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This doctoral dissertation, which builds on a mixed methods study, discusses which literary texts English teachers in upper secondary school in Norway view as suitable and/or select for classroom use, and which beliefs they hold about literature. The study finds that teachers' beliefs about students, teachers, and subject matter serve as filters when teachers select literary texts for their classrooms. Several factors influence teachers, including which study programs they work with, which literary texts are present in textbooks, which literature is used in examinations and earlier curricula, and which countries literary texts originate in. Furthermore, teachers can be teacher-oriented, student-oriented, or collegially oriented as they make decisions about which literature their students should read.

Embedded in this project is a case study focusing on teachers' assessments of contemporary dystopian literature for young adults. The findings show that dystopian literature is seen as being particularly apt for helping students understand contemporary culture and society, as well as developing environmental awareness and *Bildung*. The case study sheds further light on how teachers decide whether a literary text that is new to them might be suitable for the classroom, and exemplifies in more detail teachers' beliefs and selection processes regarding literature.
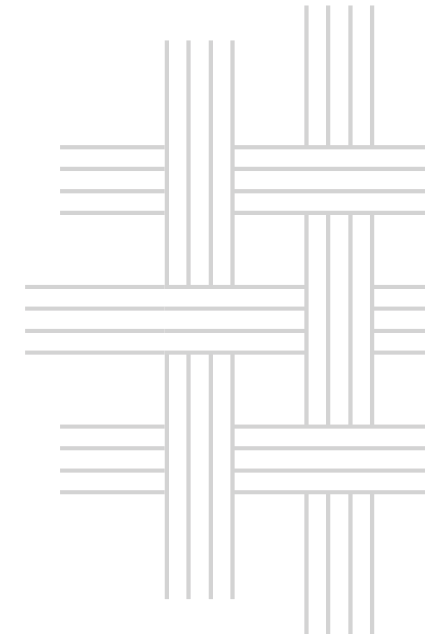
Marit Elise Lyngstad • English teachers' choices and beliefs about literature in the Norwegian upper secondary classroom • 2019

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Faculty of Education and Pedagogy

Marit Elise Lyngstad

PhD Dissertation

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PhD Dissertation in Teaching and Teacher Education
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Ph.d.-avhandlinger i profesjonsrettede lærerutdanningsfag

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Abstract

This doctoral dissertation presents a mixed methods study discussing the *what*, *how*, and *why* of literature in the upper secondary English classroom in Norway. More specifically, the study examines which literary texts English teachers view as suitable and/or select for classroom use, and which beliefs about literature influence their choices. The empirical data that the analysis builds on have been collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods, namely a questionnaire and interviews.

The current *Knowledge Promotion* curriculum does not specify which text types, authors, and/or titles students should read. This means that teachers today have great freedom in choosing literature for their classrooms. This study finds that several factors influence teachers' choices, including which study programs teachers work with, which literary texts are present in textbooks, which literature is used in examinations and earlier curricula, and which countries the literary texts originate in. Furthermore, teachers' choices and beliefs about literature are linked to their text selection processes: teachers can be teacher-oriented, student-oriented, or collegially oriented as they make decisions about which literature their students should read. Based on these findings, I argue that teacher beliefs about students, teachers, and subject matter serve as filters when teachers select literary texts for their classroom.

Embedded in this project is a case study focusing on teachers' assessments of contemporary dystopian literature for young adults. It addresses issues of didactic relevance in a popular literary genre, exemplified by four novels. The findings show that dystopian literature is seen as being particularly apt for helping students understand contemporary culture and society and become more environmentally aware, and they have potential in terms of several aims of the core curriculum, especially *Bildung*. The case study sheds further light on how teachers decide whether a literary text that is new to them might be suitable for the classroom, and exemplifies in more detail teachers' beliefs and selection processes.

Sammendrag

Denne avhandlingen presenterer en studie som ved bruk av mixed methods diskuterer hva slags litteratur som blir brukt i engelskfaget i videregående skole i Norge, og hvordan og hvorfor denne litteraturen velges. Studien ser på hva slags litterære tekster engelsklærere synes er passende og/eller bruker i engelsktimene, og hvilke oppfatninger om litteratur som påvirker valgene deres. De empiriske dataene som analysen bygger på har blitt samlet inn ved hjelp av både kvantitative og kvalitative metoder, mer spesifikt, en spørreundersøkelse og intervjuer.

Den nåværende læreplanen *Kunnskapsløftet* spesifiserer ikke hvilke teksttyper, forfattere, og/eller titler elever skal lese. Det innebærer at lærere i dag har stor frihet når det gjelder valg av litteratur for sine elever. Denne studien argumenterer for at det er mange faktorer som påvirker lærernes litteraturvalg, inkludert hvilke studieprogrammer lærerne jobber med, hvilke tekster som finnes i lærebøker, hvilken litteratur som brukes i eksamensoppgaver, hvilke tekster som ble nevnt i tidligere læreplaner, og hvilke land de litterære tekstene kommer fra. Videre kan læreres valg av og oppfatninger om litteratur kobles til deres tekstutvalgsprosesser: lærere kan være lærerorienterte, elevorienterte eller samarbeidsorienterte når de tar beslutninger om hvilken litteratur elevene deres skal lese. Basert på disse funnene argumenterer jeg for at læreroppfatninger om elever, lærere og faginnhold fungerer som filtre når lærere skal velge litterære tekster til klasseromsbruk.

En del av dette prosjektet er en casestudie som fokuserer på læreres vurdering av dystopiske romaner for ungdom skrevet i løpet av de siste 14 årene. Her diskuteres den didaktiske relevansen til en populær litterær sjanger, eksemplifisert ved fire romaner. Funnene viser at dystopisk litteratur blir vurdert til å være spesielt egnet til å hjelpe elever med å forstå kulturer og samfunn i vår egen tid, bli mer miljøbevisste, og den har potensiale for arbeid med den generelle delen av læreplanen, spesielt danning. Casestudien belyser også hvordan lærere bestemmer seg for om en ny litterær tekst passer for klasseromsbruk, og eksemplifiserer lærernes tekstutvalgsprosesser og oppfatninger om litteratur.

Preface

It has been four years since I began this project. My aim and motivation throughout has been to stay close to the practitioners and write a dissertation that I would have benefited from reading when I worked as a teacher. I hope, therefore, that this study may be of use not only to academics, but also to English teachers in upper secondary school.

During my work on this project, I have learnt a lot, not only about the topic I have investigated, but also about myself. I emerge on the other side of this dissertation as someone who knows she is able to complete an extensive project, who can handle criticism and improve on her work, who has come to realize just how much she loves teaching and looks forward to doing that more, and who is more knowledgeable than before embarking on this journey. It has been hard work, but absolutely worth it.

Many people have contributed to this project. First and foremost, I would like to thank the respondents: the 110 teachers who answered the survey and the eight teachers who volunteered for interviews. The interviewed teachers, in particular, spent hours meeting with me, preparing for the interviews by assembling their plans and reading materials, and reading a new novel. Thank you all!

Alongside the respondents, my supervisors have played the most important role. Professor Sandra Lee Kleppe helped me get started, and has been very supportive since. Professor Juliet Munden and Professor Gweno Williams took me to the finishing line. Thank you for reading my drafts with interest and enthusiasm, providing both criticism and praise in your feedback, for trusting me enough to give me space to work in isolation when I needed it, and for being available when I had something for you to read. I have learned a lot from our conversations.

The discussants at my 50% and 90% evaluations, Associate Professor Anne Skaret and Associate Professor Aslaug Fodstad Gourvennec, offered sensible criticism and advice concerning the path forward. Thank you for making these two nerve-wracking days quite enjoyable. I would also like to thank Associate Professor Bård Uri Jensen, who

Table of contents

List of tables

A note on language

The variety of English used in this dissertation is based on American English. However, the vocabulary related to educational terminology is based on British English. The reason is that British English terms are used in official documents in Norway, for instance in the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training's translations of curricula.

The following abbreviations are used when referring to past and present curricula and other official documents:

KKUF = Det kongelige kirke-, utdannings-, og forskningsdepartement [The Royal Ministry of Church, Education, and Research]

KUD = Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet [The Ministry of Church and Education]

KD = Kunnskapsdepartementet [The Ministry of Education and Research]

Udir = Utdanningsdirektoratet [The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training]

When referring to interviews with teachers, the information in parentheses after teachers' quotations refers to the interview in which this utterance emerged and the page number of the transcription (e.g. I2, p. 5, which means interview 2, page 5). If the parenthesis includes a "T", the quotation has been translated from Norwegian (e.g. I2, T, p. 5). Furthermore, […] is used to denote ellipsis in teachers' quotations.

1. Introduction

1.1 Starting points

This study seeks to examine English teachers' choices and beliefs about literature in the upper secondary classroom. My motivation for choosing this topic for my doctoral research is based on several things. Beginning with the most recent, my professional experience as a college lecturer teaching aspiring secondary school teachers was that I could not tell them anything about which texts teachers actually used in their English classrooms. I was unable to find any studies reporting on this following the introduction of the Norwegian national curriculum, *Knowledge Promotion*, in 2006.[1] LK-06 includes an English subject curriculum which, for the first time since the introduction of the modern upper secondary school in 1974, does not specify any texts, authors, or genres teachers have to use with their students. Secondly, I remember being a freshly graduated upper secondary school teacher myself ten years ago, and having to rely on textbooks and colleagues for guidance regarding literature that could be suitable for my students, since the curriculum did not offer any specifics. As I became more experienced, I grew to enjoy the freedom the curriculum gave, but I also felt that a number of factors influenced my choices. There were some authors that I thought my students had to read, and some cultures' literatures that I wanted to be represented in my year plans – even if neither were officially required. Furthermore, I noticed that some of my colleagues relied heavily on their textbook whereas others did not use it at all, and that the selection of texts available in the school library influenced which novels students would read. Reflecting on my experiences, both as an upper secondary school teacher and as a teacher educator, my desire to find out *which literary texts teachers use*, *why they choose these texts*, and *how they choose them* gradually emerged. Answering these questions is the focus of the present study.

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[1] Later references to *Knowledge Promotion* will be abbreviated to LK-06.

As I started looking into these questions, I realized that this field has not been researched extensively in Norway. Therefore, this project aims to fill a gap in the existing research on literature didactics in subject English Norway, as well as on upper secondary English teachers' choices and beliefs.

The second part of my study, the examination of contemporary dystopian fiction for young adults (YA) and the genre's didactic potential, builds on my personal experiences as a young, enthusiastic reader. When I was in secondary school,[2] my teachers divided literary texts into two categories: the types that they saw as relevant for academic studies and the types that they thought were unsuitable for the classroom and that we could only read in our spare time. Some of my teachers expressed a lack of interest in the texts I liked, and attempted to turn me away from them because they were not 'good enough'. This led me to disconnect reading literature for pleasure and working with literature in school. Only in my third year as a college student did I begin to understand that it was possible to combine a joy of reading contemporary, popular texts with academic studies. Fantasy, science fiction, and dystopias had become particular favorites of mine by this stage, and my awareness of the growing critical literature addressing these genres led me to explore a dystopian novel in my Master's thesis, namely Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006). With the publication of Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy (2008, 2009, 2010) and the massive popularity of contemporary dystopian fiction for young adults following it, particularly after the film adaptations were released, I wondered whether the genre's popularity and growing critical acclaim had influenced the attitudes of the teachers who were choosing literature for their students.[3] In order to explore this issue, I decided to add dystopian literature to my project: I wanted to find out whether teachers view contemporary dystopian YA fiction as suitable for classroom use. Furthermore, having teachers read and discuss a literary text that was completely unknown to them would also provide me with further and more detailed insight into the other issues I wanted to explore.

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[2] The previous curriculum, Reform 94, was in effect at the time. It is discussed further in chapter 2.

[3] Classic dystopias written for adults, such as Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and George Orwell's *1984* (1949) have been accepted as canonical works for many years. This, however, is not the case with dystopias for young adults.

In addition to my personal motivation for working with dystopian literature, there are other good reasons for exploring this genre's role in the upper secondary classroom. These include the popularity of contemporary dystopian YA fiction, which means that this genre might appeal to upper secondary students, and the genre's struggle with attaining critical legitimacy. Most importantly, though, I think that the genre has great didactic potential in the context of subject English in Norway.[4] Therefore, I was interested in exploring through a case study what teachers thought about a popular, contemporary literary genre. Would teachers see any didactic potential in these texts? After an extensive selection process,[5] I chose four contemporary YA dystopias for teachers to read and discuss: L. J. Adlington's *The Diary of Pelly D* (2005), Paolo Bacigalupi's *Ship Breaker* (2010), Patrick Ness's *More Than This* (2013), and Louise O'Neill's *Only Ever Yours* (2014).

1.2 Research questions

The research questions examined in this study are:

1. Which literary texts and genres are seen as suitable and/or used by teachers?
2. Why do teachers choose the texts they do?
3. How do teachers choose texts for classroom use?
4. How do teachers assess a specific contemporary dystopian young adult novel for classroom use?

I have sought to answer these questions using a mixed methods approach: I combined a quantitative survey of 110 upper secondary teachers with qualitative research interviews with eight teachers.[6]

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[4] These issues are addressed in chapter 4.

[5] The selection process is explained in chapter 4.

[6] This is discussed further in chapter 6.

1.3 Dissertation structure

This chapter has introduced the current project, including my motivation for conducting this research. The next five chapters situate this study further contextually, theoretically, and methodologically. Chapter 2 discusses upper secondary education in Norway and emphasizes developments from 1974 until today within the fields of vocational and general studies and *Bildung*.[7] Chapter 3 discusses the role of literature in upper secondary subject English today. I start by addressing literature's role in the current curriculum, examinations, and textbooks. Next, I discuss the presence and content of a literary canon, syllabus, or set texts in subject English, the development from an Anglo-American focus to a global English approach in previous and current curricula, and the use of literature as a resource to learn other things, or as an independent object of study. Chapter 4 discusses contemporary dystopian YA fiction, including the genre's didactic potential in the Norwegian context. Chapter 5 looks into the theoretical background relevant for this project, namely teacher cognition and teacher beliefs, and looks in more detail at studies of teachers in the Norwegian context. Chapter 6 presents the methods used in the current study.

Next, I present and discuss my results. Chapter 7 seeks to answer research question 1: Which literary texts are seen as suitable and/or used by teachers? The chapter examines the *de facto* English literature syllabus as reported by the teachers participating in this study, elaborating on teachers' beliefs about the suitability of literary texts, and discussing teachers' attitudes towards and uses of different genres. Chapter 8 begins to answer research question 2: Why do teachers choose the texts they do? It discusses the literature used in vocational and general study programs, and explores possible reasons why different texts are preferred with different students. Chapter 9 continues exploring research question 2 by discussing the role of textbooks and curricula, including the geographical origin and cultural focus of literary texts. Chapter 10 seeks to answer the

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[7] In this dissertation, the term "general study" is used to refer to the study programs that qualify students directly for further studies in colleges and universities (in Norwegian: "studieforberedende"). The term "vocational study" is used to refer to the study programs consisting of upper secondary education in combination with an apprenticeship that qualify students for a vocation (in Norwegian: "yrkesfag").

third research question: How do teachers choose texts for classroom use? It discusses whether teachers' focus is on their own literary preferences or those of their students, or on the influence of their colleagues. Chapter 11 deals with the findings related to the embedded case study, namely exploring teachers' beliefs about four contemporary dystopian YA novels in the upper secondary classroom. It seeks to answer the fourth research question: How do teachers assess a specific contemporary dystopian YA novel for classroom use? It also includes a discussion of the other dystopian texts my teachers informants reported using, and their views on the dystopian genre in general.

The last two chapters bring the main findings together. Chapter 12 combines theory and previous research discussed in chapters 2-5 with the main findings presented in chapters 7-11, discussing the web of influences on teachers' choices and beliefs about literature. It focuses on how beliefs about students, teachers, and subject matter function as filters when teachers select texts, the stability of teachers' beliefs about literature, and the importance of context. Chapter 13 concludes the dissertation by gathering up the threads and pointing forwards.

2. Upper secondary education in Norway

Upper secondary education in Norway today is voluntary, but it is still seen as part of the basic education that teenagers and young adults should complete. Today, children start their education the year they turn 6, and schooling is compulsory and comprehensive for students in primary and lower secondary school (Year 1 through Year 10). Even though upper secondary school (Years 11-13) is optional, recent statistics show that 92% of 16-18-year-olds attend some form of upper secondary education (Udir, 2018c). Of these, 60% attend general study programs, and 40% attend vocational study programs. It is considered to be quite difficult to compete successfully on the job market without a completed upper secondary education (Fremstad & Gravklev, 2016), and efforts are continually made, on the political level as well as in schools, to lower the dropout rate and help students graduate (Lillejord et al., 2015).

This chapter focuses on two central issues in upper secondary education in Norway that create an important backdrop for discussing literature's role in subject English, namely *Bildung* and vocational and general studies. In section 2.2, I discuss vocational study programs and general study programs, how they differ and relate to each other, and refer to relevant research. In section 2.3, I address educational *Bildung*, with an emphasis on theoretical approaches and the implementation of these ideals in the Norwegian system. First, however, I provide a brief historical overview of the development of the modern upper secondary school in Norway. I do this for two reasons. Firstly, because it provides necessary context for the issues I discuss in 2.2 and 2.3; secondly, in the expectation that earlier curricula could still be influencing teachers' practices today.

2.1 Brief historical overview

The table below describes the main features of the four reforms that have taken place in the last 45 years. Note that whereas the reforms in 1974, 1994, and 2006 were

comprehensive and affected the entire upper secondary school system, the reform in 1989 affected only general studies.

Table 1: Overview of educational reforms 1974 – 2006

Reform	Main features
1974 reform (New Structure)	- Merged academically oriented schools ("gymnas") and schools oriented towards professions ("yrkesskoler") - Gave students the right to attend upper secondary education - Changed the number of and content of study programs - Revised the subject curricula
1989 reform (Veierød)	- Revised the subject curricula in general studies
1994 reform (R94)	- Changed the number of and content of study programs - Revised the subject curricula - Introduced the core curriculum - Implemented new law which guaranteed all students the right to attend and complete upper secondary school - Streamlined the structure in all vocational study programs, including the apprenticeships
2006 reform (LK-06)	- Merged the national curricula for primary and lower secondary schools with the curricula for upper secondary schools - Changed the number of and content of study programs - Revised the subject curricula

(Sources: Bjørndal, 2005; Markussen, 2009; Nyen & Tønder, 2014; Udir, 2006a; 2013a.)

I begin this overview in 1974, as this was when the New Structure reform was implemented. As the name indicates, this reform completely restructured the upper secondary school system. In addition to marking the beginning of the modern upper secondary school in Norway, this reform is also the first curriculum to have influenced directly some of the teachers participating in this study. Most of the teachers working in Norwegian schools today were educated – some have also worked as teachers – when earlier educational reforms were in effect (Holgersen, Ekren, & Steffensen, 2017). The teachers who participated in this study were mostly under the age of 60,[8] which means that New Structure, which was implemented 45 years ago, is most likely

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[8] Only 11 survey respondents (10% of the total number) reported that they were over the age of 60, and none of the interview respondents were over the age of 60.

the first curriculum that the oldest of my participants would have been exposed to as students or taught themselves.

In what follows, I address the main features of each of the four reforms, focusing on issues that are relevant for the discussions of vocational and general studies and *Bildung* in the later sections of this chapter.

2.1.1 New Structure

In the decades after the Second World War, Norway needed to restructure the system of upper secondary education because of the increased number of students who wanted to attend higher education. This increase was a result of the post-war baby boom generation growing up, as well as a growing interest in education caused by the improved economic situation in the country (Bjørndal, 2005, p. 121). In 1965, a committee was appointed by the government who were to suggest changes to the system in order to be able to offer a three-year upper secondary education for all students who wanted to attend; it consisted of politicians, heads of influential organizations and businesses, principals, and other school leaders (Bjørndal, 2005, pp. 130-131). They made several suggestions for alterations and new subject curricula that were followed up in legislation by Parliament and tried out in practice by Forsøksrådet (Bjørndal, 2005, p. 137).[9] The New Structure reform for upper secondary education was approved in Parliament in 1974, and the new curricula were effectuated from 1976 onwards.

The most important elements of New Structure included giving all students the right to attend three years of upper secondary education, allowing students to choose which study program they wished to attend regardless of their previous academic achievements, providing adapted education for all, strengthening vocational education, and locating schools and study programs across the country (Bjørndal, 2005, p. 171).

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[9] Forsøksrådet existed from 1954 until 1984 and was a government appointed council that was in charge of testing new plans in selected schools before a reform was implemented nationwide (Telhaug & Langøren, 1985).

Furthermore, from having a strict divide between vocational and general study programs where students attended different schools according to whether they aimed to go on to higher education or to learn vocational skills, the system now became more comprehensive; in the new upper secondary school, different study programs – both general and vocational – co-existed under the same roof. Therefore, this reform is seen as the first step towards an upper secondary school that could include most of the country's teenagers and young adults and attempt to equalize the differences in status between general and vocational schooling – what is referred to as "enhetsskole" in Norwegian (Solerød, 2012, pp. 116-118).[10]

2.1.2 The Veierød reform

After New Structure had been in effect for a few years, several of the study programs were revised. In 1980, a group led by the principal Tom Veierød began working with revising the structure and contents of the general study program (Bjørndal, 2005). After they submitted their suggestions in 1982, Rådet for videregående opplæring [The Council for Upper Secondary Education] tried out their revised curriculum in 11 schools (Bjørndal, 2005, p. 243).[11] After evaluating these school projects and finding them satisfactory, the Ministry implemented the Veierød reform for general study programs nationwide in 1989. This means that unlike New Structure, the Veierød reform did not affect all aspects of upper secondary education – only general studies. For this reason, this section and the remainder of the chapter's references to the Veierød reform only address subject English in general studies.

One of the problems in New Structure which led to the Veierød reform, was the fact that foreign language subjects, including English, were not being chosen by a sufficient number of students. In the 1980s, only 15-25% of the students who enrolled in the

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[10] "Enhetsskole" can be translated as "comprehensive school" or "inclusive school" in English.

[11] The Council for Upper Secondary Education was established in 1975, to serve as a link between the Ministry, Parliament, counties, and schools (Bjørndal, 2005, p. 217). It adopted the tasks of Forsøksrådet when the latter was abolished.

general study program in upper secondary school chose to study languages (Ibsen & Lie, 1990, p. 10); the rest chose to study Science and Social Science (Bjørndal, 2005, p. 228). This worried politicians, educators, and representatives of industry alike since they perceived there to be "a greater need for language skills than ever before" (Bjørndal, 2005, p. 228, my translation). Therefore, the Veierød Reform aimed to strengthen foreign language learning in Norway by changing the structure of general studies. It allowed students more flexibility in terms of subject combinations while also requiring more of them in terms of foreign language learning (Bjørndal, 2005, p. 243). Results showed that the Veierød curriculum succeeded in getting more students to study English at the advanced level; under New Structure, 77% of the students only took the compulsory English course, whereas under Veierød, only 14% of the students stopped studying English after the compulsory first year course (Ibsen & Lie, 1990, p. 45).

2.1.3 R94

In the early 1990s, there was again need for a substantial reform of the entire system of upper secondary education in Norway. There was concern about insufficient capacity in the education system, which did not ensure that all students who wanted to attend upper secondary were able to. This violated the students' guaranteed access to upper secondary (Nyen & Tønder, 2014, p. 71). Additionally, there was concern about the low completion rate in some of the study programs, and the system of apprenticeships needed clearer regulations. A government-mandated group led by Kari Blegen was asked to suggest how one could ensure that all young adults could be made able to complete a general or vocational study program, the latter including an apprenticeship (Bjørndal, 2005, p. 289).

Their suggestions, which were followed up by Parliament, included giving all Norwegian 16-19-year-olds a right by law to attend upper secondary education, reducing the number of study programs at the first-year level, and simplifying the curriculum (Bjørndal, 2005, p. 290). Vocational students were given the opportunity to

qualify more easily for higher education, the organization of vocational studies was streamlined to a 2+2 structure (two years in upper secondary followed by two years as an apprentice), and students had to be given the opportunity to complete the study program they started on (Nyen & Tønder, 2014, pp. 69-92). Additionally, a core curriculum was introduced – a document that was meant to serve as an overarching aim for everything that happened in schools.[12] The Minister of Education from 1990-1995, Gudmund Hernes, was very influential in the development of the new curriculum, and R94 was described as being implemented "top-down" (Bjørndal, 2005, p. 299) instead of being tested out in schools first. R94 was very important in terms of making upper secondary education available to all, and in promoting general subjects for a well-rounded education for both general and vocational students.

2.1.4 LK-06

In 2001, the results from the first PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) tests, conducted in 2000, were published.[13] The Norwegian students achieved an average score in reading, mathematics, and science (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2001). This meant that combined, Norway scored lower than the other Nordic countries, as Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, and Finland all scored above average on one or more of the three test areas. These mediocre results led to an intense public debate (Fladmoe, 2013), and the new *Knowledge Promotion* curriculum for primary and secondary school – LK-06 – was introduced in 2006. This curriculum was meant to help improve students' learning by focusing on basic skills and competences, and introduced national tests at the primary and lower secondary level (Sjøberg, 2017). The latest PISA results, from the tests conducted in 2015, showed that Norwegian students scored above average in all three test areas

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[12] The core curriculum is discussed in more detail in section 2.3.1.

[13] PISA measures 15-year-olds' levels in mathematics, science, and reading (in Norway, students read in Norwegian on the test). The countries that partake are ranked according to their average scores. (For more information, see Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2017.)

(Kjærnsli & Jensen, 2016), and they even placed Norway among the top ten countries in one of the categories, reading (Frønes, 2016).

LK-06 covers primary and lower secondary education (Years 1-10) as well as upper secondary education (Years 11-13, or Vg1-Vg3). This means that it is the first curriculum to include both the compulsory part (primary and lower secondary school) and the elective part (upper secondary) of the centralized, state-governed educational system. Prior to this, upper secondary school was addressed in separate curricula and reforms. Furthermore, this reform reduced the number of vocational study programs at the Vg1 level. Currently, students are able to choose between 13 different programs when they start upper secondary education, five within general studies, and eight within vocational studies (Udir, 2019e). The core curriculum remained unchanged from R94, meaning that the same overarching principles that governed education from 1994 onwards are still in place in LK-06.

Importantly, though, LK-06 is currently being revised (Udir, 2019a). The core curriculum has already been revised, but is not yet implemented, and the curricula for the general subjects in both general and vocational studies are in the process of being revised. The new curricula – both core and subject-specific – will be implemented from the fall of 2020. However, as the data for this study was collected in 2016 and 2017, before any revisions had taken place, my references to both the core curriculum and subject curricula refer to the version of LK-06 that was in effect at the time, where not otherwise indicated in the text.

2.2 Vocational and general studies

As mentioned in the previous section, the reforms in 1974 and 1994 were very important in terms of including vocational studies in the broader educational tradition in Norway. The New Structure reform merged vocational and general studies schools, creating the modern, upper secondary school in Norway. However, the vocational and general study programs were still seen as belonging to separate spheres even though

they existed under the same roof (Markussen, 2009, p. 43). The contents of the subjects in the study programs as well as which subjects students had to take differed greatly, even regarding the general subjects such as Norwegian, Mathematics, and English. It took another twenty years following the New Structure reform before R94 introduced the core curriculum for all students, regardless of study program, that established the principles and values that teaching in the subjects should be based on. Furthermore, R94 ensured that everyone who wanted to take an upper secondary education was offered a place and enabled to complete their education, and it also introduced more general subjects – including English – into all of the vocational study programs. These subject curricula were revised so that the compulsory, general subjects became more similar for vocational and general studies. According to Guro Hansen Helskog, this increased academization happened because "politics and pedagogy were to a great extent discussed on the basis of a desire for economic growth, efficiency and control" (2003, p. 19, my translation). Purely practical knowledge of a vocation was no longer the only quality sought after in an employee; the authorities argued that in the future, all vocations would require more theoretical knowledge (Bjørndal, 2005), and it was considered necessary for vocational studies to move closer to general studies. This development was continued in LK-06, which has identical subject curricula for the compulsory courses that are common across vocational and general study programs, including English.[14] In this project, one of the issues I examine is whether the identical curriculum in the compulsory English course is interpreted and enacted similarly across vocational and general studies, or whether there are marked differences between teachers' choices for the different student groups.[15]

The increased similarities between vocational and general studies mean that ideally, the same educational principles should apply for all student groups. In Norway, *Bildung* is an important foundation for what goes on in schools, and this central educational concept is elaborated on in what follows.

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[14] The current curriculum is discussed in more detail in chapter 3.

[15] This issue is discussed in most detail in chapter 8.

2.3 *Bildung*

As the previous sections suggest, upper secondary education in Norway has developed greatly during the last 45 years. One educational aim has remained important throughout, however, namely what is sometimes referred to as *Bildung*. This corresponds to the Norwegian term "dannelse", which when translated directly into English tends to become "education",[16] but which in meaning corresponds more closely to the German term *Bildung*. When *Bildung* is used in pedagogical and didactic studies, it has a specific meaning; it aims to ensure the formation of well-rounded citizens through education. Therefore, there is consensus for employing the German term *Bildung* instead of an English translation which would not include all aspects of the concept (see e.g. Biesta, 2006; Standish, 2003).

Although the idea of *Bildung* can be dated back to ancient Greek society, the modern, humanist notion of *Bildung* arose in the Enlightenment period (Biesta, 2006). The German philosopher Wilhelm von Humboldt was central in the development of this modern view of education, which according to him dealt with "the linking of the self to the world to achieve the most general, most animated, and most unrestrained interplay" (2000, p. 58). This means that there is an element of individualism in *Bildung*, but the individual is never alone in the world: "the self is never a lonely wanderer, but always already involved, such that the opposition between self and world is not a contingent one but expresses a necessary relation" (Løvlie & Standish, 2003, p. 3) – what von Humboldt calls "interplay". *Bildung* was also linked to "the question of what constitutes an educated or cultivated human being", and the answer was "the one who had acquired a clearly defined set of knowledge and values; it was the one who was properly socialized into a particular tradition" (Biesta, 2006, pp. 2-3). Furthermore, the term came to denote self-education or "self-transformation" (Løvlie & Standish, 2003, p. 5). Ultimately, the main objective was a broad, liberal education which "included ideas about equality, individual autonomy and a communicative democracy" and which focused on the formation of citizens able to participate in a

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[16] It has also been translated as "edification" or "liberal education" (see Biesta, 2006, pp. 11-12).

democratic society (Helskog, 2003, p. 19, my translation). *Bildung* can also be viewed as education that centers on the general; knowledge and values that can be shared by all members of a society and serve as "a uniting force or a common ground" (Biesta, 2003, p. 63). This view of *Bildung* can be expressed as concrete aims in curricula or as cultural canons that list the works that educational authorities require all students to know. However, *Bildung* can also be more generally understood as that which is "equally valid for everyone everywhere" and that which can "bring the individual in touch with what is general or universal or enduring" (Biesta, 2003, pp. 64, 63).

In the Scandinavian context, the German theorist Wolfgang Klafki is frequently relied on when discussing what constitutes *Bildung* (Aase & Hägerfelth, 2012; Fenner, 2018). According to Klafki (1959/1996), there are two main branches of *Bildung*: the material theories which focus on the content of teaching (the specific knowledge students should possess), and the formal theories which focus on how students should learn and develop individually (pp. 172-185). Importantly, Klafki outlined a third branch of *Bildung* theory: the categorial, in which the material and formal theories exist in a dialectic relationship. In categorial *Bildung*, the processes in the individual are important as well as which types of learning materials that are used (Aase & Hägerfelth, 2012, p. 169), since "content and method are inextricably and mutually linked to each other" (Klafki, 1959/1996, p. 190, my translation). This means that "learning about a topic is not sufficient for *Bildung*; categorial *Bildung* […] requires reflection and critical thinking" (Fenner, 2018, p. 19).

My understanding of *Bildung* in this study builds on Klafki's categorial *Bildung*, as well as von Humboldt's views of the individual's interplay with the world. I emphasize the individual's development into a well-rounded citizen and the linking of the self to the outside world – something which includes both social and cultural understanding. Of particular pertinence to the present project is the role of language, literature, and culture in the formation of personality that constitutes *Bildung* (Solerød, 2012, pp. 12-13). In her influential book *Cultivating Humanity* (1997), American philosopher Martha Nussbaum argues,

the great contribution literature has to make to the life of the citizen is its ability to wrest from our frequently obtuse and blunted imaginations an acknowledgement of those who are other than ourselves, both in concrete circumstances and even in thought and emotion (pp. 111-112).

This means that Nussbaum sees literature as being uniquely able to help people understand others and to inspire empathy. Both are essential components of *Bildung* as I define it in this study.

2.3.1 *Bildung* in Norwegian education

Bildung has traditionally been important in the Norwegian education system, beginning with the establishment of "folkehøgskoler" [people's colleges] in the 1800s; these colleges still exist today, and are characterized by being exam-free and only widespread in the Nordic countries (Klepp, 2016). They build on the idea that education should not only provide students with facts and knowledge, but should also "develop their personality, attitudes and values, their humanity" (Bjørndal, 2005, p. 26, my translation). Additionally, an inherent idea of these colleges is that *Bildung*-based education should be available for all regardless of people's social standing and wealth. The government thus subsidizes these schools even though the students do not achieve any formal certificates or examinations by attending – the aim is to ensure *Bildung* for all (Klepp, 2016).

In primary and secondary schools, the development of state education throughout the 1900s aimed to provide children and teenagers with access to a free education that included *Bildung*, knowledge, and skills. The compulsory 9-year primary and (lower) secondary schooling that was introduced nationwide in 1969 had three main aims: to prepare students for work and professional life, to give students knowledge of the national cultural heritage, and to help students in their personal development (Solerød, 2012). Until the 1990s, however, upper secondary school divided students who selected the more academically oriented general studies and continued pursuing an education

that included *Bildung*, and students who selected vocational studies which were much more practically oriented and did not emphasize *Bildung* in a similar manner.

