented subjects (Kalaja, Dufva & Alanen, 2013: 4). Although such interactions might also take place between the subjects and the viewer(s) of the image (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006: 46), such potential interactions are not considered for this study in an attempt to limit the scope of data analysis.

In presenting the participant-produced drawings in the findings chapter, summaries describing the drawing of each case are presented. These summaries describe to some extent

what is visually depicted as interpreted by the researcher, but are primarily based on a combination of verbal statements about the drawings discussed in the respective interviews, and the written comments about the drawings which were a part of the drawing task. Images of the drawings themselves are presented at the end of the results chapter, gathered on one page for a simple overview and comparison (section 5.8). Full sized copies of the drawings may be found in appendix F.

#### **4.11 Selection of participants**

For this study, the teacher informants were located by way of purposive or criterion sampling, in which '[t]he researcher selects participants who meet some specific predetermined criteria' (Dörnyei, 2007: 128). This sampling method is particularly valuable for in-depth studies of specific phenomena (Schreier, 2018: 93), and is a type of purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling is frequently used in qualitative research because it allows for the participation of 'information-rich cases', despite limited resources of the research project (Palinkas et al., 2013: 2). Purposeful sampling requires the participants to possess a comprehensive understanding and acquaintance with the phenomena in focus (Bernard, 2002). Thus, unlike probability sampling, purposeful sampling is not concerned with generalizing the findings (Palinkas et al., 2013: 2).

For the proposed study, the six teacher informants were asked to participate based on fulfilling certain criteria concerning their profession and experience. In order to participate, the teachers were required to be fully qualified teachers in England. This entailed holding a qualified teacher status (QTS) gained either from completing teaching courses or certain undergraduate programmes related to education, or from obtaining a postgraduate certificate of education (PGCE) following an alternative undergraduate degree. They could, however, be newly qualified teachers (NQTs) undergoing induction. Furthermore, the teachers were required to work in maintained primary schools in England and accordingly follow the English National Curriculum. Additionally, the participants were required to currently work in the lower Key Stage 2 in England as teachers of a year 4 class. Participants teaching this specific year group were chosen because children in this age group (8-9) are in the process of developing and improving their writing significantly (Andersen et al., 2018: 129) and their attitudes relating to learning are in an important stage of being formed (Woods, 1987). An attempt was made to find teacher informants of both genders and with various levels of experience of teaching from different schools, in order to produce rich and varied data. Ultimately, the sample consisted of three male and three female teachers from different schools, ranging from 21 to 47 years of age, and with teaching experience ranging from two months to 20 years at the time of the interview.

The participants were located and contacted by way of social media, specifically Facebook and Twitter. Both generic invitations and advertising posts were used, providing potential participants with an outline of the research study and a brief description of the ideal candidate. In both cases, the language used was friendly and semi-formal in order to reflect the medium on which the teachers were contacted. In finding potential participants to send generic invitations, key words such as ‘primary’, ‘year4’, and ‘teacher’, were used as search criteria on Twitter, using a professional profile created with the purpose of locating participants.

#### **4.12 Validity and reliability**

Traditionally, according to Gibbs (2007), *validity* is concerned with the extent to which the study accurately presents ‘what is actually happening’, and *reliability* concerns whether the findings remain consistent when examined numerous times or by several researchers (91). However, these characterisations of validity and reliability have been argued to be both ‘difficult’ and ‘inappropriate’ for qualitative research (104) because this type of research, unlike quantitative research, is more subjective and difficult to reproduce (91). Nonetheless, this section seeks to explore ways in which this qualitative study has attempted to produce reliable and valid results.

One attempt to increase the reliability of the research project was by way of triangulation, that is, the consideration of data from more than one perspective, such as using several methods of data collection (Creswell, 2016: 191). The participant-produced drawings were included as a second method of data collection to provide an alternative angle from which to gain information and insight into the topics at hand. The drawings provided a visual element to the data collection that gave insight into a specific lesson of writing (differing from the spoken data acquired which often concerned the teaching of writing more generally), which was particularly valuable as no classroom observations were undertaken. Respondent validation of the drawings, that is, discussing the drawings in each respective interview to ensure that the researcher’s interpretation of the drawing was as similar to that of the participant as possible, was conducted as a ‘validity check’ (Carspecken, 1996: 164-165) of the visual data collected. One teacher informant did withdraw from submitting a drawing for the study, however, and thus only five drawings were collected. This decreased the validity of the study.

The validity of both the drawing task and the semi-structured interviews might be negatively affected by their retrospective nature, as this might have impacted the answers of the participants. For instance, answers may be affected by consistency bias (Franklin & Ballan, 2001: 280), meaning that reports of experiences and beliefs might reflect the way in which the

participants felt at the time of drawing and/or the interview, rather than at the time of the depicted and/or described experience. Additionally, the data collected from the retrospective interviews and drawing tasks could be influenced by misattribution, where '[m]emories are attributed to an incorrect source' (Schacter, Chiao & Mitchell, 2003: 228), such as to other year groups taught, mistaken for having taken place upon teaching year 4. Despite the limitation of such memory biases, however, these methods for data collection were considered beneficial for the current study as they could offer an in-depth insight into teacher cognition (Borg, 2015b). Certain measures were taken to minimise memory biases in the teachers' recounts, such as asking for recent and specific memories in their drawings and interviews, as suggested by Thomsen and Brinkmann (2009).

Furthermore, the validity of the project is weakened because merely a single interview per participant, and no classroom observations, were undertaken. These are two main limitations to the study. The decision to conduct single interviews was made for practical reasons in order to reduce the cost and time spent on travelling between countries. For the same reason, observations were not conducted. An additional reason for the latter was the ethical implications of including children (under 18s) in research. Moreover, the low number of participants certainly decreases the validity of the study, and in turn, the sample size should ideally have been greater. Seidman (2006) suggests two criteria for when the qualitative research has 'enough' participants. Of these, the current study does not fulfil that of 'saturation of information', which is the point where little new information is being revealed, and the reported information repeats that which has already been found (55). However, the study does fulfil the second criteria of 'sufficiency' to at least some degree. This entails that the study holds a range of differences between the participants, such as age, experience, sex, and background (55). Yet, the number of participants could be larger to fulfil this criterion to a greater degree, though this was made difficult due to the limited timeframe of the thesis.

It has been found that social media sampling is likely to procure younger participants, and thus result in a more skewed sample than more traditional sampling methods (McRobert et al., 2018: 4). Although this was the case for the study at hand to a certain extent as four participants were under 30, one participant was in their 30s and another in their 40s, which allowed for insights (albeit in low numbers) into teacher experiences of different age groups. A benefit to this type of sampling was that different criteria, such as sex, could be easily located by making a search such as 'male teacher primary', allowing three participants of each sex to take part in the study. Ultimately, the 'similar structural and social conditions' of the teachers' experience, such as following the UK National Curriculum, gives 'power to the stories of a

relatively few participants' (Seidman, 2006: 55). In turn, a rather small number of participants (six) was justified.

As mentioned above, reliability concerns whether the findings remain consistent when examined numerous times or by several researchers (Gibbs, 2007: 91). This is more difficult to demonstrate due to the independent nature of the thesis but can be accomplished in qualitative research to some extent, Gibbs (2007) suggest, by 'transcription checking' (98). Upon completing each transcript, the relevant audio-recording was listened to at least twice more while reading the completed transcript to ensure that any errors had been fixed, and that the transcript was accurate and clear. Another way in which reliability was increased was by thoroughly documenting the decisions made and the research conducted throughout the research process, so that there is potential for the results to be studied and interpreted further by others. According to Paltridge and Phakiti (2015) '[s]uch explicit and honest accounts of research methods can help both researchers and their readers understand the research findings' (22). Some researchers employ the term 'dependability', rather than reliability for such qualitative research (22).

#### **4.13 Research Ethics**

NSD, The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, assessed that the processing of personal data in this project was in accordance with data protection legislation. In order to gain this approval, and to ensure the participants' comfortability during the research project, various ethical concerns were considered. More specifically, what Brinkmann and Kvale (2005) refer to as 'micro-ethics of research' were considered (167). These are concerned with the wellbeing and rights of the participants (167). Firstly, the participants were informed of the project's purpose, aims and research questions prior to their participation. They were also informed of their rights as participants and what would happen to their information during the project and after its end. From this information, the teachers could make an informed decision of whether they wished to participate before giving consent, and whether they wished to withdraw their consent at any point.

To ensure their anonymity, each participant was given a pseudonym generated by an online pseudonym generator. Neither the names of the schools with which they were attached, nor any other personal information which could result in their identification were published in any form. Similarly, the participant-produced drawings remained anonymous and were linked to the participants' pseudonym. Although this decreases the participants' claim of ownership to their visual creation and the ownership is shared with the researcher, the participants were

informed of this during the recruitment stage and gave their consent that the drawing would not be attached to their real name. As Guillemin and Drew (2010) point out, '[i]ssues of privacy and ownership of participant-generated images are highly complex' (180). This is due to their special nature and origin in that they are created as visual data rather than as a general piece of work (180). Providing the participants with information prior to their collaboration and gaining their consent based on awareness of what their participation entailed, were efforts made to overcome such complexities of participant-produced drawings.

## **5 Results**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This section presents the findings from the interviews and the participant-produced drawings. The results are structured primarily by case (teacher) in chronological order based on their time of interview. Furthermore, for each case, the findings are organised by way of categories. These categories correspond to those of the interview guide, outlined in the previous section: experiences with writing; reflections on teaching writing; attitudes toward the National Curriculum; and the participant-produced drawing. However, these categories overlap and therefore act more as structural devices than rigid categorisations. At the end of the chapter, the participant-produced drawings are presented in small-sized JGP format (section 5.8). They may also be found in their full size in appendix F.

### **5.2 Laura**

#### **5.2.1 Educational and qualification background**

At the time of the interview, Laura was in her fourth year of teaching. She was 26 years old. Prior to working in her primary school, she had completed an undergraduate degree in sports development, followed by a year studying for a PGCE teaching qualification. Both studies took place in England, and upon completion, she was qualified to teach in English primary schools.

#### **5.2.2 Experiences with writing**

Laura reported enjoying writing all throughout school, especially in primary school and at university. At university, she clarified, the enjoyment stemmed primarily from writing about sports in which she was greatly interested. As a teacher, however, Laura explained that she wrote primarily for work, for instance in the form of reports, club letters and sport fixtures. She also wrote model texts, which she called ‘What a Good One Looks Like’ (WAGOLL). These WAGOLLs she wrote from the perspective of a year 4 student in order to motivate and inspire her pupils by showcasing a ‘good’ text supposedly written by a pupil their age. Aside from writing such varied text types for her profession, Laura explained she did not typically conduct any writing in her own time for pleasure. She clarified that this was because she did not feel as if she had enough time in the week to write for pleasure.

Laura perceived her students to enjoy writing when they could ‘write about whatever they like’, and to greatly appreciate this ‘freedom’. Therefore, she particularly attributed importance to allowing pupils to hold some agency in choosing writing topics: ‘when you’re



told “you need to write this, you need to write that”, it kind of becomes a chore, and you don’t use your imagination. You’ve not got your own creative flare on it’. Because of her pleasant experiences with writing as a learner, Laura explained, she was occupied with providing her pupils with such writing tasks which might provide her pupils with a similar positive experience of writing. Another way in which she attempted to create positive experiences with writing was by introducing an element of humour and silliness in her teaching of writing. Laura used the example of a lesson in which she had taught prepositions:

- Laura:            So I was being silly at the front saying ‘Oh well, miss [Laura’s surname] stood *on* a chair and then stood *next to* the chair and *under* the chair, and they found that hilarious.
- Rebecca:        [Laughter]
- Laura:            Because I had this chair going around. And then I’d go moving a chair over and next to my head and then they’d go away and make their own, so: ‘The cat sat *on* the apple’. They enjoyed that kind of comical side of it. Then they get it, don’t they?

In this example, Laura described using a combination of instruction and individual writing, both of which encompassed humour to make the learning experience more engaging. Another way of engaging pupils, she explained, was to base writing tasks of the reading material and props related to the texts, so that the writing became immersive. She described having seen a positive development in relation to this in her school:

When I first started here there was none of these props in the classroom. It was just ‘we’re going to write a story and we’re going to do it on this’ and it wasn’t so immersive, if you like. But now, it is. We are trying to show them that you can get pleasure from writing.

The props she referred to above were a letter which she had written and placed in the classroom inspired by a novel they read as a class, to which the pupils wrote a report afterwards, as well as a robotic arm in relation to the class-reading of a book about robots, about which the pupils were to later write. She found these props to ‘hook’ the pupils into the story and the following writing tasks.

Laura perceived her pupils to generally enjoy writing. Particularly, she believed there to be clear links between good writing and avid reading and reading enjoyment. She used the example of a ten-year old girl whom she had previously taught as a year 5 teacher: ‘She had the reading age of a fifteen-year old. So she was the best writer I’ve ever, ever seen. She was so

good'. Laura underlined that her school aimed to inspire children to read for pleasure. For instance, Laura elaborated, her classroom contained a reading corner with cushions and signs of fictive places, such as Hogwarts and Narnia, to inspire her pupils to read. Furthermore, Laura described typically modelling her enjoyment in reading while reading aloud to her pupils: 'Oh isn't this so much fun'. Still, she did not perceive the children to read for pleasure after the school day ended. She explained: 'When they get home, would they rather read a book, or would they rather sit on their PlayStation? Nine times out of ten we know what they're going to pick'. Similarly, she did not perceive the children to write for pleasure at home, and she believed a main challenge in getting children to write for pleasure to be technology. In addition, Laura considered technology to offer easier tools for writing, compared to which traditional writing on paper required more effort. As a result, Laura believed her pupils to enjoy writing on pen and paper less because of its difficulty. She expanded on this point, mentioning that some of her pupils had 'a barrier to learning in the sense that they have the ideas in their heads, but they can't formulate them enough to get them down onto paper'.

### **5.2.3 Reflections on teaching writing**

When asked about her main role as a teacher of English writing, Laura emphasised her role as a facilitator. She referred to herself as 'the guiding force' behind her pupils, giving them tools with which they could write independently in turn. To achieve this, Laura used a mixture of instruction and independent work. She mentioned that the first lesson of teaching a particular aspect of the written language would typically feature instruction during which the children would sit on the carpet in front of the whiteboard. The following lessons of that week would be increasingly independent. The lessons were designed around one book at a time, appointed by a scheme called 'Literacy Tree'. Laura used the example of fronted adverbials:

lesson one might be looking at what a frontal adverbial is; lesson two we'll start to write some, about anything; lesson three, we'll write some that are relevant to the work they're going to be doing later on in the week. So that when they're doing their independent writing, they can refer back to these ones.

To refer back to the elements explored in that week, Laura described using a 'working wall' for each subject. Here, the week's important topics and WAGOLLS were portrayed. In addition to containing material which Laura believed to be helpful for the pupils, the wall featured what her pupils felt should be put on the working wall. She emphasised that it was '*their* working wall'. Although she perceived most of her pupils to be independent writers, some were 'lower

attainers' who did more group-based shared writing. She explained that her middle and higher attainers were able to work more independently. However, she would sometimes use group-work tasks across all ranges of abilities.

When asked about describing a rewarding lesson she had taught, Laura described one in which the pupils explored 'checking stations' in groups. In their groups, the pupils explored five classroom tables where each focused on different grammatical and syntactical features. To exemplify, she explained that one table had a note asking: 'has every sentence started with a capital letter and ended with a full stop?'. After spending ten minutes at each station, she found the pupils to have edited and corrected their own work to an impressive degree. Laura was keen to repeat this valuable experience. As an example of a challenging lesson, on the other hand, Laura described one in which she was teaching her pupils some rather difficult vocabulary. She experienced losing the pupils' attention and sense of comprehension. Having felt she overestimated the level of difficulty and amount of words to teach, despite providing exemplifying sentences, Laura described frustration and self-blame: 'One lesson then ended up becoming two, because I got it all wrong, and then it had fallen apart'.

#### **5.2.4 Attitudes towards literacy in the current National Curriculum:**

Laura expressed appreciation for the National Curriculum's clarity of what teachers are meant to teach and appreciated it as a base for teaching. However, she wished it contained explicit information about which genres to be taught each year, and that the curriculum included examples of the grammar the children should learn. When asked about the curriculum's emphasis on reading, she explained that the intense focus on reading put great pressure on improving the children's reading and in turn, was 'causing the teachers stress'. This pressure was particularly strong because Ofsted was particularly concerned with reading. This, she worried, would be picked up by the children: 'I worry that we then put it on to the children and then it's not teaching them to read for pleasure, is it'. This, she believed, created a wrong emphasis on reading performance rather than enjoyment: "'well, we're not very good at this [reading] so quickly, effortlessly read, and try to enjoy it". It's not... genuine, is it? It's really fake'. She found the main challenge with the curriculum, however, to be the excessively high expectations for what the teachers needed to successfully teach children learn over the course of a limited set of hours each week.

When asked about the absence of focus on writing for pleasure in the National Curriculum, Laura suggested that writing was not currently the government's main priority, and in turn there was a lesser push toward writing for pleasure in the curriculum:

I guess, writing at the minute isn't hot on their agenda, so that's why there's not all this pressure to enjoy writing for pleasure. But then, you know what will happen? Because they've put all this focus on reading, they'll get reading up, reading up, reading up, then they'll be like 'oh no! We need to focus on writing'. So reading will take a back-step and then writing will come into being important again.

### **5.2.5 Participant-produced drawing**

Laura drew herself as facing her pupils while engaging with the whiteboard on which it says, 'Writing a report'. Her drawing depicts, in other words, a writing lesson in which she is explicitly teaching features related to the writing of reports in an early stage of scaffolding. Her pupils are sat on the carpet in front of the whiteboard, which she explained was to ensure they remain focused. The pupils' desks are drawn to their right, ready for when the children will later engage with independent writing based on what they have learnt during the instruction depicted. In the background is the English working wall, featuring a WAGOLL, key vocabulary for that week, and some additional unspecified content. These resources, Laura explained, were placed on the working wall for the children to consult during the independent writing to follow the instruction depicted. It was important for her to include this wall in her drawing, she explained, because her pupils would actively use this wall in their writing.

## **5.3 Owen**

### **5.3.1 Educational and qualification background**

Owen was 23 years old and had practiced as a teacher of English for just over a year at the time of the interview. He was two months into his second academic year of teaching. His first year of teaching included teaching both year 4 and year 5 pupils. Owen completed his PGCE following his three-year undergraduate degree in Modern History and Politics at an English university.

### **5.3.2 Experiences with writing**

Owen described having enjoyed writing in school. He was successful in his English literature and language classes, felt confident, and acquired good grades. He found English to be an interesting and inspiring subject, particularly in secondary school. His secondary school English teacher had delivered the subject in an engaging way, which he considered to have potentially influenced his current focus on fostering writing enthusiasm in his own teaching. He explained that his confidence in his writing abilities had remained, and that he in turn felt

confident in writing the different types of texts for different audiences currently required as part of his profession. These included reports, emails and blog posts for his school sports team. He did not find that he had the time to write for pleasure, however. He had considered starting a blog in which he could write about topics that interest him, but he had not yet found there to be enough time to do so along with balancing work and his social life.

When asked about how he perceived his pupils to find writing, Owen described their experiences with texts to vary on the genre they were to write. He explained that he perceived his pupils to often be negative toward learning they would write, until he had explained the task: ‘if I said, “Oh, we’re going to be doing some writing today”, then there’d probably be more groans than cheers’. However, he pointed out, ‘if you say “oh, we’re going to write a story today”, there’ll be like a whole class cheer’. In other words, Owen perceived his pupils to make different associations with writing depending on the genre. Nevertheless, Owen believed the teacher to play a large role in creating positive attitudes toward different genres and tasks. He believed that if not presented in an engaging manner, the English subject could easily be perceived as boring, consisting only of hard work and grammar, and writing to be associated with this accordingly. In turn, he emphasised his role as a teacher in modelling positive attitudes towards different tasks, even when the immediate response from the class towards the task was negative:

I think it’s all about how you deliver it. If you’re really enthusiastic and tell them it’s going to be fun, and you know it’s going to be fun because you believe in it, the children also believe in it. Not always, because everyone’s got their own thing going on in their head, and there’s outside issues you can’t control, but you’ve got to sell it. And if you sell it properly, then the children are onboard, and they follow.

On the whole, then, Owen experienced there to be a positive feeling towards writing among the children in his class. He clarified that some children in his class typically perceived writing as more pleasurable than others. For instance, he perceived children with a stronger reading ability to find writing more pleasurable and believed this to be because they were more familiar with different aspects of the written language, such as spelling and syntax. He therefore encouraged reading because he believed that ‘good reading comes with good spelling, and good reading also broadens their vocabulary and their understanding of how sentences are structured and things like that’. Conversely, he believed low writing enjoyment to be linked to low confidence as writers, often as a result of writing barriers. He explained: ‘some people have more barriers, so they’re more scared of it’. Overall, however, he did not perceive there to be ‘any distinct

pattern' as to who enjoyed and who did not enjoy writing, as pupils with learning barriers could also express writing enjoyment, and that all pupils could have moments of low confidence in their writing. Rather, he believed writing for pleasure to take place the most when pupils were engaged in a writing task which they found enjoyable. For instance, Owen's class had particularly enjoyed a prewriting task which gave them an opportunity to map out a story inspired by sci-fi texts on A3 paper sheets as an alternative to a more formal writing plan. Owen found this to help the children visualise their story and its characters, and if they felt stuck while writing they could consult their visual sheets for inspiration. He was convinced of its help to the pupils after they had asked if they could use the same pre-writing method for another writing task: 'Oh, can I draw it as a map? Can I draw it as a story-line?'

### **5.3.3 Reflections on teaching writing**

Owen felt his main role as a teacher of English, and of writing especially, to be two-sided. First, his role as an English writing teacher was to Owen to help students 'use the English language as capably as they can in the modern world (...) so that they can go out into the world and fulfil whatever their ambitions might be in their careers'. An added role, he believed, was to help build an understanding and a love of arts, through both reading, writing, seeing and performing. To him, 'good writing comes as a result of both good instruction but also the willingness to make mistakes and being well-read'.

To teach writing, Owen followed two formal schemes of work on the various unit topics to be explored over the year: one text scheme and one grammar scheme. Each scheme took up two lessons per week, and the remaining periods for that week was used to further explore elements which he felt the pupils would benefit from exploring further, such as grammar or spelling. The schemes were, in other words, semi-structured, in that he had a base for the majority of his lessons for each subject, yet he also had the freedom to base the remaining lessons on how the children were responding to the material and topic. Some topics would expand over several weeks. Owen used the example of writing Viking information books: over the course of three weeks, the children first learnt about features of information books such as their content, index, glossary, bold writing and captions, before gradually undertaking independent writing. Furthermore, during the time working on such a unit topic, Owen described frequently using a KWL-grid, in which the children were to fill out what they *know* (K), and what they *want* to know about the topic before commencing (W). Additionally, towards the end of working on the topic and their texts, the children fill out what they have *learnt* (L). This grid format was, then, familiar to his pupils.

When asked to describe one particularly challenging and one especially valuable experience of teaching, Owen felt like these two experiences were related in the case of one of his pupils. This pupil had no particular learning barriers, and was middle ability, but due to external factors, lacked motivation. The pupil had negative attitudes towards learning and would frequently disrupt the class. Although challenging at first, Owen felt he was able to help the individual by improving their self-efficacy. This student responded well to ‘lots of praise’ and eventually ‘produced a fantastic piece of work’ as a result of Owen’s attempt to build the pupil’s confidence. Having cared for his pupil’s affective needs, Owen explained that reading this piece of writing toward the end of the school year was one of his most rewarding experiences as a teacher of writing.

Owen explained that he used two types of success criteria when considering his pupils’ written work, both of which were familiar to the children. The first was a three-part success criterion, called the *must, could, should* framework. This was altered for each writing task to explain to the children what they must, should, and could include in their writing. This allowed pupils of different abilities to stretch toward various challenge levels. The second criteria which Owen mentioned, was created by the class themselves collectively for each topic or task, such as for the Viking booklet. This was usually a tick-table, where the children ticked off whenever they had included important elements which had been agreed upon in advance. It was important for Owen that the pupils began developing a sense of assessment as a way of learning how to be a better writer at a young age. As well as including such self-assessment tasks, the children were given a variety of post-it notes with which to give feedback to everyone’s piece of written work. Using the ‘Two stars and a wish’ format, the children gave each other feedback on two things they had done well, and one aspect which could be improved.

This feedback task also reflected Owen’s belief that writing should be taught using a combination of individual and group-based work. Whether the children worked independently or in mixed group settings depended on the task and the outcomes in focus. Like Laura’s class, Owen’s had a broad ability range. He explained that, as a result, he would sometimes create mixed-ability groups so that the higher-ability children could inspire and help the lower-ability children. Other times the level of challenge was differentiated so the higher-abilities worked together, the middle-abilities were in a group, and the lower-ability pupils were paired.

#### **5.3.4 Attitudes towards literacy the current National Curriculum:**

Owen appreciated the curriculum’s emphasis on reading for pleasure and found this emphasis to be important. He explained that his pupils and the rest of the school read self-chosen books

from the school library in addition to those which were part of his school's reading scheme. It was important to Owen that his pupils were given opportunities to read whatever genre(s) they preferred, regardless of their challenge level: 'Some children typically might go for a non-fiction book and take out something that's full of a lot of pictures, but that is still reading, and it's reading for pleasure'. Because of these viewpoints, he agreed with the National Curriculum's focus on reading and particularly reading for pleasure. He was surprised to learn about the more limited emphasis on writing for pleasure in the curriculum, however, but hoped it reflected that teaching writing for pleasure now was a given:

I'd like to think that because writing for pleasure has been taken out of the National Curriculum the teachers are not bound by that. That it's almost a given that teachers now... that it's delivered; that writing is to be taught for pleasure. But I am surprised that it's not in the curriculum, actually. I think it's strange that reading is meant to be there, but writing isn't.

### **5.3.5 Participant-produced drawing**

Owen explained his drawing to portray a lesson briefly outlined previously, in which the children were to draw a visual plan over the story they wanted to write. They had read a fantasy novella as a class, and this book was to serve as inspiration for their story planning and writing. Using an A3 piece of paper each, the students were encouraged to create a 'world to help tell their story as a form of planning. By doing this, they were able to visualise and add characters, locations and events'. Owen's drawing portrays the classroom's whiteboard onto which he has written the *must, should, could* framework for the pupils to consult during the planning of their stories. His drawing includes various additional pieces of information which he had outlined for the pupils, regarding the purpose and outcome of the task. This information includes that the lesson featured an 'open task' of writing a fantasy story; that the pupils could use various resources to produce the drawing and its text; and were to give feedback to all their peers at the mid-point of the lesson to help them learn what could be improved. He found this lesson to be valuable because these pre-writing drawings proved to help produce some impressive stories in a later lesson, and the children asked to use the same form of planning again.



## 5.4 Katie

### 5.4.1 Educational and qualification background

Katie was 22 years old and in her first term of teaching at the time of the interview. She was, in other words, an NQT, and good-humouredly referred to herself as an ‘NQT newbie’. She had attended university in England where she received her undergraduate degree in Primary Education. After completing this degree, she was accredited with QTS and had started teaching in the first academic term following graduation.

### 5.4.2 Experiences with writing

Katie explained that she had ‘hated literacy’ in school. These strong words reflected her experience as a learner of being repeatedly told ‘maths is where you’re better, you really need to pick up your English’. Her English ‘always seemed like a negative’, and in turn, she turned to the subjects in which she felt success, such as maths, for enjoyment. Her low confidence with the English subject followed her into secondary school, where she did not enjoy the subject. Her attitude of ‘well, you’re not as good in it’, persisted. As a teacher, Katie did not undertake any writing for pleasure, but wrote for practical reasons as a part of her profession and social life. She believed her own experiences with writing in school to influence how she taught it herself: ‘I know that they need that positive comment. They need, ‘this is really, really good, but can you try this next time? It will be *even* better’, sort of thing. So we do a lot of friendly feedback’. She believed this to be particularly important for her group, as she perceived that a number of her pupils had had negative experiences with writing: ‘They are quite down on themselves this group. I’ve had students that have scribbled out all of their work because they don’t think it’s good enough. So I try and kind of build up confidence as much as possible’. From her own experiences in school she could relate to their low confidence in writing.

Overall, she explained, ‘I think there are negative attitudes toward writing, definitely’. A main challenge in writing among her pupils, she perceived to be spelling. Because spelling hindered their writing flow, she believed it to be ‘disheartening’. She therefore tried to point out only the most severe spelling mistakes made in their written work to avoid making her children reluctant to continue writing. The children in her class were particularly reluctant to undertake independent writing. After having completed a writing task, even if the children had been excited about the topic, they afterwards did not want to undertake more writing. Rather than being excited for another opportunity to write, Katie explained the attitude of the class to be something along the lines of the following: ‘We don’t really want to do more writing. We’ve

just done all of this big long, long thing'. She perceived the most challenging aspect of individual writing to be getting the ideas and writing the first few sentences. She explained that these aspects of the writing process could be 'quite daunting' to some of her pupils. She found that using sentence starters, such as writing the first sentence down collectively as a class, was helpful. With some 'hand-holding', she hoped the pupils would 'get the flow' after a rocky start to the tasks.

Despite the generally negative attitudes and experiences with writing, Katie found her pupils to enjoy writing more when they were interested in the topic. She perceived that, although her class was 'boisterous', an interesting writing task could keep them focused and entertained to some extent. In turn, Katie tried to 'hook' her pupils in with topics and tasks she experienced her pupils to enjoy in order to motivate them to write more. Her pupils did not particularly like poetry because of its many rules and structure, but they did enjoy creating creative posters after learning about information texts, although they did not produce great amounts of texts for this task. She was hopeful that writing stories would let the children showcase their knowledge and foster their writing enjoyment to a greater extent, particularly as she believed it would allow them to use their imagination to a larger degree.

### **5.4.3 Reflections on teaching writing**

To Katie, her main role as a teacher was less concerned with the academic side of teaching than with her pupils' wellbeing and happiness: 'I like to make sure they come in happy and they leave happy. To me, the actual academic side of it... it's great if they're learning loads. But if they're not happy then I'm not really happy'. This answer was based on her reflections that pupils in her school, and in her class especially, had 'a lot of different issues'. As such, her main emphasis as a teacher was on their enjoyment and comfortability over performance.

Katie's school followed the scheme 'Literacy and Language' which Katie did not find to accommodate the lower attainers in her class. In turn, she typically changed the scheme's suggested lessons to a large extent in order to moderate their level of detail. In order to teach the lower and middle ability class, she explained, she would frequently model with them on the board because they required 'hand-holding quite a lot'. Katie used the example of writing a segment about information to share with someone who would listen to their news reel: 'we actually wrote out a whole one for our class, the one we were doing. So when they went to do it themselves they kind of knew what they were going to do'. She pointed out that, during the modelling writing lessons, the children were encouraged to share their ideas and engage as a class. The news reels were later created in groups. However, she pointed out, some units were

based more on individual work, such as poetry and radio adverts. Despite their lower abilities, she wanted her pupils to be as independent as possible but felt modelling to be necessary to give them a 'push' towards writing independently.

While she believed most of her pupils to be at a similar level in writing, she described a broad range of reading abilities. Some of her pupils, she elaborated, were reading the Harry Potter series, while others barely read at home. For all reading abilities, her school encouraged reading for pleasure. She explained that her classroom had a bookshelf with different books which the pupils read in the morning, after lunch, and if they finished an activity early. The pupils were also expected to read at home three times a week. She perceived writing for pleasure, on the other hand, to play a more limited role in her pupils' lives:

I think it would be good if children picked up a pen or pencil or whatever and started writing for pleasure, but I don't think they will... (...) I just think there's too many different things in the world now. I think technology has like overtaken their lives. And they're actually quicker on an iPad, or, quicker typing this out now, than they are at writing.

Katie expresses here that writing for pleasure appeared to be an outdated activity among her children, which she did not believe them prioritise. Similar to Laura, then, she believed technology to hinder the extent to which writing for pleasure is undertaken at home, and considered technology to offer easier tools for writing, compared to which traditional writing on paper requires more effort. Ultimately, Katie believed writing for pleasure to be beneficial, but did not see writing to play such a role in their lives. She did, therefore, not typically encourage this activity in out-of-school contexts.

#### **5.4.4 Attitudes towards literacy in the current National Curriculum**

To Katie, the National Curriculum had its positives and negatives. She enjoyed its clear structure and the teachers' freedom to choose when and how to teach its various elements throughout the school year. However, she believed the primary curriculum was too comprehensive for many pupils: 'I just think the primary curriculum is quite massive in all senses. What they're expected to know is ridiculous'. She approved of its emphasis on reading for pleasure, particularly because of the benefits of reading on writing, but she perceived this to offer its challenges. Particularly, she emphasised that some children did not get the support required while reading for pleasure at home:

There's a lot of benefits to reading, but I do think that there's not always the support needed when reading. I've got some children that I know read at home but they're never listened to. So they're reading words wrong, and they're not being told that it's a wrong word that they're reading. So they're kind of embedding something that's wrong in their mind, which obviously doesn't then help. That's quite a struggle in here sometimes.

Similar to Laura, then, she appreciated the curriculum's emphasis on reading for pleasure, but pointed out challenges of the extensive emphasis on reading extensively and for pleasure demanded by the curriculum. When asked about writing for pleasure, Katie was not surprised by its limited emphasis in the curriculum, as she felt it reflected the more practical function, rather than enjoyable purpose, with today's children. As aforementioned, to Katie, children were unlikely to write for pleasure because of their consumption with their technological devices.

#### **5.4.5 Participant-produced drawing**

Katie's drawing depicted a lesson in which she was producing a model text with her class. Katie is portrayed as a smiling teacher at the front by the board, facing her pupils. She distinguished between the two different boards in her classroom: the interactive whiteboard (IWB), and the non-interactive whiteboard (NIWB). The task is on the interactive whiteboard (IWB). This, explained Katie, was to give the children a point of reference, 'so we can check we're doing it right'. On the non-interactive whiteboard, she is depicted as writing a text. In doing so, she explained, her pupils' ideas are used to build up the paragraph as she writes on the board. Following the depicted class-writing, the pupils were to try and write similar texts more independently. The drawing displays the twenty-three pupils of the class, each represented by a grey dot. She explained that the four children sitting on the carpet do so because they were unable to see the IWB from their table, and the IWB is essential for her modelling.

### **5.5 Mark**

#### **5.5.1 Educational and qualification background**

Mark was a couple of days away from turning 30 at the time of the interview. After having completed a university degree within sports, he found his way into teaching through being a teacher assistant and gaining a PGCE teaching qualification, all of which took place in England. At the point of the interview he had been a teacher for five years.