Although *Bildung* has been present in Norwegian education since the 1800s, it has not always been explicitly present in formal curricula. Alfred Oftedal Telhaug argues that prior to the 1990s, *Bildung* was more discussed in other parts of the establishment – mainly the church, in politics, and in pedagogical fields within higher education – than in the official documents regulating primary and lower secondary education (2011, p. 211). He states, however, that the most recent educational reforms, R94, L97,[17] and the current LK-06, brought *Bildung* to the forefront of both public discussions and curricula documents: "it has become a part of the reform work in educational politics at different levels, from kindergarten up to the universities and colleges" (p. 218, my translation).

The most important development in that respect was the implementation of the core curriculum in 1993. The introduction to the core curriculum states that "the aim of education is to expand the individual's capacity to perceive and to participate, to experience, to empathize and to excel" (KKUF, 1993a, p. 5). This aim is specified in the main part of the curriculum, which describes the qualities students should possess upon their completion of education in Norway. All students are supposed to be spiritual, creative, working, liberally-educated, social, environmentally aware, and integrated individuals when they have completed their education (KKUF, 1993a) – undoubtedly ideals in the *Bildung* tradition. This curriculum is still in place, although it will be replaced by a shorter core curriculum that emphasizes similar issues. The "core values" of the revised version of the core curriculum are "human dignity", "identity and cultural diversity", "critical thinking and ethical awareness", "the joy of creating, engagement and the urge to explore", "respect for nature and environmental awareness", and "democracy and participation" (KD, 2019).[18] Although the revised core curriculum could be viewed as less extensive in its depictions of how the educational system should mold students, the values of primary and secondary

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[17] The 1997 school reform L97 (KKUF, 1996) regulated primary and lower secondary education in Norway.

[18] Although the core curriculum was updated in 2017, it has not yet been implemented (see KD, 2017 for details).

education remain largely the same as in the 1993 version. Therefore, both the original and the revised core curriculum can be seen as continuing the Norwegian tradition of *Bildung* in the educational system.

The competence-based LK-06

Whereas the core curriculum emphasizes *Bildung*, the subject-specific curricula in LK-06 are dominated by a competence-focused approach. Although it is possible to combine *Bildung* and competences in education, the two approaches may require different foci from students and teachers. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training defines competences in the curricula as such:

> The ability to solve tasks and master complex challenges. Students demonstrate competence in specific situations by using knowledge and skills to solve tasks. It can relate to mastering challenges in specific areas in education, working life, and society, or on a personal level. (Udir, 2016b, my translation.)

This means that competences require students to combine knowledge and skills in order to solve both simple and complex tasks and challenges in all areas of their lives. In turn, the knowledge and skills that are included in the curricula need to be seen as useful for the students' development of competences, meaning that "subject knowledge is selected on the basis of the prime goal of competency achievement" (Winter, 2011, p. 350). Knowledge is not an aim in itself; the aim is that students are able to use their knowledge to solve tasks and master challenges. A consequence of this is that competence-based curricula focus on assessment. In Norway, the Directorate provides detailed descriptions of how teachers should assess students' work towards meeting the competence aims of the curriculum, and how continuous assessment should help students learn (Udir, 2016a).

Competence-based curricula have spread throughout the Western world in recent years, largely as a result of the OECD focusing on competences and the testing of skills across countries and contexts. As discussed in section 2.1.4, Norway's results on the first PISA tests led to the development of the competence-focused LK-06 curriculum, which aimed to improve students' skills and in turn affect Norway's test results. The influence

of international tests as a way of assessing Norwegian students' academic levels means that the national educational system is more closely connected to education in the rest of the world than it has been before. Some have criticized the sustained focus on testing and measurement in the current system (see e.g. Elstad & Sivesind, 2010), and there is arguably, in some areas, an ongoing tension between the overarching values of *Bildung* present in the core curriculum and the focus on competences in the subject curricula. This is discussed further in the next section.

2.3.2 *Bildung* in subject English

Today, English is considered to be one of the subjects that should emphasize *Bildung* in Norwegian education.[19] The process of turning English into a broader subject of *Bildung* started in upper secondary school sometime after the Second World War, when teachers used authentic texts in order to put a greater emphasis on culture, social studies, history, and literature (Fenner, 2005, p. 90). In the compulsory English subject in primary and lower secondary schools, however, *Bildung* did not begin to emerge until the reforms in the 1970s. The reforms in the 1980s and 1990s continued this development, and the introduction of the core curriculum was especially important (Fenner, 2005, p. 93).

As discussed above, the current curriculum is competence-based, and this is largely the result of OECD testing and a general tendency in Western countries for curricula to emphasize competences. For subject English, there has been another important international influence on the curriculum, namely the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). CEFR was developed by the Council of Europe in order to "provide a transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of foreign language proficiency", and is currently

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[19] The Norwegian phrase is "engelskfaget er både et redskapsfag og et dannelsesfag" (Udir, 2013b, p.1), and this is translated as "English as a school subject is both a tool and a way of gaining knowledge and personal insight" (Udir, 2013a, p.1).

available in 40 different languages (Council of Europe, 2018). An Official Norwegian Report[20] which addressed the future of education in Norway stated that,

> the curriculum in English is […] inspired by the main idea behind the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), meaning that it emphasizes how language is used (reading, writing, listening, speaking), but the curricula do not follow CEFR in terms of descriptors and content (Ludvigsen et al., 2014, p. 79, my translation).

The competence-based curricula inspired by CEFR have been criticized for lacking specific content descriptions, and they have been contrasted with a student-centered, constructivist approach (Bland, 2013, p. 4). Mike Fleming states that this criticism is especially relevant when it comes to literature teaching, as "it might be argued that […] the action-orientated competence approach adopted by the Common European Framework is appropriate for language acquisition but too crude for capturing the subtleties of the development of literary awareness" (2007b, p. 49). However, Fleming also suggests that focusing on inputs, exploration, and understanding rather than on skills would make assessment more difficult (p. 49).

The move towards competences in the subject English curriculum has three possible consequences for literature teaching. Firstly, since these curricula do not regulate the total amount of reading to be done, this may influence how much students read in the subject. Some students, classes, or study programs may read less than others, but it is difficult to say whether this is the case. There is research suggesting that the reading skills of students who study elective, advanced English courses in upper secondary school are not significantly better than those students who only complete the compulsory English course (Hellekjær, 2012). This indicates that students' reading skills do not improve significantly when they study more advanced English, which means that reading may not be the area which teachers emphasize the most. However, it should be noted that the curriculum also allows for teachers to use a lot of literature if they wish to do so; some teachers may prioritize reading and literature over other areas, while others may not. The second possible consequence is, as argued by Fleming

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[20] In Norwegian, this is referred to as a NOU (Norges offentlige utredninger).

above, that the focus on output and skills reduces the focus on individual understanding that is central when studying literature for literature's sake. This might lead to literature being used more as a resource to achieve other goals, than literature being read for the sake of reading literature.[21] The third possible consequence of the competence-based curriculum is that it may influence which texts are taught, since specific texts and/or authors are not mentioned as required reading in the curriculum. This means that teachers and students do not have a common syllabus to refer to across schools or perhaps even within schools, and that examinations do not require knowledge of specific texts.

Despite the strong focus on competences, *Bildung* is still important in Norwegian schools in general and in subject English in particular. Its influence can be seen in three main areas. Firstly, the term is included in the law regulating education: education is supposed to foster "*Bildung* and the desire to learn" (see § 1-1 in Opplæringslova, 1998, my translation). Secondly, the core curriculum emphasizes values that are central to the *Bildung* tradition, and this curriculum is supposed to underpin everything that goes on in Norwegian schools. Thirdly, vocational students in upper secondary education have the same curricula in subject English and the other compulsory general subjects as students enrolled in general study programs, which means that all students should, ideally, be part of the same educational tradition.

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[21] This issue is discussed further in the next chapter.

3. Literature in subject English in Norway

English as a school subject in Norway was first taught in the late 1700s (Fenner, 2005, p. 85). It became widespread in schools from the late 1800s and onwards, and finally became a compulsory subject for all students in primary and lower secondary school in 1969 and in upper secondary school in 1994 (Fenner, 2005, p. 88; Høvik, 2017, p. 192). Today, English is a compulsory subject in Years 1-11 and considered one of the core subjects along with mathematics and Norwegian (Udir, 2013a).

The development of the subject is closely linked to the evolving role of the English language in Norway, which has changed from it being considered one of several foreign languages to be studied, to being viewed as a foreign language with a unique standing. This is especially evident in the curriculum. English is the only language besides Norwegian that has been given a subject curriculum of its own; all other foreign languages are taught in accordance with the "Subject curriculum for foreign languages" (Udir, 2006b). This means that English is not viewed as a foreign language like the others, but that it instead functions as a foreign language with second language features (Brevik, 2015; Rindal, 2014). English used to be a language that students did not learn until they encountered it in foreign language classes in school, but it is now a language that most students have encountered from early childhood. This development has happened gradually in recent decades due to the increased influence of English in business and academia, as well as the influence of popular culture and entertainment such as music, television, and movies (Rindal, 2014). Thus, most students recognize and know some elements of English when they begin working with it in Year 1 in school. English hovers between being a second and foreign language because it is more widely used than most foreign languages in many areas of society, and many Norwegian native speakers have highly developed skills in the language.

Subject English in Norway is "inherently cross-curricular" (A. S. Bakken, 2018, p. 6), in that it seeks to help students with language learning by developing the basic skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening, and that it contains culture and social studies, literature, film, and other artistic expressions. Literature has historically had an

important role in the subject, and today, it is focused on in the curriculum alongside language learning, written communication, oral communication, and culture and society (Udir, 2006a; 2013a). Literature's stated purpose is to help students experience and learn the language, teach them about other people and cultures, and be a means for them to develop on a personal level (Udir, 2013a). The latter is in line with L2 curricula developments in other countries: "literature has a place in fostering self-awareness and identity in interaction with a new language and culture" (Carter, 2007, p. 10). A direct consequence of this is that "there is no single 'correct' way of analysing and interpreting the text, nor any single correct approach" (Carter, 2007, p. 10) – teachers have the freedom to choose how to approach literature in their classrooms in order to help their students' development.

This chapter looks at literature's role in subject English using two different perspectives: examining central documents (the core and subject curricula, exams, and textbooks) and discussing three central issues that emerge across the documents. I begin by addressing in detail how literature is included in the current curriculum for upper secondary school; both the compulsory and the elective courses are examined, as well as the core curriculum. I have chosen to begin my discussion by focusing on curriculum documents because they form the official foundation for teaching in the subject. Whereas teachers may employ different methods and resources with their students, the curriculum remains the same. Curricula have traditionally been closely connected to textbooks in Norway; until the year 2000, textbooks had to be centrally approved in order to ensure that they interpreted the curriculum correctly. When abolishing this practice, the government wanted to make the curriculum more central to what happened in schools (Bratholm, 2001). Although textbooks still influence classroom practice today (Ø. Gilje et al., 2016), the curriculum is the only official document governing education. It is, therefore, important to examine the English subject curriculum as well as the core curriculum and the role they play in influencing teachers' choices and beliefs. Building on my discussion of the curriculum in section 3.1, I move on in section 3.2 to comment on the influence of examinations and textbooks on teachers' selection and employment of literary texts. These two sections provide insight into the context in which the teacher informants in my study operate.

In sections 3.3 and 3.4, I present two central issues that relate to the position and purpose of literature in subject English. First, I address the presence and content of a literary canon, syllabus, or set texts. I discuss various ways of recommending and/or prescribing literary texts to be used in schools, and compare this to allowing teachers and/or students freedom of choice. Next, I discuss the tendency in the Norwegian approach to English teaching to move from an Anglo-American focus towards the inclusion of global English – meaning English as used by both native and non-native speakers across the world (Graddol, 2006). Lastly, in section 3.5, I discuss teaching literature as a resource in order to learn other things (such as language and/or culture) in comparison with treating literature as an object of study in itself. All of the three discussions outlined above have obvious consequences for which texts teachers select for classroom use and how they teach literature. By examining how the discussions represent and reflect different ways of viewing literature in schools, one can more clearly see the position and purpose of literature in today's subject English.[22]

3.1 Literature in today's upper secondary subject English

In upper secondary school today, subject English is compulsory for all students in their first and/or second year and available as additional elective courses for students attending general study programs. The table below describes the structure of the courses.

The curriculum for both the compulsory and the elective courses consists of six parts: purpose, main subject areas, teaching hours, basic skills, competence aims, and assessment (Udir, 2006a, 2013a). Students enrolled in both the general studies and the vocational study programs follow the same curriculum in the compulsory course, and this means that they are supposed to develop the same basic skills, work towards the

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[22] See Ibsen and Wiland (2000) for a discussion of literature's role – especially examinations – in the upper secondary English curricula from 1896 to 2000.

Table 2: The structure of English courses in upper secondary education today

	General studies	Vocational studies
Vg1 (first year)	Compulsory (140 hours)	Compulsory (84 hours)
Vg2 (second year)	Elective: International English (140 hours)	Compulsory (56 hours)
Vg3 (third year)	Elective: Social Studies English (140 hours) Elective: English Literature and Culture (140 hours)	-

(Sources: Udir 2006a; 2013a.)

same competence aims, and are eligible for the same examinations. The only difference is *when* they may be chosen to take the examination: at the end of Vg1 for general studies students, and at the end of Vg2 for vocational students.[23] The compulsory course is the same for both general and vocational studies because it gives students a general university admission certificate.[24] Vocational students who wish to study at college or university level after completing upper secondary need to study for an additional year first in order to complete some subjects, but English is not one of them; the compulsory course is supposed to be sufficient (Udir, 2015).

LK-06 has been criticized by some for diminishing the role of literature (see e.g. Jære, 2016). This discussion has centered mainly around literature's role in the competence aims for subject Norwegian, but is also of relevance for subject English. In the competence aims of the subject curricula, there is very little specificity regarding which types of texts the students are to read, especially in the competence aims covering the compulsory course and the elective Vg2 course. In the two Vg3 courses, there is more detail regarding literary texts, but the aims are still presented in a form which gives teachers a lot of choice, and which may lead to very different practices in terms of literature selection and teaching. It is, therefore, possible to argue that LK-06 *might* diminish the role of literature, as it is possible for teachers to do so within the framework of the curriculum. However, when addressing the role of literature in English, it is important to include the core curriculum in the discussion alongside the

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[23] The system of examinations is discussed further in section 3.2.1.

[24] Norwegian: "generell studiekompetanse".

subject curriculum. As discussed in the previous chapter, the core curriculum builds on the ideals of *Bildung*. Since literature is seen as an important component of *Bildung* due to its unique ability to help students understand the world as well as themselves, literary texts are particularly suitable for working towards the values and principles of the core curriculum. The purpose section of the subject curriculum attempts to bridge the gap between the aims of the core curriculum and the competence aims of the English subject curriculum, and this is where my discussion of the courses in upper secondary English begins.

3.1.1 The compulsory course

The purpose section of the curriculum for the compulsory English course states that literature is supposed to help students develop "a deeper understanding of others and of oneself", as well as "inspire personal expressions and creativity" (Udir, 2013a, p. 1). In the competence aims in the curriculum, "understanding others" seems to mean an understanding of cultures and societies in English-speaking countries (Udir, 2013a), whereas "understanding oneself" and "personal expressions and creativity" are not directly addressed in the competence aims for upper secondary school that relate to literature. Instead, these aims can be interpreted as being more linked to a personal, emotional, artistic, and intellectual development in each student – what is referred to as *Bildung*. Literature's close connection to cultural understanding is further emphasized by the structure of the curriculum, since one of the main areas of competence is called "Culture, society and literature". This suggests that these three elements could (or even should) be taught together.

Furthermore, the purpose section states that "literary texts in English can instil a lifelong joy of reading" in the students (Udir, 2013a, p. 1). This indicates that reading is something that is viewed to have a value in itself: students are supposed to experience reading in school so positively that they continue to enjoy reading throughout their lives. This is also related to *Bildung*, as it can be seen to constitute an element of students' lifelong self-development. Additionally, it could be argued that literature is

supposed to help students learn the language. Since more than half of the purpose section deals with the importance of learning English in order to understand and interact with other people in contemporary society, it is understood that this is also an important function of literature. Phrases like "it is necessary to be able to use the English language and to have knowledge of how it is used in different contexts" and "language learning occurs when encountering a diversity of texts" highlight how culture and literature are linked to language learning (Udir, 2013a, p. 1).

There are two competence aims that are tied explicitly or implicitly to literature; they state that students should be able to:

- discuss and elaborate on different types of English language literary texts from different parts of the world
- discuss and elaborate on texts by and about indigenous peoples in English-speaking countries

(Udir, 2013a, p. 11)

The verbs describing what students should be able to do are identical in these aims, and illustrate the level of complexity at which students are supposed to operate. To "discuss" means to list arguments for or against a statement, and to "elaborate" means "exploring the different ways in which texts make sense and readers make sense of them" (Munden & Sandhaug, 2017, p. 382). The latter verb, although clearly more complex than the former, may still be interpreted in several ways; it is possible to elaborate on a text by employing literary terminology to analyze a text's formal features, but it is also perfectly reasonable for students to elaborate on why a text makes them feel a certain way (Munden & Sandhaug, 2017).

The second aim, to "discuss and elaborate on texts by and about indigenous peoples in English-speaking countries" (Udir, 2013a, p. 11), is likely to have been included because Norway has indigenous people. The Sami cultural heritage is mentioned specifically in the current core curriculum as something that the Norwegian educational system should be responsible for preserving (KKUF, 1993a), and the importance of the Sami perspective is further emphasized in the revised version (KD, 2019). In the English subject curriculum, discussing other indigenous peoples and their culture is

interpreted as the best way of working with the Sami culture. A further reason for this focus on indigenous peoples may also be that it serves as a reaction to the mainstream colonial canonical tradition; that it seeks to ensure that all voices are heard in the schools, not just dominant white voices. As this competence aim is the most specific of the aims relating to literature, it may have an important influence on the texts and authors that are taught. The other aim dealing with literature is very broad: no specific authors, works, genres, or topics are mentioned. Therefore, the curriculum gives teachers a lot of freedom in terms of choosing texts for their students. This is in line with broader developments internationally: there has been "a gradual displacement of canonical texts" because "a much greater variety of texts and text-types" has been prioritized instead (Carter, 2007, pp. 5-6).

3.1.2 The elective courses

Students in general studies may choose to study English as an elective subject in Vg2 and Vg3. These elective courses are found in a separate subject curriculum, which is structured in the same manner as the subject curriculum for the compulsory course. Literature's role in these courses is defined in the purpose section of the curriculum, which states that "English literature and other cultural expressions can be a wellspring of experience, satisfaction and personal growth" (Udir, 2006a, p. 1). This means that, much like in the compulsory course, literature is supposed to help students develop on a personal level, as well as increase their general understanding and experience. The purpose of the elective courses is, therefore, linked to ideals of *Bildung* in addition to the development of more practical skills.

In Vg2, the elective course is called International English; the title indicates that it deals with global English language and culture. The aims of the course support this: students are supposed to know about "varieties of English outside of the Anglo-American core area", "challenges facing international society", and "communication that spans cultural distinctions" (Udir, 2006a, p. 3). Two competence aims that relate directly to literature are found in the main area "Culture, society and literature". Students should

be able to "elaborate on and discuss a selection of literature and factual prose from the period 1950 up to the present" and "analyse, elaborate on and discuss at least one lengthy literary work and one film" (Udir, 2006a, p. 6). These aims are a bit more specific than those in the compulsory course, given that the time period is specified and at least one lengthy work must be read. The wording relating to what the students should be able to do with the texts is quite similar to the compulsory course, though; students are supposed to "discuss" and "elaborate on" texts – just as in Vg1. For the second aim, however, students are also supposed to "analyse" a work and a film, and this implies that students need to do something more than what they did in the compulsory course. Whereas students do not have to analyze literature when elaborating – they could focus on their personal feelings instead, for example – an analysis requires students to examine something complicated by looking at its individual components (Tranøy & Tjønneland, 2017). In the case of literature, analysis often entails an examination of the building blocks of the text in order to make sense of the complete work.

In Vg3, students can choose between two courses: Social Studies English or English Literature and Culture. Of these, the Directorate's statistics for 2015-18 show that approximately three-quarters of the students who chose English in Vg3 studied Social Studies English (Udir, 2018a).[25] Both courses focus more on Anglo-American history, culture, and literature than the compulsory course and Vg2 International English.[26] In Social Studies English, only one competence aim relates to literature directly: that students should be able to "interpret at least one major work of fiction, one film and a selection from other English-language literature from the 1900s up to the present" (Udir, 2006a, p. 7). This is more specific than the compulsory course, in that genres, the minimum amount of texts, and one time period are specified.

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[25] These statistics also show that the number of students who choose to study English in Vg2 and Vg3 is steadily decreasing. In 2015-16, 15 991 Vg2 and Vg3 students studied elective English courses; in 2016-17, these courses were attended by 14 824 students; in 2017-18, 13 747 students, and in 2018-19, only 12 971 students took these courses (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2018a).

[26] This is discussed in more detail in section 3.4.

Unsurprisingly, the other Vg3 course, English Literature and Culture, includes the most aims that deal explicitly with literature. In this course, students should be able to:

- interpret a representative selection of texts from literary-historical periods in English literature, from the Renaissance up to the present time
- analyse at least two lengthy works of fiction
- analyse and assess a film and a selection of other artistic forms of expression within English-language culture
- interpret literary texts and other cultural expressions from a cultural-historical and social perspective
- present a major in-depth project with a topic from English literature and culture and assess the process
  (Udir, 2006a, p. 7)

The verbs used to describe what students should be able to do with the literary texts in the Vg3 courses differ from the Vg1 and Vg2 courses, as students are supposed to "interpret", "analyse", and "assess" texts. To "interpret" a text is "to specify the meanings of its language by analysis, paraphrase, and commentary" and to "make clear the artistic features" in the work (Abrams, 2005, p. 127). To "assess" means to "consider the value or importance of something", in this case an artistic work, "paying due attention to positive, negative and disputable aspects, and citing the judgements of any known authorities as well as your own" (UNSW Sydney, 2014). That students are required to interpret, analyze and assess indicates that students in Vg3 need to conduct more advanced discussions of literature than Vg1 and Vg2 students.

When examining the content of the competence aims in the English Literature and Culture course, some of the aims mentioned above immediately sound more specific than the aims covering literature in the Vg1 and Vg2 courses. The Vg3 aims specify some time periods ("from the Renaissance up to the present time") and some types of texts to be read ("representative selection of texts"; "lengthy works of fiction"). However, it is evident that these aims may be interpreted in different ways: which literary-historical periods teachers choose to focus on from the 1400s until today can vary, as can what is considered a "representative selection of texts". Therefore, the biggest difference between the course in English Literature and Culture and the other

English courses in upper secondary is that there is more *focus* on literature in the former course – but students might still read very different texts depending on the choices their teachers make.

In both the compulsory and elective courses, the purpose section of the subject curriculum and the aims and values of the core curriculum are arguably meant to guide teachers in their work with the competence aims. It is in the way texts are discussed and worked with in the classroom that teachers may be able to focus on, for instance, "understanding others" and "understanding oneself" (Udir, 2013a, p. 1), and using literature as "a wellspring of experience, satisfaction and personal growth" (Udir, 2006a, p. 1).

Two factors that may not only influence the ways in which teachers work with literature in English, but also their choices of texts, are examinations and textbooks. They provide interpretations of the curriculum in their respective manners, and are addressed in the next section.

3.2 Literature in examinations and textbooks

This chapter has so far been concerned with official curriculum documents, but other factors also influence which literature is used in the classroom. This section addresses the two most important of these: examinations and textbooks.[27] Both may influence teachers in their choices of texts, as examinations and textbooks interpret the broad aims of the curriculum – although in different manners. In what follows, I briefly discuss what characterizes literature's role in contemporary examinations and textbooks. I focus especially on the compulsory English subject in upper secondary school.

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[27] Other relevant factors include the selection of literature available in the school library, including class sets of texts.

3.2.1 Examinations

Today, all students taking the compulsory and elective courses in English may be selected for both written and oral examinations.[28] The written examinations are designed by committees appointed by the Directorate for Education and Training (Udir, 2017). All students across the country taking a specific course in a given school term take the same written examination, and English teachers across the country serve as examiners of the coded, anonymous responses. In the compulsory course, the written examination includes a preparation booklet which students are provided with the day before the examination, which allows them to prepare for the issues that will be addressed in the examination itself. In the elective courses, there is no preparation part in advance of the examination, but since written examinations used in preceding years are available on the Directorate's website, teachers may use these to help students prepare (Udir, 2019b).

Unlike the written examinations, the oral examinations are designed locally; the county authorities are in charge of them, but they may delegate the responsibility to the individual schools. Usually, the teacher who has taught the students designs the examination tasks, and s/he is also part of the examination along with an external examiner. On the day before the oral examination, students are provided with a topic which they have to present at the examination. After the student's presentation, the examiners can ask them about other issues relating to the course's competence aims (Udir, 2019d). Since the oral examinations are designed and organized locally, it is fair to assume that they may vary in terms of what they focus on, and how much emphasis literature is given. A recent study distinguished between "content" and "oral competence" (the competence aims dealing with literature were seen to belong to "content") in the assessment of oral examinations in the compulsory subject and found that teachers varied greatly in how they weighted these two components (Bøhn, 2016).

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[28] In the Norwegian educational system, students do not have examinations in all their school subjects. In the spring of Vg3 (Vg2 for vocational students), students are selected for written examinations and oral examinations in a selection of the subjects they are studying – the number of which can vary depending on their study program. In Vg1 and Vg2, students may be selected for *either* one written or one oral exam. (See Udir, 2018b for more.)

Due to the lack of data with regard to literature's role in oral examinations, I will focus on written examinations in the discussion that follows.

I have looked at all the written examinations in the compulsory course, Vg2 International English, Vg3 Social Studies English, and Vg3 English Literature and Culture from 2016, 2017, and 2018 that were available on the Directorate's website in the early fall of 2018 (Udir, 2019b). Vg3 English Literature and Culture stands out as being more literature-centered than the others, which is natural, considering the course's name and focus. In the other three courses, literature plays a more peripheral part in the examinations. Because English Literature and Culture is the least taught of all the English courses in upper secondary school, and because the same tendencies can be seen in the examinations for the compulsory course, Vg2 International English, and Vg3 Social Studies English, I focus on the latter three courses here. The examples below are taken from examinations in the compulsory course.

In the written examination, literature is one of several elements that students can choose to write about. In the compulsory course, the preparation booklet for the examination may include literary texts to help students prepare for the given topic. For the fall 2016 examination, students read an excerpt from Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932); before the spring 2017 examination, they encountered song lyrics by Buffy Sainte-Marie (b. 1941) and an excerpt from Nick Hornby's novel *How to be Good* (2001); before the spring 2018 examination, they read an excerpt from Veronica Roth's *Divergent* (2011) – all twentieth or twenty-first century texts. However, literature is not always part of the preparation material; as students prepared for the spring 2016 examination, a brief text about the author Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) was the closest they got to literary texts in the booklet they were provided with. This lack of focus on literature was reflected in the examination tasks that year, with only one out of six being related to literature (students had to respond to two out of the six tasks). Furthermore, this task was quite broad, allowing students to choose which texts (or films) they wanted to discuss:

> Literary characters often choose to violate social norms or break laws, often for very
> good reasons. Create a text in which you compare two such characters and discuss the

choices they make. The characters must be from English-language novels, films, plays or short stories you have studied. Give your text a suitable title. (Udir, 2019b.)

In other examinations, however, the literary texts used in the preparation booklet were referred to directly in tasks; this was the case with both the excerpt from the Hornby novel and the excerpt from the Roth novel. Nevertheless, as students could always choose another task which did not require them to address literary texts, students did not have to write about literature in any of them. The latter was also the case in the examinations in Vg2 International English and Vg3 Social Studies English: even though literary texts and/or films were usually included in the examinations, it was always possible for students to choose not to respond to the literary tasks.

There are two main consequences to this kind of written examination. Firstly, since it is possible to earn an excellent grade without discussing literature at all, this could indicate to both teachers and students that literature is a less central part of the subject. Secondly, the preparation booklet and the examination tasks could be viewed as the ultimate interpretation of the competence aims, meaning that the texts used here could be seen as "approved" by the educational authorities. This appears to be the case in the lower and upper secondary schools examined in a study conducted after the implementation of LK-06; it found that the teaching of English was strongly influenced by the examinations (Sandvik & Buland, 2013). This is referred to as a "backwash" effect: "the curriculum's competence aims are viewed as less important than the national guidelines for assessment" (Sandvik & Buland, 2013, p. 122, my translation). When it comes to literature, this means that teachers prioritize literature in general and specific texts in particular not in accordance with the competence aims, but in accordance with the examinations. However, the study also found that the backwash effect of examinations on teaching was stronger in lower secondary than in upper secondary school; teachers in Vg1 included all central skills and competences mentioned in the curriculum – even those not tested directly in examinations (p. 124). Nevertheless, the backwash effect is present in teachers' practices, and can be seen to be a negative version of the competence agenda. Rather than focusing on the overall competences that students are to achieve, teachers influenced by backwash focus on the examinations' assessment criteria in their teaching.

3.2.2 Textbooks

Another important resource that influences which texts teachers use in the classroom is the textbook. Although teachers may use any resources they wish to meet the aims of the curriculum, research shows that textbooks are central to English teachers' practices in Norway (A. S. Bakken, 2018; Eikrem, 2006; Ø. Gilje et al., 2016; Ibsen & Hellekjær, 2003; Juuhl et al., 2010). The textbooks are usually written by teachers and/or scholars working with teacher training programs in college and universities, and schools may choose freely which textbooks available on the market that they wish to use. Most schools have class sets of textbooks for their students, and this practice ensures that all students have the same written materials available at all times. However, English teachers in primary and lower secondary use textbooks more than teachers in upper secondary schools; in a recent study, less than 40% of upper secondary teachers reported that the printed textbook was their primary teaching resource (Ø. Gilje et al., 2016, p. 51). According to the same study, digital resources are more used in upper secondary than in primary and lower secondary schools, where the printed textbook has a stronger standing (p. 24). The study also confirmed that textbooks are chosen by teams of teachers at the individual schools, and that the teachers' level of autonomy in this area is slightly higher in upper secondary than in primary and lower secondary schools (p. 18).

Although printed textbooks are viewed as less important in upper secondary school today, they still have a place; textbooks are used as a point of departure, often deciding which topics to teach and the order in which these topics are addressed (Ø. Gilje et al., 2016; Munden & Sandhaug, 2017). Although LK-06 does not mention any particular English-speaking countries, cultures, or literary texts and traditions as required knowledge bases in the compulsory English course, some of the textbooks organize their content according to geography, with a special focus on the USA and Great Britain (or North America and the British Isles). Examples include *Tracks SF* (Sjøvoll, Moen, Murray, & Fodnestøl, 2016) and *Targets* (Balsvik, Bratberg, Pihlstrøm, Kagge, & Henry, 2015) for Vg1 general studies, and *Tracks: Engelsk for yrkesfag* (Burgess, Fuhre, Moen, Murray, & Sjøvoll, 2013) for vocational studies. NDLA, the national

digital learning arena which offers online resources for the upper secondary level,[29] organizes topics about culture and society geographically in what appears to be their perceived order of importance (considering the amount of sub-categories, texts and tasks available for each topic). They begin with the USA, continue with the UK and Ireland, progress to Canada, Australia and New Zealand, and conclude with the last geographical category called "other countries", which includes selected African and Asian countries (Gundersen & Frønsdal, 2018). Other textbooks, however, organize their content according to topics and issues rather than focusing on geography; examples include the textbook series *Skills* for vocational studies which is found in several editions, one for each vocational study program (see for example Lokøy, Lundgren, Langseth, & Hellesøy, 2013a), and the Vg1 general studies book *Access to English* (Burgess & Sørhus, 2013). This differing organization may influence which literary texts are selected, as a chapter dealing with one geographical region is more likely to include texts originating only from that area, and a chapter organized according to a topic will include texts that relate to this topic rather than texts that originate in a certain place.

In terms of the selection of specific literary texts, different textbooks for the compulsory course present a variety of works, but some texts and authors nevertheless appear in several. The strong position which textbooks hold in Norwegian schools (Ø. Gilje et al., 2016) might indicate that the literature present in textbooks is probably in widespread use.[30]

3.3 A literary canon, syllabus, or set texts?

As my brief discussion of the literary texts that are present in several textbooks shows, there appears to be a form of *de facto* literature curriculum in subject English – at least

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[29] NDLA (Norwegian Digital Learning Arena) is a state-sponsored website that is designed to support learning for students and be of assistance to teachers in upper secondary schools in Norway. It contains texts, tasks, curricula and plans that teachers and students can use free of charge. (See Gundersen & Frønsdal, 2018 for more.)

[30] This issue is addressed in more detail in chapter 9.

concerning a few texts. This leads me to a discussion regarding the teaching of literature, namely whether a subject curriculum should include what we often refer to as a literary canon, a syllabus, or a list of set texts.

A literary canon is traditionally defined as "an authoritative list of approved books" (Fleming, 2007a, p. 31), but is more often interpreted to mean the "best" or "most valuable" literary works. The most well-known literary theorist to have assembled a list which he believed included the best literary works of all time is the American critic Harold Bloom, with his *The Western Canon: The books and school of the ages* (1995). In it, he presented 26 authors and their works in detail, but also added a list of hundreds of authors and works that he saw as included in the traditional Western canon. What mattered to Bloom when selecting canonical works were "their sublimity and their representative nature", as well as "strangeness, a mode of originality that either cannot be assimilated, or that so assimilates us that we cease to see it as strange […] as adding strangeness to beauty" (Bloom, 1995, pp. 2-3). These are criteria used to establish aesthetic quality; Bloom's critics have argued that he emphasizes this aspect too much, and that his is an expired version of literary *Bildung* (see e.g. Scholes, 1998). Furthermore, when recommending or prescribing literature for schools, there are other issues besides aesthetic quality to consider, for instance whether the text and its topics are suitable for the age and maturity level of the students. This means that one does not refer to a canon in the traditional sense when discussing prescribed literature in schools, but rather the presence of a syllabus or set texts. In the remainder of this dissertation, these are the terms I will use when referring to this issue.