### **5.5.2 Experiences with writing**

Mark, similar to Katie, admitted to never having enjoyed writing in school. He explained that he was never an avid reader or writer in school, and rarely, if ever, produced any writing for pleasure. He would merely write when given school writing tasks. This, he believed, gave him a great understanding of many of his pupils. He felt he could relate to the pupils that struggled with reading and writing motivation. He was, therefore, particularly invested in helping his pupils find enjoyable books to read, and motivate reading for pleasure, because he never found any that he particularly enjoyed as a pupil himself. He encouraged his pupils to choose any book(s) from the school library, regardless of genre or difficulty, and believed enjoyable reading experiences to improve both reading and writing abilities and writing enjoyment. At the time of the interview, Mark would write reports of various lengths as part of his profession, but not undertake writing for pleasure. He explained that some other teachers at his school did write for pleasure, including poetry, but that he himself was more engaged with sports and fitness as a hobby.

From his experience, Mark typically perceived an even distribution of pupils who enjoyed and who did not necessarily enjoy writing. He had not noticed any patterns regarding who enjoyed writing more than others. Although spelling and punctuation could be a challenge for his pupils, he rarely perceived this to prevent writing for pleasure. He perceived, however, some genres to be considered more enjoyable among pupils than others. For instance, after having worked on limericks and news reports, several pupils had brought to class a number of texts which they had written at home for the sake of enjoyment. One girl, he explained, 'came to class with an entire newspaper, with a bunch of news reports in it, which she had written at home'. He believed a reason for this could be that reports often involved 'running around and gathering information', and was, in turn, a more engaging type of text to write than others. During the writing of any type of text, Mark perceived the most enjoyable part of the writing process among his pupils to be independent writing, as he believed planning and editing to more easily become boring among children. In turn, he found his pupils to generally be the most enthusiastic about their individual writing.

### **5.5.3 Reflections on teaching writing**

As a teacher of writing, Mark felt his main role was to equip his pupils with the skills required for them to be the best writers they could be at their age, with room for individual strengths and challenges. Additionally, he saw creating positive attitudes toward writing to be important. In

doing so, he would typically set a wide range of tasks of different genres, as explored in the previous section. His teaching was based off the *Talk for Writing* scheme, which was followed by his school. He explained that this scheme had three stages: (1) imitation, in which the pupils learned a text by heart, through retelling and immersing the learners in creative ways after which all pupils were able to read it because it had been internalised; (2) innovation, whereby the class worked together to create a new text based on the one learnt in shared writing lessons, and (3) invention, which was the independent writing stage, where the pupils wrote their own texts based on the structures and strategies taught in the earlier stages, using the shared writing text, a word bank and a story map for guidance. Within these stages, emphasis was also placed on grammar and punctuation linked to the texts which they were currently reading or writing. To exemplify, Mark explained that he had used a passage from *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* as a model text, which the children innovated in a shared writing process into taking place in a jungle, before writing their own independent fiction texts, employing features typical of fantasy texts.

His school encouraged spending longer time on topics if the teachers saw fit, rather than producing rushed written pieces of work of poorer quality. In turn, Mark did not feel like his teaching of writing was ever rushed, which he considered to be beneficial for both his teaching and his pupils' learning. Moreover, he did not find that one specific experience or moment of teaching stood out as particularly challenging nor as particularly valuable. Rather, he believed that the *Talk for Writing* programme worked exceptionally well in encompassing all levels of writing abilities, and that this made teaching less challenging. Additionally, he emphasised the school's focus on helping one another, so that if he ever had any issues or challenges, he could easily resort them by consulting one or more teachers. To Mark, the moments of noticing great improvements in pupils' writing were greatly rewarding, but no one episode stood out as an example of this.

#### **5.5.4 Attitudes towards literacy in the current National Curriculum**

To Mark, the National Curriculum was helpful in demonstrating the requirements of what to include and expect in teaching the various subjects. He explained that his school's literacy scheme was created with the curriculum in mind, and thus made it simple for him to include the elements of composition, transcription, grammar, spelling and punctuation, described in the curriculum into his teaching. He supported the curriculum's emphasis on reading for pleasure, because he found extensive reading to have great benefits for his pupils' literacy skills, and his school was concerned with creating positive attitudes towards reading. However, Mark believed

there was potential for the curriculum to include writing for pleasure in order to promote writing enjoyment in the primary classroom: 'Including writing for pleasure in the curriculum might make teachers place more emphasis on enjoyable aspects of writing. That would be great if that happened'. Ultimately, then, Mark held positive attitudes toward the curriculum, but saw room for improvement in regard to its limited emphasis on writing for pleasure.

### **5.5.5 Participant-produced drawing**

In his drawing, Mark is teaching as a part of the second stage, the innovation stage, of the Talk for Writing scheme. His class is working on newspaper reports after the children have already learnt a newspaper model text by heart. On a clothing line in the classroom hangs a story map boxed into paragraphs 'to help them learn the structure', as well as a Word Bank consisting of 'key words and phrases they can use'. He explained that both the story map and the word bank contain pictures for visual aid. Mark is standing by the classroom's flip board with a marker in his hand, ready to write on the board. He explained: 'in the lesson, we're working together to turn the learnt text into a new text of our own'. In doing so, Mark is portrayed as smiling broadly. He explained this to be a deliberate feature, because it was important for him to model positive attitudes toward the task and to help the pupils find his lesson enjoyable. Once the shared text is completed, this would also be placed on the washing line, as demonstrated by the drawing. This is to assist the children in their independent work during the next stage. The children are not drawn, but their desks are represented by the rectangular shapes on the bottom half of the page.

## **5.6 Ben**

### **5.6.1 Background**

Ben was 32 years old and had worked nine years as a teacher at the time of the interview. Throughout his time teaching he had taught across primary from year 2 up to year 6. Before going into teaching he had undertaken a history undergraduate degree and qualified as a teacher upon acquiring his PGCE. Both his degree and teaching qualification were undertaken in England.

### **5.6.2 Experiences with writing**

Ben had enjoyed writing throughout school and considered himself 'quite fortunate' to have done so. He had done well in the English subject in school and had been confident in his

abilities. He had always preferred writing non-fiction over fiction and had preferred writing about topics which he enjoyed. Similarly, he had preferred reading non-fiction. He attributed his childhood writing enjoyment to his reading enjoyment and was thankful for having had parents who had read to him as a child, and fostered reading enjoyment. As a teacher, Ben described writing frequently for his profession, including reports, emails and fiction texts with his pupils in class. He did not conduct any writing for pleasure. However, he believed he would find pleasure in writing if he actually sat down to write: 'I probably do like to do it, I just don't do it enough'.

Ben perceived his pupils to enjoy writing overall, particularly in tasks where they experienced more ownership. Although some pupils held negative attitudes toward writing, he found the majority of his pupils to take enjoyment in writing to a greater extent when their writing could be more 'independent'. In turn, Ben described ending every lesson with asking his pupils to write independently, inspired by a creative picture provided, for ten minutes. So long as they attempt to include what they have learnt in the lesson (i.e. using the possessive apostrophe), they could write about the picture in any way they wish to. He clarified: 'It's not writing for pleasure in the sense that I am telling them to write, it's something they've got to do. *But*, it's freedom'. He explained that other attempts to foster writing enjoyment in his class included inviting authors to talk about their book(s) and writing processes, and providing the pupils with engaging writing topics which interested them. For instance, Ben clarified, he had asked his pupils to write a recruitment poster for World War 1. This task had engaged even the most reluctant writers, who 'got very into this idea, and they were trying to trick people into joining, in a way, convincing and indoctrinating people. And they really enjoyed that. Their writing was fantastic'.

Additionally, in an attempt to promote writing for pleasure, he encouraged his pupils to write for pleasure at home, and to bring the pieces of work to school. It was important for Ben to acknowledge and celebrate his pupils' writing, and he believed this to be important for their writing enjoyment. He therefore encouraged his pupils to bring texts written at home into school, in order to promote future writing for pleasure:

I say "bring it in!", and pop it up at the board. And a lot of times it could be not very well punctuated or stuff, but *they* wrote it and they took pleasure in writing, they're proud of their writing. And that should be acknowledged because they've done something off their own bat. They're not writing because *I* tell them to write, they write because they *want* to write.



Lastly, similar to Owen, Ben believed it was important to enjoy writing as a teacher, or at least pretend to enjoy it, for the sake of the pupils, in order to increase their writing enjoyment. He believed, in other words, that teacher enthusiasm was important in increasing the writing enthusiasm of pupils, which would in turn positively influence their writing:

‘Children, they just soak up enthusiasm. Whatever the subject, it doesn’t matter if it’s a subject that you hated in school, love it for them. Pretend that you love it. And if *you* love it and you *are* enthusiastic, the children will be enthusiastic. And that just soaks up into the writing’.

### 5.6.3 Reflections on teaching writing

Ben felt teachers of writing to hold a combined main role of writing and reading. He emphasised the importance of reading in order to become a skilled writer and explained that his school had a big focus on reading and how it transfers over to writing. According to himself, ‘We feel that we can’t do one, really, without the other’. This belief was greatly reflected in his reported practices of teaching writing. One aspect to his teaching of writing was ‘a massive emphasis on good, quality texts’. This entailed reading ‘*with* the children and *to* the children, *a lot*. It’s about an hour a day of reading, minimum’. From considering authorial voice and inferring the words’ meaning, he believed reading to help generate “good, standard writing” in his class. In doing so, reading was typically undertaken in advance of writing. He explained:

So the idea is that if we’re looking at a topic, we’ll ask the children to read about that topic beforehand, so they’ve got the knowledge and richness of vocabulary, and ideas to write. So if you’re writing a fairy tale, why not read lots and lots and lots of fairy tales? Because you can’t write a fairy tale if you don’t know what a fairy tale is.

His school’s emphasis on reading ‘good, quality texts’ was illustrated by Ben’s use of WAGOLLS. In his school, the model texts were taken from ‘the real world’ rather than being written by the teacher. He explained that although these texts were likely to be of very high standards, they were helpful in encouraging children to aim high and set high standards. Next, he would ask his pupils to write a paragraph of a text of a similar type, such as a news report, following the ‘Writing Revolution’ method. This approach, he explained, ‘boils down to the ideas of syntax’ and emphasised grammar as the ‘building blocks of writing’. He explained that because it was very structured, children wrote independently one paragraph at a time. Ben would model, but most of the writing was individual, using the ‘scaffold framework of ‘Writing

Revolution’. Consequently, completing a text was time-consuming process from which the pupils ‘create some brilliant writing’. He explained:

‘Basically, we spend a long time on even one paragraph at a time, and a paragraph might even take two or three days. But we look at what a paragraph needs, we plan it out in a lesson so there’s notetaking, vocabulary (...). We write it; we then revise it; we write it again. So, it’s quite a long process but over three or four weeks you get a nice piece of writing that actually took a long time to scaffold and build up’

In addition to placing emphasis on reading and grammar, a third element of his teaching of writing included a ‘purely SPAG-approach’. This approach was based on the pupils’ year 6 test of spelling, punctuation, and grammar (SPAG), and included explicitly teaching elements which would be asked in the test, such as writing terminology. Ben was unsure, however, as to how well these terms transferred over to the pupils’ actual writing, and disagreed with their emphasis in the curriculum, as is explored in the subsequent section 5.6.4.

When asked to describe a lesson which had been particularly pleasurable as a teacher, Ben described a lesson in which the pupils had been asked to write the next paragraph of a novel they had read together as a class. The novel had ended on a cliff-hanger, and he perceived his pupils to have enjoyed continuing the story the way they imagined it. He felt this was a successful lesson because ‘The ideas and the creativity was brilliant. And everything we’d taught, skills based, flowed. It was natural’. In opposition, a lesson which stood out to him as particularly challenging was one concerning the possessive apostrophe. He found it ‘dry’ and difficult for his pupils to comprehend and enjoy.

#### **5.6.4 Attitudes towards literacy in the current National Curriculum**

Ben appreciated the move from genre-based writing to writing for purpose that had taken place between the previous and the current the National Curriculum. This shift, he believed, had allowed students to take more ownership over their writing and to be more engaged in writing: ‘I think they enjoy it [writing] more now because it is looser’. In addition, Ben was positive toward the curriculum’s emphasis on reading for pleasure, both for the pupils’ reading development, but also for its value in teaching and learning writing. Writing for pleasure, on the other hand, he believed to be ‘something we probably need to promote more, and I think not as a school but as a country’. He believed it to be important that, in the midst of the emphasis on the quality of children’s writing, writing for pleasure should be a priority. This included the National Curriculum. He was worried that it currently placed excessive emphasis on learning

terminology, making writing ‘very prescribed’ and even ‘ridiculous’. This, he worried, was ‘taking the joy out of writing away’.

### **5.6.5 Participant-produced drawing**

Ben did not produce a drawing for this study. This is considered in relation to the validity and reliability and the limitations of the project, in sections 4.12 and 6.6, respectively.

## **5.7 Alicia**

### **5.7.1 Background**

Alicia was 47 years old and in her 20<sup>th</sup> year of teaching at the time of her interview. She had an undergraduate degree in Russian politics and a PGCE. She was qualified to teach the full range of 4-18-year-olds. She had also worked as a senior and head teacher during her years as a teacher. At the time of the interview, however, she taught year 4.

### **5.7.2 Experiences with writing**

Alicia explained that she found great enjoyment in writing. In turn, she reported to frequently write for pleasure: ‘I write for pleasure. I write because I love writing’. This writing included a blog about her experiences with teaching and writings for various teacher community websites, where she felt free to write at her own pace and to choose her own topics. To her, writing could be ‘incredibly cathartic’. She explained that she shared with her class her title as an author on these websites, the fact that she wrote frequently, and examples of some of her writings. This, she believed, was important for her to be a positive writing role model: ‘for the children to see that the people that are teaching them, actually also do that in their daily life, is wonderful. It's not just that I'm going into school teaching writing. I'm passionate about writing. I love writing’. Even though she did not perceive her pupils to necessarily read her written texts, she perceived her writing enthusiasm to be met with excited reactions from pupils such as ‘[Gasp] Are you like an author?!’ and ‘Ah, it's amazing’.

However, Alicia had not always loved writing. Although she had done well in writing at school and at university, her writing experiences had been negatively influenced by childhood teachers that were ‘never terribly celebratory’ about her writing. She explained: ‘what stuck with me was being told an awful lot in school that what I was writing was not quite what they wanted. What I love now is that I can just write, and that I haven't got someone

saying 'Well, that's not quite right, don't do this'. This, she elaborated, transferred into her ways of providing feedback for her pupils' writing:

I'm very conscious as a teacher that well I'm giving verbal feedback to my children about their writing, that I do so in a way that is incredibly supportive but will also move them on. Because I think, when people put pens to paper, they become vulnerable.

She believed that often, both for learners and teachers, this vulnerability and fear of being judged could easily remove any sense of pleasure from writing, and she therefore emphasises positive feedback in building self-efficacy among her pupils. Nevertheless, she believed her pupils took great enjoyment in writing: 'They write because they love writing. And it's such a pleasure to see that with children, to see them excited when they get a writing lesson'. For some of her pupils, this writing enjoyment led them to write for pleasure in their spare time, and occasionally show the writing to Alicia. One of her pupils sometimes sent her stories electronically, which Alicia encouraged. What she believed to be the most important for pupils' enjoyment in writing was being creative. However, this was sometimes made difficult because her taught class struggled with spelling and handwriting. In turn, she emphasised the importance of not only allowing creativity, but also explicitly teaching important elements of writing, particular to the text type in focus.

### **5.7.3 Reflections on teaching writing**

Alicia believed her main role as a teacher of writing to be 'to really develop children's understanding of story language, understanding of writing, so that they become lovers of writing'. In other words, fostering positive attitudes toward writing was of great importance to her, and in doing so, she believed in the power of stories and storytelling. This, she believed, allowed her pupils to consider their texts from both a reader and writer perspective:

I'm not saying to them 'go write a story about a cat'. What I'm doing is, I'm teaching them exactly what they need to do to write a story, what they need to do to write characterization for example, and then I guide them through the process step by step by step, and they understand what they're writing for readers point of view, and they understand what they're writing from a writer point of view.

Similar to Mark, in doing this, Alicia followed the Talk for Writing scheme where writing is taught by way of learning texts by heart and later writing independent texts inspired by the texts

which have been explored in great detail as a class. In other words, spoken language and literacy was considered as closely connected. She explained:

I teach it to them through images so they can actually talk the story. And they talk and they act and they understand story. They can talk the whole story through. And then it's about pulling the story apart and pulling the features apart, so actually, if you're doing characterization, what makes up good characterization? (...) And then you innovate the original story. (...) So what you do is you say to them 'how did this story start? What should we do for the beginning of our next story?'. And using the same sort of structure. So, that you're getting children to use what you taught them but apply it to their own writing and change it up as such.

Knowledge of storytelling was to Alicia one of the most important aspects to teach. In addition, teaching phonics and handwriting, she believed, was particularly important to master. She acknowledged the complexity of writing and explained that the various components of writing made it a challenging craft to master: 'You've got to write neatly so people can actually read it, you've got to spell correctly, you've got to punctuate correctly, you've got to use the right grammar, and *then* you've got to be creative'. Due to writing's complex nature, she underlined the complexity of teaching writing and described it as 'really hard' to teach. She appreciated being able to rely on her past experiences as a teacher and subject knowledge, especially when experiencing more challenging lessons, particularly in relation to grammar and punctuation. She explained: 'I feel very, very grateful now that I have, after 20 years, I have a great deal of subject knowledge that I can fall back on'.

Alicia also emphasised the importance of reading in developing writing. This involved getting children to both read widely and to become passionate readers. She believed this to inspire children with ideas to write about, and that that children's writing typically reflected their breadth and preferences of reading: 'I do think that if you've got a child that doesn't read very widely, their writing will show that'. In getting pupils to read, Alicia believed the teacher played an important role in both providing a wide range of books and make recommendations when desired, but also to frequently read to her learners:

Books to me are absolutely vital. For children to be good writers they have to be good readers. They have to absolutely live and breathe the language of books, but teachers do too. So I *love* reading to my children and making the books come alive, because I think children then understand the power of writing on the reader.

#### 5.7.4 Attitudes towards literacy in the current National Curriculum

Although she appreciated that newer teachers could find great help in the structure and clear requirements of the curriculum, Alicia experienced the current National Curriculum as restraining her teaching of all subjects. This was because she perceived the freedom of teaching to be limited: ‘We’re told what we have to do and how we have to do it’. Rather than deciding what and how to teach, she felt like her teaching was greatly influenced by what was required by the curriculum. She explained:

there’s a frustration in the fact that we have to tick boxes, and by the time you’ve gone from this school you should have ticked off all of these boxes. And *these* the boxes are the ones you should tick off in year 4. And that’s what takes away the freedom.

In turn, Alicia felt ‘very, very contained’ in her teaching, and believed that she was unable to teach in ways she would have liked. She had suggested a change in teaching literacy to her leader but had been told that it would not be possible in practice due to the strict curricular requirements for each year group. The restraining nature of the curriculum was, in other words, also experienced in regard to literacy, specifically. She explained: ‘It basically says in year 4 they must cover this, this, this, this, and this. They must spell these words, they must do this grammar’. This led Alicia to find the national curriculum ‘annoying’ in her teaching of reading and writing. Particularly, she did not believe it was the government’s place to enforce reading for pleasure in schools:

I find it fascinating that the government feels that they have to tell people to read for pleasure. And if you’re told to read for pleasure, my question would be, do you? If I’m telling you ‘you have to read that book and you have to do it for pleasure’, are you actually going to? Or are you going to feel a bit frustrated that you’re being told to read for pleasure? So, I think, the job of the teacher is to ensure that children love reading. But I think the National Curriculum making it another tick box, ‘make sure your children read for pleasure’, that puts an awful lot of pressure on the teacher. And then, actually, are you encouraging children to read for pleasure because you believe in it, or are you encouraging them to read for pleasure because that’s what it says you have to do?

Similar to Laura, then, Alicia felt this emphasis to place unnecessary pressure on teachers and students to take pleasure in reading, and worried that it instead had the opposite effect. Similarly, Alicia believed fostering writing enjoyment and encouraging writing for pleasure were essential aspects of teaching writing, but she did not feel that the National Curriculum should pressure teachers into enforcing it. Rather, she believed it should be a natural part of

learning and teaching writing. For less experienced teachers, however, she believed such an emphasis in the curriculum could be beneficial.

### **5.7.5 Participant-produced drawing**

Alicia's drawing depicts the first lesson in which she taught writing by using a talk map. Such a map consists of pictures that represent words within the text 'so that the children can easily learn them'. She explained: 'I hang the talk map up on a washing line and teach from it'. Similar to Mark's drawing, then, her drawing features a Talk for Writing inspired washing line. In Alicia's drawing she is standing in front of this line, smiling, while her pupils are seated (although depicted as standing) in front of her. Her decision to depict this lesson, she explained, was made because it had stood out to her as a remarkable lesson:

I had seen this done by others but couldn't believe how quickly children could learn long passages of text when they were taught it with visuals and actions. I think what I found unbelievable when I first taught it was that the children were able to tell me what certain words, phrases and sentences were when I pointed at the images on the map. They were then able to use these in their own writing and 'innovate' or improve on them.

Alicia's drawing is the only one produced for this project which portrays direct speech. This speech is presented in the form of a speech bubble in which it says: 'It was a dark night. No moon. No stars. Black'. These words, she clarified, were spoken by her pupils in unison in their act of telling the given story, while she pointed to the pictures on the clothing line, leading the session.

## 5.8 The participant-produced drawings

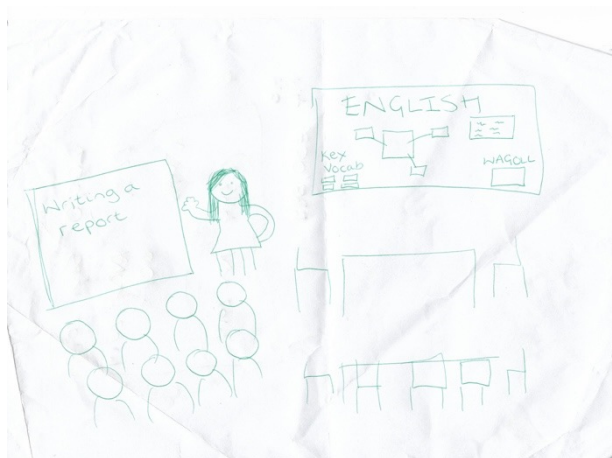


Figure 3: Laura's drawing (above).

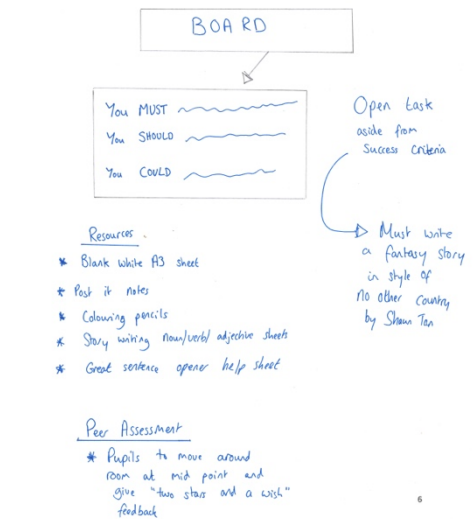


Figure 4: Owen's drawing (above).

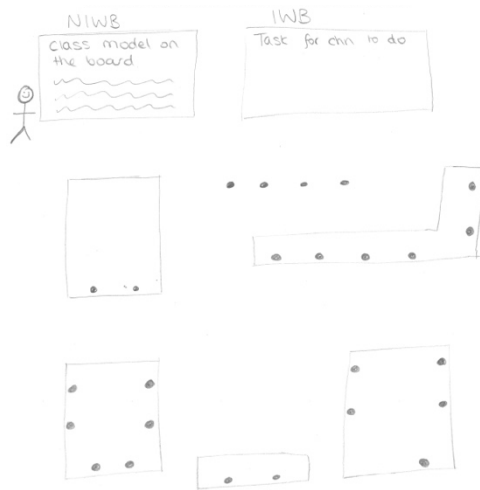


Figure 5: Katie's drawing (above).

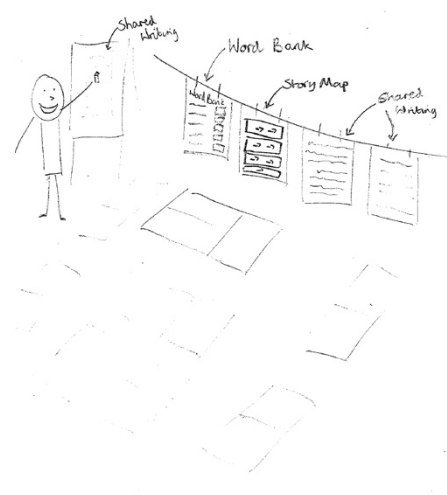


Figure 6: Mark's drawing (above).

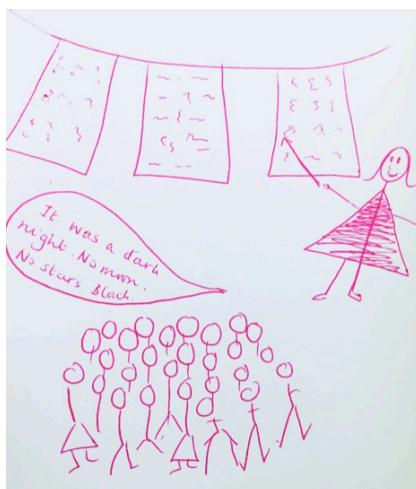


Figure 7: Alicia's drawing (above).



## **6 Discussion**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter offers a discussion of the main findings of the current study which were outlined in chapter 5. Particularly, the teachers' beliefs about writing for pleasure and teaching writing is discussed, taking into consideration both the teachers' verbal and visual statements. As well as highlighting corresponding and dissimilar findings between the participants, the chapter considers the findings in light of previous relevant research drawn from both L1 and L2 contexts, as well as theory. In addition, the results are linked to the research questions of this study: To what extent does writing for pleasure play a role in the teachers' reported beliefs about teaching writing? What are some main factors influencing the teachers' reported beliefs about the role of writing for pleasure in teaching writing? How do the teachers' reported beliefs about teaching writing compare with their visual self-representation as teachers? How do the teachers' reported beliefs about teaching writing and writing for pleasure compare with theory on said topics?

The chapter is organised categorically, following the categories based on the interview guide, as did the previous two sections: experiences with writing; reflections on teaching writing; teachers' attitudes towards the curriculum; and finally, the participant-produced drawings. However, some overlapping between the different themes and topics may occur as all categories are linked to the overall themes of teaching writing and writing enjoyment.

### **6.2 Experiences with writing**

According to Borg (2015b), teacher cognition is likely to be influenced by beliefs formed prior to beginning to teach. Experiences as learners have been argued to be particularly significant in impacting teachers' beliefs and practices (Lee, 2018). In line with this, five of the six teacher informants in the current study believed their own experiences as learners to have had an impact on their beliefs about how writing should be taught, particularly in making writing an enjoyable experience. Laura and Owen suggested their beliefs about teaching writing to be influenced by pleasant experiences with writing as learners. Although Laura's positive experiences were mainly from primary school and university, while Owen's were primarily from secondary school, both teachers were inspired by their own engaging teachers, and described emphasising teaching methods which they believed to be engaging and enjoyable as a result. For Laura, for instance, this involved providing pupils with choices in deciding their own writing topics, as this was something she had appreciated in school, herself, particularly in university. Katie,

Mark and Alicia, on the other hand, believed certain features which they employed in their own teaching to have been missing from their own writing education. For Mark, this included the use of reading for pleasure in motivating writing for pleasure, while for Katie and Alicia, this involved the use of friendly feedback to build their pupils' confidence as writers in order for writing to become an enjoyable experience. Feeling that they would have benefited from this in their own education, the teachers consciously made an effort to include this in their teaching. In turn, the findings are in line with writing teacher cognition research which suggests that writing teachers' beliefs about teaching methods and practices are typically influenced by their positive or negative experiences as learners (Borg, 2015b). For instance, Lee (2018) found learners' experiences, both positive and negative, to affect teachers' beliefs about whether process- or product writing were the most valued in their own teaching, and Drew (2019) found Norwegian student teachers' perceptions about the teaching of English (L2) to show a preference toward teaching methods which differed significantly from those they encountered as learners themselves, similarly to Mark, Katie and Alicia in this study (70).

There does not appear to be any strong correspondence between past learner experiences with writing and the teacher informants' beliefs about the current role of writing for pleasure in their personal lives. Five teachers, the great majority of the participants, reported to rarely, if ever, write for pleasure. This reflects the previous research which has found the great majority of teachers to rarely write for pleasure (Gardner, 2014; Morgan, 2010). However, the current study is incongruent with previous research which suggests learner experiences to impact the levels of writing enjoyment among teachers as adults (Daisey, 2009; Draper, Barksdale-Ladd & Radencich, 2000). In the current study, only Katie described a correspondence between her past (negative) personal writing experiences and her current low levels of writing enjoyment and disinterest in writing for pleasure. Similarly, the only teacher who reported to frequently write for pleasure, Alicia, explained that she had not particularly enjoyed writing in school nor written for pleasure until recently. These findings might suggest that factors other than childhood experiences with writing may be the primary determiner of beliefs about the role of writing for pleasure in their own lives. Supporting Morgan (2010) and Wells and Lyons' (2017) finding that a lack of time and energy following work and social activities are restricting factors in prioritising writing for pleasure among teachers, for instance, Laura and Owen attributed their lack of writing for pleasure to a hectic lifestyle.

Furthermore, these findings might imply that writing for pleasure among teachers could be further promoted. This is because writing for pleasure among teachers holds value for the teaching of writing as it provides teachers with a writer's perspective, and may, in turn, help

the teacher relate better to the challenges and rewards which their pupils may face when writing (Kendrick & Forler, 1997). In addition, sharing teacher-produced texts (especially written for the sake of enjoyment) with pupils is encouraged for a number of reasons, such as demonstrating why the benefits of writing outweigh its challenges (Augsburger, 1998) and modelling texts and writing processes from a writer's perspective (Young, 2019). Consequently, being a writer-teacher is important in fostering writing for pleasure among pupils (Young, 2019). Such benefits of being a writer-teacher are supported by Alicia's reported experiences with sharing her texts written for pleasure with her pupils. She believed that doing so inspired her pupils and generated enthusiasm around writing in her classroom. Consequently, both learners and teachers might benefit from a greater promotion of writing for pleasure among teachers.

Along with reporting experiences concerning their own writing and writing for pleasure, the teacher informants held beliefs about their pupils' experiences with writing. For instance, there appeared to be two main types of beliefs about the extent to which writing for pleasure was perceived by pupils, and the teachers' reported practices of encouraging this activity in out-of-school contexts. Laura and Katie perceived writing for pleasure to play a limited role in their pupils' lives, greatly due to their children's occupation with technology. In turn, they did not expect writing for pleasure to be undertaken at home. The four other teachers, on the other hand, perceived their pupils to enjoy writing for pleasure both in and beyond school, and further encouraged this activity. These findings might suggest that the learners' attitudes toward writing for pleasure, particularly in out-of-school-contexts, might influence teachers' beliefs about the extent to which it should be promoted beyond school contexts, or, alternatively, that negative attitudes toward it might act as a barrier to the extent to which the teachers act in line with their belief that it is beneficial. The latter potential explanation is supported by previous research into teacher beliefs which suggests negative learner reactions to teacher practices to 'hinder teachers in acting on their beliefs' (Fives & Buehl, 2012: 483-484), as may pupils' attitudes (Bullock, 2010). The findings from the current study appear to reflect, then, teacher cognition theory which suggest that social interactions within the classroom play an important role in shaping teacher beliefs (Tschannen-Moran, Salloum & Goddard, 2015).

It is worth noting, however, that all teacher informants appeared to place greater emphasis on the assignment and/or encouragement of reading for pleasure in out-of-school contexts than they did writing for pleasure. The four teachers who described promoting writing for pleasure in out-of-school contexts, described it as a more informal and occasional practice than the promotion and assignment of out-of-school reading for pleasure, which was typically

assigned as homework. This suggests that placing emphasis on writing for pleasure is to a greater extent the decision of the teacher than is that of reading for pleasure. This reflects that the latter is implemented by the curriculum as a statutory requirement to be emphasised by teachers. In other words, this finding might reflect the influence of contextual factors in the form of governmental implementations on teachers' reported beliefs (and practices) (Borg, 2015b), which is further explored in section 6.4.

Lastly, in discussing their experiences with writing and teaching writing, five teachers commonly referred to their fellow teaching staff and/or school as a community. In doing so, the teachers primarily expressed agreement with school policies, beliefs and literacy schemes. For example, for Laura and Ben, these beliefs included positive attitudes and attribution of importance toward the use of reading corners in the classrooms of their schools to promote reading for pleasure, and using reading for pleasure to motivate writing for pleasure; for Ben this also included valuing authentic, high quality model texts. For Mark these collective beliefs concerned, for instance, freedom in determining how long to spend on each writing topic; and for Owen, emphasis on technological literacy skills. In line with this, the majority of teachers expressed positive attitudes toward the literacy or writing scheme employed by their schools. Because such beliefs were described to be valued by the school as a whole, and by the individual teacher, this finding might suggest that the teachers' beliefs might have been shaped, at least to some extent, by interactions with their colleagues and their school organisation. As explained by Tschannen-Moran, Salloum and Goddard (2015), teachers' 'beliefs are shaped by interactions with others in the environment in which they work and the collective beliefs that grow out of these interactions' (301). These findings might, then, provide an insight into how experienced teachers see themselves in relation to their school.

Katie, however, was less impressed with the literacy scheme employed by her school as she believed it to be excluding her lower ability students. In addition, she referred less to her school as a whole in her reported beliefs about teaching writing. This was reflected in her more infrequent use of pronouns such as 'we' and 'us' in discussing her beliefs. Potentially, this might reflect her newly acquired role within her school as an NQT, having only taught for a few months at the time of the interview. Because she appeared to be less influenced by collective beliefs than the more experienced teachers, this might indicate that teacher beliefs change with experience. As Skott (2015) points out, teacher beliefs may be considered as 'dynamic and evolving outcomes of individual and communal acts of meaning-making' (24). For instance, changes in teacher cognition might occur as a result of contextual factors linked to the school environment (Borg, 2015b: loc 5145). This appears to be a contributing factor for

such findings in the current study, and is supported by Hollingsworth's (1989) study, which found teacher education programmes to influence the established beliefs about literacy of pre-service teachers from 'global views of teaching in classrooms to understandings about context-specific student learning' (168).

These findings have potential implications for further research which may consider differences between new and/or newly qualified teachers with the beliefs of more established and/or experienced teachers within a school, to explore the extent to which beliefs about teaching writing are affected by collective beliefs in further detail. This is particularly the case as the findings, although in line with certain teacher cognition theorists and researchers (Borg, 2015b; Skott, 2015), are incongruent with a widespread view within teacher cognition theory that beliefs are 'temporally and contextually stable reifications' (Skott, 2015: 18). Research reflecting such a 'cognitivist epistemological tradition' of cognition (Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015: 437), has found teacher beliefs to be greatly resilient to change (Calderhead, 1996; Gupta, 1995; Kagan, 1992; Mansour, 2009). Such a tradition is evolving, however, as it 'has been challenged by suggestions that there is a more dynamic and reflexive' nature to beliefs' (Skott, 2015: 19), as this study reflects.