In subject Norwegian, a point of dispute has been whether the syllabus should emphasize works that represent the national cultural heritage (Penne, 2010, pp. 211-212). In subject English, as in most foreign and/or second languages, emphasis on cultural heritage is not as important. Rather, literature is relevant for culture in that texts can address intercultural competence, including providing "insight into target cultures" and "envisioning other cultures as enriching sources of knowledge" (Volkmann, 2015, pp. 55, 64). Furthermore, in FL and SL teaching, teachers are advised to choose reading materials for the students that are "in concert with their developing linguistic and reading competence" (R. R. Day & Bamford, 1998, p. 92) –

texts at suitable language and complexity levels. In short, set texts in subject English are equivalent to a syllabus that includes considerations of cultural and linguistic relevance.

The main question regarding a syllabus in schools is whether it should exist at all. Advocates of lists of set texts in schools argue that using a democratic, dynamic approach to selecting texts will protect the students, since their "reading content should not be arbitrary", and that a syllabus will lead to more balance in reading between different types of texts (Fleming, 2007a, p. 37). Critics of employing an official literary syllabus argue that this approach "ignores the importance of context; assumes that judgements of quality are straightforward and uncontested; undervalues the professional judgements of teachers" (Fleming, 2007a, p. 37). Additionally, *who* chooses the syllabus may also be of importance, as the literature that is chosen "may not be unconnected with the powerful positions held by those educated within particular educational establishments who sit on examination boards and who set texts for study or are in control of national curricula" (Carter, 2007, p. 5).

An important distinction in this debate is whether a syllabus is presented as *the* list of texts (which is the case with Harold Bloom's canon) or as *a* list of texts (which implies that there can be more than one, and that it can be subject to change). A syllabus will be the latter, as it may be subject to change, or even choice within the list of texts. A list of texts in the curriculum may be presented as recommendations and suggestions rather than requirements, and in these cases, teachers have more autonomy, as they have the opportunity to alter the list or abandon it altogether.[31]

Interestingly, even if a curriculum does not include an official syllabus, like the current LK-06, there may be a *de facto* syllabus in use. My examples above of literary texts that are present in several textbooks demonstrate that this might be the case in Norway. This is also backed up by findings in previous research that suggest that the texts in textbooks have been especially central in terms of representing the "real" curriculum that teachers follow (Ø. Gilje et al., 2016; Juuhl et al., 2010; Solstad & Rønning, 2003),

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[31] This was the case in the previous curriculum for primary and lower secondary school in Norway, L-97 (see KKUF, 1996).

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in addition to examinations, as discussed in the previous section. This indicates that although the curriculum provides teachers with the freedom to choose any texts, their choices could still be conservative and rely largely on the resources at hand, leading to a *de facto* syllabus in widespread use.

Regardless of the teachers' choices of texts, though, the way a curriculum relates to syllabi, set texts, or complete freedom of choice will depend on the aim of literature teaching. A curriculum that encourages freedom of choice is ideal if the wish is to inspire teacher and/or student autonomy. Including a list of set texts is ideal if the goal is a common curriculum that all students in the country across contexts, study programs, and academic levels share. However, creating and employing a syllabus might also be problematic; deciding which texts are important enough to be included also means deciding which texts are *not* important enough. Since English is widely used across the world as a native, official, second, third, and foreign language, this means deciding which geographical regions, countries, and cultures that are to be represented, and which versions of the language that are to be read. This issue is discussed further in the next section.

3.4 An Anglo-American focus or a global English approach?

The role of the English language in the world has changed immensely since the first national curriculum in English in upper secondary school was implemented in Norway in the late 1800s. In the early curricula, British and American language, culture, and literature were emphasized because of Norway's close ties to Great Britain commercially and to the USA through the many Norwegians who emigrated there (Høigård & Ruge, 1971). In the early 1900s, English and German were considered to be foreign languages of fairly equal importance (Høigård & Ruge, 1971, pp. 216-217), but after the Second World War, English gained a special position (Høvik, 2017, p. 183). This was due to close political wartime alliances with Britain and the USA, as well as a general anti-German sentiment in the wake of the war. British, and especially

English, language and culture were emphasized in the post-war curricula and teacher training programs; this was probably helped along by the impact of the British Council, which had an "education officer" posted in Norway from 1950 onwards (Høvik, 2017). In the decades that followed, American English was gradually given a larger place in curricula, and in 1987, British and American English were considered equals in the subject English curriculum (Simensen, 2014).

In more recent years, the Anglo-American focus has been supplemented with global English, an approach which includes a variety of countries, cultures, and literary texts, and views the English language primarily as a lingua franca (Graddol, 2006). This is evident in the LK-06 curriculum, which has an entire course entitled "International English" (Udir, 2006a), and which states that students attending the compulsory course should work with literature "from different parts of the world" (Udir, 2013a, p. 9). This development in curricula and teaching is found not just in Norway, but across the world. David Graddol claims that the traditional teaching approaches EFL (English as a foreign language) and ESL (English as a second language) are beginning to lose ground at the expense of teaching models such as CLIL (content and language integrated learning), ELF (English as a lingua franca), and EYL (English for young learners) (2006, pp. 82-91). What the latter approaches have in common is that they tend to focus on international or local intelligibility rather than striving towards native speaker varieties of the language. In this way, the new models represent a postmodern, post-colonial, globalized approach rather than an ethnocentric Anglo-American approach. This emphasis on global English also influences the selection of literary texts in the English classroom in that texts from a wider variety of English-speaking countries are included.

However, Great Britain and the USA continue to receive particular attention in some contexts in which English is taught as a foreign language, including parts of subject English as taught in Norwegian upper secondary schools today. The elective courses in Vg3, Social Studies English and English Literature and Culture, focus more on Anglo-American history, culture, and literature than the compulsory course and Vg2 International English. Social Studies English should have "an emphasis on Great Britain and the United States" and cover "historical events and processes that have

affected the development of society in Great Britain and the United States" (Udir, 2006a, p. 3). Students attending the English Literature and Culture course should be able to "elaborate on and discuss the cultural position of the United States and Great Britain in the world today, and the background for the same" (Udir, 2006a, p. 9). Although the curriculum states that both Vg3 courses should also include discussions of other English-speaking cultures besides those of Great Britain and the United States, these two countries are the only ones named, and they can thus be interpreted as being the main priority of these courses. In sum, this means that whereas the global English approach dominates in the compulsory course and Vg2 International English, both Vg3 courses have a predominantly Anglo-American focus. These differing foci will probably influence which literary texts that are used in the different courses.

3.5 Literature as a resource or literature as an object of study?

The last issue I address in this chapter is not directly linked to which literary texts that are selected in subject English, but relates more to the overarching purpose of literature in the subject. Why should students read literature at all, and what can students learn when reading literature that they may not learn when reading other types of texts? Is there a value in reading literature for literature's sake, or should literature mainly be used as a resource to learn other things, such as language and culture?

Several theorists have addressed these questions. Marjorie Perloff writes about the importance of "literary literacy", namely working with "basic literary problems" that include understanding and interpreting language and text structure as used in different literary genres (1997, p. B5). In more recent years, scholars such as Christiane Lütge (2013) and Laurenz Volkmann (2015) have suggested that literary literacy is especially helpful in terms of furthering intercultural competence, which is an important aim of EFL and ESL teaching. Volkmann argues that this development is the result of the influence of CEFR and the shift towards competences, as "aesthetic education" is no

longer "appreciated as having educational value in itself" (2015, p. 49) – there needs to be a clear aim when students read literature in the classroom. Lütge acknowledges the influence of CEFR, and points out that there are "other dimensions of literariness that cannot easily be broken down into competences", such as "emotional, cultural or aesthetic aspects", and that these are just as central in developing students' intercultural competence as the more measurable aspects of literary literacy are (2013, p. 98). At the center of this discussion lies the distinction between using literature as a resource to learn other things, and working with literature as an independent object of study.

In the classroom, literary texts can be argued to have independent meaning when they are taught in order for students to gain more insight into the texts themselves; this is referred to as "literature as object of study" (Parkinson & Thomas, 2000, p. 1). This can be done by focusing on close reading, using literary terminology, and interpreting the text. Conversely, literature is used as a means when the goal of using the text is for students to understand other phenomena better, for example by using literary examples to illustrate linguistic or cultural issues. This is referred to as "literature as resource" (Parkinson & Thomas, 2000, p. 1). However, the distinction between the two is not always easy to pinpoint and describe. For example, the classroom activity of linking a literary text to its historical context may be used for both approaches – what matters is what the aim of the activity is. If the goal of studying the text's context and literary history is to understand the literary text better, it treats literature as an object of study. If the goal is to understand culture and history better by using the literary text to illustrate elements of society, literature is used as a resource. In practice, however, it will probably be difficult to separate the two approaches; teachers might be working towards both goals at the same time.

The distinction between literature as a resource and literature as an object of study is complicated further by the fact that there are approaches that do not fit into the above dichotomy. One example of this is extensive reading. This is an approach which is characterized by students reading whichever materials they want to silently and individually and as much as possible, there are few follow-up tasks to the reading, and the purposes of reading are "pleasure, information, and general understanding" (R. R. Day & Bamford, 1998, pp. 7-8). Although other types of texts than the literary may be

included in an extensive reading program, this approach nevertheless allows students to focus on the text at hand without being concerned with other aims than the understanding of the text itself – which might seem like an approach that emphasizes treating literature as an object of study. However, since there are supposed to be few tasks linked to the reading, another way of viewing this approach is to see it as *not* studying literature; students focus on reading the text, not on interpreting and analyzing it. In addition, extensive reading may be used as a resource because it benefits language and reading skills: "free reading results in better reading ability, better writing, larger vocabularies, better spelling and better control of complex grammatical constructions" (Krashen, 2013, p. 15). This means that extensive reading may be seen as an approach that treats literature as a resource while also valuing it as an object of study, or as seeing literature as something that should only be read and not studied at all.

In the educational context of LK-06, the vagueness of the competence aims in the compulsory English course do not indicate whether literature should be used in one way or the other – the curriculum allows for both approaches. Literature is closely linked to social studies by its presence in the main area "Culture, society and literature" (Udir, 2006a; 2013a), indicating that they might be taught together, but not prioritizing one above others. Nevertheless, the verbs used to describe what students should be able to do in the different courses tell us something about how the role of literature is viewed. It is possible to argue that literature as an object of study has a slightly stronger standing in International English (Vg2) and Social Studies English (Vg3) compared to the compulsory course, and a much stronger standing in English Literature and Culture (Vg3). Whereas the students of the compulsory course are supposed to "discuss" and "elaborate on" literature (Udir, 2013a), the students of the elective courses are supposed to "analyse", "interpret", and "assess" literary texts (Udir, 2006a).[32] This is a clear indicator of the text being viewed as more important in itself, and this is particularly evident in English Literature and Culture. These differences in verb use could influence the texts that teachers choose and use, but they may also have some

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[32] As discussed in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, "analyse", "interpret", and "assess" entail more advanced engagements with literature than do "discuss" and "elaborate".

bearing on how much emphasis teachers place on literary texts and on how they reason around their text choices in the different courses. Ultimately, the question of using literature as a resource or as an object of study is not a matter of either-or, but a matter of how teachers – and the curriculum – argue for the legitimacy of literature in the subject.

3.6 Concluding remarks

This chapter has discussed the role of literature in the current subject English curriculum, both in the compulsory course for general and vocational studies, and in the elective courses for general studies. I have addressed the current LK-06 curriculum in detail, as well as the way in which literature is used in examinations and textbooks. Three issues have been discussed as central to the role of literature in today's upper secondary subject English: the presence and content of a literary canon, syllabus, or set texts, an Anglo-American focus or a global English approach, and literature as a resource or as an object of study. LK-06 is characterized by the growing influence of global English, and by teachers having, at least on paper, great freedom of choice regarding which literary texts they wish to use. However, the literature present in examinations and textbooks may influence teachers' choices, which could mean that there is an unofficial, *de facto* syllabus at work in upper secondary subject English. Furthermore, there is a difference between the compulsory and the elective courses in LK-06: treating literature as an object of study is more present in the latter, as is a certain Anglo-American focus in the Vg3 courses.

The issues that have been addressed in this chapter reappear in chapters 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12 where I present and discuss my findings. They are particularly important in the sections that respond to research questions 1, 2, and 3 – the *what*, *why*, and *how* of literature selection. In the next chapter, the literary genre that is central in research question 4 – contemporary dystopian literature for young adults – is introduced.

4. Contemporary dystopian fiction for young adults

Whereas the previous chapters have dealt with overarching issues that are relevant for the entire study, this chapter is directly linked to research question four, which is addressed in chapter 11: How do teachers assess a specific contemporary dystopian young adult (YA) novel for classroom use? This chapter introduces the literary genre in question. In what follows, I discuss the recent development and growth of contemporary dystopian YA fiction by addressing both broad historical lines and specific works. First, the origins of YA literature and dystopian literature are presented, with an emphasis on central characteristics of the two genres. In the discussion of contemporary dystopian YA fiction which follows, I emphasize central concerns addressed in the genre, and these works' didactic potential and relevance for Norwegian curricula. Lastly, the four dystopian novels employed in this project are introduced, highlighting aspects of the novels that might make them interesting, as well as challenging, for the upper secondary classroom.

4.1 Origins, definitions, and characteristics

In this section, I present the origins of the two genres YA literature and dystopian literature, and address the definitions and characteristics of the genres that are relevant for the discussion of contemporary dystopian YA fiction in section 4.2. The main focus is on English-language literature in the Anglo-American tradition, but references are made to the Norwegian – or broader Scandinavian – context whenever appropriate.

4.1.1 Young adult literature

Origins and definitions

YA literature has a fairly recent history compared to literature for adults, and even literature for children. Its development is closely linked to the development of the concept of the teenager in modern Western culture. In the early 1900s, the term "adolescent" became significant for psychologists who examined the transition from childhood to adulthood. This, in combination with students staying longer in school to complete the secondary level of education instead of joining the workforce after primary school, led to the development of the term "teenager", to denote the group of people who were not children, but not yet adults. The concept was in common use after the Second World War, and books soon began to be marketed specifically towards this age group (Cart, 2010, pp. 3-11).

In the American context, critics disagree regarding when the exact birth of YA literature was: in 1942, with Maureen Daly's *Seventeenth Summer*, in 1951, with J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, or in 1967, with S. E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*.[33] In Norway, YA literature gradually developed into something distinct from children's literature after the Second World War, and particularly from the 1960s onwards (Birkeland, Risa, & Vold, 2018, pp. 245-246). Regardless of when one wishes to mark the beginning, though, YA literature was well-established by the late 1960s (Trites, 2000, p. 9). In his historical survey of the genre, Michael Cart (2010) argues that YA literature dealt mainly with the perceived interests of middle-class teenagers in the 1940s and 50s: romantic stories for the girls and genre fiction (car books, science fiction, adventure, sports, and animals) for the boys. Gradually, however, YA books – like art, music, and literature in general – began to reflect the changing political, social, and cultural landscape throughout the 1960s and 70s, for instance in the works by authors such as Judy Blume and Robert Cormier. This also meant that YA literature took a "darker" turn (Sambell, 2004). In the 1980s, there was a backlash to romance

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[33] Note that Salinger's novel was originally marketed as a novel for adults, but that it has since come to be viewed as a YA text of central importance (Cart, 2010, p. 27).

and adventure, and the novel series gained a stronghold on the market. In the early 1990s, many publishers and critics predicted the death of the YA novel because of the growth of the middle school novel (aimed at an audience aged 10-14), but it was considered revived and renewed in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Cart, 2010).

The term YA can be difficult to pin down when describing the intended audience of this literature, as different people and institutions refer to different age groups denoted by the term. According to Karen Patrick Knutsen (2017), YA literature "is not a genre designation; instead the label designates a proposed age range for those who might wish to read a particular book" (p. 274). The most common definition of YA is the age group 12-18 (Hill, 2014, p. 3), but some have expanded the YA category to include readers aged 10 to 35 (Cart, 2004). Interestingly, a 2012 study found that 55% of all YA books sold in the USA, Great Britain, and Canada were bought by adults; the largest proportion of these were between the ages 30-44, and in 78% of the cases, they were buying the books for themselves (Publisher's Weekly). This means that YA literature today has a much broader appeal than the age group 12-18, which was the original target audience, and these works are often referred to as "crossover literature" (Knutsen, 2017). To add to the confusion, YA is not the only term used about this type of literature: "adolescent" and "teenager" are also used at times. "Teenager" is fairly simple, as it denotes the ages 13-19, but "adolescent" is more fluid as it was originally a psychological term that denoted the time between childhood and adulthood. It usually referred to the ages 12-19, but this could differ according to whether psychologists, educators, or employers were speaking (Cart, 2010, p. 4). This means that today, the three terms YA, teenager, and adolescent are used to refer to roughly the same age group. In this study, I use the term YA when referring to the literary genre, but the terms teenager and adolescent may be used when referring to characters in the works and/or the readers. When discussing YA literature, the age group 12-18 is seen as the target audience unless otherwise indicated.

Despite its popularity, YA literature has traditionally struggled with attaining critical legitimacy in terms of literary merit and status. For instance, one of the aims of the anthology *The Critical Merits of Young Adult Literature: Coming of Age* (2014) is to "begin to put to rest doubts about the literary value of YA literature" (Hill, p. 2). Crag

Hill points at the derogatory terms used to denote YA literature, such as "kiddie lit" and "juvenile lit", and argues that "high school teachers, parents, professors of literature, and even English educators continue to treat YA literature as an illegitimate child" (2014, p. 1). YA literature has sometimes been used as rungs on a ladder to help readers climb towards the literature they really *should* be reading (Cart, 2010, p. 23), namely serious works written for an adult audience. However, since adults are now also reading YA literature (as the previously mentioned 2012 study referred to in Publisher's Weekly showed), it is evident that there is more to this literature than just offering a transition for teenagers from childhood, via adolescence, to adulthood. These literary works are primarily aimed at a young adult audience, but they evidently have a more wide-ranging appeal, which says something about these works' value in themselves. Still, the merits of YA literature are not based on popularity alone. The growing critical attention paid to the genre is another way of acknowledging these works' worth.

Characteristics

In scholarly works, YA literature is to a large extent still discussed in connection with children's literature (Hill, 2014, p. 15), although since the mid-1990s, there have been attempts at defining YA literature as something separate from both children's and adult literature. The traits most commonly agreed upon focus on the protagonist: the text needs to have a teenager as the main character (Backes, 2004; Hunt, 1994), and the story must be told from a teenager's perspective (Campbell, 2010; Hill, 2014). Roberta Seelinger Trites argued that whereas children's literature focuses on self-discovery, "YA novels tend to interrogate social constructions, foregrounding the relationship between the society and the individual" (2000, p. 20). One of the reasons for this might be that "society views the teenager in far more negative terms than it does the child", and the teenager is often in a state of opposition against the adult establishment (Hintz & Ostry, 2003, p. 10). Similarly, Hill argues that YA literature "will also implicitly or explicitly challenge the dominant assumptions contemporary culture conveys to adolescents" (2014, p. 8). However, there are quite a few YA books that appear to be

conformist rather than challenging in their relationship to societal assumptions, for instance novels in the "chick lit" genre that glorify consumerism and emphasize the importance of appearance and heteronormative relationships (Cart, 2010, pp. 93-94).

Contemporary YA literature features teenage protagonists who are in a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood, and many of these works address issues related to growing up. The teenage protagonists discover more about the world they live in, and often encounter challenges in relation to these discoveries. Conflicts with adults are frequent, as the adults will often cause problems for the teenagers, for instance by trying to restrict their exploration of their expanding world. Teenage rebellion against parents is a well-known trope, so much so that this is expected in one form or another as young people reach a certain age – in both literary characters and real life.[34] From the 1960s and onwards, YA literature attempted to deal with some of the challenging issues teenagers encountered in their lives. The so-called "problem novel", which according to Cart "is to young adult literature what soap opera is to legitimate drama" (2010, p. 32), prioritized elaborating on one specific challenge in the plot instead of creating quality characters and stories; these books were very successful in the 1970s. The novels dealt with issues like dropping out of school, runaways, rape, teenage pregnancy and abortion, drugs and alcohol abuse, family problems, and suicide, but were criticized for being too sensational, at times too didactic, and not providing the readers with well-developed literary worlds.

Even though the problem novel is not as widespread as it once was, YA literature still deals with problematic issues that are relevant for teenagers. Violence, bullying, physical and mental abuse, and sexuality can be added to the list of issues mentioned above as topics that are addressed in contemporary YA novels. From time to time, discussions emerge among adults – for the most part parents, commentators, literary critics, and authors – regarding whether it is good for teenagers to read books that deal with challenging issues. For instance, the children's book reviewer for *The Wall Street Journal*, Meghan Cox Gurdon (2011), attacked what she believed to be too much

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[34] Interestingly, though, recent research indicates that contemporary teenagers – in Norway – experience less conflict in their relationship with their parents, and that they spend more time at home than they used to (A. Bakken, 2016). This might affect this trope in YA literature in years to come.

"darkness" in literature for teens. Her main arguments were that some popular literary works for YA, including Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (2007), are so excessively bleak and violent that they do not depict a realistic image of the world at large, and that too early exposure to these books could be damaging for teens. The books' "depravity", "brutality", and "ugliness" could harm young people's "happiness, moral development and tenderness of heart" (Gurdon, 2011). In a text entitled "Why the Best Kids Books Are Written in blood" (2011), Alexie responded by stating that these bleak books reflect the reality that many teenagers experience – and as long as there are teenagers who experience the things he writes about, he will continue to write about them. This discussion has also emerged in Norway (see e.g. Aalstad, 2014; Djuve, 2013; Mørk, 2012), which is interesting, considering that Scandinavian literature for children and young adults is known for its darkness and lack of taboos (see discussion in Røssland, 2015). The main conflict in these debates appears to be how much information and insight adults think teenagers should have about their society. This conflict is also of importance in YA works, along with the question of whether teenagers should have any real agency of their own besides that which is decided by adults. These issues are central in YA dystopian fiction, and are discussed further in section 4.2.

4.1.2 Dystopian literature

In order to understand the origin of the dystopia, we first need to address the concept of utopia. In 1516, Thomas More published his book *Utopia*, which deals with life on the eponymous, fictional island. The book describes a society organized very differently from other Western civilizations at the time, where trust, peace, fairness, equality, and education are highly valued. Accumulation of wealth is not allowed, and everyone works and contributes for the benefit of the community at large. Although slavery is practiced, it is argued that this is actually a fair punishment for the crimes committed, and that there is room for forgiveness since the possibility of a pardon is present. At the book's conclusion, the narrator states that he "cannot perfectly agree to

everything" in the Utopian society, but that there are certainly elements that he would want to see in his own society (More, 1516/2016, p. 160).

Although utopian ideas had been discussed long before More's novel, no word had been coined to describe them until *Utopia* was published. The term "utopia" was created by More as a neologism, but derives from Greek and is made up of the two elements "u" and "topos", which together mean "no place". More also introduced the term "eutopia", which means "good place". In popular use, "eutopia" has been merged with the term "utopia" so the latter also produces positive connotations, but in its original meaning, utopianism is "the imaginative projection, positive or negative, of a society that is substantially different from the one in which the author lives" (Claeys & Sargent, 1999, p. 1). The positive projection of a utopia is the eutopia (or the utopia), whereas the negative projection of a utopia – the "not good place" – is the dystopia. In addition to these main text types, scholars sometimes employ terms like "satirical utopia", "anti-utopia", "alotopia", "heterotopia", "ecotopia", and "hyperutopia" (Vieira, 2010, pp. 3, 15) in order to describe the many nuances in the genres. In this study, I mainly use the terms utopian and dystopian when referring to texts, ideas, and literary worlds – with an obvious emphasis on the latter.

Elements of the dystopian have been present in utopian works since the very beginning, but dystopian literature only began to emerge as a separate literary genre in the late 1800s and around the turn of the century. The next fifty years saw the publication of several important dystopian works; the most notable include H. G. Wells's *The Island of Doctor Moreau* (1896), Evgenij Zamjatin's *We* (1921), Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), and George Orwell's *1984* (1949). The development of the genre throughout the twentieth century is often linked to the two world wars, the Cold War, and the fascist and communist totalitarian regimes that emerged in various parts of the world (Claeys, 2010). Although the first recorded use of the word dystopia was by John Stuart Mill in the English parliament in 1868 (Mill, Robson, Kinzer, & Robson, 1988, p. 248), the term only entered literature studies in the latter half of the twentieth century with Glenn Negley and J. Max Patrick's distinction between eutopia and dystopia (1962, p. 294). This means that an important work such as Huxley's *Brave New World* was not referred to as a dystopia when it was first published, but simply a utopia, in

line with the contemporary definition: this was seen to describe "any speculative structure taking us to the future" (Gottlieb, 2001, p. 4).

As several scholars have pointed out, the line between utopias and dystopias is frequently blurred. Erika Gottlieb claims that "each dystopian society contains within it seeds of a utopian dream" (2001, p. 8), and Balaka Basu, Katherine R. Broad and Carrie Hintz argue that "the dystopia often functions as a rhetorical reduction ad absurdum of a utopian philosophy, extending a utopia to its most extreme ends in order to caution against the destructive politics and culture of the author's present" (2013, p. 2). This means that in most dystopian novels, the purpose has been to create a utopian society, but because of the restrictions and demands that have been placed on the population, we find ourselves in a dystopia instead. As a result, there are elements of both the positive and negative in these literary works: "Every utopia since *Utopia* has also been, clearly or obscurely, actually or possibly, in the author's or in the readers' judgment, both a good place and a bad one. Every eutopia contains a dystopia, every dystopia contains a eutopia" (Le Guin, 2015).

Another blurred line is the link between dystopian literature and other genres of speculative fiction, including apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fiction. Apocalyptic fiction is literature that deals with "the decline and fall of civilization", commonly referred to as "end-of-the-world fiction" (Tate, 2017, p. 2), and post-apocalyptic works thus deal with life after the (Western) world as we know it has ended. Many apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic novels are also dystopias, and Andrew Tate describes dystopia as one of two possible versions of apocalyptic fiction: a world "dominated by technology and excessive consumerism that generates endless leisure for a decadent ruling elite and misery for a vast, starving underclass" (2017, p. 3). He contrasts this with the other version of apocalyptic fiction: "a devastated earth in which this 'technofuture' has failed and life is simply a brutal struggle eked out by the survivors" (p. 3). In many works, though, the distinction between the two versions is unclear: Paolo Bacigalupi's *Ship Breaker* (2010) describes life after a societal collapse caused by climate change, and the people we encounter are most definitely involved in a post-apocalyptic "brutal struggle" to survive. However, we are also made aware of the sophisticated technology and luxuries that are available for the wealthy – who in this world would be the

"decadent ruling elite". Therefore, I would argue that in some cases, the distinction set up by Tate and other scholars between dystopias and survivalist literature does not serve a purpose, since survivalist works can also be dystopian. I will therefore not draw a clear line between dystopian and apocalyptic survivalist fiction, but rather broaden the interpretation of the genre of dystopian literature to also include works that rely heavily on the (post-)apocalyptic.

Furthermore, speculative fiction includes science fiction and fantasy, and these genres are also closely linked to dystopias. The main difference between the companion genres science fiction and fantasy is that science fiction describes a future that could exist; any improbable elements in the story are explained by science and technological advancements. Fantasy, on the other hand, deals with the construction of the impossible, often seeking to explain the inexplicable through magic (James & Mendlesohn, 2012, p. 1). M. H. Abrams's definition of dystopian literature focuses on the "disastrous future culmination" of "ominous tendencies of our present social, political, and technological order" (2005, p. 337). This emphasis on the future links the genre to what Fatima Vieira terms "euchronia" (2010, p. 9), which is also a common trait of science fiction. Gregory Claeys argues that the term "dystopian" should only be used about fiction that portrays "feasible negative visions of social and political development" where "no extraordinary or utterly unrealistic features dominate the narrative" (2010, p. 109). He therefore excludes many works from the genre that clearly portray dystopian societies, but that employ settings and traits commonly used in science fiction or fantasy literature.

Rather than adhering to Claeys's view, though, I agree with Åsa Nilsson Skåve's analysis. She distinguishes between "dystopian realism" and "dystopian fantasy" in her article, and the latter types of works operate outside the realm of logic – much like fantasy literature (2017, pp. 100-103). The contemporary YA dystopian genre contains both realistic dystopias set in the near future in societies we can recognize, such as Bacigalupi's *Ship Breaker* and Saci Lloyd's *The Carbon Diaries* series (2008, 2009), and fantastic dystopias that incorporate magical elements, such as Catherine Fisher's *Incarceron* series (2007, 2008) and Amy Ewing's *Lone City* trilogy (2014, 2015, 2016). Additionally, I would like to include in the discussion works that rely on the science

fiction genre, such as Patrick Ness's *Chaos Walking* trilogy (2008, 2009, 2010) and Pierce Brown's *Red Rising* trilogy (2014, 2015, 2016). I wish to promote a broader understanding of dystopian literature that better reflects the varied and evolving contemporary landscape of the genre. Any work that portrays a "not good place" which is "substantially different" (Claeys & Sargent, 1999, p. 1) from our own, that contains "[a]n awareness of social organization" (Hintz & Ostry, 2003, p. 4), and that builds on "ominous tendencies of our present social, political, and technological order" (Abrams, 2005, p. 337), will be included in the discussion. This means that dystopias set in space or parallel universes – works that rely heavily on science fiction or fantasy – are included in my definition of dystopian literature alongside more realistic dystopias, as well as works with apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic features. This definition is in line with central contemporary works of criticism that address YA dystopian fiction: Hintz and Ostry's *Utopian and Dystopian Writing for Children and Young Adults* (2003), Basu, Broad and Hintz's *Contemporary Dystopian Fiction for Young Adults: Brave new teenagers* (2013), and Day, Green-Barteet and Montz's *Female Rebellion in Young Adult Dystopian Fiction* (2014). All of these employ broad understandings of the dystopian genre and include works in their discussions that are closely linked to science fiction and fantasy literature.[35] In the remainder of the dissertation, science fiction, fantasy, apocalyptic, and post-apocalyptic are used as supporting terms to explain elements, traits, or settings in dystopian works.

4.2 Dystopian fiction for young adults written after 2000

During the past decade, dystopian novels and book series for young adults (YA) have been published in abundance, and this has become one of the most popular literary genres for young adults internationally as well as in Norway (Birkeland et al., 2018,

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[35] Note, though, that none of the four novels employed in this project are fantastic dystopias. The reason is that the criteria employed to select the four novels did not leave me with any such works: other qualities were deemed as more important when selecting the novels than ensuring that one or more works would incorporate fantastical elements. (See section 4.4 for further descriptions of the criteria and the selected novels.)

pp. 600-604). In 2014, when I began working with this project, nine out of ten books on the Young Adult Library Services Association's Teens' Top Ten List in the USA could be defined as dystopias (Young Adult Library Services Association, 2014). In Norway, adolescents read YA dystopian literature written originally in Norwegian (Birkeland et al., 2018, pp. 601-604; Foreningen les, 2018), but also dystopian literature in English and the Norwegian translations of these English-language books (Ubok.no, 2017). The most popular works are English-language novel series that have been turned into high-grossing films which further extend the YA audience for dystopian narratives, such as Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy (2008, 2009, 2010), Veronica Roth's *Divergent* trilogy (2011, 2012, 2013), and James Dashner's *The Maze Runner* series (2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2016).

Although YA dystopian fiction has its roots in genres that have existed since the late 1800s (dystopian literature) and the mid-1900s (YA literature), it is only in recent years that YA dystopian fiction has been identified as a clear trend and a separate genre, mostly because of the immense success of Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy. Many dystopian novels, book series, TV series, and films have followed in the trilogy's wake, and Collins's works have also been subject to much literary and cultural criticism by academics (see e.g. Broad, 2013; J. Fitzgerald & Hayward, 2015; Fritz, 2014; Henthorne, 2012; Pharr & Clark, 2012; Tan, 2013). Even though the new wave of dystopian YA fiction began with *The Hunger Games*, I have chosen to include in my discussion works that were published before Collins's trilogy because these novels have been widely read and examined critically after the publication of her books. Therefore, this section concerns itself with patterns and trends in YA dystopian novels published after 2000. It should not be viewed as an exhaustive overview, as this contemporary genre is continually growing and expanding.

Dystopian YA literature builds on the definitions and characteristics of traditional and modern dystopian literature that were discussed in the previous section of this chapter, but it differs significantly from literature for adults in some respects. A central trait of dystopian literature is to explore what might happen if we continue along a certain path in terms of the development in our society. Dystopian works frequently take a stand against the contemporary tendencies they address, and YA dystopias do this to a greater

extent than their adult counterparts. Basu, Broad, and Hintz argue that "one of the strongest sources of appeal for young adult dystopias […] is the unequivocal clarity of their message", and that "this blatant didacticism signals to readers the problems with society while offering something like a training manual on how to overcome the dilemma, reverse the damage, and start anew" (2013, p. 5). In YA dystopian novels, the teenage protagonists often instigate rebellion and change when the adults are either unwilling or unable to do so: teenagers "save the world from destruction" since they are "agents of hope" – not "jaded elders" (Hintz & Ostry, 2003, p. 10). This means that most YA dystopias are more hopeful than their adult counterparts since the protagonists' rebellions often lead to real change: the narratives are not mere cautionary tales, but show instead "the possibility of utopian change even in the darkest of circumstances" (Basu et al., 2013, p. 3). However, it is important to note that there are also examples of works that leave the readers less than hopeful about this imagined future: novels where the problems in the societies remain unresolved or at status quo at the end of the narratives despite the young characters' efforts. Examples of this include M. T. Anderson's *Feed* (2002), Carrie Ryan's *The Forest of Hands and Teeth* trilogy (2009, 2010, 2011), and Louise O'Neill's *Only Ever Yours* (2014). According to Basu, Broad, and Hintz, dystopian literature's "capacity to frighten and warn" leads to the genre engaging with "pressing global concerns: liberty and self-determination, environmental destruction and looming catastrophe, questions of identity, and the increasingly fragile boundaries between technology and the self" (2013, p. 1). In the remainder of this section, I discuss the concerns addressed in contemporary YA dystopias that are most relevant for the current study, building on both contemporary critical materials and specific dystopian works.

4.2.1 Social organization

As discussed earlier in this chapter, a literary work needs to contain an element of social organization in order for it to be labelled dystopian (Hintz & Ostry, 2003, p. 4). The ways in which societies in dystopias are structured are often reminiscent of real-life

societies. Due to this link, dystopias can offer commentary on historical events and tendencies in our contemporary world, and they can show how the future may look like if we continue down certain paths. This is relevant for both dystopian literature in general, and for contemporary YA dystopias.

Many dystopian works are set in societies built on ideologies of totalitarianism, which is one of the main ideas at the core of the genre (Vieira, 2010, p. 18). The politics and mechanisms of these dystopias are often mirrors, or at the very least adaptations of sorts, of past and present societies. Margaret Atwood, for instance, when asked what inspired her to write *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), said, "I did not put anything into the book that had not already happened at some time in some place in history, or which was not happening when I was writing the book. So it's all reality-based" (Balser, 2017). L. J. Adlington told me in a personal interview and subsequent e-mail correspondence in 2016 that the inspiration for writing *The Diary of Pelly D* (2005) came while she was researching the Second World War. However, rather than write a historical novel, she created a future society on another planet that treated one part of the population in a similar manner as the Jews were treated by the Nazis.

Other issues besides totalitarianism are also addressed in the genre. Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy, for example, discusses class differences and the exploitation of the poor by the rich. One of the links to contemporary society is that the poor district that the protagonist Katniss has grown up in is situated in what was once Appalachia. According to Tina L. Hanlon, "details about the coal-town environment, hunting and the black market, folk medicine, folk music, and propaganda spread by mass media" (2012, p. 59) are among the elements that help readers recognize the culture of this American region in Collins's novels. Furthermore, segregation and seeing some parts of the population as less worth than others is recognizable in both history and contemporary society, and is a common theme in several other dystopian works. These include Julie Bertagna's *Exodus* trilogy (2002, 2007, 2011), Kiera Cass's *The Selection* series (2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016), O'Neill's *Only Ever Yours*, and Ewing's *Lone City* trilogy.

4.2.2 Environmental and technological concerns

Another highly relevant issue to discuss in the context of contemporary dystopian YA literature is the genre's concern with the environment and technological advancements. Critical works point at the centrality of environmental challenges in YA literature in general and in dystopias in particular (Bradford, Mallan, McCallum, & Stephens, 2008; Curry, 2013), and Stableford argues that "the essential seed of dystopia" is "the abstraction of human beings from a supposedly harmonious relationship with the natural environment and its inherent rhythms" (2010, p. 266). In contemporary YA dystopias, this abstraction is achieved by focusing on "environmental destruction" or on "the increasingly fragile boundaries between technology and the self" (Basu et al., 2013, p. 1) – or on both simultaneously.

One of the issues most commonly addressed in YA dystopias is global warming; it is central in Bacigalupi's *Ship Breaker*, Bertagna's *Exodus* trilogy, and Lloyd's *The Carbon Diaries* series, amongst others. In addition, environmental disasters are often part of dystopian societies' pasts, as they destroyed our contemporary society and let new world orders form in the disasters' aftermaths. This is the case in Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* series (2005a, 2005b, 2006, 2007), Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy, O'Neill's *Only Ever Yours*, and Adlington's *The Diary of Pelly D*. In the works that are either apocalyptic or take place right after the great disaster, there is seldom much hope for improvement regarding the environment – the damage has been irreparably done, and the natural world is altered forever. However, the novels and series that do have hopeful endings manage to do that by describing protagonists that are able to carve out sustainable lives for themselves and their loved ones despite the ecological destruction – for instance in the *Exodus* trilogy, where the characters find refuge on Greenland when the rest of Europe is covered by water.

Due to the clear environmental focus in these novels, they invite ecocritical readings. Ecocriticism – studies of "literature and the environment" (Clark, 2011; Westling, 2014) – is currently a multi-faceted term which includes various theoretical and interdisciplinary approaches, transnational and global foci, and studies of different genres and media (Zapf, 2016). Nevertheless, the core purpose of ecocriticism is to

conduct analyses of literary and cultural works "with an acute awareness of the devastation being wrought on that environment by human activities" (Abrams, 2005, p. 71). Broadly speaking, ecocriticism engages "both with literary analysis and with issues that are simultaneously but obscurely matters of science, morality, politics and aesthetics" (Clark, 2011, p. 8). A central component of ecocriticism is to examine the relationship between nature and culture (Kerridge, 2006, p. 538), and technological advancements are usually seen as representatives of the latter.

In ecocriticism, technology has been viewed as one of the components that makes man consider himself superior to nature (White Jr., 1996), and scientific and technological progress constitutes – along with totalitarianism, as discussed in the previous section – one of the main ideas that form the dystopian genre (Vieira, 2010, p. 18). Most works that deal with technology display an innate skepticism towards it; the development has gone too far, and it is often being used to monitor, control, use, and manipulate the population. In Anderson's *Feed*, an internet feed complete with communication technology, entertainment, advertisements, and online shopping has been installed directly into people's brains; in Nancy Farmer's *The House of the Scorpion* (2002) and *The Lord of Opium* (2013), human clones are used for organ harvesting; in Patrick Ness's *More Than This* (2013), the entire population has been put into artificial comas while their minds continue living their lives in a virtual reality.

However, there are novels which focus on the positive aspects of technological development. Elaine Ostry (2013) discusses how cities in both the *Exodus* trilogy and *Uglies* series are sustainable and employ environmental-friendly technology. In the *Exodus* trilogy, the artificial city New Mungo could be viewed as being truly ecological because it does not exploit any natural resources. As a result, the technological advancements in Bertagna's novels can be said to represent both syntheticity and sustainability – perhaps adding another layer to what Timothy Clark refers to as "ecology without nature" (2011, pp. 69-71). However, this view of ecology is quite uncommon: in most dystopian works that address ecology and/or technology, humankind's greed and lack of respect for the environment have led to unambiguous destruction.

4.2.3 Conformity

Many YA dystopias address issues related to personal freedom and autonomy, and several of these novels do so by describing societies that promote conformity, which is motivated by "a fear that diversity breeds conflict" (Basu et al., 2013, p. 3). In these works, the population is divided into strict categories from which the people cannot escape by their own means once they have been placed there: "uglies", "pretties", and "specials" in Westerfeld's *Uglies* series; different factions in Roth's *Divergent* trilogy; different castes in Cass's *The Selection* series; and different classes in Ewing's *Lone City* trilogy. Important decisions in young people's lives are made by someone else, such as the government deciding who they should marry in Ally Condie's *Matched* trilogy (2010, 2011, 2012), and parents deciding whether their teenagers should be allowed to continue living in Neil Shusterman's *Unwind* series (2007, 2012, 2013, 2014). In all of the above works, there is a ceremony, a selection, or a set date approaching, at which point the protagonists' lives will change. This change is sometimes in the teenagers' own hands, as in the *Divergent* trilogy, but it is mostly decided by others. Any rebellion on the part of the protagonists is often linked either directly to, or happens as a consequence of, this marked change in their lives.

In novels where the protagonists have little or no choice regarding who, when, or if to love, the protagonists' romantic and sexual awakenings are often linked to rebellion: the main character falls in love with someone s/he is not supposed to be with and rebels in order to live out the relationship. Therefore, love becomes a strong motivation for these protagonists to engage in anti-establishment activities, and their emotional and sexual awakenings are thus linked to their intellectual and political awakenings (S. K. Day, 2014). Novels that address this include Lauren Oliver's *Delirium* trilogy (2011, 2012, 2013), as well as Condie's *Matched* trilogy.

Freedom of cultural expression – especially music, art, and literature – is also central in many YA dystopian novels. The common trope when dealing with cultural expressions is that there are restrictions and limitations on the fine arts: some songs, texts, and images are forbidden, while others are allowed. Amy L. Montz describes this as "the illusion of choice" present in dystopian literature (2014, p. 109). In order to

restrict the citizens' freedom of speech, emotion, and thought, the totalitarian governments limit people's possibilities to experience culture, both as consumers and creators. Controlling and containing art, music and literature thus becomes a way to control and contain people's minds and hearts, as the governments are aware of the revolutionary potential present in cultural expressions. Music, art, and literature in their many forms represent the freedom and diversity of the human condition – in essence the opposite of what is valued by the oppressive regimes. Freedom of cultural expression is a central aspect of Oliver's *Delirium* trilogy, Condie's *Matched* trilogy, Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy, and Ewing's *Lone City* trilogy. By discovering and exploring the various art forms, protagonists in dystopian literature also discover themselves and become active agents that see the possibility of rebellion. In this sense, the desire to rebel against conformity is linked to the last issue I wish to address in this section, namely teenagers' development of personal identity.

4.2.4 Personal identity

Contemporary dystopian YA fiction often focuses on the protagonists' awakening to the negative sides of the society they live in. While dealing with the challenges they encounter, they grow up, find their places in the world, and develop their personal identities. In this sense, YA dystopias can be linked to literary *Bildung*, as the conventional *Bildungsroman* "features a naive protagonist who, because of some conflict or trauma, leaves his (or, less typically, her) home and childhood behind and embarks upon a journey of self-discovery and maturation" (Kealley, 2017, p. 296). In YA dystopias, this often means that "the conditions of the dystopian society force protagonists to fall from innocence and achieve maturity as they realize the dystopian realities in which they live" (Basu et al., 2013, p. 7); protagonists in YA dystopias must explore their own emerging identities while simultaneously realizing that the society and people around them are unreliable. Furthermore, the typical protagonist in contemporary YA dystopian fiction is a teenager who stands out from the rest of society in one way or another – usually by possessing specific skills or by being selected for a

task. S/he takes responsibility and acts in response to the suppression, unfairness, or abuse of power they witness in their dystopian society. There is often a development towards agency in the characters: Mara in the *Exodus* trilogy realizes gradually that she has a predestined role to help others and that her leadership skills make her equipped to take charge; Darrow in the *Red Rising* trilogy is conscripted to join the already existing rebellion and accepts it wholeheartedly when his oppressors kill his wife; June in Marie Lu's *Legend* trilogy (2011, 2013a, 2013b) changes her allegiance and starts fighting for the rebels when she discovers the truth about the government she has been working for.

Furthermore, there is a clear trend in contemporary dystopian YA fiction towards strong, female protagonists. According to Day, Green-Barteet, and Montz, these young women "occupy liminal spaces as they seek to understand their places in the world, to claim their identities, and to live their lives on their own terms", and "attempt to recreate the worlds in which they live, making their societies more egalitarian, more progressive, and, ultimately, more free" (2014, p. 3). This tendency can be seen as a reaction against the earlier trend of emphasizing the passive and subordinate young female in 19th and early 20th century Western literature (J. Brown & St. Clair, 2006, p. 6). Speculative fiction has since then often featured male heroes who lead rebellions and take charge, while women serve as assistants, sidekicks, or romantic interest. In recent YA dystopian fiction this has changed, since many female protagonists – among them Katniss in *The Hunger Games* trilogy, Tris in the *Divergent* trilogy, Violet in the *Lone City* trilogy, Mara in the *Exodus* trilogy, and June in the *Legend* trilogy – enter into positions of leadership and are active in terms of changing their societies. However, some claim that these apparently ultra-feminist girls still reinforce traditional gender roles. Broad (2013) argues that even though Katniss in *The Hunger Games* trilogy has been hailed as a strong heroine, she does not possess genuine, rebellious agency since she only acts when she must in order to save those she loves, and that Katniss ending up as a seemingly content mother and wife at the end of the narrative despite her initial desires to avoid such roles is also seen to reflect her conformist, passive character.

In contemporary YA dystopias, both male and female protagonists experience moral conflicts linked to what they have to do to inspire change in their societies. Katniss turns her back on the rebellion when they kill civilians to further their cause; Mara in the *Exodus* trilogy feels guilty when she is forced to turn down many people in distress since there is no room for them on the boat she captains that is carrying refugees; Nailer in *Ship Breaker* feels tormented in the aftermath of killing his own father, even though he knows that he had to do it in order to survive himself. These moral conflicts are part of the characters' developments into adults: the realization that good and evil are not always mutually exclusive categories that are distinguished between easily. This is also part of what makes the genre highly relevant for classroom use, which is what I turn to next.

4.3 Contemporary dystopian YA fiction in the classroom

There are several reasons why contemporary dystopian YA fiction is suitable for the upper secondary classroom. Since this genre is part of the broader YA literature genre, the dystopian works are targeted towards teenagers and the issues they address are relevant for students that are on the brink of adulthood. Some of these issues were discussed in the previous section, and include social organization, environmental and technological concerns, conformity, and the development of personal identity. The links between the dystopian societies and our own are particularly relevant, and some works include in them a call to social action.

The scholarly discourse about contemporary dystopian YA literature's teaching potential in the English classroom is mainly focused on the genre's relevance for linking together literature and social studies. Amber M. Simmons (2014) suggests teachers use Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* trilogy to encourage social action, focusing on hunger and involuntarily labor as issues that are relevant in contemporary society. Megan Marshall (2014) outlines several ways of approaching YA dystopias, one of which being to engage students in acts of social justice in their own societies.

Frauke Matz (2015) sees dystopian literature as especially apt for "promoting political awareness and fostering trans- and intercultural competences" (p. 264), especially global matters and ecodidactics. Rachel Wilkinson uses dystopias to help students examine the consumerist culture in contemporary society (2010), and Crag Hill (2012) argues that dystopian literature could help students make sense of and take action in the world around them. Oliver Tearle's study (2016) links dystopias to social studies in a more indirect manner. He examines the role of parenthood, and looks at how social organization affects motherhood and fatherhood in several works, including Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games*, and how this issue could be addressed when teaching the genre.[36] Of the abovementioned studies, some are theoretically oriented, focusing on emerging issues in the texts that are of relevance in the classroom (Matz, 2015; Tearle, 2016), while others discuss in more specific detail the dystopian texts' possible classroom application (Hill, 2012; Marshall, 2014; Simmons, 2014; Wilkinson, 2010). In the Norwegian context, I have not been able to locate any peer-reviewed studies that discuss the didactic potential and/or classroom application of dystopias. There are a few studies that have examined contemporary dystopias for YA by focusing on understanding and interpreting the texts, though, and dystopian literature's role in youth culture has also been debated in non-academic journals and newspapers (Aalstad, 2014; Haakonsen, 2015; Mørk, 2011; Nilsen, 2015).

However, not everyone is positive towards the use of this genre in an educational context. The criticism of educators and parents who oppose the use of dystopian literature in the classroom seems to center around two main issues. These are the same issues that are brought up when discussing YA literature in general,[37] namely the texts' perceived lack of literary merit, or literary quality, and the widespread presence of violence and brutality (see e.g. Crowe, 2001; Gurdon, 2011; Salerno, 2018). To address the former issue of literary quality, it is clear that this is a vexed and disputed term in our postmodern society; it is hard to describe and difficult to apply in discussions of specific works – especially contemporary literature. Writer, academic, and book dealer

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[36] In addition to Tearle and Simmons, Hill also discussed Collins's works, making *The Hunger Games* trilogy the most frequently recurring literary texts in the abovementioned studies.

[37] See section 4.1.1.

Rick Gekoski argues that you have to have read a lot in order to be able to distinguish the good books from the mediocre, and that it will always be easier to pinpoint which books are the worst than which are the best (2011). Similarly, the criteria for selecting the winners of the Young Adult Library Services Association's annual Michael L. Printz Award for best YA novel state: "What is quality? We know what it is not" (Young Adult Library Services Association, 2013). When it comes to defining what great YA literature *is*, though, the description is purposefully unclear: "flexibility and an avoidance of the too-rigid are essential components of these criteria" and "for each book […] the weight of the various criteria will be different" (Young Adult Library Services Association, 2013). I agree with this flexible way of approaching literary quality, especially concerning contemporary YA literature. Each text should be assessed on its own instead of being compared to a set list of requirements, even though this makes it more difficult to judge the quality of a text. The second point of criticism, the violence and brutality of these works, is just as complex as that of literary quality. My discussion of the issue in section 4.1.1 illustrated the tension between those that want to preserve children and YA's innocence (e.g. Aalstad, 2014; Gurdon, 2011) and those that want literature to reflect the bleakness of reality (e.g. Alexie, 2011; discussion in Mørk, 2012). Personally, I sympathize more with the latter view, particularly concerning YA literature, as discovering the complexity and brutality of adult life is part of growing up.

The biggest difference between the discussion in the American and the Norwegian context, though, is that in Norway, censorship of literature is not commonly practiced in schools and libraries. Even though some people raise concerns regarding specific literary works, these discussions have few practical implications for the work of teachers and librarians in making texts available for students and other readers. In my view, there are more possibilities than drawbacks related to using dystopian literature in English classrooms in Norway. This seems to be the view of textbook authors as well, since several textbooks for upper secondary school currently on the market include excerpts from contemporary YA dystopias (see Burgess et al., 2013; Burgess & Sørhus, 2013; Lokøy et al., 2014; Lokøy et al., 2013a; Lokøy, Lundgren, Langseth,

& Hellesøy, 2013b). The didactic potential of the genre for the Norwegian curricula is the topic of the next section.

4.3.1 Relevance for Norwegian curricula

The four central issues present in contemporary dystopian YA literature that were addressed in the previous section – social organization, environmental and technological concerns, conformity, and development of personal identity – are highly relevant for both the English subject curriculum and the core curriculum in Norway. The first two issues, social organization and environmental and technological concerns, are suitable when addressing culture and society in subject English. As discussed in chapter 2, one of the main subject areas of the curriculum is named "culture, society and literature" (Udir 2006a; 2013a). I only discussed the competence aims linked to literature there, but these sections also address culture and society. The curriculum for the compulsory English course states that students should "discuss and elaborate on culture and social conditions in several English-speaking countries" (Udir 2013a, p. 9). In the curriculum for the elective courses, the aims for Vg2 International English state that students should "elaborate on and discuss various aspects of multicultural societies in the English-speaking world" and "elaborate on and discuss a number of international and global challenges" (Udir 2006a, p. 6). In Vg3 English Literature and Culture, students should "interpret literary texts and other cultural expressions from a cultural-historical and social perspective", "elaborate on and discuss the cultural position of the United States and Great Britain in the world today, and the background for the same", and "elaborate on and discuss current issues in international culture and the news media" (Udir, 2006a, p. 7). In Vg3 Social Studies English, students should, among other things, "elaborate on and discuss questions related to social and economic conditions in some English-speaking countries" and "elaborate on and discuss current debates in the English-speaking world" (Udir, 2006a, p. 7). Just like the aims addressing literature specifically, the competence aims focusing on culture and society are very broad, and it is thus possible to use literary texts when working towards

achieving them. Dystopias might be especially apt, since seeing links between the imagined dystopias and the English-speaking world can provide interesting perspectives on contemporary society – for instance by focusing on social organization and environmental and technological concerns in these texts. As the English subject curriculum for the compulsory and the elective courses in upper secondary school do not specify which literary texts or genres students should read, dystopias could be read in all the courses.

Furthermore, all of the four issues addressed in section 4.2 relate to the core curriculum that is supposed to be integrated in the entire educational system (KKUF, 1993a). As discussed in chapter 3, the core curriculum is closely linked to ideals of *Bildung*. In my view, contemporary dystopian YA literature could help teachers work towards several of the educational aims and values that the curriculum wants Norwegian education to include.

Firstly, and perhaps most obviously, the environmental and technological concerns addressed in many YA dystopias can be easily linked to the aim of students becoming environmentally aware. The core curriculum states:

> Human beings are a part of nature, and are constantly making decisions with repercussions not only for their own welfare, but also for other humans and for the natural environment as well. Our choices have consequences across geographic borders and across generations […] our society's waste becomes the plight of future generations (KKUF, 1993a, p. 35).

The focus on contemporary humans' responsibilities for future generations makes dystopias particularly apt for addressing these aims. Ecological dystopias, such as Bertagna's *Exodus* trilogy, Bacigalupi's *Ship Breaker*, and Lloyd's *The Carbon Diaries* series, imagine the future as it might look if we do not act on the problems causing irreversible climate change, and they force us to consider what we might be doing to later generations. The core curriculum encourages teaching that helps students consider "the interplay between economy, ecology and technology" (p. 36) and that education "must counteract fragmentary and compartmentalized learning" (p. 38). It argues that ethics must be included in our discussions, and that students' "faith in the

efficacy of joint efforts and collective action" (p. 38) should be nurtured. This could be interpreted as encouraging students to agency and social action – an issue that is present in existing didactic writing on dystopian fiction (Hill, 2012; Matz, 2015; Simmons, 2014). Furthermore, the introduction of the core curriculum states that education "must teach the young to look ahead and train their ability to make sound choices" and "accustom them to taking responsibility – to assess the effects of their actions on others and evaluate them in terms of ethical principles" (KKUF, 1993a, p. 5). Dystopias could help inspire students to take action, as literary texts have a unique ability to evoke feelings of compassion and understanding for others (Nussbaum, 1997). Thus, dystopian literature could be able to connect with students at an emotional level, which in turn could lead them to consider their own actions in terms of how they might impact on future humans. In this sense, environmentalism could be linked to both ethics and agency when dystopian literature is used in the upper secondary classroom.

Secondly, the core curriculum emphasizes "the social human being" by focusing on the various communities students are part of as well as their role in them (KKUF, 1993a, pp. 30-31). This can be linked to both social organization and conformity in dystopias: the core curriculum discusses students' "duties and responsibilities" for others, focusing especially on the school context (p. 31). Although the curriculum's perspective is inherently positive in its outlook on the social human being's role, dystopian literature could be used to problematize what happens if the duties and responsibilities required of the individual by society do not align with the individual's beliefs, moral compass, and/or self-preservation. Contemporary YA dystopias that could be used to address this include Ewing's *Lone City* trilogy, O'Neill's *Only Ever Yours*, and Shusterman's *Unwind* series. As the core curriculum also discusses the importance of critical thinking (p. 14), dystopian literature could be helpful for combining these perspectives.

Thirdly, dystopian literature's sustained focus on the development of personal identity relates to several parts of the core curriculum. In essence, the entire document aspires to help young people develop, with a particular focus on values and skills that are necessary to make students productive and responsible members of society. The section on "the spiritual human being" discusses the development of individual identity in

relation to cultural heritage (pp. 7-9), the section on "the creative human being" encourages students to "open their minds" (p. 11), and the section on "the integrated human being" states that education should aim to "develop independent and autonomous personalities" (p. 39). As contemporary dystopian YA fiction frequently portrays protagonists who develop during the course of the narrative and who seek to have a positive impact on the society in which they live, these types of texts could help students find out who they are and what their role in society should be. Some of the novels examined in this study are examples of texts that could be used in this manner, and this is further explored in what follows.

4.4 The main novels in this study

The four dystopian YA novels employed in this study are L. J. Adlington's *The Diary of Pelly D* (2005), Paolo Bacigalupi's *Ship Breaker* (2010), Patrick Ness's *More Than This* (2013), and Louise O'Neill's *Only Ever Yours* (2014). These novels were selected for three main reasons: because they represent a wide variety of topics and themes addressed in the genre at large, because they are well-written novels that I think are worth reading for both 15-19-year-old students and adult teachers, and because they address issues that allow them to be employed in the English subject in upper secondary school. As there are many dystopian YA novels that meet these criteria, a few other issues were considered in order to make the final selection. Elaborating on the genre's variety, I decided that the selection had to include books from more than one English-speaking country, and that both male and female authors as well as protagonists should be represented. In addition, I wanted the books chosen to be novels that the teachers were not likely to have read or be familiar with, which meant that any novels that had been adapted into films or TV series were excluded. The reason for this was that I was interested in finding out what teachers' text selection processes were like when they read texts for the first time. Lastly, I decided that I would only use stand-alone novels, which meant that novel series were excluded from the selection. This limited the number of suitable texts substantially, as the genre consists of many trilogies and book

series. The reason why I chose stand-alone novels was that I wanted the teachers to read a narrative that was concluded at the book's end, and where there were no sequels published that told of the continuation of this particular story or what happened to the main character. In my view, this would allow for a more substantial discussion concerning the book's teaching potential, as there would be no loose ends waiting to be tied up in another book.[38] In table 3 below, the four novels are presented briefly.

In the remainder of the chapter, the four novels are discussed in more detail. Each section begins with a presentation of the novel's plot, before moving to a discussion of how the novel relates to the issues discussed in sections 4.2 and 4.3. All of the four novels address the issues discussed in sections 4.2.1-4.2.4 in one form or another, and it is my claim that all of the novels could be used to meet the aims of the English subject curricula for both the compulsory course and the elective courses, as well as parts of the core curriculum. In what follows, I highlight the most important aspects of each novel.

4.4.1 L. J. Adlington, The Diary of Pelly D

The Diary of Pelly D is set in the distant future on another planet, to which colonizers from Earth travelled when the climate became unbearable on our planet. The novel's setting – away from Earth – makes it the most science fiction of the novels employed in this study. It is also the only novel published before *The Hunger Games*, meaning that it was uninfluenced by the recent surge in popularity of dystopian YA literature. Additionally, Adlington's novel is the least known of the four novels, which means that there is little critical writing available on it.

In *The Diary of Pelly D*, generals lead the governments and people have developed gills, but otherwise the society seems very much like ours – at first. The story is told by two teenagers: the frame narrative is focalized through the boy Toni V, who has a

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[38] Note, however, that two of the selected novels have companion novels: these differ from series in that they are set in the same literary universe, but do not follow the same protagonist or storyline.

Table 3: *Overview of the four selected novels*

Title	Year	Author (gender, nationality)	Protagonist(s) (gender, age)	Themes and sub-genres	Companion novel(s)
The Diary of Pelly D	2005	L. J. Adlington (female, Great Britain)	Pelly (female, 15) Toni (male, 14)	Intertextuality (Anne Frank); science fiction; segregation & inequality (based on genetics); unfair distribution of resources; civil war; family dynamics	*Cherry Heaven* (2007)
Ship Breaker	2010	Paolo Bacigalupi (male, USA)	Nailer (male, 15)	Post-apocalyptic; science fiction; survivalist; ecology; unfair distribution of resources; biotechnology & humanity; domestic violence; family dynamics; substance abuse	*The Windup Girl* (2009); *The Drowned Cities* (2012)
More Than This	2013	Patrick Ness (male, Great Britain/USA)	Seth (male, 16)	Science fiction; technology; philosophy & existentialism; ecology; loneliness; homosexuality; family dynamics; domestic violence; migration	None
Only Ever Yours	2014	Louise O'Neill (female, Ireland)	freida (female, 16)	Science fiction; gender inequality; biotechnology & humanity; sexuality; segregation & inequality (based on gender)	None

dangerous and exhausting job at a construction site in City Five. While digging, he finds a notebook which was written by a girl called Pelly D some years earlier – before and during the war that Toni V is clearing up after – and the story Pelly D tells in her diary is the second, and most important, narrative. The novel is structured around Toni reading sections from Pelly's diary, with episodes from his working and personal life described in between the diary entries. In the diary, Pelly seems at first to be an ordinary teenage girl who goes to school, has boy problems, is embarrassed by her parents, and thinks her teachers and schooling are completely irrelevant. The readers soon learn that this society is made up of people from three different genetic families, and that one of them – the Galrezi – is considered inferior. The turning point in the novel comes when Pelly D finds out that she is Galrezi. Gradually, her diary begins to tell the story about how she and her family experience systematic discrimination and abuse.

In *The Diary of Pelly D*, as soon as a crisis occurs, in this case water shortage, people protect those they consider their own and blame "the others" – the Galrezi. Importantly, this novel not only describes the gradual deterioration of rights for groups targeted by prejudice and political propaganda, but also how society at large changes its mindset and starts to use different language to describe groups of people deemed "undesirable" by a governmental apparatus that claims to have the *majority* of the population's best interests at heart; this makes it acceptable to discriminate against a minority. Because of this, *The Diary of Pelly D* can be described as a dystopian science fiction version of *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank (1952), especially considering the fact that Pelly D's diary in the novel – like Anne's real diary – ends abruptly. As mentioned earlier, Adlington's inspiration for writing this novel was based on her studies of the Second World War. She came across a reference to diaries buried in the Warsaw Ghetto, which made her consider what would have happened if another person had found Anne Frank's diary – for instance a Hitler Jugend member – and had kept it to him-/herself or destroyed it. There are many similarities to the Nazi society in this novel, as it demonstrates how discrimination and prejudice against minorities can develop during times of crises.

In terms of the issues addressed in sections 4.2 and 4.3, social organization and development of personal identity are focused on the most in Adlington's novel. The

former is shown through the systematic, government-orchestrated discrimination against a minority. The latter is shown in that Pelly's personality changes greatly in the face of structural and personal abuse. In the beginning of the novel, she is mostly concerned with shallow interests, but she gradually starts seeing beyond herself to what is happening around her. An additional didactic potential lies in the novel's obvious link to Nazi Germany, which could make it an interesting read when pursuing cross-curricular projects with English and Social Studies and/or History. As the novel is fairly short and parts of it are written in the style of a diary, *The Diary of Pelly D* could be read by students at various skill levels.

4.4.2 Paolo Bacigalupi, *Ship Breaker*

Ship Breaker is set in a future version of the USA, more specifically the coastal area close to New Orleans. The main character is fifteen-year-old Nailer, who works as a ship breaker and searches for copper wire in rusted oil tankers off the shore. After narrowly escaping drowning in a pocket of oil in a tanker, he and his friend Pima find a fancy clipper ship washed up on a remote part of the beach after a storm. In the ship is a girl called Nita, whom Nailer decides to help so she can find her way back to her wealthy father. Nailer's drug addicted father, Richard Lopez, holds them hostage for a while, but the teenagers manage to fight their way out. Nailer and Nita travel to New Orleans, where they eventually find a ship that belongs to Nita's father. Along with them comes Tool, who helped set them free from Richard. An important turning point in the novel comes when Nailer is forced to kill his own father – an action that torments him throughout the rest of the narrative.

Tool, although not the protagonist, is one of the most interesting characters in this novel. He is a half-man, "mixed from a genetic cocktail of humanity, tigers, and dogs" (Bacigalupi, 2010, p. 212). Tool and his like are extremely strong, but are also genetically designed and conditioned in their training to be loyal and obedient to their masters: if the master dies, the half-man is supposed to die with him. However, Tool does not follow the rules of genetics and conditioning; he is independent, obeys no

masters, and thinks for himself. Therefore, he represents a rebellion against the governing forces – his mere existence and way of life constitute a threat to the authorities and baffle those he encounters.

The world described in *Ship Breaker* is one of rough survival: the polar ice caps have melted and the environment as we know it is ruined, leading to the vast majority of people living in poverty. In the midst of this future environmental decay we see glimpses of our current, Western society, which Nailer calls the "Accelerated Age", for instance when they pass the ruins of New Orleans and Orleans 2 (which was rebuilt when the original city was destroyed): "The wreckage of the twin dead cities was good evidence of just how slow the people of the Accelerated Age had been to accept their changing circumstances" (Bacigalupi, 2010, p. 203). Undoubtedly, there is a call for action to be found here: Bacigalupi urges his readers to help change the direction in which our world is moving. This is a common trait in Bacigalupi's writing: *Ship Breaker* fits neatly into his body of dystopian works, which encompasses short stories and novels set in the future that address limited resources as a consequence of climate change, the negative sides of technological advancement, and the survivalist nature of humans in the face of it all. This means that of the issues discussed in section 4.2, Bacigalupi's novel addresses environmental and technological concerns most clearly.

However, *Ship Breaker* deals with other issues as well: Saba Pirzadeh argues that the novel is concerned with power, identity, and community (2015, p. 205). One early example from the novel, which provides the readers with a clear understanding of how Nailer's ship breaking society works, is related to the people who work together to form "crews", which means much more than just being colleagues. When Nailer is close to drowning in oil on one of the tankers, he is abandoned by one of his crew, Sloth, because she wants to claim the oil as her own. When he lives to tell the tale, Sloth is immediately fired, and her face is cut to destroy the tattoos that show which crew she belongs to. What awaits her is either prostitution or selling her organs and blood: "Grub shacks won't take her because the ship breakers won't buy anything from someone with slashed crew tats. Smelter clans definitely won't touch an oath breaker. Liar like that, she's out of options" (Bacigalupi, 2010, p. 49). In this society, loyalty to your community means life or death – there is no surviving on your own. Power,

however, can either be achieved through remaining honest and working hard, but it can also be achieved by breaking the rules to strike a fortune: this was what Sloth attempted to do with the oil, but she gambled and failed. Additionally, violence can be used to acquire power in this survivalist society; Nailer's father is an example of a man ruling his home and controlling his status in society in such a manner. This means that social organization is another of the novel's main concerns.

The didactic potential of *Ship Breaker* is informed by several factors. As discussed in section 4.3, the focus on environmental and technological concerns and social organization mean that it can be linked to both subject curricula and the core curriculum. Furthermore, the moral complexities of the novel, which include Nailer killing his own father, add to its worth as a book that could help students problematize ethical issues – something the core curriculum encourages. Thirdly, although the novel is set in the future, the description of the young ship breakers' lives is reminiscent of descriptions of real-life ship breakers in current-day Bangladesh (see e.g. Ketels & Griebeler, 2014). Therefore, the novel could serve as an entry point to understanding the lives of teenagers in other parts of the world. Lastly, the language is at a level that makes *Ship Breaker* suitable for upper secondary students; Nailer's age (15) also indicates that the novel targets the age group most upper secondary students are in.