### **6.3 Reflections on teaching writing**

A common belief among all teacher informants was that modelling positive attitudes toward writing, particularly toward writing tasks, was important in fostering writing enjoyment among their pupils. Correspondingly, Young (2019) suggests that teachers model the 'pleasures' of writing in promoting writing for pleasure (16). This reflects the role of teacher enthusiasm in attaching value toward the writing activity among pupils, which, according to Pekrun's (2006) control-value theory, is likely to generate positive achievement emotions toward the activity and/or its outcome (334). Attributions about values are, according to this theory, especially significant in determining the emotions linked to an achievement activity or its outcome (317). This distinction, between enjoyment in relation to the activity and its outcome, might be linked to Young's (2019) distinction between writing *as* pleasure, where pleasure is experienced during the activity itself, and writing *for* pleasure, where satisfaction occurs 'after the act of writing' (13).

The majority of informants of the current study appeared to primarily link their modelling of positive attitudes toward the activity of writing, that is, writing *as* pleasure. Two informants, Owen and Ben, explicitly emphasised the importance of teacher enthusiasm in creating positive attitudes toward writing and writing tasks, reflecting research which has found

teacher enthusiasm to influence that of pupils (Frenzel et al., 2009). Similarly, Laura believed humour in the classroom to have a positive effect on her pupils' attitudes toward the writing task, in congruence with Frenzel and Stephens (2013) who suggests humour to be a helpful tool in fostering positive engagement among learners. Alicia, on the other hand, might be considered to link her reported modelling of attitudes related primarily to writing *for* pleasure, as she shared, with her class, positive attitudes toward her texts and authorship. She experienced this practice to inspire her pupils to write for pleasure. To employ Young's (2019) words, Alicia might be considered to model the satisfaction which may arise from of 'Sharing something to be proud of and feeling you've achieved something significant' (Young, 2019: 13).

Setting interesting writing tasks, however, appeared to be the main way in which the teacher informants felt able to improve their pupils' levels of writing enjoyment. This belief was based on their perception that writing enjoyment was task-dependent to a great extent. Correspondingly, Young (2019) considers volition, one of the building blocks, or, 'affective domains', of writing for pleasure, to be enhanced when the writing project is concerned with something of importance or significant interest to the writer (17). This involves that the writing project should be considered 'purposeful' and 'authentic', so that it is attributed meaning (15). In turn, a meaningful writing project might both inspire writing undertaken for enjoyment, as the writing process itself becomes more interesting, and writing undertaken for satisfaction, as it might provide 'a sense of purpose fulfilled' once it is completed (13). Additionally, this belief is aligned with current literature related to learner motivation and enjoyment, in which task interest is considered essential in fostering positive emotions toward the activity, particularly in fostering intrinsic motivation toward a task initially undertaken for external purposes (Csikszentmihályi, 1990; Pekrun, 2006; Ryan & Deci, 2000). According to the control-value theory, for instance, setting interesting writing tasks can attach value to the given achievement activity (Bohn-Gettler & Rapp, 2014: 451).

One way of making literacy tasks more interesting is by allowing learner agency. This entails pupil choice and voice in relation to writing topics, often within parameters set by the teacher, and in relation to the navigation of their own writing processes (Mcquillan & Conde, 1996; Young, 2019). Reflecting this, Cremin (2016) considers writing for pleasure to involve writing which is 'writer-directed and choice-led' (no pagination). Similarly, Young (2019) considers agency to be another affective domain of writing for pleasure, which is an effective way of making writing projects meaningful (17). This reflects learner motivation theory, which considers autonomy, an individual's 'experience' of behaviour as 'self-determined', to be a

key aspect of intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000: 58), for instance by way of ‘choice and the opportunity for self-direction’ in an activity (59).

However, only three teachers emphasised pupil agency in their attempts to make writing interesting. Ben, for instance, referred to this as ‘freedom’ and Laura referred to her pupils’ ‘own creative flare’. In these three cases, however, such practices were described primarily as occasional, rather than structured. Contrarily, in discussing reading for pleasure, all teachers highlighted their pupils’ agency in choosing texts to read and, occasionally, where to read (e.g. reading corners, by their desks, etc.). This might indicate that the teachers’ reported beliefs (and practices) about their assignment of writing tasks and topics reflect the current National Curriculum, which does not emphasise learner choice in writing to the same extent as with reading for pleasure (DfE, 2014). This suggests that pupil agency, for instance in setting writing topics is, to a greater extent, the decision of the teacher than is that of reading and may further underline the influence of contextual factors on teachers’ beliefs and practices (Borg, 2015b), which is explored in section 6.3. Consequently, the findings suggest that learner agency in writing might be further promoted in educational contexts as ways of fostering meaningfulness (Young, 2019) and value (Pekrun, 2006) towards writing.

Five of the teacher informants believed reading played an essential role for writing development, and, consequently, that the two aspects of literacy should be taught in relation to one another to some extent. For instance, Ben attributed importance to how reading transfers over to writing. He explained: ‘We feel that we can’t do one really without the other’. This quote highlights the close connection between the two aspects of literacy, whereby the development of one, according to current theory, is likely to develop the other (Barrs, 2000; Dahl & Farnan, 1998). For instance, according to Stotsky (1995), the ‘reading experience’ of a writer is a main component in their development of ‘syntactic, generic, and lexical knowledge’ (773). In line with this, the teachers believed using ‘direct modelling’, such as employing model texts in their teaching of conventions, styles and processes of writing, was valuable for their teaching of writing (Hirvela, 2004). Consequently, the teachers’ beliefs about teaching writing appeared to be in line with variations of the genre-orientation, because they considered text types in relation to their context and purpose (Wette, 2014a), and reported to play an active role in providing guidelines as to how to write various text types with focus on ‘reoccurring textural structures’ (Ahn, 2012: 3). Additionally, the teachers believed extensive reading for pleasure benefited writing development. This way, their beliefs also reflected ‘indirect modelling’, which is concerned with the acquisition, rather than the conscious effort, of writing development from reading (Hirvela, 2004).

However, while the great majority of teachers attributed significance to the positive effects of reading on writing development, only half of the teachers explicitly expressed using reading for pleasure to inspire writing enjoyment or writing for pleasure. By ‘immersing’ the pupils in engaging children’s literature, Laura explained, she hoped ‘to show them that you can get pleasure from writing’. Similarly, Mark and Alicia believed reading for pleasure to have the potential to inspire further reading and writing for pleasure. These beliefs reflect Young’s (2019) writing for pleasure pedagogy, where ‘connecting reading and writing’ is considered an important principle (21). For instance, Young (2019) considers reading for pleasure to offer valuable motivation for undertaking writing *as* pleasure, as it may ‘continually suggest and inspire ideas and themes for personal writing projects’ (21). The finding that half of the teachers did not emphasise this link, however, might indicate that the benefits of reading for pleasure on writing enjoyment might be less well-known or considered among teachers than its benefits on writing skills and knowledge. This could be linked to the nature of writing for pleasure as a concept, which has only recently seen more focus in educational settings (Young, 2019), and might, therefore, be less considered in relation to reading than the development of writing performance, which is based on more well-established theory (Stotsky, 1995; Krashen, 1984). In turn, these findings might imply that a greater emphasis on the positive effects of literacy for pleasure might be promoted, particularly because, in line with Pekrun’s (2006) control-value theory, it may generate a greater attribution of value toward the writing task among pupils. Such value is a central feature of intrinsic motivation, according to this theory.

Nevertheless, while only half of the teachers explicitly emphasised the link between reading and writing for pleasure, all six teachers reported to scaffold writing by modelling, which might be considered a way in which texts were used to foster writing enjoyment. This is because learner motivation theories highlight the importance of providing pupils with ‘feelings of competence’ (Ryan & Deci, 2000) and ‘control’, before requesting them to undertake independent work, in order for intrinsic motivation and positive emotions to arise in relation to the learning activity itself (Csikszentmihályi, 1990; Pekrun, 2006) and/or its outcome (Pekrun, 2006). Scaffolding writing by modelling allows such a sense of control to be retained while the level of provided assistance for writing tasks is slowly reduced and potentially removed entirely. With the help of scaffolding, pupils are typically able to eventually undertake previously assisted activities (more) independently (Spycher, 2017). By reporting to scaffold writing by modelling in such a way, the teachers reflect sociocultural theory, which considers learning to be socially mediated by the help of an MKO, in this case the teacher, in order to



accomplish tasks within their ZPD, that is, just above their current independent ability level (Lantolf, 2000).

One way in which scaffolding writing by way of modelling may foster experiences of control and competence, is through the teaching of self-regulation strategies. Self-regulation requires knowledge of strategies and resources for navigating the writing process, and allows pupils to write with a sense of ‘independence away from continual external intervention’ (Young, 2019: 17). Such an experience of competence and independence is important for a greater desire to write; more ownership over the writing process; and consequently, a stronger feeling of being a writer (5). Consequently, self-regulation might further both the enjoyment of writing *as* pleasure and the satisfaction of writing *for* pleasure and is an essential affective domain of writing for pleasure (17). Additionally, self-regulation is a particularly important factor in academic engagement (Shernoff et al., 2014: 215). In turn, teaching self-regulation strategies, for instance by modelling writing processes, is argued to be valuable for fostering writing enjoyment (Young, 2019: 53).

Despite appearing to employ a similar overall approach of scaffolding writing by modelling, however, the teacher informants described using different strategies for modelling. In fact, the teachers collectively reflected all three types of modelling proposed by Cumming (1995). Although these types of modelling may all be considered to teach self-regulation strategies by way of demonstration and instruction, they place their main emphasis on different aspects of model texts. Laura and Owen described what may be considered as ‘cognitive modelling’ (Cumming, 1995), which involves the teaching of ways in which to navigate writing processes. This emphasis on the writing process is in line with Young’s (2019) writing for pleasure pedagogy, which presents modelling as an efficient way of ‘explicitly teaching the writing processes’ (2019: 19). For Laura and Owen, such an emphasis on the processes of writing might be considered to reflect Hyland’s (2014) statement that teachers often employ a mixture of approaches in their teaching of writing (23), because they generally appeared to favour a genre orientation to teaching writing.

The majority of teacher informants, however, described ways of modelling in ways which placed emphasis on the content and context of texts. Such modelling is, then, particularly typical within the genre orientation to teaching writing (Hyland, 2014: 21). Ben, reflecting ‘text modelling’ (Cumming, 1995), believed there to be significant benefits to analysing and discussing quality texts for and with his pupils, in order to improve their vocabulary and writing structure. Katie, on the other hand, particularly highlighted ‘social modelling’ (Cumming, 1995), or, more specifically, ‘teacher-led collective modelling’ (Wette, 2014b), where the

pupils were described as active participants in the composition of a shared class text in collaboration with the teacher. Within this, Katie described teaching writing strategies, such as how to start and connect sentences. Mark and Alicia, however, appeared to employ both text modelling and social modelling. By exploring a written text with their pupils in-depth, and later collaborating to innovate a new one based on this text with their pupils, the two teachers aimed to teach writing structures and strategies which could be employed in later writing stages. For instance, Alicia mentioned teaching characterisation strategies in such a way.

Underlining the importance of building pupils' sense of control and competence in experiencing writing enjoyment in educational contexts in such ways, the great majority of teacher informants believed learning barriers linked to the pupils' lack of experienced control over writing to pose the main challenges in promoting writing for pleasure. For four of these teachers, such challenges were particularly linked to spelling and the mechanics of transferring ideas onto paper or screen. In other words, these barriers significantly concerned a disconnection between ideas and fluency. This reflects previous findings of common difficulties with writing at the primary level (Berninger et al., 2002; Lin, Monroe & Troia, 2007). Such learning barriers might explain why flow writing, that is, writing in which one is 'deeply immersed' in the activity (Perry, 1999: 1), was not described by any of the teacher informants in this study. This is because such barriers, linked to the cognitively demanding nature of writing (Zumbrunn et al., 2019: 2), might pose challenges in reaching the deep concentration and 'cognitively efficient' mental state which flow requires (Moneta & Csikszentmihályi, 1996: 277).

However, rather paradoxically, the cognitive demands of writing have been found to be positively influenced by 'positive emotional experiences while writing' (Zumbrunn et al., 2019: 2). This highlights the importance of promoting writing for pleasure in educational contexts, and has implications for future research, which might consider how to best allow inexperienced writers to reach the 'cognitively efficient, motivated, and happy' state of flow (Moneta & Csikszentmihályi, 1996: 277). This might, in turn, generate both writing volition and pleasant emotions while writing (Perry, 1999: 13). Future research into this field is particularly important as the findings of this study correspond with previous research into flow, which suggests flow experiences at the primary level to only occur to a limited extent (Shernoff & Csikszentmihályi, 2009: 138).

Importantly, low levels of self-efficacy among pupils, that is, their beliefs that they are able to write well and achieve their writing goals (Young, 2019: 17), were believed to be another main challenge in promoting a sense of control and consequent writing enjoyment among

pupils. Correspondingly, Young (2019) considers self-efficacy to be another foundational building block, or, affective domain, of writing for pleasure. This is because self-efficacy provides motivation for setting, and persisting throughout, writing activities whereby the individual is challenged, which is important in experiencing volition and motivation to write for pleasure (17). Additionally, confidence in one's writing, regardless of age or skill, is a significant aspect of feeling like a writer, another affective domain of writing for pleasure (5). In turn, attending to self-efficacy is important to promote writing for pleasure (4). Similarly, the control-value theory emphasises the importance of 'environmental support' in order for optimal learning environments to arise (Shernoff, Tonks & Anderson, 2014: 168). According to this theory, such support is necessary for intrinsic motivation, and consequent pleasant emotions, to develop in educational contexts, especially for tasks initially undertaken for external purposes (Csikszentmihályi, 1990).

In line with this, all teacher informants emphasised the significance of tending to affective needs in promoting experiences of writing enjoyment among their pupils. Owen, Katie, Mark and Alicia, for instance, expressed beliefs that positive feedback and praise were essential in building their pupils' confidence as writers, and to, in turn, positively influence their pupils' attitudes and enjoyment toward writing. This is supported by Young (2019) who considers 'constructive feedback' essential for promoting writing for pleasure, and by Ryan and Deci (2000), who considers positive feedback essential for intrinsic motivation to occur in educational contexts (58). Ben believed it was important to celebrate his pupils' effort and achievements in both their class writings and their personal writing projects. Such beliefs about positive feedback and celebrations might be especially linked to the notion of writing *for* pleasure, as they are concerned with 'The expectation of a response', and might promote 'Sharing something to be proud of and feeling you've achieved something significant' (Young, 2019: 13).

Ultimately, then, although the teacher informants experienced certain challenges with promoting writing for pleasure in their classrooms, there appeared to be consensus among the them that their pupils' engagement toward, and enjoyment in, writing was, to some extent, malleable. By being positive models of writing; providing interesting writing tasks; scaffolding writing by modelling; and tending to their pupils' affective needs, the teachers believed they could positively influence their pupils' experiences with writing. This finding is supported by the similar results of a study by Hardré and Hennessey's (2013), which found a greater willingness among teachers to consciously attempt to motivate pupils upon believing that learner engagement was malleable by their effort. Nevertheless, certain aspects of writing for

pleasure were less highlighted among the teachers as a whole. This included being a writer-teacher, emphasising pupil agency, connecting the pleasures of reading and writing, and encouraging writing personal projects (both in and/or out of the classroom). Contrarily, all teachers emphasised pupil agency in reading to a significant extent and encouraged extensive reading for pleasure, both in the classroom and in out-of-school contexts. In turn, reading for pleasure appeared to play a greater role in the teachers' reported beliefs and practices than its writing equivalent.

#### **6.4 Teachers' attitudes towards literacy in the current National Curriculum**

The current study supports previous teacher cognition research which has found national regulations to be a contextual factor which interact in complex ways with the beliefs of teachers, whereby 'teachers' beliefs are viewed as a filter, interpretive device, and transformer of curricular intentions developed elsewhere' (Skott, 2015: 17). For instance, although the majority of teachers believed the structured, clear teaching requirements of the curriculum to have its benefits, particularly for less experienced teachers, all teacher informants expressed concerns about the comprehensive nature of the National Curriculum. Particularly, in relation to literacy, a common concern was that it placed great pressure on teachers (and by implication, pupils) to cover specific aspects of reading and writing. Within this, the concerns were of two types: (1) that covering the curricular requirements was overwhelming ('massive', 'ridiculous'), and (2) that this coverage was restricting ('very prescribed', 'no freedom', 'annoying').

Several teachers expressed beliefs that their teaching was influenced, even compromised, by such concerns regarding the curriculum, in that they could not fully teach according to their beliefs. For instance, Ben would have liked to place less emphasis on the teaching of writing terminology, which he worried was 'taking the joy out of writing away', and Alicia experienced that there was no room for an alternative, more enjoyable, teaching of literacy in her school, due to curricular restraints. This implies that the teacher informants' beliefs were not always in line with the contextual frames of the curriculum in which they taught, which created various levels of frustration among the teachers. This is supported by teacher cognition theory, which suggests that 'curricular standards (...) may present challenges to teachers in enacting practices congruent with their beliefs' (Buehl & Beck, 2015: 78). In turn, as Borg (2015b) suggests, contextual factors may influence teachers' 'practices directly without changing the cognitions underlying them' (loc 5145). These findings are similar to those of Potari and Georgiadou-Kabouridis's (2009) study, in which a Greek teacher experienced the

curriculum to be constraining in her attempt to practice in line with her beliefs about how learning might come to be experienced as pleasurable through games, albeit in the domain of mathematics. Ultimately, the findings of the current study hold implications for future research into the relationship between teaching writing, fostering writing enjoyment, and curriculums. As Phipps and Borg (2009) argue, ‘tensions’ between reported teacher practices and beliefs are ‘a valuable focus for both research and teacher development’ (381).