4.4.3 Patrick Ness, *More Than This*

More Than This tells the story of 16-year-old Seth, who dies in the first chapter but wakes up alone in a different society in the second chapter. The town, although familiar to him, is abandoned, and everything is overgrown and shows signs of not having been inhabited for years. Gradually, Seth remembers that he used to live in the house he wakes up close to, and he has to try to figure out what is going on in this society.

On one of his exploration trips, he is hunted by a figure called the Driver, who does not appear to be entirely human. As it turns out, the Driver is guarding a prison, and inside the grounds Seth finds large storage halls that contain thousands of human-sized boxes "[w]ith people inside. Asleep. Living their lives" (Ness, 2013, p. 263). The explanation

for Seth's experiences and the strange container halls full of humans is that in this society sometime in the future, nature has been so damaged by humans that the government has encouraged people to enter into digital, virtual-reality lives instead of living in the real world. Only a few guards remain to watch over the bodies, which are sustained through a sophisticated system of nutrition and waste-disposal inside the boxes. As long as everyone is connected to the system, the government has complete control over them. However, because of a technical malfunction, Seth woke up in the real world when he died in the virtual reality. Eventually he also meets a teenage girl, Regine, and a young boy, Tomasz, who have experienced exactly what he did. Towards the end of the novel, Seth decides to free the people that are kept in the container halls, and he realizes that the only way to do this is by reconnecting himself with the system, trying to fight it from within. The novel therefore ends with Seth leaving Regine and Tomasz in the real world, and attempting to return to the virtual world.

In this long and complex novel, there are several important sub-plots in addition to the main storyline. It becomes clear that in the digital world, Seth had fallen in love and engaged in a secret relationship with another boy, Gudmund. This gay relationship was not looked on positively by Gudmund's parents, and when his boyfriend was sent off to school in a different part of the country, Seth was in such despair that he attempted to commit suicide – and thus the readers realize that the death scene in the beginning of the novel was willed by Seth himself. Additionally, we find out that Seth's younger brother, Owen, was abducted when the boys were young and left at home alone, and that his parents seemingly blame Seth for this. Seth's discovery of what really happened to Owen, and his own part in the abduction, is an important turning point in the novel. Regine and Tomasz, who become Seth's friends in the real world, also struggle with problems of their own. Regine died in the digital world because her stepfather pushed her down a flight of stairs, showing her to be a victim of child abuse. Tomasz was also killed in the digital world; he and his mom were trying to escape poverty in Eastern Europe and were killed by human traffickers, thus portraying the violence illegal immigrants are subjected to.

An interesting point to make regarding this novel is that although people are not allowed to venture out into their natural environment, *More Than This* can actually be

viewed as an ecological novel since nature recovers when humans are removed from the equation. Controlling and confining human bodies lead to the natural world as a whole thriving, which means that the dystopian organization of society as presented in this novel is not an entirely negative thing. As previously discussed, there are several YA dystopias that address environmental destruction – either as an imminent threat or as the aftermath of a disaster – and frequently, technology and consumerism are to blame for the environment's breakdown (Ostry, 2013). In *More Than This*, though, advanced virtual reality technology is being used to remove human exploitation of the world and in turn save the environment. In terms of the issues discussed in section 4.2, therefore, Ness's novel combines environmental and technological concerns with social organization. Additionally, Seth's personal development is central to the plot, especially his realization of what his past, present, and future actually consist of.

Because of the issues *More Than This* addresses, the novel may – just like Adlington's and Bacigalupi's novels – be used to meet the aims of both the subject curricula and the core curriculum. However, I would argue that Ness's novel is perhaps not suitable for all types of upper secondary students. This book is much longer and more complex than the others, which means that it might be best suited for the students taking the elective English courses in Vg2 and Vg3 general studies. As this novel addresses several aims of the core curriculum, I still think that it is worth reading in school. The complex relationship between humans, nature, and technology is one reason, another is the moral and ethical complexities in the life of the protagonist.

4.4.4 Louise O'Neill, *Only Ever Yours*

Only Ever Yours is a feminist dystopia which builds on the heritage of Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*. In the novel, we follow sixteen-year-old freida who lives in a dystopian society in which only male babies are born naturally; female babies are designed and grown in laboratories. As a result of this, girls and women – referred to as "eves" in the novel – are viewed as inferior, and this is clearly reflected in their names: male names are capitalized, whereas female names are not. Furthermore, girls

and women are viewed as possessions that are present to please boys and men; they are not supposed to have any will of their own, and their bodies are viewed as men's property. Additionally, females are supposed to be perfect in both behavior as well as appearance. Obedience, pleasantness, and docility are qualities that all "good girls" should possess, and this is exemplified through the messages that are continuously repeated over the loudspeakers when the girls are asleep: "*I am a good girl. I am pretty. I am always happy-go-lucky.* […] *I am a good girl. I am appealing to others. I am always agreeable*" (O'Neill, 2014, p. 4). This conditioning is reminiscent of the hypnopaedias in Huxley's *Brave New World*, where children are exposed to messages suitable for their caste while sleeping: "Alpha children wear grey. They work much harder than we do, because they're so frightfully clever. I'm really awfully glad I'm Beta, because I don't work so hard. And then we are much better than the Gammas and Deltas" (Huxley, 1932/2007, p. 22).

The protagonist freida lives in a girls-only boarding school, where their classes train them in skills that women need to know in this society in order to fulfill one of three roles: wife, concubine, or chastity (guardian and teacher of the young girls in the boarding school). At the end of the year in which they turn 16, the girls are assigned roles; in freida's class, ten will become wives, and the remaining twenty will become either concubines or chastitites. The young men who will be the husbands decide which girls they want as wives, and as this is the most sought-after female role in society, there is fierce competition between the girls to become popular with the boys. There are strict rules of behavior imposed on the girls, but freida violates these rules towards the end of the novel in a desperate attempt to save herself.

In terms of the issues discussed in section 4.2, social organization and conformity are most pronounced in O'Neill's novel. Women's different roles are clearly defined with specific duties and behavioral patterns which leave no room for individuality, choice or agency – docility and obedience are crucial if women wish to remain unpunished as members of society. This means that conformity is a crucial part of the social organization of the novel. This becomes particularly obvious when freida is waiting for punishment for her transgression of the rules. Other women in the society are her most ardent critics, and what they condemn is her lack of obedience:

She is an eve. She was designed to meet a purpose and she has been trained for the last sixteen years to perform in a way that meets that purpose. […] Any deviation from that is unacceptable. This freida has failed in her duty. She has no defence (O'Neill, 2014, p. 336)

Even though freida's rebellion is more an act of desperation to save herself, she nevertheless becomes a dangerous rebel by breaking the rules. By acting in this way she becomes a subject with wishes and needs instead of a docile object – which is her *real* crime and why society needs to punish her.

The didactic potential of O'Neill's novel is linked to social organization and conformity, with a particular feminist focus. The novel could be discussed in relation to young women's roles in contemporary society and the influence of social media on the sustained importance of appearances. The novel's language is not too complex, which means that most upper secondary students should be able to read it. However, as *Only Ever Yours* is the most violent, brutal, and explicit of the four I have chosen, it might not be suitable in all contexts.

4.5 Concluding remarks

This chapter has discussed the origins, definitions, and characteristics of contemporary dystopian YA fiction, including the roots of YA literature and dystopian literature for adults. The main focus, however, has been on dystopian literature for YA after 2000, central issues addressed in these works, and the genre's didactic potential in the Norwegian context. The four novels selected for use in this project, Adlington's *The Diary of Pelly D*, Bacigalupi's *Ship Breaker*, Ness's *More Than This*, and O'Neill's *Only Ever Yours*, have been discussed in terms of how they relate to the genre at large and their suitability for the classroom. Whereas *Pelly D* and *Ship Breaker*, in terms of language, general level of complexity, and subject matter, are suitable in many types of upper secondary classes, *More Than This* and *Only Ever Yours* require more careful thought in terms of which students might benefit from reading them. In the case of

Ness's novel, this is mainly due to the text's complexity, and in the case of O'Neill's novel, it is due to the graphic and brutal content.

5. Teacher cognition

In this chapter, I examine the theoretical and research background for this study, namely the field of teacher cognition. I begin by defining the field in section 5.1, paying particular attention to teacher beliefs, which is the aspect of cognition I focus on. In section 5.2, I address teacher cognition and language teaching. Here, I discuss contemporary perspectives on language teacher cognition and examine studies that focus on reading in foreign language (FL) and second language (L2) teaching. In section 5.3, I look in more detail at studies conducted in the Norwegian context that are relevant for the current study.

5.1 Defining the field

Teacher cognition is defined as "the unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching – what teachers know, believe, and think" (Borg, 2003, p. 81), and may include teachers' emotions: "what teachers feel about what they think, know, believe, and do" (Golombek & Doran, 2014, p. 103). It is a field worth investigating because "what teachers do in the conduct of their professional activities is shaped […] by what they believe and know" (Barnard & Burns, 2012, p. 1). Teacher cognition is regarded as important for teachers' decision-making processes concerning what goes on in their classrooms (Borg, 2003; Woods, 1996). However, this does not mean that teachers always act in congruence with what they know, believe, and think: research shows "both consistency and inconsistency" concerning teacher cognition's relationship with practice (Borg, 2018, p. 75). Furthermore, the contexts in which teachers operate are important for "the extent to which teachers are able to implement instruction congruent with their cognitions" (Borg, 2003, p. 81). One of the central components of teacher cognition is teacher beliefs, to which I turn next.

5.1.1 Teacher beliefs

Within the field of teacher cognition, some researchers focus on one of its aspects, namely teacher beliefs. Research on teacher beliefs has developed gradually during the past 60 years, initially being treated as an aspect of personality, before being linked to the field of educational psychology (Ashton, 2015, p. 31). In recent years, the field has broadened to include a range of methodological paradigms and theoretical approaches. However, most recent studies within the teacher beliefs field are empirical, and are often interested in the link between what teachers believe and what they do in their classrooms (Fives & Gill, 2015).

An important review of the research on teacher beliefs was conducted by Frank Pajares, and his article "Teachers' Beliefs and Educational Research: Cleaning up a messy construct" (1992) is still referred to today. He argues that teacher beliefs constitute "an individual's judgment of the truth or falsity of a proposition" (p. 316), that there are many different types of teacher beliefs, that some are more profound and influential than others, and that this will vary from teacher to teacher. Furthermore, he argues that the concept "beliefs" is too complex and that research in the field suffers as a result: "The construct of educational beliefs is itself broad and encompassing. For purposes of research, it is diffuse and ungainly, too difficult to operationalize, too context free" (p. 316). He then goes on to summarize the field and the different research foci, and lists what he sees as the 16 "fundamental assumptions that may reasonably be made when initiating a study of teachers' educational beliefs" (p. 324). Pajares concludes that "when they are clearly conceptualized, when their key assumptions are examined, when precise meanings are consistently understood and adhered to, and when specific belief constructs are properly assessed and investigated, beliefs can be […] the single most important construct in educational research" (p. 329). However, as his review and also later reviews have shown, this is not always the case.

The most extensive review of the field is also the most recent: the *International Handbook of Research on Teachers' Beliefs* (Fives & Gill, 2015) provides an overview by examining the theoretical foundations and methodological approaches to the research, as well as reviewing studies that examine teachers' identity, motivation and

affect, teaching contexts, beliefs about knowing, teaching within academic domains, and beliefs about learners. It includes studies of beliefs that relate to general issues such as learning, students and education, as well as beliefs that are subject-specific (Fives & Gill, 2015).

In the chapter that deals with "the promises, problems, and prospects of research on teachers' beliefs", Jeppe Skott (2015) defines teacher beliefs as "individual, subjectively true, value-laden mental constructs that are the relatively stable results of substantial social experiences and that have significant impact on one's interpretations of and contributions to classroom practice" (p. 19). He argues that there are three central challenges within the field. The first is that the varying terminology and definitions employed to describe the object of study mean that there is no clear consensus regarding the concept "teacher beliefs" and what it entails. The second challenge, then, given the problem of defining the concept neatly, is that of operationalizing the vague concept in order to study it empirically, which "creates significant methodological difficulties" (p. 20), especially when comparing the results of different studies. The last challenge deals with the extent to which there is a relationship between beliefs and practices: studies are inconclusive in this respect, and their differences are often "explained with the conceptual or methodological difficulties of belief research" (p. 21). These three challenges are also addressed in other chapters of the Handbook (Buehl & Beck, 2015; Bullough Jr., 2015; Hoffman & Seidel, 2015; Olafson, Grandy, & Owens, 2015; Schraw & Olafson, 2015).

Both Pajares's article and the Handbook edited by Fives and Gill bring up complexities and challenges when researching teacher beliefs. In their review of current research in the field, Helenrose Fives and Michelle M. Buehl also highlight the diversity of studies, and argue that there is still "a lack of agreement regarding the nature of teachers' beliefs" (2012, p. 472). They then identify characteristics of the various definitions, namely teacher beliefs' "implicit and explicit nature", "stability over time", "situated or generalized nature", "relation to knowledge", and "existence as individual propositions or larger systems" (p. 473). Furthermore, they discuss what researchers consider to be the functions of teacher beliefs, namely as "filters for interpretation", "frames for defining problems", and "guides or standards for action" (p. 478). In this

study, I examine one of these functions, namely teacher beliefs as filters for interpretation, which is a well-established notion in the research (Pajares 1992; Phipps & Borg, 2009; Borg 2018). When functioning as filters, teacher beliefs become lenses through which teachers interpret "what and how they learn about teaching", whether they perceive events and content as relevant, "what information teachers recognize as worth discussing with students", and "how teachers' beliefs filter out information they do not see as relevant" (Fives and Buehl, 2012, pp. 478-479). This is in line with Pajares's view that beliefs "provide personal meaning and assist in defining relevancy" (1992, p. 317). Fives and Buehl highlight personal epistemology, students, and teachers' role as possible filters (2012, p. 478).

Another important issue to bear in mind is that teachers do not see all of their beliefs, thoughts, attitudes, and opinions as equally important. Pajares (1992) distinguishes between central and peripheral teacher beliefs (p. 318), and Borg (2018) explains how "different beliefs will also carry different 'weight', and when tensions arise, those that are more central or core will prevail over those that are peripheral" (p. 77). Similarly, Fives and Buehl argue that "different types of beliefs may serve different functions in different situations" (2012, p. 480). This means that teachers' beliefs may vary according to which other beliefs are at play in any given situation, and some beliefs appear to be more closely linked to teachers' identities as professionals. Core beliefs are, therefore, likely to influence how teachers wield their professional judgments to a greater extent than peripheral beliefs.

The teacher beliefs research field as it stands today remains multi-faceted, with a variety of definitions, approaches, and methodologies. Nevertheless, I find the term useful at both the theoretical and empirical level, both as a starting point for understanding the complexities of teachers' inner lives, and also as a way of analyzing what teachers express. The broader field of teacher cognition encompasses knowledge, beliefs, and thoughts (Borg, 2003), and my emphasis in this study is on the latter two. Teachers' knowledge enters into the discussion at some points, but I am mainly concerned with their beliefs and thoughts about literature and literature teaching. As the line between the terms beliefs and thoughts is blurred – I would argue that thoughts

can be seen as part of teachers' beliefs – I rely on the established term teacher beliefs in my discussion of findings.

5.2 Teacher cognition and language teaching

Turning then to the broader notion of teacher cognition, to which the concept of teacher beliefs belongs, this section addresses research on teacher cognition and language teaching. An important early work is that of Devon Woods, who in his book *Teacher Cognition in Language Teaching: Beliefs, decision-making and classroom practice* (1996) argue that there are three gaps in the existing research on L2 and FL classroom teaching and learning: "the structure of classroom teaching", "teachers' planning processes", and "teachers' interpretive processes" (pp. 11-15). In order to start to fill these gaps, Woods sees the need to focus on the perspectives of teachers; he examines how teachers understand events in context, including how teachers see classroom teaching as linked to course content, curricula, and planning processes (p. 15). In order to better understand teachers' perspectives and actions, he suggests using "an integrated view of teachers' beliefs, assumptions, and knowledge" (p. 184), and this forms an important part of his understanding of teacher cognition in language teaching. In his conclusion, Woods focuses on the importance of "the notion of reflection and interaction as a catalyst for change" (p. 297). However, he resists the idea of systematizing such reflection in a program, as "reflective teaching develops out of social environments in which experimentation, being temporarily wrong, reflection and change are not enforced, but rather appear natural" (p. 298).

Simon Borg's (2003) review discussing research on teacher cognition in language teaching is mostly centered on the teaching of English in predominantly ESL contexts. Examining more than 60 studies in the field, he argues that teacher cognition is a "multidimensional concept" and that the studies "highlight the personal nature of teacher cognition, the role of experience in the development of these cognitions, and the way in which instructional practice and cognition are mutually informing" (p. 83).

In his discussion, Borg focuses on the links between teacher cognition and prior language learning experience, teacher education, and classroom practice, as well as on studies conducted on grammar and literacy instruction, which are the two topics most commonly examined. In his conclusion, he points at various methodological and theoretical issues and challenges, and discusses which parts of language teachers' cognitions that should be examined further in the future. Of importance to the current study is his suggestion that future studies should focus on "different curricular aspects of language teaching" (p. 105) that have not been examined in depth, and that more research should be conducted in "representative language teaching settings" (p. 106). Studying teacher beliefs and the selection and teaching of literature in upper secondary English in Norway arguably responds to both of these suggestions.

In his book *Teacher Cognition and Language Education: Research and practice* (2006), Borg discusses both pre- and in-service language teachers' cognitions, and focuses again especially on grammar teaching and literacy instruction. He also discusses different methods used to conduct research on teacher cognition, and includes a framework for studying language teacher cognition. He argues for the necessity of examining what teachers do in their classrooms, since "our goal is ultimately to better understand teachers and teaching, not only to describe in theoretical terms what teachers believe and know" (p. 321). He points out the importance of context since "the social, institutional and physical settings in which teachers work have a major impact on their cognitions and practices" (p. 324) and contextual factors "may lead to changes in these cognitions or else they may alter practices directly without changing the cognitions underlying them" (p. 324).

An understanding of the importance of context when studying language teacher cognition has developed further in recent years. Magdalena Kubanyiova and Anne Feryok (2015) argue that researchers need to turn away from a "predominant focus on isolated constructs, such as beliefs and knowledge" and instead "embrace the complexity of teachers' inner lives in the context of their activity and aspire to understand what we have broadly termed *ecologies of language teachers' inner lives*" (p. 436). They argue that one of the problems encountered in some of the research on teacher cognition, namely that "beliefs and practices often appear difficult to reconcile"

(p. 438), is a result of two different contexts being at work. Therefore, researchers need to focus on "cognition in action" (p. 438) in order to better establish a link between "language teachers' inner worlds and their teaching, and their students' inner worlds and their learning" (p. 442).

Among the contextual factors discussed in the research on language teacher cognition is the influence of curricula. Borg (2018) points out that studies that find inconsistencies in the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices often explain them "with reference to external factors (e.g. a prescribed curriculum) that limit teachers' ability to enact their beliefs" (p. 86). This means that teachers may not be able to act according to their beliefs in language teaching contexts in which the curriculum is very detailed.

5.2.1 Studies of reading in FL and L2 teaching

As the present project is concerned with upper secondary school teachers' choices and beliefs about literature, this section addresses studies of literature and reading that have examined these issues from the teachers' perspectives. However, there are few studies of this kind that have been conducted on FL or L2 teachers, and most of them deal with the broader issues of reading instruction and literacy rather than teacher beliefs about literary texts. An additional complication is that conclusions drawn from the studies that do exist are not directly transferable to the Norwegian context or to the teaching of subject English, as the linguistic and educational contexts vary greatly from country to country.[39] With this in mind, I now turn to studies that deal with FL and L2 teachers' beliefs about reading.

In one of the chapters in *Teacher Cognition and Language Education* (2006), Borg focuses especially on reading instruction and literacy. He found that most of the studies

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[39] Some differences may include whether the majority speaks one mother tongue or whether there are several mother tongues in use simultaneously; whether the official language used in the education system is different from the mother tongue(s) of the students; whether the foreign language is widely used in the society or only by a few; whether the foreign language is close to the mother tongue(s) linguistically and culturally; when the foreign language is introduced at school, etc.

within the field have examined first language (L1) teachers and students, and that there have been few studies in FL and L2 contexts, which means that it is difficult to draw any conclusions regarding teacher cognition and reading and literacy instruction. The studies he discusses were conducted in the USA, Oman, the Netherlands, Hong Kong, and Turkey. Of these, the two Dutch studies are most relevant for my project for two reasons. Firstly, they examine teachers of 16 to 18-year-olds, which is the age group my teacher informants work with. Secondly, the contexts in which the studies were conducted are quite similar (Seeberg, 2003, p. 25), as English has a rather similar role in society at large as well as in the education system in both countries (Jenkins, 2015, p. 12). The Dutch studies (Meijer, Verloop, & Beijaard, 1999, 2001) investigate which types of practical knowledge teachers of 16 to 18-year-olds employ when teaching reading, and they found that there are three different types: focusing on subject matter knowledge, focusing on student knowledge, and focusing on knowledge of student learning and understanding (1999, pp. 72-73). These affect how teachers think reading instruction with students in this age group should be. Although the focus of my study is different from that of Meijer, Verloop, and Beijaard, the terminology used in their typology has influenced my discussion of teacher beliefs as filters in chapter 12.

In a chapter in the *International Handbook of Research on Teachers' Beliefs*, Liliana Maggioni, Emily Fox, and Patricia Alexander (2015) examine studies on teacher beliefs about reading. They state that studies within this field began to emerge in the 1970s, and most studies since have explored teacher beliefs about reading instruction. However, there are also studies dealing with beliefs about what reading is and how it develops, as well as beliefs about text and learning from text. Among all the studies examined by Maggioni, Fox, and Alexander, only one deals with secondary teachers: a 1994 article focusing on teachers' self-evaluation (Olson & Singer). This study – like many of the other studies discussed in the review chapter – was conducted in an L1 context. This indicates that the situation has not changed significantly since Borg wrote his book on teacher cognition and language education: there are few studies that investigate teacher cognition about reading instruction in FL or L2 teaching, and even fewer that investigate teachers in secondary school.

In Norway, the situation is quite similar to that described in the international studies. There are several studies that examine English teachers and reading, but very few that do so in the framework of teacher cognition or teacher beliefs. I have only been able to locate two recent studies that have done so: Trine Mathiesen Gilje's article (2014) about the teaching of reading in EFL in upper primary classrooms in Norway and Anja Synnøve Bakken's PhD dissertation (2018) about lower secondary teachers' text choices.[40] However, other researchers examining reading and literature arguably look at aspects of teacher cognition without explicitly using the term (see e.g. Munden & Skjærstad, 2018; Penne, 2012). This means that research on teacher's views on reading and literature exists in the Norwegian context, even though not all the studies use explicit frameworks of teacher cognition theory. In the next section, I look in more detail at Norwegian studies that are relevant for the current study.

5.3 Studying teachers in Norway

This section focuses on pertinent studies of teachers in the Norwegian context.[41] First, I discuss studies that have examined literature and reading in subject English. Next, I present studies that address upper secondary school English but focus on issues other than reading, and studies that have explored English teachers' perspectives that are related to neither reading nor upper secondary school. Although some of the studies presented in sections 5.3.2 and 5.3.3 are thematically somewhat peripheral to my project, they help piece together a more complete picture of what we already know about English teachers' choices, beliefs, and practices, and what goes on in subject English in Norwegian schools. Lastly, I include a few studies conducted in the Scandinavian languages that focus on the teaching of literature in L1 subjects, in order to look at the current research context for literature teaching in secondary school.

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[40] There are, however, studies using teacher cognition theory to examine other aspects of teachers' work (see e.g. Hestetræet, 2012; Vilà, 2018).

[41] An overview of empirical doctoral studies conducted between 1989 and 2017 can be found in a recent book edited by Ulrikke Rindal and Lisbeth Brevik (2019b).

5.3.1 Literature and reading

Several studies have examined literature and/or reading in English in Norwegian schools, and both teachers' and students' perspectives are represented (A. S. Bakken, 2018; Brevik, 2015; Brevik & Hellekjær, 2017; Drew & Pedersen, 2010; T. M. Gilje, 2014; Hellekjær, 2005, 2012; Munden & Skjærstad, 2018). Two recent PhD dissertations are particularly relevant for my project. Firstly, Bakken's study (2018), which focuses on lower secondary school teachers. Her aim was to explore "English teachers' reasoning about their text practices – their choice and use of texts – in their teaching" (p. 4). This includes the reading of both literature and factual texts, as well as their use of films. Her study builds on teacher cognition theory in order to examine what teachers think about their choices, methods, and goals for working with different types of texts. She found that the teachers' discussions of text choice centered around two discourse positions: one that focuses on the individual teacher's freedom to choose texts, and one that focuses on the textbook as the authority (p. 86). In her examination of teachers' views on the purposes of reading, she concludes that the main focus is on "collective, text-driven procedures consisting of close reading of textbook texts, translation and vocabulary work", that "independent, reader-driven text approaches" are less dominant, and that many teachers worry about the students' "unequal reading experiences from outside of school" (p. 87). Furthermore, she discusses how English subject curricula from 1939 until today reflect changes in didactic approaches, arguing that the curricula portray four different notions of reading: "as exposure, as a tool, as an encounter, and as meta-awareness" (p. 85).

The other dissertation which I find highly relevant is written by Lisbeth M. Brevik (2015). She discusses the development of reading comprehension in English in upper secondary school by examining both students' achievements and teachers' practices, using mixed methods to combine interviews with teachers and students, classroom observations, and analysis of students' reading test scores. She found that overall, "L2 reading proficiency is closely related to reading proficiency in the L1" (p. 63) and "girls read better than boys" (p. 65). Furthermore, she concludes that teachers of general and vocational students work differently with reading strategies in the classroom, and that

a focus on strategies is only helpful when students are able to use them independently (pp. 63-64). Brevik's findings are primarily relevant for the current study because they point out the difference between teaching practices in vocational and general studies; this is an issue that is also considered in this dissertation, in relation to text selection.

Another recent, relevant study includes a survey among 101 primary school and 31 lower secondary school teachers who were attending an in-service course in English. Juliet Munden and Torunn Skjærstad aimed to explore what "teachers and learners of English as a second or foreign language actually do with poetry, and why" (2018, p. 256). They found that poetry is most frequently used for language learning, but that it also serves other purposes, such as memorization, social experiences, structural purposes, stimulus to physical activity, and enjoyment (p. 264). They argue that lower secondary teachers are "less enthusiastic" about poetry than primary teachers (p. 268), and that the reasons given for not using poetry include "lack of time, lack of confidence, and lack of competence" as well as "not knowing suitable poems, that some poems are childish or hard to understand, not having a repertoire of teaching strategies, being limited in their choice in the textbook, and that pupils do not like poetry" (p. 269). Furthermore, the teachers in this study found little room for poetry when considering official requirements in the subject, as "exams and the focus on curriculum aims are given as reasons for *not* using poems" (p. 268). These findings are relevant for the current study because they discuss teachers' views on one literary genre, poetry, and why it is or is not used.

Gilje's article (2014) discussing reading in primary school is also worth mentioning. In her study, she interviews eight teachers about their background and practices, finding that while they relied heavily on textbooks, they "made independent decisions in the classroom, relating both to reading materials and practices" (p. 15). Both formally educated and non-educated teachers of English do this, but the formally educated are "more able to reflect around and articulate their knowledge, attitudes and beliefs (teacher cognition) and how these constructs influenced their practices" (p. 15). Gilje's findings are interesting because of her focus on teacher cognition, particularly her description of the teachers' varying abilities to reason around abstract notions related to their teaching practices. Furthermore, this article discusses a central issue in

English teaching which I want to explore in my study, namely teachers' relationships with textbooks. Gilje explains that her teacher respondents relied on textbooks, but that they were also concerned with the limited text selection and poor possibilities for differentiation (p. 8). However, as this study discusses English teachers in upper primary, its findings might not be directly transferrable to the context in which my teacher respondents are operating. In the next section, therefore, I look more closely at studies conducted in upper secondary school.

5.3.2 Upper secondary school

Several studies have examined subject English in upper secondary school, and as was the case with the studies on reading, both the student and teacher perspectives have been researched, as well as examinations (Brevik, 2015; Brevik & Hellekjær, 2017; Brubæk, 2012; Bøhn, 2016; Ø. Gilje et al., 2016; Hellekjær, 2005, 2012; Horverak, 2016; Mørch & Engeness, 2015; Ørevik, 2012). Three studies stand out as particularly interesting for the present purposes.

The first study is Henrik Bøhn's PhD dissertation (2016), which discusses how English teachers in upper secondary schools assess oral examinations in the general study and vocational study programs. He argues that the 24 teachers he interviewed are concerned with two main issues when assessing oral examinations, namely "competence" and "content", and that these issues comprise a number of sub-categories, for instance "linguistic competence" (p. 59). However, even though the teachers agree on the importance of both competence and content, they disagree regarding how the two should be weighted: some emphasize content more than competence, and others admit to assessing vocational students "more leniently" than students enrolled in general studies (p. 59). In his conclusion, Bøhn argues that it might be valuable to introduce national rating scale guidelines similar to those that are already used in Norwegian lower secondary schools, and he also suggests more systematic training for teachers assessing oral examinations (p. 71). Furthermore, he advises the authorities to reconsider whether vocational and general studies students should take the same exam

when (some) teachers assess the two groups differently (p. 70). As was the case with the Brevik study discussed in the previous section, the main point of interest is the difference between teachers of general and vocational students; more specifically, whether there is a difference in teachers' selections of literary texts for students attending vocational and general studies.

The second study is May Olaug Horverak's PhD dissertation (2016) in which she examines writing instruction in subject English in upper secondary schools. She conducted a mixed methods study, combining interviews with teachers, a survey with students, classroom observation, and analysis of teaching materials. She focuses on teachers in the first of the four articles comprising the study (2015), and explores how writing instruction was taught and why teachers taught the way they did. Her sample consists of 14 teachers from seven schools, who all taught first-year students in general studies who were taking the compulsory English course. Some of her findings are that there is "little systematic co-operation with regard to developing and sharing teaching material" and that "teachers have had little input on this through their teacher education" (2015, p. 18). This finding is of particular interest to the present study, as I found that there does exist an approach to text selection that relies on the collaboration of colleagues.

Thirdly, the project *Ark & App* (English: *Paper and app*) examines, among other things, teachers' use of teaching resources and textbooks in primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary school (Ø. Gilje et al., 2016). The researchers looked at the use of resources in four subjects: Social Studies, English, Science, and Mathematics. A survey with 178 English teachers as respondents shows that English teachers in primary and lower secondary rely more on textbooks than teachers in upper secondary (pp. 51-52). The project also includes case studies, and the one conducted in a first-year general studies class confirms these findings; textbooks are used as one of several resources in this English class (Mørch & Engeness, 2015). As with the upper primary study discussed in the previous section, teachers' relationships with textbooks is the main point of interest here.

5.3.3 Primary and lower secondary teachers

A few other studies examining English teachers are also relevant for the present study. Firstly, and most importantly, Bjørg Olsen Eikrem's PhD dissertation (2006) examines English teachers' perceptions and attitudes during the previous curriculum for primary and lower secondary school, L-97 (KKUF, 1996). She interviewed 26 English teachers in primary and lower secondary schools in order to find out how they perceive and talk about the teaching of English as a foreign language (TEFL) in the L97 curriculum, which attitudes they have to learning in English, and how these attitudes affect their teaching (p. 6). Her main findings are that teachers view their role in the classroom as either being "a supplier of knowledge", "an entrepreneur in learning", as functioning "between a supplier and a conductor of knowledge", or being "a director of knowledge" (pp. 193-208). Furthermore, she argues that the teachers have two main perceptions of TEFL: as "a traditional undertaking" or as "a modern undertaking" (p. 189). The teachers who see TEFL as the former adhere to "a fixed set of procedures and routines in the foreign language class" with a focus on "*teaching* rather than *learning*, and the teacher has a centre-stage position as the fount of knowledge" (p. 175). Some of these teachers see "the textbook as the bible", focusing on "transfer of knowledge" and using the textbook as "a strait-jacket" (p. 187). The teachers who see TEFL as "a modern undertaking" tend to view it "as a creative enterprise" where "*learning* rather than *teaching*" is emphasized, and the "centre of attention in the language class is directed towards the student and her/his intellectual and personal development" (p. 179). These teachers' relationship with the textbook is seeing it as a resource and using it "for knowledge construction […] in a flexible way" (p. 187).

Several of Eikrem's findings are relevant for this study. Firstly, the teachers' relationships with textbooks, which, as has been pointed out earlier, is an interesting issue to consider in relation to text selection. Secondly, her analysis of the teachers' positioning of themselves as either taking the "centre-stage position" or as directing attention "towards the student" (pp. 175, 179) helped in developing the framework for analysis that I use in chapter 10. This means that although Eikrem's study was

conducted when a different curriculum was in place and did not include upper secondary teachers, the issues it addresses are still pertinent today.