In the current revision of the English National Curriculum, reading for pleasure is emphasised and presented as a statutory requirement (DfE, 2013). In line with this, the teacher informants all described an emphasis on reading for pleasure in their teaching of reading and highlighted the importance of encouraging reading both within and beyond the classroom. These findings might indicate that teaching curriculum content is prioritised to a greater extent than that which is not implemented, particularly as ‘Curriculum standards create pressure for content coverage’ (Buehl & Beck, 2015: 78). Nevertheless, although all teachers believed reading for pleasure to be important and beneficial, there were mixed beliefs about the role of the curriculum in implementing it. The majority of teachers were positive towards this, because they perceived it to be important to emphasise reading for pleasure in teaching and learning. Laura and Alicia, on the other hand, expressed concerns that this implementation might have the opposite effect on the experience of reading, as they questioned the extent to which reading for pleasure could come naturally under such external pressure. In the words of Alicia:

I think the National Curriculum making it another tick box, ‘make sure your children read for pleasure’, puts an awful lot of pressure on the teacher. And then actually, are you encouraging children to read for pleasure because you believe in it, or are you encouraging them to read for pleasure because that's what it says you have to do?

This further reflects, then, teacher cognition theory, which suggests contextual factors to influence teachers’ practices while not necessarily influencing their beliefs (Buehl & Beck, 2015; Borg, 2015b). Similarly, Alicia and Owen believed encouraging writing for pleasure to be the responsibility of the teacher, and an important one at that, which did not necessarily need implementing by the government. The other teachers, however, expressed beliefs that a similar emphasis on writing for pleasure to that of reading would benefit the curriculum. To Mark, for instance, such an emphasis could help promote writing for pleasure more ‘as a country’.

Ultimately, these dissimilar beliefs about the role of reading and writing for pleasure in the curriculum and its influence on teaching highlight the benefits and limitations of implementing literacy for pleasure at a governmental level. This has implications for future

research, which might further consider curriculum implementations and implications for teaching and learning writing in relation to enjoyment. Particularly, considering the belief that an imposed emphasis on literacy for pleasure is unideal, future research might consider alternative ways of promoting literacy enjoyment, such as the influence of teacher education programmes emphasising literacy for pleasure.

## **6.5 Participant-produced drawings**

This section discusses the main trends among the participant-produced drawings created for this research project, based first and foremost on the teachers' own descriptions of their respective drawings. With this starting point, further interpretations are offered with an 'analytical focus' on content (Pauwels, 2011: 10). This is inspired by similar research studies, which have primarily considered teachers' drawings in terms of the depicted interactions between the represented participants and the portrayed classroom artefacts (Alanen, Kalaja & Dufva, 2013; Kalaja; 2015). For this study, in order to do so, the discussion considers 'materials-that-matter' (Wagner, 2011) and narrative and conceptual structures (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). In addition, this section discusses the drawings in relation to the general theory considered for this study.

Overall, the participant-produced drawings reflect the reported beliefs of the teacher informants to a significant extent in various ways. First, all four drawings which depict a teacher subject, portray this subject as smiling. These smiling faces reflect the teachers' verbal emphasis on creating a positive classroom atmosphere and modelling positive attitudes toward writing. Mark made this point explicit, highlighting in his verbal commentary the importance of smiling in engaging pupils in teaching writing and that, for this reason, the smile of his self-portrait was an important component of his drawing. The drawn smiles may, then, be considered symbolic conceptual structures, reflecting 'what a participant *means* or *is*' (Kalaja, Dufva & Alanen, 2013: 4; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006: 105). This is supported by previous studies in which participant-produced drawings have portrayed smiling faces to elicit positivity and enjoyment in classroom contexts (Alanen, Kalaja & Dufva, 2013; Kalaja, 2015; Zumbrunn et al., 2017). Ultimately, this finding might be argued, then, to further underline the teachers' verbally expressed beliefs about modelling the 'pleasures' of writing (Young, 2019: 16), and to further reflect the emphasis on teacher enthusiasm in generating positive values toward writing achievement activity among pupils in the control-value theory (Pekrun, 2006).

Second, all five drawings reflect the belief of their respective teacher that a given topic or theme of writing should be taught over the course of a series of lessons, during which the

teachers gradually decrease their level of scaffolding. This may be argued to be the case as the drawings depict classroom artefacts which were explained to be writing resources available for when more independent writing was to take place, and explicit teacher-centred instruction would no longer be necessary. To Laura, for instance, drawing an English working wall, featuring a WAGOLL and key vocabulary, was important because her pupils would actively use them in later stages of writing than the lesson depicted. Consequently, the teachers' depicted artefacts may be considered 'materials-that-matter' (Wagner, 2011), which, according to Wagner's image-analysis content approach of the same name suggests, provides a visual insight into 'the world view of an individual or group' (79).

From this perspective, then, the drawn writing resources can be considered to underline the teachers' beliefs that writing independently is a part of a longer learning process, whereby writing resources appear to be of significant importance in the teachers' gradual decrease of teacher-led scaffolding, in order for pupils to remain a sense of control over the writing activity. This reflects sociocultural theory, which considers learning as 'a mediated process' (Mitchell, Myles and Marsden, 2019: 288), whereby both culturally important artefacts and 'social mediation' between teachers and pupils is instrumental to the development of (written) language skills and knowledge (Lantolf, 2000: 80). However, these findings differ from those of Alanen, Kalaja and Dufva (2013), who found learning resources to be depicted and attributed significance in only half of the pre-service teachers' drawings collected, albeit in an English L2 language teaching context. In turn, the visual depiction of cultural artefacts might be researched further to explore to a greater extent the links between such representations of 'materials-that-matter' (Wagner, 2011) and teacher beliefs.

Further considering 'materials-that-matter' (Wagner, 2011), it is noteworthy that all five drawings in the present study depict a type of board: either a blackboard; whiteboard (IWB and/or NIWB); flip board; or pages from a flip board. In four of the drawings, these boards are actively used in the teachers' depicted interaction with their pupils. In fact, these four drawings are remarkably similar in that the teachers all depict themselves as smiling subjects at the centre of the learning activity. The pupils are depicted as sitting down, either on their desks or on the floor in front of the board, represented either by symbolic dots, desks, or as human subjects facing the teacher. These drawings, then, depict teacher-led sessions, in which the board is suggested to be attributed significance. In three of these drawings, the interaction visually depicted is teacher-talk, in which the teacher is active, and the pupils are mainly receptive. This is particularly the case as the teachers are the only subjects drawn whose faces and consequent gazes are depicted, whereby the gaze functions as a significant element of directionality within

the depicted interaction (Kalaja, Dufva & Alanen, 2013: 4). The pupils are depicted as passive onlookers rather than as actively producing language. The ‘narrative structures’ of the drawings, then, which visually represent interaction and ‘implies directionality and dynamicity’ within the depicted activity (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006: 46), is not reciprocal. Rather, it focuses on the active communication of one party, the teacher. These three drawings appear to depict, then, an early lesson of a writing topic in which high levels of scaffolding is provided as it displays various forms of modelling.

However, in two of these drawings where the children were depicted as passive onlookers, their artists (Katie and Mark) described them to portray lessons which involved a significant extent of pupil engagement, similar to that of Alicia. Alicia included a speech bubble in her drawing, to portray the active production of language by her pupils in their verbal interaction with their teacher in the retelling of a story. Similarly, although not visually depicted, Katie and Mark explained that their drawings represented lessons which highlighted the importance of their pupils’ contribution and participation, in which they wrote model texts in collaboration with their pupils. From these verbal descriptions, then, the drawings reflect ‘social modelling’ (Cumming, 1995), or, more specifically, ‘teacher-led collective modelling’ (Wette, 2014b), which reflects the beliefs and practices reported in their interviews, as explored in section 6.3. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy to acknowledge the difference between the classroom interactions which these two drawings had intended to portray (the referent) and that which the drawing visually depicted (the visual representation) (Pauwels, 2011: 11). This underlines the significance of including participant descriptions, in addition to the visual data itself, in analysing data of such nature, as encouraged within visual data research (Kearney & Hyle, 2004; Pauwels, 2011).

An explanation for the visual similarity between four of the drawings produced for this study, although they were described by their respective teachers as depicting different types of lessons, could be that the teachers’ visual image of the concept of teachers may be somewhat rooted in stereotypes and past experiences of teachers, as suggested by Weber and Mitchell (1996b). They found pre-service teachers to depict ‘teachers as traditional, usually pleasant ... figures of authority who point out or explain’ (122-123), often in front of a board, and suggested this to be based on stereotypes and childhood experiences as learners. Such an interpretation of results might underline the great influence of the teachers’ past experiences as learners on their perceptions of teaching. This adds additional support for the claim that the beliefs of the teachers about teaching writing in this study is significantly influenced by their learner experiences, as was suggested in section 6.2. This further reflects teacher cognition theory,



which suggests teacher beliefs to be influenced by beliefs formed prior to beginning to teach (Borg, 2015b). Experiences as learners have been argued to be particularly significant in impacting teachers' beliefs and practices (Lee, 2018). However, another explanation for this finding might lie in the wording of the drawing task. As pointed out by Kalaja, Dufva and Alanen (2013), different tasks 'elicit particular kinds of responses and conceptualizations' (16). The wording of the task at hand included 'giving a writing lesson', where both the words 'giving' and 'lesson' may connote to an active role of the teacher and may thus explain the teachers' centred position in the depicted classrooms.

Lastly, Owen's drawing will be considered in relation to conceptual and narrative structures, as the discussion about such concepts thus far has been primarily concerned with the drawings by the other teachers. This is because Owen's drawing significantly differs from those of the other teachers, as it does not depict any subjects. Rather, his drawing portrays all the information available on the board for his pupils to consult during a pre-writing task. Thus, 'materials-that-matter' (Wagner, 2011), such as the featured board and information for later use (depicted in written rather than drawn form), are the drawing's only visually shared components with those by the other teachers. Owen's depicted 'materials-that-matter', however, are particularly related to the specific writing task. Among the various information provided in relation to this task, it is particularly noteworthy that his depicted lesson emphasises learner agency, which is an important element of writing for pleasure (Young, 2019). In the lesson depicted, the pupils were free to choose their writing topics, as the only described task requirement was that the text should be written within the fantasy genre in the style of a particular book. In this way, Owen's drawing reflected his belief that learner agency was important in fostering writing enjoyment and encouraging writing for pleasure. This belief is aligned with current literature related to writing for pleasure (Young, 2019) and learner motivation and enjoyment (Csikszentmihályi, 1990; Pekrun, 2006; Ryan & Deci, 2000: 58), where task interest and pupil agency is considered essential in fostering positive emotions toward the activity, also toward a task initially undertaken for external purposes.

Another way in which Owen's drawing is different from those produced by the other teacher informants is that, rather than portraying a teacher-led session, his drawing depicts a lesson in which the pupils are independently engaged with a pre-writing activity. The lesson depicted, then, takes place at a later stage of teaching a text than the other drawings. In turn, the lesson depicted is student-centred, and his representation about what he '*means or is*' (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) within the lesson, is a facilitator of learning. However, such a conceptual structure was not revealed from his 'visual representation' alone, but rather in combination from

his verbal and written comments that is, the drawing's 'referent' (Pauwels, 2011: 11), in which he made this explicit, and highlighted his role as a facilitator.

Additionally, as Owen's visual representation does not depict any human subjects, it consequently does not portray elements such as speech bubbles and/or gaze which reveal narrative structures of interaction. Rather, the interaction from the narrative structures is revealed from his verbal and written narration. Unlike the other drawings, the classroom interaction portrayed includes peer interaction in addition to teacher facilitation. In the lesson depicted, as his visual representation reveals by the use of text, his pupils were 'to move around room at mid point and give "two stars and a wish" feedback'. This reflects his belief that pupils should begin to consider assessment for learning from a young age in order to become better writers, and his attribution of importance to peer interaction in working on writing tasks. This is supported by sociocultural theory, which considers peer collaboration to allow for social mediation (Vygotsky, 1978). Classroom assessment in particular, has been considered a central skill for children to develop (Hattie & Timperley, 2007), particularly because it allows for the scaffolding of the writing of peers while simultaneously developing the pupils' skills in employing assessment criteria and an analytical mind (Dysthe, 2008: 23). This has implications for future visual research into teaching writing and fostering writing enjoyment, which might place more emphasis on the depiction and beliefs of peer collaboration and peer assessment in the classroom, similarly to that of Mäntylä and Kalaja (2019), who found such collaboration to be featured in a great number of teacher drawings.

## **6.6 Limitations of the study**

The main limitations of this study are its low number of participants; the use of a single interview per participant, as opposed to multiple; and the absence of classroom observations. As a result of these limitations related to the research design of the study, merely tentative conclusions may be drawn concerning the teachers' reported beliefs about writing and writing for pleasure. Nevertheless, in an attempt to increase the validity of the project by way of triangulation, participant-produced drawings were employed. However, in order to infer greater insight into the teachers' beliefs from the drawings, the task might have had an alternative focus (e.g. emotions) or have been phrased differently, so that the drawings could have offered an even more helpful secondary research method. For instance, the words 'giving' and 'lesson' may have connoted to an active role of the teacher and, in turn, have limited the range of classroom situations depicted. In addition, the phrasing might have had a more specific

temporal focus to ensure a more similar timeframe of the depicted lessons, as the term ‘recent’ inspired drawings of lessons which varied greatly in when they had taken place.

The main limitation to the drawings, however, is the complex nature of image-analysis. There are a number of approaches with which to analyse images, whereby the majority, to some degree, rely on subjective interpretation. Although the current study employed theory and participant interpretations in attempts to minimise subjective researcher interpretations, the study might have benefited from considering the drawings from additional theoretical perspectives to reduce them further, such as emphasising its production or audience (Pauwels, 2011). In addition, the study presents only five drawings as opposed to the same number of interviews (six). The study would, evidently, have benefited from holding a full number of drawings.

An additional limitation is that the teacher informants’ beliefs about their pupils are presented without comparative data collected of the pupils’ experiences with writing (for pleasure) which would have offered a richer insight into writing in the classroom and taken into account incongruences between teacher and pupil experiences. This limitation is a result of the scope of the project, which also offered further restrictions for the project. For instance, the project would have benefited from considering teachers of various grade levels in order to gain a more comprehensive insight into the role of writing for pleasure in the lives and the teaching of teachers across primary (and potentially pre- and secondary) school. Similarly, the scope of the current study excludes important elements of teaching writing, such as the teachers’ use of technology, peer interaction and writing across subjects, and their potential links to writing for pleasure. Although these aspects of teaching writing were of great relevance to the study, they were excluded due to the limited scope and timeline of this project. Ultimately, without the limitations listed above, the validity and reliability of the study would increase, a more elaborate picture of the teachers’ experiences would be painted, and stronger conclusions could be drawn.

## **6.7 Implications for teaching**

The findings of the study, especially in relation to theory, have various implications for teaching. A main such implication is to provide pupils with a sense of control and experience of competence during the entirety of the writing process, for instance by scaffolding writing by modelling. This sense of control might be considered a starting point for writing for pleasure to take place. In order for pupils to experience a sense of control in writing, however, self-efficacy is also essential. As the teachers emphasised, tending to affective needs is important for building confidence among young writers. In particular, the importance of positive feedback, both verbal

and written, was repeatedly highlighted. There are, however, various ways of doing this. For instance, one teacher celebrated, and placed on the board, pupil texts written for pleasure at home which were brought into the classroom.

Another way of fostering writing enjoyment is by providing writing tasks which the pupils perceive to be interesting, in order for them to attach positive values toward the writing tasks. The teachers all underlined the importance of task interest for writing projects to be considered enjoyable. Within this, allowing pupils to choose their own writing topics may be a valuable way to generate a greater sense of ownership and interest of the texts, which may help make an initially extrinsically motivated writing task become intrinsically motivated. However, allowing a great extent of pupil freedom and choice might be challenging in school contexts, as the teachers are constrained by curricular demands and time restraints in their class projects. In turn, Young (2019) recommends providing opportunities throughout the week for the children to engage in personal writing projects, in addition to the class writing tasks. For instance, Young (2019) recommends encouraging pupils to work on personal writing projects while reading for pleasure when desired. This allows the pupils to make direct links between the two literacy processes, to improve writing and reading simultaneously, and to provide opportunities to both read and write for pleasure. Furthermore, in regard to reading, the books and other texts offered should be varied in order to ensure all pupils may find texts to read for pleasure, particularly as a teacher informant perceived considerable links between her pupils' writing performance and reading habits.

Pupil engagement and enthusiasm toward a writing tasks and writing in general appear to be influenced, to a significant extent, by the teachers' attitudes. The teachers shared the belief that they play an important role in fostering positive values toward writing among their pupils through acts such as smiling, employing humour and an enthusiastic voice. This implies that strong teacher enthusiasm is recommended in teaching writing. In addition, Alicia emphasised the importance of being a positive model of writing for pleasure. She wrote for pleasure and experienced her texts and authorship, which she shared with her class, to inspire and awe. This might imply that writing for pleasure among teachers indeed holds potential benefits for pupils' writing enthusiasm and enjoyment. For a number of reasons, however, such as limited time, energy and interest, writing for pleasure was not typically prioritised among the majority of teachers in this study, reflecting previous findings. This suggests that teachers might benefit from learning ways in which writing for pleasure may take place in busy schedules, as well as ways in which to incorporate their personal interests in their writing. This is particularly true as some of the teacher informants expressed a desire or interest to write for pleasure in the future.