In addition to Eikrem's qualitative study, I include here one study that employed a different method to conduct research on teachers. Although it did not focus on the teaching of literature, Elisabeth Ibsen and Glenn Ole Hellekjær's article "A Profile of Norwegian Teachers of English in the 10th Grade" (2003) provides an interesting overview of 65 10th grade English teachers working with the L97 curriculum. The study includes information about the teachers' gender, age, formal education, in-service education, teaching experience, professional esteem, collegial climate, textbook use, teaching resources, the amount of English spoken in class, other classroom practices, and authentic communicative situations outside the classroom. The information was gathered in a self-report survey, and the authors created two fictitious profiles based on the responses: the "typical English teacher", and the "not-so-typical English teacher". The biggest difference between the two profiles is their reliance on textbooks: the typical English teacher follows the progression of the textbook most of the time, whereas the atypical English teacher does not use the textbook. Ibsen and Hellekjær conclude their article by stating that the English classrooms of these 65 teachers are "relatively traditional", and that "learning to learn, new technology and project work seem to play a minor role, while the textbook provides the safety and structure a teacher needs or wants" (p. 86). This means that their article focuses, as do several other studies discussed in this chapter, on the role of the textbook. Additionally, the description of their survey was interesting, as it helped me develop my own.[42]

5.3.4 Subject Norwegian

Several studies have been conducted that examine literature teaching in subject Norwegian in secondary school (Gourvennec, 2017; Kjelen, 2013; Kulbrandstad, Danbolt, Sommervold, & Syversen, 2005; Penne, 2010, 2012; Rødnes, 2014;

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[42] See chapter 6 for a description of how I developed my survey.

Skarstein, 2013). In this section, I present two studies focusing on teachers working with literature in subject Norwegian, namely Hallvard Kjelen's PhD dissertation discussing lower secondary teachers' literature choices (2013) and Sylvi Penne's article examining how upper secondary teachers in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark view literature's purpose (2012). Both are highly relevant for my project.

In *Litteraturundervisning i ungdomsskulen: Kanon, danning og kompetanse* [*The teaching of literature in lower secondary school: Canon, Bildung and competence*] (2013), Kjelen interviewed 18 teachers in order to find out what their views of literature and *Bildung* in lower secondary Norwegian were (pp. 9-10). The research questions of greatest interest were the following: "How do teachers legitimize literature in the subject, and which notion of *Bildung* do they use? Which strategies do teachers use to select texts, and which consequences do these strategies have for the literary canon in lower secondary school? To what extent does the teacher use the freedom that the curriculum allows when selecting texts?" (p. 10, my translation). He argues that the teachers he interviewed used several different arguments when discussing literature's place and importance in the subject: literature helps in the development of language skills and may foster a joy of reading; literary texts are important in developing students' imagination and empathy; literature is an important component of the cultural heritage that all students need to know (pp. 102-103). Although many of the teachers think that *Bildung* is closely linked to literature, they struggle to define the term and specify what it means in an educational context (p. 104). With regards to text selection, Kjelen found that the texts the teachers choose to use in the classroom are largely written by men, and that multicultural society is not reflected in the text selection (p. 133).

Furthermore, Kjelen describes the different text selection strategies that the teachers employ. Teachers choose texts that the students might recognize themselves in, that represent something unknown to the students, that have a familiar form or structure, that the teachers themselves know well, that are part of the cultural heritage, that are particularly suitable for either boys or girls, or that are easily combined with other media, such as films (pp. 134-149). He concludes that what influences text selection the most are the teachers' "didactic assessments of what they thought might work in

the classroom", the teachers' tastes in literature, their educational background and gender perspectives, their interpretations of the curriculum, and the availability of literary texts (p. 155, my translation).

Sylvi Penne's article "Hva trenger vi egentlig litteraturen til?" [What do we really need literature for?] discusses a research project conducted among upper secondary teachers in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark (2012). Penne examines literature's role in the countries' curricula for subject Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish, as well as how teachers argue for literature's presence and positions in these subjects. She found that some teachers experience a discrepancy between the lofty goals of the curricula, which want students to discuss literature at an advanced meta-level, and the actual classroom situation, in which the real challenge is motivating students to read anything at all (p. 35). She describes how these teachers adapt their text selection and literature teaching to the level of the students, finding practical solutions that ensure that students at least are able to experience literary texts, even if they are not able to discuss them on an advanced, abstract, meta-level (pp. 47-51). However, she also describes the views and practices of one teacher working with more academically oriented students; here, the teacher is able to work with literature at the level which the curriculum outlines (pp. 51-53). Penne concludes her article by arguing that there are great similarities between curricula in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, and that Scandinavian teachers' views on literature teaching are similar. She suggests that there needs to be a particular didactics of literature teaching aimed at the non-reading students in the egalitarian Scandinavian schools in order for students to develop "contextual understanding" and "meta-understanding of texts" (p. 56, my translation).

Kjelen's and Penne's studies are interesting because they address several of the issues I examine in the current study: which texts teachers use and why they choose them, what teachers understand literature's role to be, and the relationship between the curriculum and teachers' views and practices. The difference is, of course, that they have explored subject Norwegian as L1, and I address subject English as L2/FL. Nevertheless, as the national context is similar and the subject curricula resemble each other, these two studies are an important part of the research context in which my study is situated.

5.4 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have introduced the multi-faceted field of teacher cognition, focusing on various aspects that are relevant for the current study: teacher beliefs, teacher cognition and language teaching, research on reading in FL and L2 teaching, and in particular Norwegian studies that are related to the field of teacher cognition. As previously mentioned, I use the term teacher beliefs to describe and discuss teachers' opinions, views, perceptions, and ideas concerning literature and literature teaching in the chapters that follow, and draw on insights from research on teacher cognition.

As has been discussed in this chapter, some researchers emphasize the importance of looking at teacher cognition in relation to teachers' classroom practice (see e.g. Borg, 2006; 2018). While this is clearly a valuable approach, it is not the one adopted in this study; my discussion of teachers' choices and beliefs about literature is based on teachers' self-reported practices, beliefs, and thoughts. In chapter 7, I respond to the first research question by presenting the specific texts and genres teachers report using and/or finding suitable. In chapters 8 and 9, I respond to the second research question and look at *why* teachers choose the texts they do. I examine teachers' beliefs about vocational and general studies and the perceived importance of the contextual factors curricula, examinations, and textbooks, which is in line with contemporary studies urging researchers to focus on the contexts in which teachers operate (see e.g. Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015). In chapter 10, I respond to the third research question and explore *how* teachers choose the texts they do. I discuss teachers' beliefs about the different people they focus on when selecting texts: themselves, their students, or their colleagues. In chapter 11, I respond to the fourth research question and explore teachers' beliefs about dystopian literature. These beliefs are linked to issues related to the curriculum, their students, and their general text selection practices. In chapter 12, I bring the main points of the preceding results chapters together by discussing the function of teacher beliefs as filters, the stability of teacher beliefs, and the relevance of context for teachers' choices and beliefs about literature.

6. Methods

This chapter presents and examines the methods used in the current study. First, the overall mixed methods approach is discussed against the backdrop of teacher beliefs. Next, I address the quantitative and qualitative methods used. For both the survey and the interviews, I discuss the development and content of the research instruments, the participants, the methods' reliability and validity, and my approach to data analysis. Lastly, the ethical considerations of the study are addressed.

6.1 Exploring teacher beliefs with mixed methods

The theoretical concept teacher beliefs is used to describe a wide range of notions, including attitudes, values, opinions, and emotions (Levin, 2015). These terms, as well as views, ideas, thoughts, perceptions, and feelings are used to describe teachers' beliefs in the chapters that follow. They relate to Sylvi Penne's notions of "everyday theories" – things that teachers "think", "feel", and "believe" (2012, p. 32, my translation) – as well as to their knowledge and competence through their education and experience as literature teachers.

Due to the complexity of the concept teacher beliefs, anyone conducting research in this field has to consider carefully *which* types of beliefs to investigate, and *how* to best gain access to these beliefs. If the main purpose of a study is to find out how many teachers share the same conscious beliefs about a given issue, then using a survey or another quantitative tool would in most cases be the right approach. If the aim is to explore the complexity of individual teachers' beliefs, various qualitative approaches would be best suited. If the researcher wants to examine to what extent teachers' beliefs correspond to their practices, a combination of interviews and observations would be suitable. However, if one wants to examine different types of beliefs in the same study, a mixed methods approach is most beneficial as it allows the researcher to access different perspectives at the same time.

The term mixed methods is used to describe studies that include both a quantitative and a qualitative component (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, pp. 2-3; M. L. Smith, 2006, pp. 458-459). The research strategy builds on the view that "the world is not exclusively quantitative or qualitative; it is not an either/or world, but a mixed world" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011, p. 22). Therefore, mixed methods studies are concerned with "thoughtful consideration of mixing not just methods or forms of data but also different ways of seeing, interpreting, and knowing" (J. C. Greene, 2007, p. xi). Employing mixed methods in educational research has become more widespread in recent years, and it is now considered a useful methodological approach since it "attempts to consider multiple viewpoints, perspectives, positions, and standpoints" (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007, p. 113) and as a result can "provide insights not possible when only qualitative and quantitative data are collected" (Harwell, 2011, p. 151). This development has also taken place in Norway, as the majority of empirically oriented PhD dissertations in the field of English didactics after 1989 comprise mixed methods research (Rindal & Brevik, 2019a).

The disadvantages of using mixed methods include that it requires more time and resources because of the more extensive data collection and the increased complexity of the results and conclusions, as well as the risk of superficial use of the methods (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). I agree that a mixed methods research design is demanding and time-consuming. I attempted to limit this drawback by not including observation in the qualitative part of the study; although observation could have provided useful information regarding teachers' choices and beliefs, I decided that it would not be realistic to do within the given time frame of this project. Given the time I have spent designing the research instruments and collecting and analyzing data, I think this was a correct decision. The second concern, that both methods may be used superficially, is something I have tried to counter by being rigorous in my treatment of the quantitative and qualitative results. This is discussed further in sections 6.2 and 6.3.

6.1.1 The current study

This study examines English teachers' choices and beliefs about literature in upper secondary school in Norway. Since this topic has not been examined in the context of the current curriculum before, the study is to a large extent exploratory. Mixed methods are used to examine the topic, and the nature of my research questions underline the need for a mixed design. The questions are as follows:

1. Which literary texts and genres are seen as suitable and/or used by teachers?
2. Why do teachers choose the texts they do?
3. How do teachers choose texts for classroom use?
4. How do teachers assess a specific contemporary dystopian young adult novel for classroom use?

The first question is descriptive and requires quantification, which means that it is best answered using a quantitative method – in this case, a survey. The other questions are both descriptive and interpretative, and are best answered using a qualitative method – in this case, interviews. Note, though, that questions 1-3 are addressed in both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the study, but the research instruments differ in how they emphasize the questions; question 4, however, is only addressed in the interviews. Because of the importance of having answers to the *which*-question before beginning to answer the *how*- and *why*-questions, the survey was conducted first. Therefore, the design of this study is nested sequential (Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 238), which means that the first phase of the study was carried out and completed before the second phase, and that the participants in the second phase of the study are a subset of the participants in the first phase. In addition to the main quantitative and qualitative components, a small-scale qualitative pilot study was conducted before the main investigation; this is described in more detail in section 6.2.

Studies employing mixed methods may give the quantitative and qualitative components different emphasis (J. C. Greene, 2007). In this study, the qualitative data have been emphasized in the presentation and discussion of results because this material is the most varied, rich and complex. The quantitative data are used to describe

broad tendencies among the survey respondents, mostly regarding research question 1, but also to provide a broader context whenever appropriate when discussing the other research questions. The qualitative data are used to examine eight teachers' choices and beliefs about literature and literature teaching in response to all four research questions, and are especially emphasized in the discussion of research questions 2-4. Table 4 provides an overview of the study; the elements introduced here are discussed in more detail in the rest of the chapter.

Table 4: Overview of research design

	Phase 1: Quantitative	Phase 2: Qualitative
Participants	110 teachers	8 teachers
Research instrument	54-item questionnaire	Interview guides 1 and 2
Data material for analysis	Questionnaire responses	Teachers' year plans (preparation for interview 1) Textbooks and other resources used by teachers (preparation for interview 1) Four novels with supporting material (preparation for interview 2) Interview transcripts

6.1.2 Population and sample

The population examined in this study is English teachers in upper secondary school in Norway. The sample in both the quantitative and the qualitative components is drawn from teachers working in five counties: Møre og Romsdal, Nord-Trøndelag, Oppland, Sogn og Fjordane, and Sør-Trøndelag.[43] These counties were selected because they include small and medium-sized towns as well as one city, there is a wide range of school sizes, all educational programs are represented more than once, and they represent different Norwegian regions (Inland Norway, Trøndelag, and

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[43] At the time in which the study was conducted, there were 19 counties in Norway.

Western/Northwestern Norway). However, as the schools and teachers in these counties were not obligated to participate in the study, the responses in both the quantitative and qualitative components relied on volunteers. This means that the sample does not represent the wider population (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 160), as the teachers that participated may have had particular motivations to do so, and the teachers who did *not* participate may have had their reasons for not doing so. Reasons for not participating in this study may be related to time constraints, lack of interest in the subject matter, lack of knowledge about the subject matter, and/or not wanting to contribute to this type of study (Jacobsen, 2015, pp. 307-308). Issues related to the sample and the reliability of the study are discussed further in sections 6.2 and 6.3.

6.2 Phase 1: Quantitative component

Quantitative research aims to say something about the nature of phenomena, especially with regards to measurement: these studies "attempt to maximize objectivity", and the ideal is to conduct research that is replicable and that produces findings that are generalizable (Harwell, 2011, p. 149). Quantitative research can take many forms and employ a wide range of methods. In this project, a self-completion questionnaire was used to acquire data about teachers' views on literature selection and literature teaching in subject English. Surveys typically "gather data at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 256), and they are particularly well suited to "describe the relevant characteristics of individuals, groups, or organizations" (Berends, 2006, p. 623). This is exactly what this questionnaire intended to do: describe who upper secondary school teachers in Norway in 2016 are, and what they believe regarding their choices and practices related to literature selection and literature teaching in subject English.

6.2.1 Designing the survey

There are many studies that have dealt with teachers' choices and beliefs about reading, but most of them tend to employ solely qualitative methods, investigate pre-service teachers rather than in-service teachers, and primary rather than secondary teachers, or examine literacy rather than literature (see e.g. the overview presented by Maggioni et al., 2015). Although there are quantitative studies that have sought to examine teachers' choices, beliefs and/or practices regarding literature teaching (e.g. Quirk et al., 2010; Witte & Jansen, 2015), these have concerned themselves with other approaches than the one pursued in this study. I, therefore, needed to develop a new questionnaire rather than adopt previously used templates. After consulting several handbooks on empirical research in education in general and survey development in particular (Cohen et al., 2011; C. F. Conrad & Serlin, 2011; Green, Camilli, Elmore, Skukauskaitė, & Grace, 2006; Johnson & Christensen, 2012; McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010) as well as an earlier study conducted in the Norwegian context (Ibsen & Hellekjær, 2003), a preliminary questionnaire was created that addressed the issues I wanted to explore.

The questionnaire was then piloted in two stages. First, as recommended by Berends (2006), I conducted what he refers to as a cognitive interview (pp. 632-634) with a teacher who had recent experience from teaching English in upper secondary school. This interview entailed that the teacher filled out the questionnaire while talking about how s/he perceived the questions, and s/he was asked questions regarding specific items where I was unsure of whether the wording communicated my intention. This pilot was helpful because it allowed me to gain access to how this teacher thought when encountering the questions I had formulated. It is important to note that this was just one teacher's perception – had I talked to several I would almost certainly have had other responses – but it nevertheless made me reformulate several items, as well as change the order of some of the sections.[44] After revising the survey on the basis of this

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[44] One major change that happened as a result of this interview was that the section containing open questions was moved earlier. In the first version of the questionnaire, that section was placed at the very end of the survey, but the teacher argued that respondents would perhaps not answer in detail because they were tired of responding

interview, the second stage of piloting was undertaken when the survey was sent out to English teachers in three upper secondary schools. The teachers were specifically asked to comment on any items that they found unclear or difficult to understand. These comments were taken into account in the second revision, and some items were removed while others were altered.[45] Since both piloting stages were qualitative and the questionnaire was not directly linked to a hypothesis, the final questionnaire should be viewed as exploratory.

The final version of the survey contains a total of 54 items divided into four sections.[46] Section 1 contains 14 background questions that all respondents had to answer, and these were either dichotomous or multiple choice questions where only one answer was possible, or multiple choice questions where several answers were possible. Section 2 contains three open questions in which teachers provide examples of specific literary texts and textbooks. Section 3 contains 20 questions about teachers' practices and section 4 contains 17 questions about teachers' views on literature and literature teaching in general. Lastly, teachers had the possibility to comment on the survey. The survey focuses on nine topics:

- Teacher-oriented approach to choosing and teaching literature
- Student-oriented approach to choosing and teaching literature
- Textbook-reliant approach to choosing and teaching literature
- Employment of texts of varying lengths
- Employment of different literary genres
- Teachers' perceived freedom when choosing literature
- Literary texts and morality

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to questions. As these items formed a vital part of the survey, I decided to move the section earlier; it instead became section 2 (see description of survey sections in the next paragraph).

[45] Most significantly, I removed two open questions in section 2 that asked teachers to give examples of high-quality and low-quality literary texts. The reason was that the teachers thought answering four open questions asking for examples of texts was too time-consuming and tiring. Therefore, I decided to prioritize the two open questions that asked teachers to provide examples of suitable and unsuitable literary texts for classroom use. Other changes included removing examples of authors from item 25, as the teachers argued that this could make respondents only answer affirmatively if they had used texts written by these authors, and refining item 53 by including the phrase "the variation that exists".

[46] See appendix 6 for the survey.

- Definitions of literary quality

- The importance of literature in subject English

These topics were based on research findings and other works regarding reading, text selection, and literature teaching in subject English (A. S. Bakken, 2018; Birketveit & Williams, 2013; Brevik, 2015; Eikrem, 2006; T. M. Gilje, 2014; Ø. Gilje et al., 2016; Ibsen & Hellekjær, 2003; Ibsen & Wiland, 2000) and in subject Norwegian (Kjelen, 2013; Kulbrandstad et al., 2005; Penne, 2012), as well as analyses of the current and previous English subject curricula in Norway (KKUF, 1993b; 2001; KUD, 1976a; 1976b; 1985; 1991; 1992; Udir, 2006a; 2013a).

In a survey that depends on the collaboration of teachers of English in Norway, choice of language had to be considered. I chose to ask questions in Norwegian since most English teachers in Norway are native speakers of Norwegian. There are also quite a few foreign English teachers, but they have to be able to understand and use Norwegian in order to work in schools. A possibility could have been to offer the survey in both languages, but I feared that might compromise construct validity; even though English and Norwegian share many transparent words and grammatical structures, there are concepts that are explained differently in the two languages. One example is the Norwegian concept "læreverk" which does not have an exact counterpart in English: neither "teaching materials" nor "textbook" corresponds to the Norwegian term. For these reasons, I chose to only offer the survey in one language, and Norwegian was chosen since it is the native language of the majority of the respondents.

Another issue to consider was the format of the survey. I decided to create an electronic questionnaire since the potential respondents were teachers, which meant that they would have access to the internet and be able to read and understand the questions (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 281). I used Questback, first and foremost because this was the platform recommended by the university.[47] There are some disadvantages to distributing questionnaires electronically, the most important relating to the low response rate. The reasons for this include that electronic questionnaires distributed via

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[47] See Questback (2019).

108

e-mail can disappear among all the other e-mails respondents receive in a day and that people are more likely to postpone responding to electronic questionnaires, sometimes for so long that it is no longer possible to participate (Jacobsen, 2015, pp. 280-281). I decided to use an electronic survey because in my view, the advantages outweighed the disadvantages, and four issues were of particular importance (Jacobsen, 2015, pp. 278-280). Firstly, the survey is easily distributed. In this case, I included the link to the survey in the e-mails I sent out to teachers and the county networks,[48] and the teachers could access the survey directly from there. Secondly, an electronic survey simplifies data collection. When the survey was closed, I received files containing all the respondents' answers, and these were easily – and correctly – transferred to SPSS (Version 25; IBM 2017), which was the computer program for statistical analysis that I used. Thirdly, this type of survey gives the respondents flexibility: the teachers could respond wherever and whenever they liked, as long as they had a functioning internet connection. Fourthly, electronic surveys increase respondents' sense of anonymity (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 279), which I hoped would help increase the response rate.

6.2.2 Conducting the survey

The survey was administered in Møre og Romsdal, Oppland, and Sør-Trøndelag in April 2016 and in Nord-Trøndelag and Sogn og Fjordane in September 2016.[49] In these five counties, there were 90 upper secondary schools that were eligible for participation at the beginning of the study. The principals at 88 of these schools[50] received information about the project first.[51] 66 of the principals responded to the e-mail I sent with information about their English teachers – 416 teachers in total. These teachers were then directly approached through e-mail with information about the study,

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[48] See section 6.2.2 and appendix 3.

[49] Møre og Romsdal, Oppland, and Sør-Trøndelag were the original sample. Because I was not happy with the number of teachers who responded (73), I decided to expand the study to include two more counties in the fall of 2016.

[50] Two private schools that only offered adaptive education were removed from the sample.

[51] See appendix 2 for the e-mail I sent to the principals.

including which topic was being studied.[52] Included was a link to the electronic questionnaire, information about how long the survey was expected to take (15-30 minutes), and information about how long the survey would be available for (approximately four weeks). In order to reach the teachers at the remaining 22 schools, the county networks for upper secondary English teachers were approached, and they sent out the same e-mail and its attached information letter to the teachers in their networks. In order to encourage more teachers to respond, an additional e-mail was sent out approximately one week before the survey closed.[53] Table 5 below provides an overview of the survey sample.

Table 5: Survey sample overview

County	Number of schools approached	Number of responding schools	Number of teachers approached[54]	Number of participants	Teachers' response rate
Møre og Romsdal	25	10	60	18	30%
Nord-Trøndelag	13	12	80	21	26%
Oppland	12	11	79	19	24%
Sogn og Fjordane	13	11	53	16	30%
Sør-Trøndelag	25	22	144	36	25%
Total	88	66	416	110	26%

The table shows that a total of 110 teachers responded to the survey; a 26% response rate for teachers that were approached directly about the study. However, if we include all the schools in the five counties – even those that did not respond with information

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[52] See appendices 3 and 4 for the e-mail and information letter I sent to the teachers.

[53] See appendix 5 for the reminder e-mail.

[54] Note that this is not the number of English teachers working in the county. 22 schools did not respond to my requests for information about their teachers, and teachers at these schools are, therefore, not included in this overview. I have based this number (and the response rate that follows) on the number of teachers who were approached directly with e-mails about the survey.

about their English teachers – the overall response rate becomes 20%.[55] Possible reasons for this are discussed in section 6.2.4.

6.2.3 The survey participants

In table 6, the teachers who responded to the survey are described in more detail, and in table 7, the teachers' school contexts are described. The information in these tables is based on the first part of the questionnaire.

Table 6: Survey sample in detail

	No. of participants	Percentage of total
AGE		
20-39	33	30%
40-49	47	43%
50+	30	27%
Total	110	100%
GENDER[56]		
Female	81	74%
Male	29	26%
Total	110	100%
JOB TITLE		
Adjunkt[57]	46	42%
Lektor[58]	62	56%
Other (lærer[59], faglærer u/ped. utd.[60])	2	2%
Total	110	100%

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[55] There was an average of 6.3 English teachers at the 66 schools that responded with information about their teachers. That makes the estimated number of English teachers in these five counties approx. 554.

[56] This ratio corresponds roughly to the overview of English teachers I gathered from the 66 responding schools: the average gender distribution was 29% men and 71% women. However, this was not the same across all five counties. The highest percentage of male teachers was in Sogn og Fjordane (36%) and Sør-Trøndelag (35%). Møre og Romsdal (23%), Nord-Trøndelag (24%), and Oppland (25%) had a male ratio below the overall average.

[57] Teacher with at least four years of higher education including a teaching qualification, but no Master's degree.

[58] Teacher with at least five years of higher education including a teaching qualification and a Master's degree.

[59] Qualified teachers with a degree of three years or less.

[60] Teacher with specific competences, most usually vocational qualifications, but without a teaching qualification.

FORMAL COMPETENCE IN THE ENGLISH SUBJECT		
One-year course ("årsstudium")	29	27%
Bachelor's degree	40	36%
Master's degree	41	37%
Total	110	100%

READING HABITS: ENGLISH-LANGUAGE FICTION		
Very often/often	74	67%
Sometimes	26	24%
Rarely/never	10	9%
Total	110	100%

READING HABITS: NORWEGIAN FICTION		
Very often/often	52	47%
Sometimes	38	35%
Rarely/never	20	18%
Total	110	100%

TOTAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE		
0-10 years	45	41%
11-20 years	35	32%
21+ years	30	27%
Total	110	100%

STUDY PROGRAMS TAUGHT BY RESPONDENTS IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR OF THE SURVEY[61]		
Vocational studies	64	58%
General studies	74	67%
Adults ("voksenopplæring")	7	6%
Other (e.g. adapted education)	14	13%
International Baccalaureate	1	1%

STUDY PROGRAMS TAUGHT THROUGHOUT THE RESPONDENTS' CAREER		
Vocational studies	98	89%
General studies	85	77%
Adults ("voksenopplæring")	29	26%
Add-on course for vocational students ("påbygg")	24	22%
Other (e.g. adapted education)	28	25%
Other types of schools	54	49%
International Baccalaureate	1	1%

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[61] Note that the numbers in this category do not add up to 110 teachers, as a teacher in any given academic year may be working with several different student groups (the upper secondary schools in Norway are comprehensive, and most of them offer several different study programs).

Table 7: Teachers' school contexts

	No. of participants	Percentage of total
GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF SCHOOL		
Small town	35	32%
Medium-sized town	55	50%
City	20	18%
Total	110	100%
NUMBER OF ENGLISH TEACHERS AT THE SCHOOL		
1-5 English teachers	33	30%
6-10 English teachers	44	40%
11-15 English teachers	23	21%
16+ English teachers	10	9%
Total	110	100%

Tables 6 and 7 show that the teachers participating in the survey may be characterized in a wide variety of manners. Almost three quarters of the respondents are under the age of 50, and this group of respondents corresponded with the group of roughly the same size that had less than 21 years of teaching experience. However, this does not reflect nation-wide statistics that show that approximately 57% of all teachers in upper secondary school are under the age of 50 (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2018). One possible reason for this mismatch could be that younger teachers are more likely to complete an electronic survey (Jacobsen, 2015, p. 280). However, I do not know whether this number corresponds with age statistics regarding English teachers alone, or in the five counties in question. 74% of the respondents are female; this does not correspond with nation-wide statistics that show that approximately 55% of all teachers in upper secondary schools are female (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2018), but it does correspond roughly to the gender distribution among the 416 English teachers that were approached in this study. Although less than 40% of the respondents say that they have a Master's degree in English, more than half of the respondents hold the title "lektor", which means that some of the respondents have a Master's degree in another subject than English. This indicates that English is not the primary teaching subject for all respondents, as it is more likely that teachers view the subject in which they hold the

most advanced degree as their primary teaching subject.[62] Furthermore, the overview shows that the majority of the respondents read fiction regularly in their spare time: more than two thirds read English-language literature often or very often, and almost half of the teachers read Norwegian-language literature often or very often. Less than 10% of the respondents say that they read English-language fiction rarely or never. Lastly, the types of study programs the teachers have taught show that the majority of the respondents have worked with vocational studies and/or general studies at some point in their careers.

6.2.4 Reliability, validity, and analysis of data

Reliability is defined as "dependability, consistency and replicability over time" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 199). This means being concerned with the internal consistency of the research instrument – in this study, the questionnaire – and being concerned with the sample. Validity is defined as "the correctness or truthfulness of the inferences that are made from the results of the study" (Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 245), in other words "the extent to which our observations indeed reflect the phenomena and variables of interest to us" (Pervin, 2010, p. 48). A central concern is whether the questions asked in a study actually make it possible for the researcher to answer the research questions. Furthermore, an important consideration of quantitative research is to ensure external validity, namely that there are grounds for generalizing results to a population based on data acquired from a sample (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 186).

In this study, the internal consistency of the research instrument relies on the piloting, which allowed me to refine the questionnaire. In the results chapters, I problematize some of the terminology used in the items and discuss how it may have been understood in different ways by different respondents. Additionally, the terms used in the multiple-choice scales in sections 3 and 4 of the survey are also open to interpretation: terms like "never", "rarely", "sometimes", and "often" may mean different things to different

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[62] In Norway, it is very common for upper secondary school teachers to teach at least two different subjects.

people. This means that rather than being accurate descriptions of how often teachers do things, the responses to these items describe tendencies that cannot be specified precisely. Another potential challenge for this study's validity is the fact that respondents tend to over-report what they consider to be positively regarded attitudes and actions, and under-report what they think may be perceived as negative (Lavrakas, 2008, pp. 15, 479). However, since the teachers were completely anonymous at all stages of the process and the survey did not address sensitive issues, this might have encouraged them to answer truthfully.

In the chapters that follow, I use the survey results mainly as a starting point for further elaboration on the issues addressed using the qualitative data, and do not make any claims of my results being representative for upper secondary English teachers in Norway in general. This is mainly because the sample of 110 teachers is too small for the findings to be generalized to the population (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 147). However, the survey participants' lack of representativeness is not just a result of how many teachers responded to the survey, but also of the possibly skewed sample. It might be assumed that teachers who found the survey topic interesting and/or who identified first and foremost as English teachers were more likely to respond than those who were less interested in literature and/or who considered English as their second (or perhaps even third) teaching subject. This might also have affected the overall response rate: teachers who were less interested in literature and/or who did not identify as primarily *English* teachers might not have wanted to participate. This means that the sample would probably not have been representative of upper secondary English teachers in Norway even if I had been able to recruit more teachers; a sample consisting of volunteers will not be likely to represent the population at large (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 160).

Rather than being concerned with the study's generalizability, I, therefore, rely on concepts like "transferability", "extrapolation", and "fittingness" that are frequently used in qualitative research to refer to external validity. These terms denote "the degree of congruence between sending and receiving contexts" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 124), or "modest speculations on the likely applicability of the findings to other situations under similar, but not identical conditions" (Patton, 2002, p. 584). Even though the findings in this study cannot be generalized statistically to the entire

population, it might be possible to generalize them analytically to sub-groups of the population. In this case, teachers who read fiction regularly and/or are generally interested in literature, teachers that view themselves as primarily English teachers, and/or English teachers who are motivated and dedicated in their profession. This constitutes "a reasoned judgment about the extent to which the findings of one study can be used as a guide to what might occur in another situation" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 297) – what is called the transferability of a study. For this reason, the quantitative data are important, even though the results cannot be generalized or be subject to sophisticated statistical analysis.

The data that were gathered from the survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics, namely frequency tables and bivariate analyses (crosstabulations). First, the data were entered into the analytical software program SPSS (Version 25; IBM 2017) and I conducted frequency analyses of the items in sections 1, 3, and 4 in order to get an overview of the material. I found that a total of 18 teachers had failed to respond to all items in sections 3 and 4. The items they had failed to respond to were spread out across the two sections, and no items stood out as being overlooked by many. One of the teachers had neglected to respond to six items, and another to ten, but the rest of them had missed between one and four items. I considered removing the two informants who had failed to respond to six and ten items, but decided to keep them because they had answered the open questions in section 2 in detail. This means that the number of respondents for the survey items reported on in the following chapters varies from 106 to 110; these numbers are clearly presented in the tables that appear in the following chapters.

Next, bivariate analyses – crosstabulations – were conducted in order to find out whether there were associations between variables denoting teachers' backgrounds and contexts (section 1 of the survey) and variables denoting the types of texts they used (section 3 of the survey). When conducting these analyses, I looked at the percentage difference, which "estimates the extent to which one phenomenon implies the other" (Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 631). This type of analysis was chosen because it is transparent: "straightforward to calculate and simple to understand" (Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 632). However, the research literature does not take a clear stand in terms of how big the

differences between groups need to be in order for them to be relevant. I decided that there had to be at least a 25 percentage point discrepancy in order for findings to be relevant for discussion. The main reasons for this were that this is the middle ground between suggestions and examples provided by different research handbooks (see Cohen et. al., 2011, pp. 631-632; Jacobsen, 2015, p. 334) and because another mixed-methods study with a similar number of respondents used this as the limit (Vestby, 2017). When calculating the percentage difference, I treated the variables denoting types of texts used as dependent variables, and teachers' backgrounds and contexts as independent variables.

In both the frequency tables and the bivariate analyses, I sometimes collapsed categories of responses in order to show the general tendencies in the material. This applied to the ratio variables (age, years of teaching experience, and number of English teachers at the school),[63] ordinal variables (reading habits), and one nominal variable (job title) in section 1, as well as the ordinal variables in sections 3 and 4. For instance, I used six different age categories in the survey, but in table 6 above these have been changed into three age categories. Although some argue that one should only use two-category variables in bivariate analyses that examine percentage difference (Cohen et. al., 2011, p. 632), others argue that tables can be more complex and include three categories (Leon-Guerrero & Frankfort-Nachmias, 2015, p. 215). I have used two-category variables when possible, but in some cases, collapsing categories to make two-point scales would lead to a possible distortion of meaning. In those cases, I have used three-category variables instead. When collapsing categories, I ensured that the merging did not distort the meaning of the responses by only combining categories that were next to each other on the given scale and that were on the same side of a scale's center. For instance, for items 18-29, the five-point scale was reduced to a three-point scale by merging "never" and "rarely" into one category and "often" and "always" into another, but leaving "sometimes" – the center point – standing alone.[64] Merging categories allowed me to have more respondents for each category, and it made the

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[63] Note that the ratio variables were treated nominally in the analyses.

[64] The tables make it clear whether categories have been collapsed in the analyses by including a slash (/) to indicate which categories have been merged.

heterogeneousness of the responses more apparent. The disadvantage of collapsing categories is that nuances in the quantitative material disappear. However, as this is a mixed methods project, I decided that the data from the qualitative component would ensure that the overall findings would not appear too oversimplified.

Two items from section 1 required more processing before they could be used in the bivariate analysis: item 13, which asked teachers which study program(s) they taught in the school year in which the survey was conducted, and item 14, which asked teachers which study program(s) they had previously taught. As teachers were able to tick several boxes in response to these questions, I had to compute new variables for each of the categories. I computed two different types of variables: the first contained responses to each of the available categories, making up seven variables for item 13 and ten variables for item 14. However, as teachers were able to answer affirmatively to several categories for each of these items, I was also interested in creating variables denoting teachers who *only* taught one of the two major study programs, meaning that they taught either vocational or general studies. Therefore, I computed two additional variables that denoted teachers who responded affirmatively to the one but negatively to the other.[65]

When working with the teachers' responses to the three open questions in section 2, I had to approach the material differently. First, the responses were coded.[66] Specific examples of literary texts listed as responses to items 15 and 16 were placed in separate categories according to genre. In the cases in which the teachers' responses listed types of texts rather than specific titles, these answers were placed in a separate category. Titles of textbooks listed in response to item 17 were categorized according to study program, and the teachers' assessments of the textbooks were also included in this overview. The coded responses to the open questions were not entered into SPSS, but analyzed manually. The reason for this was that there were so many different texts,

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[65] Note that this was only done for item 13: because 89% of the respondents reported that they had taught vocational studies at some point in their careers, I did not do this for item 14. Furthermore, this was only done for vocational and general study programs, and not the other categories, as the difference between vocational and general studies was what I wanted to examine.

[66] See chapter 7 for a specific example of the coding.

genres, and textbooks mentioned that it would have been very difficult to operate with clear categories for analysis in SPSS. When working with the coded responses manually, I counted how many times specific texts and genres were mentioned, which provided me with a detailed overview of which texts the teachers viewed as suitable and unsuitable for their students. These data also showed which textbooks the teachers used and what they thought of the selection of literary texts in them.

In terms of the broader analytical approach, abductive reasoning was the main strategy for both the quantitative and qualitative data. Abduction entails examining theories and previous research alongside the analysis of data in order to find explanations; it differs from the more common explanatory models induction and deduction in that the two latter only move in one direction – bottom-up from data to theories and top-down from theories to data respectively – whereas abductive reasoning moves back and forth between theories and data (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). I conducted preliminary analyses of the survey results before I moved on to the qualitative component of the study, and went back to the quantitative component after I had conducted and begun to analyze the interviews. The theory and previous research I had reviewed early in my project were revisited after I had collected the data, meaning that I worked with theory and data in different stages in order to analyze and explain the findings in the best possible way.

6.3 Phase 2: Qualitative component

Qualitative research aims to understand how people construct meaning in their lives. In order to accomplish this, researchers describe and analyze the qualities of complex phenomena, often by observing or interviewing the people involved. These studies require close examination and deep, rich descriptions of few subjects rather than broad surveys of many, in order to procure the knowledge needed about the phenomena of interest. Since "the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis" (Merriam, 2002, p. 5), it is of crucial importance that s/he explains the way

in which the findings have been obtained. For that reason, epistemology is of great concern; the qualitative researcher must explain what type of knowledge is acquired through the study, how it was constructed and what its uses are. Qualitative researchers will frequently argue that knowledge is always subjective due to their constructivist and contextual view of the world: "knowledge as a mirror of reality is replaced by a conception of the social construction of reality, where the focus is on the interpretation and negotiation of the meanings of the social world" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 61). This epistemological approach is especially relevant when it comes to research on people's lives, as social and cultural phenomena change according to time and place and "what might be 'true' in one context may not be so in another" (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, pp. 300-301).

In semi-structured interviews, such as the ones I have conducted, knowledge is constructed by interviewer and interviewee together, and the researcher can create meaning and formulate previously unexpressed beliefs with the teachers. This approach does not view knowledge as extracted from the teachers by a neutral interviewer; instead, knowledge is perceived as produced, relational, conversational, contextual and narrative (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, pp. 63-65). Semi-structured interviews also provide the researcher with the flexibility that is needed if s/he is to understand how teachers construct meaning: the researcher develops an interview guide that contains topics and questions that should be addressed in the interview, but the order in which these issues are discussed may be altered, and the guide may even be discarded altogether if more relevant topics and lines of thought emerge.

The drawback of this method, as with other qualitative approaches, is that it is not possible to generalize the findings to a large population because the research is time-, context- and subject-bound (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 220). However, this drawback is less pronounced in mixed methods studies due to the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Although I am not able to generalize the findings from the survey in my study, this dissertation nevertheless provides a broader view of teachers' choices and beliefs than an interview study alone would have done.

In what follows, I describe the specifics of the qualitative component of this study. I have relied on Brinkmann and Kvale's *InterViews* (2015) and Alvesson's *Interpreting Interviews* (2011) as I have prepared for, conducted, transcribed, and analyzed the interviews. Brinkmann and Kvale's book is widely used, and offers concrete advice regarding how to understand and use the method. Alvesson's book is less pragmatic, and problematizes the method more by focusing on reflexivity. These two resources offer different perspectives on research interviews, and have helped me consider overarching methodological issues as well as develop specific research strategies.

6.3.1 The interview participants

Since the design of this mixed methods study was nested sequential, the interview participants were taken from the pool of teachers eligible to partake in the survey – meaning that all English teachers in upper secondary schools in Møre og Romsdal, Nord-Trøndelag, Oppland, Sogn og Fjordane, and Sør-Trøndelag were eligible for interviews. In the e-mail in which the teachers received information about and the link to the electronic survey, they were also informed that they might volunteer for interviews.[67] I decided that eight teachers would be sufficient for the purposes of this study. The main reason for this was that each teacher would be interviewed twice, and I assumed that sixteen interviews would be sufficient for data saturation: the point at which no new insights occur even if more interviews are conducted (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 601). Additionally, I had selected four dystopian novels that I wanted teachers to read and assess, and each book was to be read by two teachers because I wanted two different opinions on each literary work's classroom relevance.

Six teachers responded to the e-mail I had sent out and told me that they wanted to participate. I did, however, struggle with recruiting the last two. One of the reasons why it was difficult to get teachers to participate could be that this project placed significant demands on their time. In order to recruit two more teachers, I sent

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[67] See appendices 3 and 4.

additional e-mails to teachers at schools in areas from which no teachers had volunteered, but I was not able to persuade anyone to participate. In the end, I had to recruit the last two interviewees in different manners. One was approached at an event at a literature festival when it became clear that s/he had taught dystopian literature.[68] The other was approached after she had participated in a book project that involved one of the other teacher volunteers.[69] Therefore, my sampling strategy can be described as a combination of voluntary and purposive sampling, with an added snowball (Cohen et al., 2011, pp. 156-160).

In the beginning, my aim was to recruit a sample in the qualitative component of the study that would resemble the sample in the quantitative component in terms of gender, age, years of teaching experience, job title/level of education, and type of school location. In the end, I was happy to have been able to recruit eight teachers at all, and found it to be an added benefit that this sample resembled the survey sample in several respects. The table below compares the respondents in the two data sets.

Table 8: Sample selection in the quantitative and qualitative components of the study

Sample factors	Survey	Interviews
Gender	Female: 74% Male: 26%	Female: 75% Male: 25%
Age	20-39: 30% 40-49: 43% 50+: 27%	20-39: 50% 40-49: 25% 50+: 25%
Years of teaching experience	0-10: 41% 11-20: 32% More than 20: 27%	0-10: 50% 11-20: 37.5% More than 20: 12.5%
Job title	Adjunkt: 42% Lektor: 56%	Adjunkt: 37.5% Lektor: 62.5%
Location of school	Small town: 32% Medium-sized town: 50% City: 18%	Small town: 50% Medium-sized town: 37.5% City: 12.5%

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[68] I approached this teacher because I thought s/he might be interested in participating since I was exploring contemporary dystopian novels for young adults. However, the teachers did not have to know the genre well or have worked with dystopian literature in the classroom before in order to participate in the interviews.

[69] One of the six original participants, Neil, decided to use the dystopian novel he read for my project with his students. A colleague of his, Charlotte, joined in on the project and taught the novel in her classes as well. She became the last interview participant described above.

The table above shows that although the distribution of participants for the survey and interviews is not identical across five factors, most are roughly comparable. However, it is important to note that this does not mean that the interviewed teachers can be viewed as representatives of the survey respondents – they represent only themselves. An important reason for this is that the teachers who volunteered to participate in the interviews could be considered to be enthusiasts, and this was demonstrated in three respects. Firstly, the eight interviewed teachers all identified themselves first and foremost as English teachers, meaning that they considered English to be the subject that was most central to their teaching practice. Secondly, the interviewed teachers were very interested in literature and literature teaching. Thirdly, the amount of time that the interviewed teachers volunteered to this project showed a great level of commitment. Although these factors could also be present in some of the survey respondents, it is fair to assume that the interview respondents are overall more enthusiastic about subject English, literature, and this research project. The eight teachers who participated in the interviews are presented in more detail in chapter 7.

6.3.2 Planning and conducting the interviews

Since there are no set rules for how to design and conduct qualitative research interviews (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015), the researcher must carefully consider the aim of the study and how best to achieve it. In this study, the aim is to explore teachers' choices and beliefs – answering questions concerned with the *what*, *how* and *why* of literature teaching. The *what*-questions were largely answered in the teachers' and my preparations (see below). This left room for the two latter categories to be explored in the interviews, and these are the types of questions best suited for qualitative research (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 127). Both interviews were audio recorded (using a sound recorder that was used solely for this purpose), and all eight teachers consented to this. In accordance with the Norwegian Centre for Research Data's guidelines for

treatment of this type of data, the sound files were deleted upon the project's completion.[70]

Preparation: examining secondary data material

In this study, teachers' year plans and the textbooks and other teaching resources that they use have been important as additional material that helped me prepare for the interviews. One of the greatest advantages of examining year plans and teaching resources in addition to interview transcripts and questionnaire responses, is that these texts are "naturally occurring"; they "document what participants are actually doing in the world – without being dependent on being asked by researchers" (Silverman, 2014, p. 276).

In advance of the first interview, the eight teachers sent me their year plans for the English classes they taught, and they also informed me of which textbooks or other teaching resources (such as NDLA) they relied on. Gaining access to these texts helped me prepare and adapt the interview guides to each teacher, as I already knew a lot about which literary texts they used and which texts they did *not* use (the literary texts in the textbooks which were not included in their year plans). This preliminary analysis also gave me an idea of how the teachers viewed literature's role in the English subject and helped me form a picture of the teachers' overall didactic choices in terms of how they organized learning in the English classroom in upper secondary school. Furthermore, the year plans allowed me to compare the eight teachers' literature choices with the texts listed by the survey participants in response to questionnaire items 15 and 16.[71]

Interview 1

The first interviews with the eight teachers were conducted between May and December 2016. The teachers suggested a time and place that suited them, and since all of them wanted the interviews to take place at the schools in which they worked, I

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[70] See appendix 1.

[71] See appendix 6 for the survey.

travelled to them. The teachers were also given the choice as to whether the interviews would be conducted in Norwegian or English. In the first round of interviews, six of the teachers wanted to use Norwegian, and two chose English. For the second round of interviews, one of the teachers who chose Norwegian the first time wanted to use English instead.[72] The reason why I let the teachers decide was that I wanted them to feel comfortable and at home in the situation; this applied both to the setting of the interview, as well as the language used.

This first interview addressed teachers' literature selection and literature teaching in general, and the interview guide was therefore quite extensive. A template guide was adapted to each individual teacher based on the texts I had examined before our meeting.[73] Despite individual adaptations, however, all the interview guides followed the same four-section structure: introductory questions; classroom suitability of texts; issues of literary quality and problematic topics related to text selection; elaboration of questions from the survey. The four sections were presented in this manner so we could discuss issues that were familiar to the teachers first, before moving on to issues that might be more abstract and/or complicated.

The first section contained background questions which were important for establishing a connection with and getting to know the teachers, as well as acquiring information about them. Some of the questions focused on their work situation, including the school context, the colleagues and the classes they taught. Other questions focused on the teacher as an individual, such as their interests in literature, film, and the arts, and their own educational background.

The second section began with a narrative approach: in advance of our meeting, the teachers had prepared to present a literary text they had taught which they thought had worked well in the classroom, and they also reflected on *why* this text had been

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[72] Robert, Joanna, Anne, Sophie, and Charlotte conducted both interviews in Norwegian. Margaret and Neil conducted both interviews in English. Victoria conducted the first interview in Norwegian and the second in English.

[73] See appendix 7 for the first interview guide. Question 2 in section 2 that dealt with teachers' year plans was adapted to each teacher.

successful.[74] Opening the main part of the interview with this question was meant to allow the teachers to begin on safe ground by displaying their strengths as literature teachers. I saw it as important that they felt safe in the interview context from the beginning, as I believed that this would help them establish a trusting relationship with me that could last throughout the project. In this sense, my approach to interviewing could be viewed as romantic; Alvesson describes this as a position to interviewing that "believes in establishing a rapport, trust and commitment between interviewer and interviewee" that will lead to "open, rich and trustworthy talk" (2011, p. 14). In order to achieve this, a narrative approach can be very helpful; it prompts teachers to open up and share their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and judgments. Because I wanted the teachers to feel that their ideas, reflections, and teaching choices would not be diminished or judged at this stage, it was crucial that I had to "remain a listener, abstaining from interruptions" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 180) after having asked the initial question. The teachers had to be given time to tell their professional life stories in order to establish a good foundation for the rest of the first interview as well as the second. Only after the initial presentation was completed, could I ask follow-up questions.

Commencing the dialog with the teachers' own stories meant that the teachers had the chance to influence the direction of the interviews, and that the interviews would be less biased in terms of my preconceived notions regarding which issues that might say something about the teachers' choices and beliefs. As researchers, it is important to bear in mind that we must be open to hearing the stories the teachers want to tell, not just the stories we want to hear: "understanding teaching requires that we pay attention to teachers […], listening to their voices and the stories they tell about their work and their lives" (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007, p. 359). Employing a narrative approach that focused on the teachers' professional life stories also allowed the interviews to take "the funnel shape" (Brenner, 2006, p. 362): beginning with broad, overarching questions and then zooming in on the most interesting details.

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[74] This approach has been used successfully by other researchers, including Hallvard Kjelen (2013).

When conducting the interviews, I experienced that the teachers described, explained, and qualified their choices, and they reflected at length on why the particular texts they had chosen were successful in their classrooms. Furthermore, starting broadly with stories that the teachers had prepared sometimes led the interview in directions that I would not have thought of had I taken charge of the detailed questioning from the beginning. I found that my role as interviewer in bringing forth the teachers' choices and beliefs about literature and literature teaching varied in the different interviews; some teachers had clear ideas that they elaborated on without prompting, whereas others needed more follow-up questions in order to share views which were perhaps on a more tacit level. Regardless of the teachers' degree of independence, though, there was a need to be sensitive towards their answers and be open to hearing their thoughts and reflections. In my view, the narrative approach in section 2 constituted a sensible way of building trust and allowing a broad, as well as deep, range of responses.

The second question in section 2 dealt with the teachers' year plans, and in addition to covering the teachers' strategies regarding planning, this was the question that was adapted to each teacher according to how their plan was. This question elicited several interesting responses concerning the teachers' way of thinking about individual texts, as well as their views on literature's role in subject English. Combined, the background questions and questions 1 and 2 from section 2 took up about half of the time spent in the first interview. I prioritized these on purpose as I wanted the first interview to be quite open to ensure that the teachers could bring up issues that were important to them.

The rest of the questions in sections 2, 3, and 4 produced less detailed answers than the ones discussed above, and not all questions were equally relevant for all of the teachers. Additionally, some issues that were listed later in the interview guide were addressed in the discussion of year plans and particular texts – for instance the issue regarding students' involvement in choosing literary texts, and full-class versus individual reading. Another issue, whose importance was played down after I had interviewed a few teachers, was teachers' beliefs about literary quality. Most of the teachers displayed a pragmatic attitude to this issue; quality seemed to be less important to them than a text's level of difficulty and/or the possibility of linking it to topics and themes relating to culture and society in the curriculum. Because of this, I only included the

questions dealing with literary quality in interview 1 when I felt we had the time to do so – if not, I addressed them briefly in the beginning of interview 2. Interview 1 was rounded off with five questions from the survey that I wanted the teachers to elaborate on, and the responses to these questions functioned as summaries in some of the interviews.

Interview 2

I chose to interview each teacher twice for the following reasons: firstly, to benefit as much as possible from the trust that was built up in the first interview, since people approach each other differently when they already know each other. Secondly, knowing that I had one more meeting planned with all of the teachers meant that I could let each of the first interviews follow its own course, since I could cover any leftover issues in the second interview. It also allowed me to ask follow-up questions in the second interview to clarify what the teachers meant, and pursue issues that I might have missed the first time but discovered to be important in the preliminary analysis conducted between the two interviews. Lastly, two interviews allowed me to focus on different issues in the two meetings, which meant that I was able to examine teachers' choices and beliefs about literature from different angles.

The second interview took place between two and five months after the first interview. In preparation for the second interview, the teachers read one of a selection of four contemporary dystopian young adult novels.[75] They were asked to do this because I believed that reading and assessing a literary work that was unknown to them would bring out other responses than when they discussed literature that they knew well (which was the case in the first interview). Also, this gave us a chance to explore in-depth one literary text and discuss many aspects of it, which I expected to be very valuable in revealing more sides of the teachers' beliefs about the role of literature in subject English. The first teachers that I interviewed were able to choose between all four novels, but as I wanted all books to be read by two teachers, the last teachers were

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[75] See chapter 4 for a presentation of the novels, as well as the justification for why they were chosen.

presented with less choice, and teacher number eight was simply assigned a book. This means that some teachers may have been more motivated to read their book than others, and that their responses may have been different had they read one of the other novels.

The teachers were given their chosen book at the end of the first interview, and told that we would schedule the second interview once they had had the chance to read it. Approximately 2-3 weeks before the second interview, I sent the teachers additional material for them to look at before we met. The teachers received different materials because there were different resources available for the four novels. For *The Diary of Pelly D* (2005), there was an extensive teaching guide (71 pages) available (Liddle, 2006), and I wanted the teachers to read it and reflect on the suitability of the tasks for their students. As this guide was extensive, I did not send them any other materials. For *Ship Breaker* (2010), there was a short teaching guide (6 pages) that I wanted the teachers to read and reflect on its suitability for their students (Brock, n.d.), but as this guide was quite short, I decided to send two book reviews in addition (Boehme, 2011; Stiefvater, 2011). These reviews were written by ordinary readers and posted on GoodReads, and I chose two short reviews that were highly rated by other GoodReads users: one with a positive view on the book, the other with a negative. In addition, I brought with me an article about contemporary, teenage ship breakers for the teachers to read and discuss in the interview, but this was not sent out in advance (Ketels & Griebeler, 2014). For the two most recent novels, *More Than This* (2013) and *Only Ever Yours* (2014), there were no teaching guides available. Therefore, I decided for the Ness novel to send three detailed reviews from GoodReads that were highly rated and that discussed different elements in the novels: one with a positive response, one neutral, and one negative ("Karen", 2013; "Lara", 2013; Goodreads, 2016). For the O'Neill novel, I sent two detailed reviews from GoodReads, one positive and one negative ("Mary", 2015; "Moonlight Reader", 2015), and one review from an online magazine (McGill, 2016). The teachers who read *Ship Breaker*, *More Than This*, and *Only Ever Yours* were asked to consider which reviews they agreed with and why.

The reason why I presented the teachers with additional material in advance was that I wanted to have a few discussion starters ready for each book. In addition, I thought that by adding negative reviews (for three of the novels) I might be able to get at the

teachers' critical perspectives – they may have thought initially that they were *supposed* to be positive towards the book, and seeing negative reviews might help them to be more critical. However, there were also some possible disadvantages of this approach: most importantly, that the additional materials could influence the teachers' views on the novels' didactic potential. It is possible that teachers who read novels that had teaching guides available would be more positive towards using them in the classroom because they had received specific suggestions for how to do so.[76] My aim was, therefore, to make it clear to the teachers in the interview context that I treasured all their opinions – positive, negative, and neutral – about the novels, and that the framework for the interview would be flexible enough to allow for a wide range of responses.

The interview guide for this second interview was a lot shorter than for the first,[77] providing a more spacious timeframe that could accommodate a variety of responses. I had also set aside time in the very beginning for follow-up questions, as well as any questions from interview guide 1 that I did not have the time to address in our first meeting (for instance questions regarding literary quality). The questions in interview guide 2 were – like the questions in interview guide 1 – structured to allow the interview to take "the funnel shape" (Brenner, 2006, p. 362): the conversation started with the teachers' overall impressions of the book, and gradually zoomed in on its classroom potential. The main difference between these eight interviews was, naturally, whether the teachers could see themselves using their book in the classroom or not; those who were enthusiastic about their novel had a lot more to say about the book's classroom potential than those who harbored lukewarm feelings towards it. Nevertheless, the reviews and teaching guides helped propel the discussion forward in all the interviews, and shed further light on the teachers' beliefs regarding the selection and teaching of literary texts in general, and dystopian literature in particular.

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[76] The results presented in chapter 11 show that this did not appear to happen, though: although the teachers reading *Ship Breaker* found it suitable for the classroom, the teachers reading *The Diary of Pelly D* were not convinced that it would be a good choice for their students.

[77] See appendix 8 for the second interview guide.

In sum, by employing narrative approaches and meeting with each teacher twice, I achieved a balance between flexibility and structure in the interview setting that allowed me to discuss a variety of issues that were important to each teacher. Central to this approach was a concern to both prepare well (by planning interview guides and imagining possible responses) and at the same time be able to alter or discard the plan if the teacher wished to take the interview in another, more interesting direction. It was, after all, the teachers' genuine beliefs that I sought, not their superficial responses to a set of predetermined questions that were more or less relevant to their practice.

6.3.3 Transcription

As noted by Brinkmann and Kvale, transcription is not straightforward and simple, but "an interpretative process" (2015, p. 203). In the interview setting, a lot of information is transferred between interviewer and interviewee in the form of body language – elements that are lost when the oral interview is turned into written form. In addition, oral language is a different narrative mode than written language; the two represent different "language games and […] cultures" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 204). Pauses, fillers, and sounds that cannot be distinguished as clearly articulated words are extremely common, and in the context of the oral conversation they make sense to the participants. When read in a transcript, though, they could create the impression of indecisive and ineloquent conversation partners. The many different Norwegian dialects that sound very different, and in some cases employ different words for the same concept, is another issue worth considering, as writing out the participants' dialects could endanger the teachers' anonymity, since the dialect linked to other information could make them identifiable. My main concern when transcribing the teacher interviews was therefore to balance the verbatim oral (that is unique for each teacher) with a standard written style that veiled the teachers' identities and made their responses readily accessible to readers.

When I transcribed the teacher interviews, I followed the standardized spelling and grammar rules of Norwegian bokmål for the interviews conducted in Norwegian, and

American English for the interviews conducted in English. This had the greatest consequences for the Norwegian-language interviews: the respondents spoke using several different dialects, some of which were closer to Norwegian nynorsk than bokmål. Some used other words for concepts than those that are commonly used in bokmål, which means that I not only altered the spelling and grammar of their utterances, but also in some cases the vocabulary. In the English-language interviews, I followed the same principle in order to protect anonymity. In the chapters that follow, extracts from interviews conducted in Norwegian have been translated into English. This means that the translated extracts have gone through another round of interpretation, which could, potentially, bring them further away from the teachers' original meanings as expressed through their oral dialects. In order to make sure that the translations were as close to the original utterances as possible, I listened to the audio recordings after translating, and revised the translations one more time.

This type of transcription focused on the content of what the teachers said, not the linguistic form of their utterances. I put the non-verbal sounds that the teachers made in brackets: for instance [laughs], [sighs], [yawns], [incomprehensible sound]. Additionally, I used (…) to denote long pauses. Whenever the teacher and I would talk simultaneously, the transcript always included what the teacher said. What I said was included in the instances in which I completed the phrase I had begun; in most of the cases, I would pull back and let the teachers finish what they had begun talking about, and in these cases I did not record my own, brief utterances. As each interview lasted between one and three hours, one interview could result in more than 30 pages of transcribed text. For these reasons, I decided not to include stressed words, perceived mood, tone, volume, and speed of voice in the transcription (Cohen et al., 2011). In order to navigate the texts easily when analyzing them, I needed the meaning of the teachers' utterances to be clearly conveyed in writing. I believe that the complexity level at which I placed the technicalities of my transcription allowed me to do that.

6.3.4 Reliability, validity, and analysis of data

In qualitative studies, reliability centers around "the craftsmanship and credibility of the researcher" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 283). The results must be deemed trustworthy by the reader, and this can only be conveyed through broad descriptions of all parts of the study in question. In the interview situation, the biggest potential threat to reliability is the behavior of the researcher. The questions in qualitative, semi-structured interviews are not set in stone even though an interview guide is followed, and the interviewer is open to changing the structure and content of each interview along the way. Therefore, there is a risk that the interviews might become too different, and be difficult to analyze and compare. However, as has been discussed, researchers need to maintain flexibility in order to discuss the unique experiences of each interviewee; this is particularly important when examining teacher beliefs, as it is the "individual, subjectively true, value-laden mental constructs" (Skott, 2015, p. 19) that we wish to explore. In order to balance these concerns, Brinkmann and Kvale suggest operating with two levels in the interview guides: the broad, thematic research questions that are explored on one level, and the specific questions that probe into these issues in a more detailed manner on the other level (2015, p. 158). This allows the researcher to make sure all the broad, thematic concerns are addressed in all interviews, whereas the specific questions that are asked might differ according to each individual situation. This balancing act can be challenging and hard to plan for as the researcher does not know how the interviews will turn out in advance, and this is where the interviewer's craftsmanship becomes important: a good interviewer should be knowledgeable, structuring, clear, gentle, sensitive, open, steering, critical, remembering, and interpreting (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, pp. 194-195).

In this study, each teacher was interviewed twice, which allowed for the asking of follow-up questions and probing deeper into issues found to be important in the preliminary analyses conducted between interviews 1 and 2. Leading questions were avoided by asking questions about the main issues in as neutral a manner as possible. However, the teachers were sometimes asked leading questions towards the middle and end of the explorations of the main issues in order to see whether the interviewees were

consistent in their answers, and in order to verify my interpretations of their responses along the way. Brinkmann and Kvale point to a limited use of leading questions as being a useful way of checking the reliability of the answers provided by the interviewees (2015, p. 200). It is important to note that although the power balance was not as lopsided in these interviews as it would have been if the interviewees were not adults, my role as a researcher representing an institution of higher education could provide me with a position of authority in the eyes of the teachers. However, my impression is that the teachers overall were not afraid of expressing their opinions; in the second interview in particular, some of them disagreed with my interpretations and voiced clear criticisms regarding the novel they had read.

Validity in qualitative studies is mainly concerned with internal validity, namely whether "the explanation of a particular event, issue or set of data which a piece of research provides can actually be sustained by the data" (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 183), and especially whether there are any possible alternative explanations for the interpretations presented in the study. As is the case with reliability in qualitative interviews, validity is also to a great extent dependent on the interviewer's craftsmanship. In this study, triangulation of data, interviewing each teacher twice, and member validation have strengthened the validity of the research.

Triangulation of data was especially important in the first interview, as the teachers volunteered year plans and information about the resources they used in their English lessons in addition to partaking in research interviews. These texts provided an additional source of information that could tell me more about the literature choices and the context in which literature was taught in the teachers' classrooms, than only the teachers' own oral accounts of their choices and practice. Another important feature of this study that strengthened its validity was, as discussed earlier, the fact that each teacher was interviewed twice. The third key component of validity checking in the interviews was member validation (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 290). All eight teachers received drafts of the teacher profiles that were to become part of the dissertation, to ensure that they had not been misrepresented. The teachers responded positively to the drafts, and approved the versions that are found in chapter 7.

Coding was a central part of the analysis of the qualitative data, both when working with the teachers' year plans and teaching resources, and when working with the interview transcripts. The coding of year plans and teaching resources, mostly textbooks, entailed highlighting the literary texts present and denoting the genres they belonged to. The lists of works that emerged from this process were used as I prepared for the interviews, as well as in the subsequent analyses. The coding of the interviews was more complex. Following the first round of interviews, the following codes were used to organize the transcripts thematically:

- Background information
- Specific literary texts
- Literary genres
- Student groups: vocational and general studies
- Textbooks and other teaching resources
- Criteria when choosing texts
- Purpose(s) of literature in subject English
- Core curriculum, subject curriculum, competence aims, and examinations
- Literary canon
- Literary texts' geographical origin and/or setting
- Literary quality
- Violence, profanity, and sex in literary texts

Preliminary coding was conducted before the second round of interviews. In the analyses of the second interviews, I used the following codes:

- Follow-up questions to interview 1
- Dystopian novel: teacher's views as a reader
- Dystopian novel: teacher's views as a teacher
- Dystopian novel: teacher's responses to reviews, teaching guide, and/or other resources

The follow-up questions to interview 1 were coded according to the interview 1 categories described above.

When all the interviews had been conducted, transcripts from both rounds of interviews were coded thoroughly. In some cases, the same section of an interview transcript could be linked to two or more codes. In these cases, sections were coded with all the relevant categories. When all 16 interviews had been coded, I found that the categories I had used had produced manageable sections of text for each teacher's responses, and the coded material based on the categories described above was used in order to get an overview of the teachers' beliefs about the various issues. The coded material was used for the analyses that led to the results presented and discussed in chapters 7-12. As mentioned in section 6.2.4, abduction was the overarching explanatory model in use, which means that I moved back and forth between the different types of data, theories, and previous research in order to analyze and explain my findings.

6.4 Ethical considerations

When conducting research in the social sciences, there are always ethical considerations to be made. Some of these are formalized in the shape of guidelines of informed consent that must be followed, whereas others are more subtle and require careful considerations on the part of the researcher. In this section, the main concerns central to this study are addressed.

Before any teachers could be approached, permission was sought from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). The application was approved in November 2015, and since the study progressed in the manner described in the application, the formal requirements for ethical conduct have been met.[78] As mentioned in section 6.2.2, the principals at all of the upper secondary schools in the five counties received information about the project first.[79] Next, the teachers at the schools and the county networks received an e-mail from me with information about the study and a link to

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[78] See appendix 1 for NSD's evaluation of the study.

[79] See appendix 2 for the e-mail I sent to the principals.

the electronic questionnaire.[80] Included in this e-mail was information about the project and what was required of them if they chose to participate in the survey and the interviews, how the data would be collected and stored, and that they would be completely anonymous in the dissertation.[81] The interview participants signed the consent form attached to this information letter during our first meeting and were informed that they could withdraw their consent to participate at any stage. None of the interviewed teachers withdrew their consent.

The question of anonymity was treated differently in the quantitative and qualitative components of the study. The teachers who only participated in the survey were completely anonymous at all times since the electronic survey did not track the respondents; this was an additional way of reassuring the teachers that their identity would not be revealed. The interview participants were a subset of the survey respondents, as they volunteered by responding to the information e-mail I had sent out to the teachers. However, there was no link between the quantitative and qualitative data that allowed recognition: the interview respondents were never linked to their survey responses. The interview participants were not anonymous to me, but I made sure that their names and contact information were only written down in one document; here, their real names were linked to the "aliases" that were used in all the other texts concerning the project, including the interview transcripts and this dissertation. Supervisors, committee, and anyone else reading the dissertation have no access to this information. Furthermore, when the teachers said something in the interviews that could identify them, this was not written down in the transcripts. The sound files were kept on a separate storage device which no one had access to except me, and were deleted on completion of the project. An additional consideration regarding anonymity was when some of the teachers provided detailed descriptions of their students' attitudes and behaviors in the English classroom. Although some of these descriptions were interesting for the study, I chose to leave out the most specific details in case the students would be recognizable; this could potentially have jeopardized the anonymity

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[80] See appendix 3 for the e-mail I sent to the teachers.

[81] See appendix 4 for the information letter that the teachers received.

of both teacher and students, and involved students who had not agreed to participate in the project themselves.

In the interview situation, the researcher has set the parameters for the conversation, and can thus be seen to be the one in charge (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, pp. 37-38). Therefore, another central ethical consideration is to ensure that the power balance is not too lopsided; it is important to enable the teachers to influence some aspects of the interviews. For a qualitative research interview to function in the manner it should, it is important that the interviewee trusts the researcher. This trust can be affected by an imbalance of power; if the teachers feel that they are not able to talk about the issues that matter to them, but instead are forced to comment only on issues that matter to the researcher, they are less likely to make valuable contributions to an in-depth study. Allowing the teachers to influence the direction of the interviews, as was done in interview 1, was therefore important not just for the quality of the study, but also for ethical reasons. Another way in which the teachers could affect the interviews in this study was in deciding the time and place for the meetings. This way, the interviews could happen when and where they would feel relatively comfortable and relaxed.

Furthermore, member validation was part of this study. This process is valuable not just for the validity of the study, but also for its ethical soundness. If the researcher alone defines the what, how, and why of the material and which implications and meanings it has for a wider audience, this may conflict with the teachers' understandings of the content of the interviews. By including the research participants in the presentation of findings, it is fair to assume that disagreements regarding the meaning of events and statements may lead to more valid results (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 290). Therefore, discussing elements in the findings and the analyses can be beneficial for both the participants as well as the research: ethically, the teachers will hopefully feel less misrepresented or misunderstood, and it will also increase the validity of the researcher's findings. However, a possible pitfall when including the participants in the interpretation of findings is that the research subjects may find their own statements and actions overwhelming when seeing them described, analyzed and interpreted in a research paper. Participants may wish to withdraw elements that they think are unsuitable or "extreme", but that represent interesting observations for the

research. In these cases, it is important that the researcher attempts to reassure the participants, as valuable research findings may otherwise be lost. It is crucial that the researcher reflects on his/her own role when negotiating these two major concerns: preserving the participants' autonomy, privacy, and integrity while at the same time procuring valid, reliable, and interesting research. I attempted to balance this by having the teachers read and comment on the teacher profiles that introduced them, but not on the other findings discussed in chapters 7-12.