There is an implied need to make writing for pleasure an activity more suited for modern times. Two teachers believed technology to occupy the lives of their pupils to such an extent that writing for pleasure was considered an outdated activity, which was not prioritised. This might imply that promoting writing for pleasure among children poses certain additional challenges, but simultaneously offers a unique possibility: technology may allow for the use of a wide array of platforms and ways in which to write for pleasure. This might imply that there lies importance in teaching children not only how to become technologically literate, but also how writing for pleasure may take place using technological devices. This is supported by findings by the NLT, suggesting that in out-of-class-contexts, children write more frequently by way of technological devices than with pen and paper (Clark, 2013: 8). Although schools and families might have limited technological resources, and the use of technology is beyond the scope of this project, this point is worth making in the greatly digital 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Lastly, the study aspires to have extended implications and relevance for L2-teaching as well as for L1-teaching. For instance, research into Norwegian state schools might serve as an interesting area for further research into writing for pleasure in the teaching of writing, to which the current study may serve as a point of comparison. Encouraging writing for pleasure in L2 contexts might meet additional challenges, as L2 writers typically face greater writing barriers than L1 writers (Frankenberg-Garcia, 1990). Nevertheless, by placing tasks at optimal challenge levels which maintain each learner's sense of control; providing interesting writing tasks; the chance to choose writing topics; and modelling positive writing attitudes (ideally by being a writer for pleasure), the L2 classroom might also engage in writing for pleasure.

## 7 Conclusion

This study has aimed to explore the beliefs of six year 4 teachers at the primary level in England in relation to writing for pleasure and its role in their teaching of L1 writing. In doing so, this teacher cognition research project has particularly highlighted theory in relation to writing for pleasure (Young, 2019), teacher cognition (Borg, 2001; 2003; 2012; 2015a; 2015b), learner motivation (Csikszentmihályi, 1990; Pekrun, 2006; Ryan & Deci, 2000) and sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978). Semi-structured interviews and participant-produced drawings were employed in a qualitative collective case study research design to answer the following research questions: To what extent does writing for pleasure play a role in the teachers' reported beliefs about their teaching of writing? What are the main factors influencing the teachers' reported beliefs about the role of writing for pleasure in teaching writing? How do the teachers' reported beliefs about teaching writing compare with their visual self-representation as teachers? How do the teachers' reported beliefs about teaching writing and writing for pleasure compare with theory on said topics?

Firstly, to what extent does writing for pleasure play a role in the teachers' reported beliefs about their teaching of writing? The study concludes that writing for pleasure plays some role in the teachers' reported beliefs about their teaching of writing. This conclusion may be drawn as the teachers highlighted certain aspects of writing for pleasure to a greater extent than others. For instance, the teachers emphasised the importance of being positive models of writing and providing interesting writing projects. This reflects both Young's (2019) writing for pleasure pedagogy and learner motivation theories (Csikszentmihályi, 1990; Pekrun, 2006), which consider these factors to play a significant role in motivating learners and, in turn, promoting (writing) enjoyment in educational contexts. In addition, the teachers were concerned with providing their pupils with a sense of control and competence of writing. Particularly, the teachers reported to scaffold writing by way of modelling and to attend to their pupils' confidence in relation to writing. Such experiences of control and competence are essential for pleasant emotions to arise in educational situations (Csikszentmihályi, 1990; Pekrun, 2006; Ryan & Deci, 2000), and might be linked to the affective domains 'self-regulation' and 'self-efficacy' of writing for pleasure (Young, 2019). Additionally, by scaffolding writing in such ways, the teachers' beliefs highlight the importance of social mediation within the learners' ZPD, as outlined in sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), in promoting writing for pleasure.

However, the teachers, as a whole, emphasised other aspects of writing for pleasure to a lesser extent. For instance, only one teacher reported to write for pleasure and, relatedly, highlighted the benefits of being what Young (2019) refers to as a ‘writer-teacher’ (9). For this teacher, being a writer-teacher involved sharing her authorial status and written texts with her class in order to inspire writing projects and to foster writing enjoyment. This suggests that writing for pleasure among teachers might be further promoted, particularly as her reported experiences of being a writer-teacher reflects the benefits of this practice suggested in previous research and theory (Augsburger, 1998; Chamberlain, 2016; Kendrick & Forler, 1997).

Moreover, writing for pleasure appeared to play a more limited role in the teachers’ reported practices than its reading equivalent. For example, pupil agency in writing, an essential aspect of writing for pleasure (Cremin, 2016; Young, 2019) and, relatedly, encouraging writing personal projects (both in and/or out of the classroom), was reported to be attributed importance by only half of the teachers. In these cases, such practices were primarily described to be occasional, rather than structured. Contrarily, all teachers emphasised pupil agency in reading to a significant extent and encouraged extensive reading for pleasure, both in the classroom and in out-of-school contexts. Lastly, the great majority of teachers reported to be concerned with the transfer of skills between the two aspects of literacy, in line with theory (Stotsky, 1995; Krashen, 1984). However, only half of the teachers emphasised the potential for reading to promote writing enjoyment, reflecting Young’s (2019) emphasis on connecting reading and writing also in terms of pleasure (21). Ultimately, then, writing for pleasure may be said to play some role in the teachers’ reported beliefs about their teaching of writing overall.

Secondly, what are the main factors influencing the teachers’ reported beliefs about the role of writing for pleasure in teaching writing? The study suggests that four main factors influence such beliefs. In line with teacher cognition theory (Borg, 2015b; Lee, 2018), one such factor is that of the teachers’ own experiences as learners. These experiences appeared to influence which aspects of writing were emphasised in the teachers’ attempts to promote writing enjoyment among their pupils. Two participants had had positive experiences with writing as learners and reported to include elements which they had appreciated in their own writing education, such as agency in choosing writing topics, in their teaching of writing. Three teacher informants reported to have had negative experiences with learning to write and to, in turn, promote positive writing experiences in ways which they felt had been missing from their own education. This included providing frequent occasions for reading for pleasure to inspire writing and using friendly feedback in building their pupils’ confidence as writers. Neither type of learner experience with writing, however, appeared to be particularly influential in their

beliefs about the current role of writing for pleasure in their own lives. Rather, busy schedules were reported as being a main restricting factor for prioritising writing for pleasure among several teachers.

A second factor influencing the teachers' beliefs about the role of writing for pleasure in their teaching appears to be their pupils' attitudes toward writing. More specifically, learner attitudes concerning writing for pleasure, particularly in out-of-school contexts, are suggested to potentially interact with teacher beliefs in two ways: (1) learners' positive or negative attitudes toward writing for pleasure might influence teachers' beliefs about the extent to which it should be promoted, particularly beyond school-contexts; and (2) learners' negative attitudes toward writing for pleasure might act as a barrier for the teachers to act in line with their belief that it is beneficial. Further highlighting the teachers' social environment, a third factor which appears to have influenced the teachers' beliefs is the 'collective beliefs' of the environment in which they taught (Tschannen-Moran, Salloum & Goddard, 2015: 301). For the majority of teachers, their beliefs about writing and literacy enjoyment, and how it might be fostered among children, were described to reflect the beliefs and values of their current school to a significant extent. The most newly qualified teacher informant, however, emphasised, and agreed with, collective beliefs to a lesser extent. This might suggest links between teacher experience and beliefs. More specifically, these findings might indicate that teacher beliefs might change with experience. As suggested by Skott (2015), teacher beliefs are 'dynamic and evolving outcomes of individual and communal acts of meaning-making' (24). This finding, however, is incongruent with the widespread, albeit evolving, view within teacher cognition theory and research (Calderhead, 1996; Kagan, 1992; Mansour, 2009) that beliefs are 'temporally and contextually stable reifications' (Skott, 2015: 18).

A fourth and final factor influencing teacher beliefs about teaching writing (for pleasure), and literacy as a whole, appears to be the National Curriculum. This is because the teachers' reported beliefs and practices reflect the curriculum's emphasis on reading for pleasure and its more limited stress on volitional writing. In turn, the teachers' beliefs are suggested to be influenced by what is attributed significance at a governmental level, and allowing agency in writing appears to be the decision of the teacher to a greater degree than that of reading. However, half of the teachers also expressed beliefs that their teaching was influenced, even compromised, by the curriculum, in that they could not fully teach writing, and foster writing enjoyment, in accordance with their beliefs. This supports teacher cognition research and theory, which suggests that this contextual factor may influence teachers' 'practices directly without changing the cognitions underlying them' (Borg, 2015b: loc 5145),



and ‘may present challenges to teachers in enacting practices congruent with their beliefs’ (Buehl & Beck, 2015: 78).

Thirdly, how do the teachers’ reported beliefs about teaching writing compare with their visual self-representation as teachers? The teachers’ reported beliefs about teaching writing are reflected to a significant extent in their visual self-representation as teachers. This is because a number of features which were described as important in the interviews were portrayed in the teachers’ drawings or discussed in relation to it. For instance, visual representations of ‘materials-that-matter’ (Wagner, 2011) provided a visual insight into beliefs about particularly important materials, such as writing resources helpful in scaffolding writing over the course of a series of lessons, and writing tasks emphasising pupil agency. In addition, the great majority of drawings reflected the teachers’ beliefs about themselves as positive models of writing, creating a positive classroom atmosphere, where their drawn smiles might be considered a symbolic conceptual structure, reflecting ‘what a participant *means* or *is*’ (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006: 105).

However, in other cases, the visual representations alone did not directly reflect the teachers’ reported beliefs. Instead, the verbal and written descriptions revealed that there was a difference between that which the drawing intended to portray (the referent) and what the drawing visually depicted (the visual representation) (Pauwels, 2011: 11). This was the case especially in relation to the represented interaction between the pupils and teacher, or, ‘narrative structures’ (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Such interactions were typically depicted in the drawings as teacher-centred but were in several cases verbally described as emphasising pupil interaction and conversation. This might suggest that the teachers’ visual image of ‘teachers’ may be somewhat rooted in visual stereotypes and past experiences with teachers, as suggested by Weber and Mitchell (1996b), and, in turn, offer additional support for the claim that learner experiences are a main factor influencing the teachers’ reported beliefs about teaching writing (for pleasure).

Lastly, how do the teachers’ reported beliefs about teaching writing and writing for pleasure compare with theory on said topics? As this conclusion has hopefully demonstrated, the teachers’ reported beliefs reflect, to a significant extent, the main theories considered for this study. First, the teachers reflect various theories related to writing for pleasure (Young, 2019) and enjoyment in educational contexts in general (Csikszentmihályi, 1990; Pekrun, 2006; Ryan & Deci, 2000). For instance, the teachers highlighted the significance of perceived control over the learning activity in order for intrinsic motivation and consequent pleasant emotions to arise (Csikszentmihályi, 1990; Pekrun, 2006; Ryan & Deci, 2000). This might be linked to the

importance of attending to self-efficacy and to the teaching of self-regulation skills, which are important for promoting writing for pleasure (Young, 2019). In providing such experiences of competence, the teachers highlighted the importance of social mediation in scaffolding their learners' development, in line with sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978). Other highlighted important aspects of writing enjoyment, and intrinsic motivation in general, were related to attributing 'value' (Pekrun, 2019), or, 'meaningfulness' (Young, 2019), to the writing projects. This involved the teachers' beliefs about being positive models of writing, providing interesting writing projects to increase volition and motivation, and, in some cases, allowing learner agency.

Additionally, the findings of the study reflect teacher cognition theory. Particularly in line with theory from this field, social and contextual factors appear to influence teacher beliefs to a significant extent (Borg, 2015b; Fives & Buehl, 2012; Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015; Phipps & Borg, 2009; Skott, 2015; Tschannen-Moran, Salloum & Goddard, 2015). Nevertheless, in line with Skott (2015) but incongruent with the tradition of perceiving teacher beliefs as 'stable' (Calderhead, 1996; Kagan, 1992; Mansour, 2009), this study suggests teacher beliefs to be of a 'dynamic' nature. Finally, the 'materials-that-matter' approach (Wagner, 2011) and conceptual and narrative structures (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006) proved to be a valuable lens of visual research theory with which to consider teacher cognition, as it offered an alternative insight into how teacher beliefs related to the general theory used for this study.

In terms of future research, this study has, throughout its discussion, indicated numerous areas which may be considered. For instance, as the teachers appear to place greater emphasis on some aspects of writing for pleasure than others, future research might consider how these less highlighted elements might be further promoted in classroom contexts. Such research might also be valuable within L2 contexts, for instance in Norway, where this topic has previously been attributed limited emphasis, particularly from a perspective of teacher cognition. Furthermore, the study suggests that writing for pleasure among teachers might be further promoted, as the teacher informant who frequently undertook such writing experienced it to benefit her pupils' attitudes toward writing, supporting previous research and theory (Augsburger, 1998; Chamberlain, 2016; Kendrick & Forler, 1997). Future research may, then, be of longitudinal nature in order to consider the potential effects of professional development initiatives which highlight both writing for pleasure among teachers and the promotion of writing for pleasure among pupils. This might include professional learning initiatives, such as teacher education programmes, or initiatives related to teacher collaboration and school culture (Avalos, 2011).

Importantly, such research might consider how initiatives for promoting writing for pleasure in school contexts might emphasise the satisfaction and enjoyment to be gained from writing, without such an activity becoming perceived as externally enforced. This is particularly significant because multiple teacher informants expressed beliefs that the current implementation of reading for pleasure in schools made reading for pleasure feel pressured, rather than enjoyable. Consequently, as this example demonstrates, the current study might serve as inspiration for future professional development initiatives in relation to writing for pleasure because, as Skott (2015) points out, teacher beliefs are a valuable source for developing initiatives which aim to improve the situation for teachers and their pupils.

Primarily, however, the study seeks to contribute to teacher cognition research. For instance, the study contributes to this field due to its creative research design, which adds to the more traditional approaches generally used in studying teacher beliefs. Furthermore, the project's overall emphasis on writing is an important contribution to its field because teacher cognition research has typically considered literacy with particular focus on reading, both in international and Norwegian contexts. Finally, the study has made an attempt to promote the concept of writing for pleasure within teacher cognition research, wherein this is not yet an established term. In doing so, the study concludes that, overall, although fostering writing enjoyment appears to be of great significance to the teachers, writing for pleasure in educational contexts may be promoted further. Indeed, the findings, in light of relevant theory, highlight the importance of promoting writing for pleasure, not only among pupils, but also among teachers.

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## 9 Appendices

### Appendix A: Interview Guide

All questions are subject to follow-up questions that are not prewritten. The indented text with bullet points are potential follow-up topics and questions likely to be asked yet subject to elimination.

#### Background and qualifications

1. How old are you?
2. For how long have you practiced as a teacher of English?
3. What are your educational qualifications?

#### Experiences with writing

1. What is your personal experience with writing?
  - What do you recall about English writing instruction in school?
  - What is your personal experience with finding pleasure in and from writing?
  - To what extent do you write as a part of your profession?
2. How, in your opinion, do learners experience writing?
  - Which part, or parts, of the writing process do your pupils tend to find the most challenging? Why do you think this is?
  - From your experience, which part, or parts, of the writing process do pupils tend to find the most enjoyable? Why do you think this is?
3. According to a nation-wide study by the National Literacy Trust, ‘Half (50.9%) of children and young people in 2017/18 said that they either only enjoy writing a bit or not at all’ (Clark, 2018: 1). What are your attitudes towards these findings, and how do they correspond with your experiences as a teacher?

### Reflections on teaching writing

1. In your opinion, what is your main role as a teacher of English writing?
2. How do you teach writing and why do you teach it in this way?
  - Methodology
  - Curriculum
  - Influences
  - Experience
  - Materials and tools
  - Technology
3. Can you describe one particularly valuable experience you have had as a teacher of writing, and one particularly challenging one?

### The participant-produced drawing:

1. Please describe what you have drawn in your picture.
  - Why did you draw it in this way?
  - To what extent do you think the drawing describes you as a teacher of writing? How?

### Teacher's attitudes towards the curriculum:

1. According to the current National Curriculum, pupils should 'be encouraged to read for pleasure. Schools should do everything to promote wider reading' (DfE, 10). What are your opinions on this?
2. The current National Curriculum does not emphasise pleasure of writing to a similar extent. What are your opinions on this?
3. How does the National Curriculum and assessment framework support and/or possibly hamper your teaching of writing for pleasure?

### Final comments:

1. Would you like to make any final comments, raise any questions, or add anything which you feel has not yet been brought up?

## **Appendix B: Information Letter**

### **Are you interested in taking part in the research project "Writing for Pleasure and the Teaching of Writing at the Primary Level: A Teacher Cognition Case Study"?**

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to gain insight into teacher cognition in relation to writing for pleasure and the teaching of writing at the primary level in England. In this letter you will be given information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

#### **Purpose of the project**

This research project is a masters dissertation. The aim of the thesis is to study teacher cognition in relation to writing for pleasure in writing instruction. Teacher cognition is a branch of research which looks into teachers' beliefs, experiences, and practices. Writing for pleasure is a volitional act of writing undertaken for enjoyment and satisfaction. In order to gain an in-depth insight into teachers' perspectives about their writing instruction, the study will use a qualitative research method which combines the individual interviews and participant-produced drawings of six Year 4 English teachers.

The thesis will address the following research questions: What are the teachers' reported beliefs about how writing should be taught? What are the teachers' reported beliefs about the role of writing for pleasure in their writing instruction? How do the teachers' reported beliefs compare with their visual self-representation as teachers? How do the teachers' reported beliefs about writing instruction and writing for pleasure compare with formal theory on said topics?

#### **Who is responsible for the research project?**

The University of Stavanger, Norway, is the institution responsible for the project. The project is conducted by the student Rebecca Marie Gusevik under supervision from university lecturer Torill Irene Hestetraet.