6.5 Concluding remarks

This chapter has presented the mixed methods used in this project. For both the quantitative and qualitative components the teacher participants have been described, the development and use of the research instruments have been addressed, the reliability, validity, ethics, and methods of analysis for the different types of data have been discussed, and the study's possible transferability has been considered. The survey and the interviews have in this chapter been discussed separately, but the results of the analyses will be presented and discussed thematically in the chapters that follow. However, as the quantitative and qualitative methods contribute differently to answering the research questions, the survey and the interviews are not used side by side throughout. Which types of data that are presented and discussed is explained in each of the following chapters.

7. The *de facto* English literature syllabus

This chapter presents and discusses issues related to the *de facto* literature syllabus, which consists of texts that the teachers participating in this study see as suitable for subject English in upper secondary school. It seeks to respond to research question 1 – which literary texts and genres are seen as suitable and/or used by teachers? – by presenting the specific texts that the teachers think are suitable for the classroom, as well as the genres that they report using. As teachers of both vocational and general study programs are represented among the participants in the study, the responses referred to in this chapter – if not otherwise indicated – apply to subject English in upper secondary in general: both vocational and general studies, and both the compulsory and the elective English courses as taught in all study programs and with all types of students. However, there are differences between vocational and general study programs regarding some issues, and when this is the case it is made clear in the text.

This chapter combines the quantitative survey findings with the interview responses; however, not all issues are discussed using detailed insight from both the qualitative and quantitative components. Furthermore, as the data sets have required different methods of analysis, the writing styles in which the results are presented also differ (J. C. Greene, 2007, p. 181): the quantitative findings are mostly presented in tables, whereas the qualitative data are mainly discussed in continuous prose, although some tables are used to present these findings as well.

7.1 Introduction to findings

7.1.1 Survey

The survey responses discussed in this chapter address two issues: firstly, the perceived suitability of literary texts for the upper secondary classroom, and secondly, teachers'

use of different genres. The specific titles belonging to the former category are reported on in sections 7.2 and 7.3. They have been extracted from the teachers' responses to two open questions that asked them to list literary texts that they found suitable (item 15) and unsuitable (item 16) for the classroom. Of the 110 teachers that participated in the survey, 92 responded to item 15 and 53 responded to item 16.[82] I analyzed their responses using qualitative methods followed by descriptive statistics. I will explain my interpretive process using teacher number 18's response to item 15 as an example. This teacher wrote:

> An Honest Thief - Timothy Callender (Vg 2)
>
> A Drive in the Motor-Car - Roald Dahl (Vg 2)
>
> Panache (Vg 1)
>
> Fated Attraction (Vg 1)
>
> The Sniper (Vg 1)

The first two entries were easy to understand. "An Honest Thief" was written by Timothy Callender, and the teacher saw this text as being suitable for Vg2 students. The genre was not listed in the response, but I found out that it was a short story after conducting a quick search on the internet. "A Drive in the Motor-Car", written by Roald Dahl, was also seen as suitable for Vg2 students. I recognized this as being an excerpt from Dahl's autobiography *Boy* (1984). For the next three entries, only the titles and which student group these texts were seen as suitable for were written. I recognized "The Sniper" from other teachers' responses as being Liam O'Flaherty's short story (1923), but the other two were unfamiliar to me. As these texts were listed as suitable for Vg1, I consulted the textbook the teacher had listed as the Vg1 textbook s/he used in the response to item 17, namely *Tracks 1* (Anvik, Burgess, Fuhre, & Sørhus, 2006). Here, I found the two texts. "Panache" is a short story written by W. P. Kinsella, and "Fated Attraction" is an article written by Lynn Wallis. However, as this means that the latter is not a literary text, I did not include it in my continued analysis. The other four texts were entered into a master document that contained information about all the texts mentioned in response to item 15. This information included each text's title,

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[82] Possible reasons for the differing response rate to these two items are discussed in section 7.3.

author, genre, the student group it was seen as suitable for, and the respondent who had listed it. A similar master document was created for the responses to item 16.

However, not all responses included titles of texts. Those that only named genres and/or authors (e.g. "plays by Shakespeare" or "Ernest Hemingway") were entered into the relevant master document, but with the title field empty. Similarly, responses that did not specify which student group the text was suitable for were entered into the appropriate master document with the student group field empty. Furthermore, three teachers listed textbook chapters as responses to item 15; in these cases, I consulted the given textbooks and found all the literary texts listed in these chapters, and then entered these texts into the master document. Lastly, some responses were not included in the master documents at all. These were responses that did not include text titles, authors, genres, or chapters, but that contained responses such as "I don't know" or general considerations of literature. One example of the latter is taken from teacher number 88's response to item 15: "texts and books that are able to combine relevance for the subject with a language that is not too complex". The responses that were not included in the master documents were assembled in separate documents for items 15 and 16 respectively.[83] However, the master documents were most important for the descriptive analyses that appear in this chapter.

The second issue discussed in this chapter, teachers' reported use of different genres, is presented in section 7.4. These findings are taken from teachers' responses to multiple-choice items in section 3 of the survey.

7.1.2 Interviews: teacher profiles

This section serves as an introduction to the qualitative findings of the study by presenting the eight teachers who were interviewed. Each teacher is described in a brief profile, which includes their personal taste in literature and general perception of

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[83] For item 15, 3 of the 92 responses were placed in this document; for item 16, 13 of the 53 responses were placed in this document.

literature's role in subject English. This section is meant to help the reader get to know the teachers before delving into the thematically structured discussion of findings that follow in this chapter and in chapters 8-12. In order to distinguish between the different teachers, each of them has been given an alias and a brief description in the heading. The alias refers to an author of literature that s/he enjoys reading (except in one case, in which it refers to a historical period), and the aliases will be referred to throughout the discussion of the findings. Table 9 below provides an overview of the teachers' backgrounds, and as such serves as an introduction to the teacher profiles.

Victoria – thorough and well-prepared

Victoria is a "lektor" in her thirties who grew up in another European country, and her mother tongue is neither English nor Norwegian. She has experience teaching both vocational students and general studies students. She appeared to have prepared thoroughly for both interviews and brought along notes for the questions and issues she had been asked to consider.

Victoria has a preference for modern novels as well as the classics – especially Victorian literature. She does not like fantasy or science fiction, but prefers realistic, complex works that deal with "difficult lives and problems and women and men" (I1, T, p. 2). Most of her reading of literature is in English, to stay updated in her job, but she also reads in her native language when she wants to read to relax. She does not read literature in Norwegian.

With regards to subject English in upper secondary school, Victoria thinks that there is not enough time for literature in the compulsory course since there are too many competence aims related to other subject areas (English as a global language, language learning, and communication). She prefers to work with literature in general studies classes, as they "are more open for literature and culture and society" (I1, T, p. 6), and she worries that the vocational students find working with literature a waste of time.

Table 9: Overview of the interview participants

Alias	Education in English[84]	Teaching experience in upper secondary[85]	Teaches English in[86]	Novel read
Victoria	Master's degree ("lektor" program)	3 years	Vg1 GS,[87] Vg3 GS[88] *Vg1 GS, Vg1 VS*	*Only Ever Yours*
Margaret	Master's degree	10 years	Vg1 GS, International Baccalaureate (IB) *Vg2 GS, IB*	*Only Ever Yours*
Robert	One-year course	3 years (4 years)	Vg1 VS (4 groups), Vg2 VS	*More Than This*
Joanna	Bachelor's level	22 years (23 years)	Vg1 GS, Vg2 GS *Vg1 GS, Vg3 GS*	*More Than This*
Neil	Master's degree ("lektor" program)	5 years	Vg1 GS, Vg2 GS, Vg3 GS *Vg1 VS, Vg2 GS, Vg3 GS*	*Ship Breaker*
Anne	Master's degree	11 years	Vg1 VS (2 groups), Vg2 VS (3 groups)	*Ship Breaker*
Sophie	Master's degree	15 years	Vg3 GS *Vg3 GS*	*The Diary of Pelly D*
Charlotte	One-year course	5 years (18 years)	Vg1 GS, Vg1 VS	*The Diary of Pelly D*

[84] One-year course: corresponds to "årsstudium" or "grunnfag"; Bachelor's level: corresponds to "fordypning" or "mellomfag"; Master's degree: corresponds to "hovedfag".

[85] Some teachers have taught in other parts of the school system in addition to upper secondary. In these cases, the total amount of teaching experience is listed in parentheses.

[86] When the interviews were conducted in different academic years, the classes listed in italics are those taught during the second interview.

[87] GS refers to general studies, and VS refers to vocational studies.

[88] All references to Vg3 general studies courses in the table are to Social Studies English.

Margaret – native speaker and IB teacher

Margaret is a "lektor" in her forties who grew up in an English-speaking country, and English is her native language. She teaches International Baccalaureate (IB) students in addition to general and vocational studies, and thinks that the way she works with English in IB has influenced how she teaches other classes.

Margaret describes her personal taste in literature as omnivorous, stating that she reads "all kinds of things. […] Everything from literary fiction to genre fiction from, you know, I like all of it" (I1, p. 2). She refers to her reading time as being her own, saying that "it's very rare that I would pick up something because I'm considering it for a class" (I1, p. 3). She reads almost exclusively in English, and enjoys travel literature, philosophy, history, non-fiction, and graphic novels in addition to novels. One of her favorite works is Dante's *Inferno* (ca. 1308-1321), which she will "revisit periodically" since it makes her feel like she is "in the presence of greatness" (I1, p. 21). She also enjoys reading Margaret Atwood's books, and poets such as William Butler Yeats and John Keats.

With regards to subject English in upper secondary school, Margaret sees literature as being very important for language learning and students' abilities to read and write texts. In addition, she finds literature important for helping students "gain a greater understanding of other people in other places" (I1, p. 3). She likes working within the Norwegian educational system because of the freedom the curriculum offers.

Robert – representing a vocational perspective

Robert is a native Norwegian "adjunkt" in his thirties. He has lived in an English-speaking country for a few years, and studied English both there and in Norway. The school in which he works has mainly vocational study programs, and Robert has taught exclusively vocational classes. He seems to care a great deal about his students, and volunteered for the project mainly because he wanted the perspective of vocational teachers to be included.

Robert describes his personal taste in literature as previously centered on fantasy literature, with Robert Jordan and Brandon Sanderson's *Wheel of Time* series (1990-2013) as a favorite. More recently, he enjoys a wide array of literature, including science fiction classics such as Douglas Adams's *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* (1979), classic and contemporary literary fiction, dystopias, and fictional and non-fictional tales of the great outdoors. The latter genre is mostly consumed in Norwegian, but the others he reads in both English and Norwegian.

With regards to literature's role in subject English, Robert views literature as important for gaining an understanding of society, as well as providing more variety in the classroom. Furthermore, he thinks that there should be a clear difference between vocational and general studies English: "a person attending general studies who is moving on to, for instance, a college degree, should have more focus on literature […] I think there should be, perhaps, more focus on vocational English in the vocational studies, to a larger extent" (I1, T, p. 9).

Joanna – the student-centered humanitarian

Joanna is a native Norwegian "adjunkt" in her fifties who has 22 years of teaching experience, the longest of all the interview respondents. In the interview situation, she was confident and outgoing, and focused on her students' learning and wellbeing. Throughout the two interviews she responded to almost all teaching-related questions with examples based on her own experience with an emphasis on her students.

Joanna describes her personal taste in literature as omnivorous; she "eats a lot of different types of literature" (I1, T, p. 3). She prefers to read literature in the language it has been written, and reads in English, Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish. Jojo Moyes is one of her favorite authors, but she feels the need to defend this choice because it is "simple literature" (I1, T, p. 4). She also enjoys books by other female authors such as Joanna Trollope, Mary Lawson, and Amelie Nothomb. Joanna is not particularly fond of fantasy or science fiction, but she does value classic dystopias like Orwell's *1984* (1949) and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954).

With regards to subject English in upper secondary school, Joanna sees literature as an integrated part of the subject. She does not teach literature as a separate component, but combines work with language, culture, and society with literary texts. She sees literature as especially important when helping students understand the social studies component of the subject, as well as when shaping students' attitudes and opinions about the world we live in: "I feel that literature helps us in the right direction […] I think it's very important that we discuss and […] try to be realistic and look at what kind of society we have, and what we want to have. So I try to link it to things that are happening around us" (I1, T, p. 17).

Neil – ambitious and talkative

Neil is a native Norwegian "lektor" in his thirties. He came across as enthusiastic, talkative, ambitious, and full of ideas; he is partly involved with the school management, and has also planned and initiated a project that included collaboration with English teachers and students in another country. He works in the same school as Charlotte.

Like Robert, Neil describes his personal taste in literature as centered on fantasy literature. One of his favorite authors is Terry Pratchett, and he has also read several of Neil Gaiman's books, as well as George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* series (1996, 1998, 2000, 2005, 2011). However, he finds most fantasy epics to be "too big, too long and too difficult for teaching" (I1, p. 6), and his reading has therefore broadened to include works that he considers using in the classroom. He prefers to read books in the language in which they were written since he gets "physical pain from translations" (I1, p. 7), and he reads mostly in English.

With regards to subject English in upper secondary school, Neil sees literature as closely linked to social studies when he teaches Vg2 International English and Vg3 Social Studies English, but when he teaches literature in Vg1 general studies, he focuses more on literary terms and vocabulary. He thinks that vocational students require different approaches than general studies students, and admits that "it's harder

for me, because I don't like to dumb down material. […] You can do the same thing, but in a very different way" (I2, p. 1).

Anne – the concerned vocational teacher

Anne is a native Norwegian "lektor" in her thirties. Like Robert, she teaches exclusively vocational students and wants this perspective to be included in the study. She expresses concerns that vocational students (and their teachers) are generally viewed as less important among English teachers: "The agenda is almost always adapted to Vg1, Vg2, Vg3 general studies, and when you talk to your colleagues, you sense that […] when you're an English teacher, that's general studies" (I2, T, p. 1).

Anne started reading extensively when she was young, and her first favorite was Roald Dahl's *Matilda* (1988). Today, she describes her personal taste in literature as centered on crime novels, and mentions the Norwegian authors Jo Nesbø, Anne Holt, Jussi Adler Olsen, and Hans Olav Lahlum. She may also read other types of literature, but struggles with her motivation for reading when other people decide what she should read, for instance when literature is part of academic studies. She reads in both English and Norwegian, and the Norwegian books tend to be audio books.

With regards to subject English in upper secondary school, Anne thinks that literary texts can offer useful insights into other cultures. However, the amount and types of texts she uses vary according to which student group she is working with: "I think it is easier to work with texts and fiction in classes with a lot of girls, because they have a different relationship to literature. […] While in boy classes, I think it can be difficult to work with text-based things […] because they don't see the point of reading these kinds of texts" (I1, T, pp. 4-5).

Sophie – quick and efficient

Sophie is a native Norwegian "lektor" in her forties, who in addition to being a full-time teacher writes novels in her spare time. Sophie speaks fast and responds to

questions without taking detours, and as a result, the interviews with her were the shortest.

Sophie describes her personal taste in literature as varied, "from highly intellectual literature that experiments with form to pure, almost trivial literature" (I1, T, p. 2). She reads a lot of literature for teenagers and young adults and contemporary works in both English and Norwegian in order to stay updated in her teaching subjects. In the beginning of the summer vacation, she always enjoys reading "easy chicklit" (I1, T, p. 2) by authors such as Marion Keyes and Sophie Kinsella.

With regards to subject English in upper secondary school, Sophie sees literature as closely linked to social studies, history, and culture. She finds it easy to incorporate literature in the first two years of general studies (the compulsory course and International English), but says that it is difficult to find time for enough literature in Vg3 Social Studies English. She has never taught Vg3 English Literature and Culture, but views that as "the dream subject" (I1, T, p. 3).

Charlotte – the hesitant, all-round teacher

Charlotte is a native Norwegian "adjunkt" in her fifties who works in the same school as Neil. She has been a teacher for eighteen years, and five of those have been in upper secondary. She has previously taught in lower secondary school, primary school, kindergarten, and adult training programs. Furthermore, she has training and work experience in a profession, and has also served in the army. She is soft-spoken and expressed concerns that she would not have much to contribute in this project – concerns that were soon proven unfounded.

Charlotte says that she has always been interested in reading, and describes her personal taste in literature as varied. She has preferred different genres at different stages in her life, and in recent years, she has read a lot of children's and YA literature because of her children's reading interests – especially fantasy novels such as J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* (1997-2007) series and Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* series (2005, 2006, 2007, 2008). However, she also enjoys classic literature, and mentions Shakespeare

and Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) specifically. She reads in both English and Norwegian in her spare time.

In terms of subject English, Charlotte thinks that literature should be given a bigger place than it currently has: "Nowhere in the curriculum does it say that you should have read a book. Perhaps it used to say that […] and I think it is a shame that it is gone, because I see […] what it did to the students" (I1, T, p. 6). She sees literature as important for the development of language and learning about culture, but is especially concerned with literature as a means for the students to learn about themselves.

7.2 Literary texts viewed as suitable

Having introduced the interview participants and the parts of the survey that are examined in this chapter, I will now discuss the responses from both the survey and the interviews. In this section, I seek to answer research question 1 by examining teachers' employments of and beliefs about the suitability of specific texts. This means presenting both survey responses to item 15 and the interviewed teachers' year plans and overviews of texts that they used with their students.

7.2.1 Survey responses

The types of texts most frequently mentioned in the survey as suitable for the upper secondary classroom were novels and short stories, but a variety of other types of texts were also suggested. As table 10 shows, prose fiction (short stories and novels) is the category of texts where there is the most variety, both in terms of the number of different texts mentioned and in terms of the number of teachers who mentioned texts belonging to these genres. 45 different short stories and 31 different novels were

mentioned by two or more teachers, and 52 short stories and 61 novels were mentioned just once.[89]

Table 10: Types of texts mentioned in response to item 15

Types of texts	Number of different texts[90]	Number of teachers mentioning the genre
Short stories	97	55
Novels	92 [91]	71
Poetry	70	23
Plays	12	14
Songs	9	13
Biographies	7	11
Other texts	4	4

Table 11 below lists the prose texts that were the most popular choices, and shows the variety of texts represented. Classic texts (Hemingway, Steinbeck, Lee, Orwell, Golding) were mentioned alongside popular, contemporary texts (Collins, Haddon, Hosseini), and several texts were written from other perspectives than the white, Anglo-American (Grace, Silko, Jew, Hughes, Alexie, Hosseini, Swarup). However, all the texts in table 11 were written in the 20th or 21st centuries, indicating that older texts are regarded as less suitable. Furthermore, only five of the sixteen authors of the most frequently mentioned works – 31% – are female, suggesting that the male perspective is more often present in the most popular texts. This ratio corresponds roughly to that of all prose texts mentioned by more than one teacher: 90% of the novels and 93% of the short stories were written in the 20th or 21st centuries, and women wrote 23% of the novels and 27% of the short stories. Interestingly, though, there is a noticeable difference between novels and short stories regarding the latter issue: as table 11 demonstrates, all of the most popular short stories were published before 2000 (the

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[89] See appendix 9 for the overview of the prose texts that were mentioned by more than one teacher.

[90] Most of the responses to item 15 refer to specific titles. However, responses such as "Roald Dahl's short stories" are included in the category "short stories" here; even if the response does not include a specific title, it still refers directly to one specific type of text that Dahl wrote. However, when a response simply says "Roald Dahl", it has not been included in this table.

[91] Six of these were novel excerpts.

Table 11: Novels and short stories mentioned at least six times in response to item 15

Genre	Text	No. of teachers
Short story	Liam O'Flaherty, "The Sniper" (1923)	16
	Leslie Marmon Silko, "Tony's Story" (1981)	9
	Patricia Grace, "Butterflies" (1987)	8
	Anne Jew, "Everyone Talked Loudly in Chinatown" (1991)	8
	Hugh Garner, "The Moose and the Sparrow" (1966)	7
	Ernest Hemingway, "A Day's Wait" (1933)	6
	Langston Hughes, "Thank You, M'am" (1963)	6
Novel	John Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men* (1937)	21
	Sherman Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (2007)	11
	Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games* (2008)	11
	Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner* (2003)	11
	Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2003)	8
	Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960)	7
	George Orwell, *Animal Farm* (1945)	7
	William Golding, *Lord of the Flies* (1954)	6
	Vikas Swarup, *Slumdog Millionaire* (or *Q & A*)[92] (2005)	6

most recent having been published in 1994), whereas more than half of the novels were published after 2000. This means that the novels that teachers find suitable for the classroom are more contemporary than the short stories.

When it comes to poetry and plays, table 12 below shows that a total of 70 different poems (and poets) were mentioned in response to item 15. However, fewer teachers were responsible for these entries than was the case with the prose fiction texts, and fewer poems were mentioned by more than one teacher. This seems to be in line with Munden and Skjærstad's findings (2018) that poetry is not in widespread use in secondary school, at least when compared to the genre's position in primary school English. Furthermore, the table shows that only 12 plays were mentioned as suitable, and these were mentioned by 14 different teachers.

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[92] Vikas Swarup's novel was originally published as *Q & A* in 2005. Following the success of the film adaptation entitled *Slumdog Millionaire* (Boyle, 2008), the novel was renamed *Slumdog Millionaire* in later editions.

Table 12: Poetry and plays mentioned at least twice in response to item 15

Genre	Text	No. of teachers
Poetry	Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken" (1916)	6
	Roald Dahl, "The Anteater" (1983)	4
	Emily Dickinson, "I am nobody! Who are you?" (1891)	3
	William Wordsworth, "We Are Seven" (1798)	3
	W. H. Auden, "Funeral Blues" (1938)	2
	William Blake, "A Poison Tree" (1794)	2
	Unigwe C. Emmanuel, "One Man's Terrorist" (2009) [93]	2
	Roger McGough, "Cinema Poem" (1983)	2
	William Shakespeare, "Sonnet 18" (ca. 1609)	2
	Shel Silverstein, "Forgotten Language" (1974)	2
	Shel Silverstein, "This Bridge" (1981)	2
	Stevie Smith, "Not Waving but Drowning" (1957)	2
	Oodgeroo Noonuccal (earlier: Kath Walker), "Son of Mine" (1970)	2
Play	William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* (ca. 1591-95)	3
	Arthur Miller, *Death of a Salesman* (1949)	2
	William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (ca. 1595-96)	2
	William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (ca. 1599-1602)	2
	William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (1606)	2
	Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie* (1944)	2

The table shows that the gender balance of authors is more lopsided regarding the plays: none of them were written by women, although 23% of the poems were (which is the same ratio as for novels). However, there is more variety in terms of when these texts were written; literature from the 20th and 21st centuries does not dominate this list as it did table 10.[94] Of the texts in table 12, 31% of the poems and 67% of the plays were written before 1900. All of these plays were written by William Shakespeare, which seems to indicate that his works have a strong position in upper secondary English.

However, although there are in total nine entries for Shakespeare's plays and two for a poem by Shakespeare in table 12, these entries stem from only six teachers.[95] When

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[93] I have not been able to find the publication date of Emmanuel's poem. My source for the poem is the textbook *Targets* (Haugen et al., 2009, p. 63).

[94] This might be related to the traditions of the genres; prose fiction did, after all, emerge later than poetry and plays (Hawthorn, 2010).

[95] These six teachers responded as follows: teacher 1: *Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; teacher 2: *Hamlet*; teacher 3: *Romeo and Juliet*; teacher 4: *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and "Sonnet 18"; teacher 5: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and "Sonnet 18"; teacher 6: *Romeo and Juliet* and *Macbeth*.

including responses such as "Shakespeare's plays" and plays that were only mentioned once, the total number of teachers who viewed Shakespeare's works as suitable is ten – 9% of the survey respondents. This means that Shakespeare's position may not be as strong as the table might indicate.[96] In terms of poetry, there is more variety regarding the represented authors. The positions of Frost, Dickinson, and Auden are further strengthened by the fact that these poets were mentioned by an additional two teachers each without any titles being mentioned.

In sum, the survey responses to item 15 demonstrated that prose texts were, if not more popular among teachers, at least more readily available to them as they listed texts they found suitable for the classroom. Of these, one novel (John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*) and one short story (Liam O'Flaherty's "The Sniper") stood out as the most frequently mentioned. When looking at the lists of texts mentioned by more than one teacher, there is a clear majority of male authors, and most of the prose texts are written in the 20th and 21st centuries, whereas there is more variety in terms of when the poems and plays were written. In the next section, the interview responses are discussed in order to elaborate on this *de facto* literature syllabus.

7.2.2 Interview responses

The data from the interviews, much like the survey responses to item 15, showed that a wide variety of literary texts were seen as suitable for upper secondary students. In this section, I discuss the literary texts in the lists and year plans that the teachers presented, showing which literature they used with their students in the academic years in which I first met with them.[97] I have chosen to focus on the texts the teachers have used that were also among the most frequently mentioned as suitable for the classroom in the survey (see tables 11 and 12). This helps me provide a snapshot of eight teachers'

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[96] Shakespeare's role is discussed further in chapter 8.

[97] See appendix 10 for a complete overview of all the literary texts used by the interviewed teachers in the school year in which we first met.

literary choices in 2016 and 2017 and how they relate to the teachers' perceptions of suitable texts more generally. Table 13 below provides an overview of these texts.

Table 13: Literary texts taught by the interview respondents that were also frequently mentioned as suitable in the survey[98]

Genre	Title	Teacher	Class
Short story	O'Flaherty, "The Sniper"	Victoria	Vg1 GS
		Robert	Vg1/Vg2 VS
		Joanna	Vg1 GS
		Neil	Vg1 GS
	Silko, "Tony's Story"	Joanna	Vg1 GS
		Neil	Vg1 GS
		Sophie	Vg1 GS
	Grace, "Butterflies"	Robert	Vg1/Vg2 VS
		Joanna	Vg2 GS
		Neil	Vg2 GS
	Jew, "Everyone Talked Loudly in Chinatown"	Victoria	Vg1 GS
		Margaret	Vg1 GS
		Joanna	Vg1 GS
	Garner, "The Moose and the Sparrow"	Neil	Vg1 GS
		Anne	Vg2 VS
	Hemingway, "A Day's Wait"	Joanna	Vg1 GS
		Anne	Vg2 VS
		Sophie	Vg1 GS
Novel	Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*	Neil	Vg2 GS
		Sophie	Vg1 GS
	Collins, *The Hunger Games*	Margaret	Vg1 GS
		Robert (E)	Vg1/Vg2 VS
		Sophie (E)	Vg1 GS
	Hosseini, *The Kite Runner*	Joanna (E)	Vg1 GS
	Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*	Joanna	Vg1 GS
	Swarup, *Slumdog Millionaire / Q & A*	Joanna (E)	Vg2 GS
Poem	Dickinson, "I am Nobody! Who are You?"	Charlotte	Vg1 GS
	Auden, "Funeral Blues"	Victoria	Vg1 GS
	Walker, "Son of Mine"	Robert	Vg1/Vg2 VS
Play	Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*	Victoria (E)	Vg1 GS

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[98] The letter E in parentheses after a teacher's name indicates that the teacher has used an excerpt instead of the complete novel or play.

The table shows that all of the eight teachers used at least one of the texts, and that the short stories most frequently mentioned as suitable by the survey respondents are used the most by the interviewed teachers: each of the six stories is used by an average of three interview participants. In comparison, three of the novels, the play, and all of the poems are used by one interview participant each. Furthermore, when examining table 13 alongside tables 11 and 12, it is evident that the short story genre is the one in which almost all of the most popular texts are also used by the interviewed teachers. Only Hughes's "Thank You, M'am" was not used by the interviewed teachers, whereas there are several novels, poems, and plays presented in tables 11 and 12 that are not used by the interviewed teachers. In fact, the text that was mentioned in the survey by the most teachers across genres, Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, was not used by any of the interview participants in the year in which I met with them. The only reference to it was in the interview with Margaret, the native speaker IB teacher. In response to the question of whether she adapted her text selection to the skills of her students, she explained that she had sometimes used a graded reader version of Steinbeck's novel with vocational students: "sometimes I've read like a simpler, simplified version of *Of Mice and Men* with my building and construction guys for example" (I1, p. 17).

These findings seem to suggest that there are more similarities between teachers concerning their choices of short stories than other genres. This might be related to short stories' textbook presence, an issue I discuss further in section 9.1. However, it is important to problematize these findings, especially from the survey. The use of the term "suitable" in the item may explain some of the variation in the teachers' responses. It is possible that the teachers responding to this item will have understood the term in different ways. It could refer to texts the teachers saw as suitable for their students, texts they saw as suitable for the competence aims and/or examinations, or texts the teachers saw as suitable for themselves to teach. It is also possible that some interpreted this item to be asking them which texts they actually taught. This became evident as I conducted the interviews. When asked which texts they found suitable for the classroom, all the interviewed teachers responded with texts they had actually used, which meant that I had to ask them a follow-up question concerning whether there were

any texts they found suitable that they had *not* used in the classroom.[99] As the interviews were conducted after the survey, I could not change the items in the survey. However, I chose to include the survey results despite the possibility of the item being interpreted in various ways because even though teachers may have reasoned differently, the responses to item 15 show texts that teachers were *positive* towards. It is for a similar reason that I include the survey responses to item 16 in the next section; texts viewed as unsuitable by teachers. Regardless of how teachers may have interpreted the term "unsuitable", these responses refer to texts that teachers feel negatively about.[100]

7.3 Literary texts viewed as unsuitable

In the survey, item 16 asked teachers which texts they deemed unsuitable for the classroom. The table below shows the types of texts that were most frequently mentioned by the 53 teachers that responded to this item.

Table 14: Types of texts seen as unsuitable by more than one teacher

Types of texts	Number of different titles	Number of teachers
Short stories	21	15
Novels	17	16
Plays	1	4
Older texts*	-	3
Excerpts	1	3
Poetry*	-	2
Longer texts*	-	2

* The responses mentioning these types of texts did not include any specific titles.

The table shows that similar to the responses to item 15, most of the texts mentioned were short stories and novels. A few texts were mentioned by two teachers, but most

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[99] See appendix 7 for the interview guide to interview 1.

[100] The ambiguity of the terms "suitable" and "unsuitable" is discussed further in chapter 12.

of the texts were mentioned by just one teacher. Interestingly, though, several of the prose texts that teachers found unsuitable were also among the texts considered suitable by the most teachers, including Hemingway's "A Day's Wait", O'Flaherty's "The Sniper", Collins's *The Hunger Games*, and Swarup's *Slumdog Millionaire* (*Q&A*). The reason for this might be that these texts are in common use, and that they, therefore, are discussed by teachers. Thus, more teachers may be likely to form an opinion of them – either positively or negatively.

In addition to the dominant position of prose texts, there was one finding that stood out in the teachers' responses to item 16: William Shakespeare and his works were mentioned by eight teachers. Four teachers simply answered "Shakespeare", three teachers responded with "Shakespeare's plays", and one teacher wrote Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. This means that one in seven teachers who responded to item 16 referred to Shakespeare in one way or another, and that all the references to plays in table 14 were to Shakespeare's plays. As ten teachers viewed Shakespeare's plays and poetry as suitable in response to item 15, there is clearly a disagreement among the teachers who responded to the survey regarding Shakespeare's suitability for the upper secondary classroom.

However, it is worth noting that fewer teachers responded to this item in the survey than those that responded to the item regarding suitable texts: only 53 of the 110 respondents. A possible reason for this could be that teachers are less concerned with which texts they do *not* find suitable, but are more concerned with – or more easily remember – the texts they actually consider as potential reading materials. Furthermore, several teachers responded with phrases that did not include specific titles, but contained answers such as "I think most works can function well or not" or "I think it's important to choose works based on the students you have". These responses point towards the teachers having a flexible approach to the selection of literary texts.

A flexible approach to text selection was also evident among the interview respondents. When asked whether there were any texts they did not find suitable for the upper secondary classroom, Joanna, the student-centered humanitarian, and Charlotte, the

hesitant, all-round teacher – the two oldest teachers with the longest teaching experience – both thought that all texts could work well, but that it depended on the context, especially the student group. The vocational teacher Robert also thought that all texts could work, and remarked that although not all texts could be used in a joint reading project, they might still be suitable for individual reading. The other interviewed teachers gave examples of unsuitable texts and genres, and these are listed in table 15 below. Just like the survey respondents, however, they provided fewer examples than when they talked about texts that they found suitable.

Table 15: Texts and genres deemed unsuitable by the interview respondents

Teacher	Title	Genre
Victoria	Paul Jennings, "Pink Bow Tie" (1986)	Short story
	Isaac Asimov, "True Love" (1977)	Short story
		Plays (in general)
Margaret	James Joyce, *Ulysses* (1922)	Novel
	James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake* (1939)	Novel
	Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899)	Novel
	"Anything that's too long" and "too challenging" (I1, p. 18)	
Neil	"A text that is so antiquated that even teachers have trouble analyzing what it means" (I1, p. 26)	
Anne	Nikki Sixx, "Paranoia" (2007)	Autobiography excerpt
	From Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1892)	Short story
Sophie	Bret Easton Ellis, *American Psycho* (1991)	Novel
	"Old classics" with "old-fashioned language" (I1, T, p. 18)	

The most noticeable aspect of table 15 is the variety of the texts and genres that are mentioned. This seems to indicate that the differences between teachers' beliefs and practices are greater than the similarities. However, there is one similarity that connects several of the teachers' responses, namely the consideration of students' skills (in terms of language level) and/or interests. Margaret argued that texts that were too long and challenging were unsuitable, as students would lose interest quickly and not be able to work with them. Neil, the ambitious and talkative teacher, had similar ideas, as he explained that he wanted "students to read literature that gives them something" (I1, p.

26), and that was not possible when they read antiquated texts that were difficult to understand. Sophie, the quick and efficient teacher, argued that old classics in the original version would not work well in the classroom because there was a language barrier when students read these types of texts, and this led to students not learning much from them. Similarly, Victoria, the thorough and well-prepared teacher, did not like to use plays with her students because she thought that the students would find it "artificial to read dialogs and descriptions of settings" (I1, T, p. 18).

In sum, there are three main findings related to teachers' beliefs about texts