#### **Why are you being asked to participate?**

For this study, six Year 4 (Key Stage 2) teachers of English L1 writing of various levels of experience have been asked to participate. All teachers are fully qualified to teach in English primary schools. The participants work at maintained primary schools in England and follow the UK National Curriculum.

#### **What does participation involve for you?**

- If you choose to participate in the project, this will involve that you take part in a semi-structured interview. The interview will include questions about your background and qualifications; reflections on teaching writing; and experiences with writing. The interview will be audio-recorded.
- I will also ask you to produce a drawing in advance of the interview. I will provide you with a visual task sheet (see appendix) on which you will be asked to do the following: 'Draw a picture of yourself giving a writing lesson in the recent past and write, on the following page of the task sheet, a brief explanation of what is going on in the drawing'. This is to provide you with an alternative method of expressing yourself and to generate

further verbal discussion in the interview. Please note that in order for the drawing to not reveal any personal information, you should avoid drawing features which may be used to identify individuals or the school (e.g. school logo or highly realistic faces).

### **Participation is voluntary**

Participation in the project is voluntary. You may withdraw your consent at any time without providing a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you choose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

### **Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data**

We will only use your personal data for the purpose specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

- Only the student and supervisor will have access to the data material.
- The computer which is to be used for processing your personal data will be protected with relevant security mechanisms, including anti-virus software, activated firewalls and systems which regularly update operating systems and security mechanisms.
- The audio data will be collected on an external audio recorder and will be transferred with caution to an encrypted USB memory stick. Anonymised copies of your completed visual tasks, your age, educational qualifications and experience as an English teacher will also be stored on this encrypted USB memory stick.
- Directly identifiable personal data (your signature and contact details) will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data, locked away non-electronically.
- Your name will be replaced with a pseudonym so that you will not be recognizable in publications. Both your verbal statements and your drawing (and its respective written explanation) will be linked to this pseudonym in publications.
- The personal information about you to be published is your age, educational qualifications and experience as an English teacher.

### **What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?**

The project is scheduled to end 11.05.2020. At this point, all audio-recordings will be deleted. Your personal details will remain anonymous. You may choose to give consent for your personal data in anonymous form to be stored after the project's end, in order for it to be archived for future research. Your original drawing will not be preserved at the end of the research project. However, given your consent, an anonymised reproduction may be included in educational publications related to this study (e.g. presentations and the published research project). It will not be possible to identify you in the results of the study when these are published.

### **Your rights**

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

**What gives us the right to process your personal data?**

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with the University of Stavanger, NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

**Where can I find out more?**

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- The University of Stavanger via Rebecca Marie Gusevik and Torill Irene Hestetraet.
- Our Data Protection Officer: [personvernombud@uis.no](mailto:personvernombud@uis.no)
- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: ([personverntjenester@nsd.no](mailto:personverntjenester@nsd.no)) or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Project Leader  
(Supervisor)

Student

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## **Appendix C: Drawing task**

### The task:

- On the page titled 'Drawing' (p. 6), please draw a picture of yourself giving a writing lesson in the recent past.
- The drawing may be made by hand or digitally. Should you choose to do the latter, please insert the digital drawing on page 6 of this document.
- On the page titled 'Brief explanation of drawing' (p. 7), please write a brief explanation of what is going on in your drawing.
- The purpose of this task is not in any way to assess your drawing, which may be simple or comprehensive, but to gain further insight into your teaching practices in an alternative mode of expression, and to generate further verbal discussion in the interview.

### Practical information:

- Please note that in order for the drawing to not reveal any personal information, you should avoid drawing features which might make possible the identification of individuals or the school (e.g. school logo or a highly realistic face). Should any such features be included in the drawing, the researcher will blur or crop out said features.
- Your name will NOT be used with the drawing. Please do not write your name anywhere on the document. This is to avoid identification. The document will be linked to your pseudonym by the researcher.
- Please bring the completed task sheet to the interview session in printed form. After the interview, the researcher will collect your drawing.
- If the interview is conducted via an online video call service (e.g. Skype), please send the student researcher a scanned copy of your drawing in advance of the interview.



## Appendix D: Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project 'A Study of Writing for Pleasure in Writing Instruction and Teacher Cognition at the Primary Level' and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- to participate in an interview
- to produce a drawing for this project
- for my drawing to be reproduced for educational purposes related to this study (e.g. presentations and the published research project). I understand that my real name will NOT be used with the drawing
- for my personal data (age, educational qualifications, teacher experience) to be stored after the end of the project for the purpose of archiving it for future research

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. 11.05.2020

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(Signed by participant, date)

## Appendix E: Approval from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data

16.4.2020

Meldeskjema for behandling av personopplysninger



### NSD sin vurdering

#### Prosjektittel

A Study of Writing for Pleasure in Writing Instruction and Teacher Cognition at the Primary Level

#### Referansenummer

710738

#### Registrert

28.09.2019 av Rebecca Marie Gusevik - rm.gusevik@stud.uis.no

#### Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Universitetet i Stavanger / Fakultet for utdanningsvitenskap og humaniora / Institutt for kultur- og språkvitenskap

#### Prosjektansvarlig (vitenskapelig ansatt/veileder eller stipendiat)

Torill Irene, torill.hestetreet@uis.no, tlf: 51831358

#### Type prosjekt

Studentprosjekt, masterstudium

#### Kontaktinformasjon, student

Rebecca Marie Gusevik, rm.gusevik@stud.uis.no, tlf: 98686471

#### Prosjektperiode

25.10.2019 - 11.05.2020

#### Status

30.09.2019 - Vurdert

#### Vurdering (1)

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##### 30.09.2019 - Vurdert

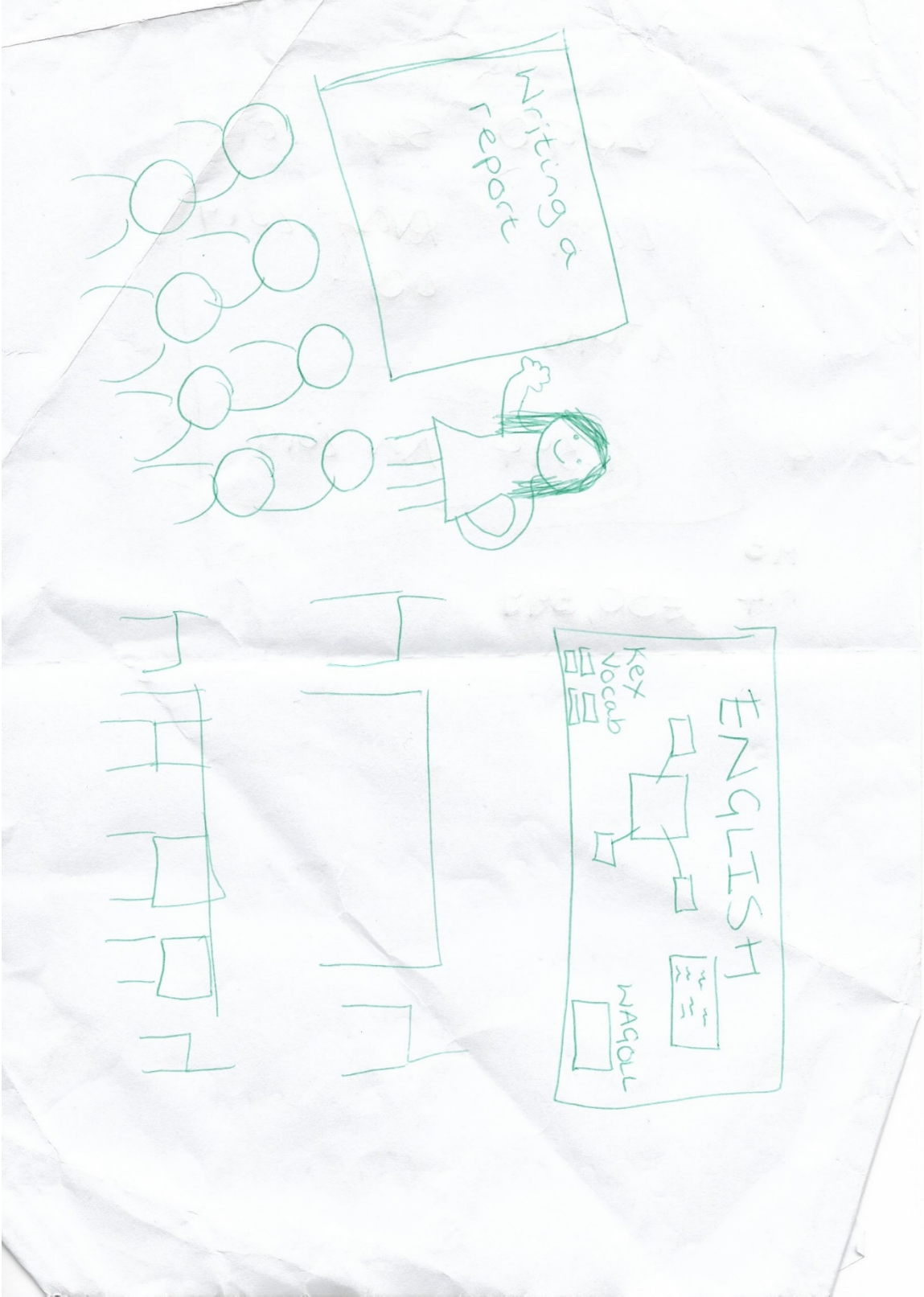
Our assessment is that the processing of personal data in this project will comply with data protection legislation, so long as it is carried out in accordance with what is documented in the Notification Form and attachments, dated 30.9.2019. Everything is in place for the processing to begin.

#### NOTIFY CHANGES

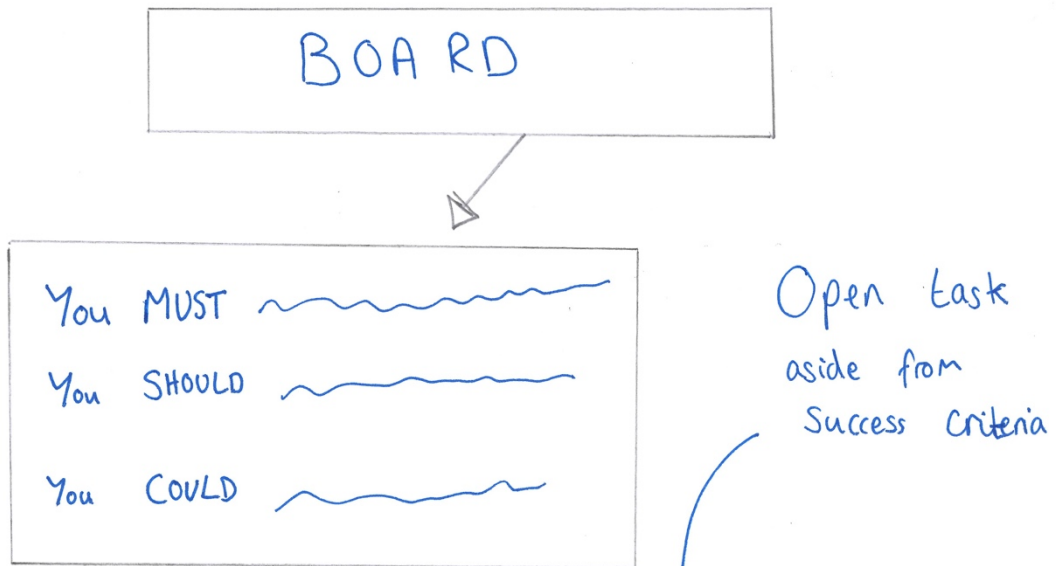
If you intend to make changes to the processing of personal data in this project it may be necessary to notify NSD. This is done by updating the information registered in the Notification Form. On our website we explain which changes must be notified. Wait until you receive an answer from us before you carry out the changes.

**Appendix F: Participant-produced drawings**

**Alicia's drawing:**



## Owen's drawing:



### Resources

- \* Blank white A3 sheet
- \* Post it notes
- \* Colouring pencils
- \* Story writing noun/verb/ adjective sheets
- \* Great sentence opener help sheet

### Peer Assessment

- \* Pupils to move around room at mid point and give "two stars and a wish" feedback

**Katie's drawing:**

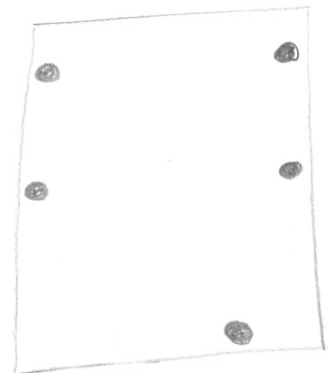
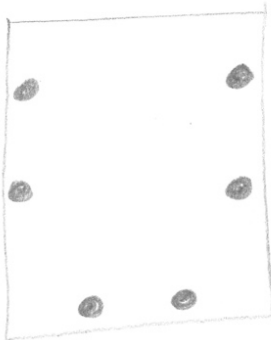
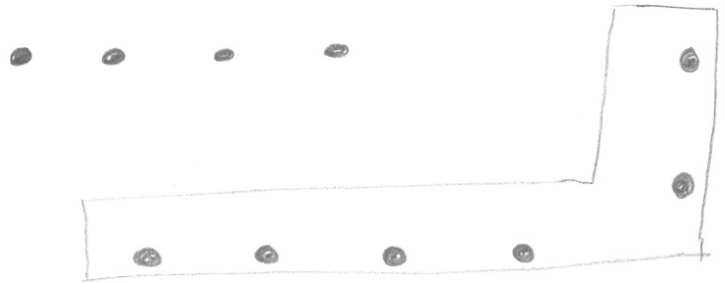
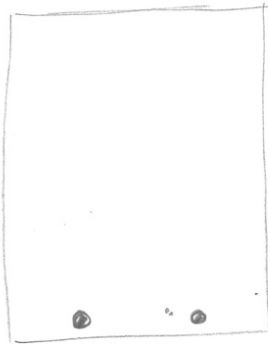
NIWB

class model on  
the board.

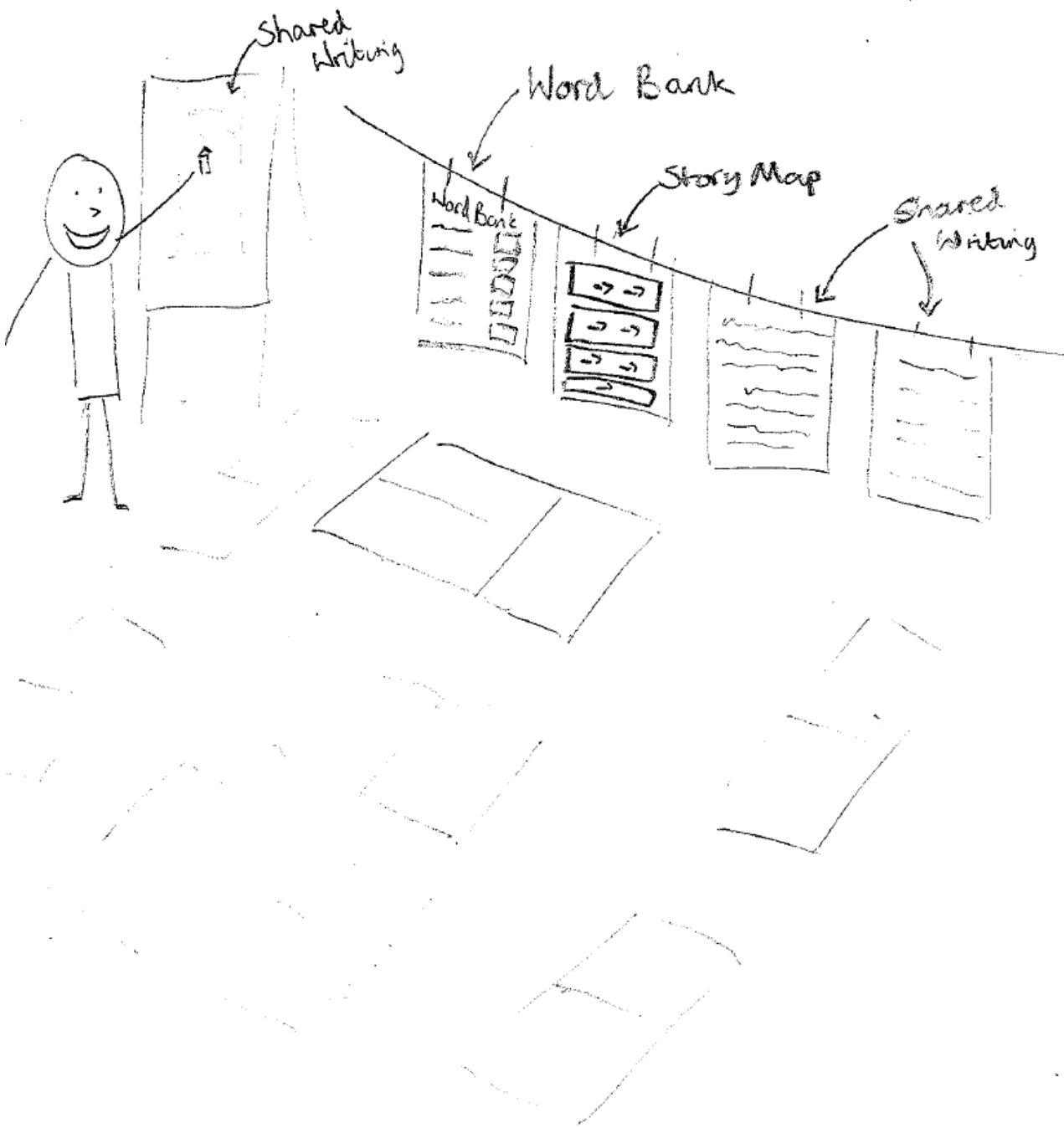


IWB

Task for chn to do



Mark's drawing:



Alicia's drawing:

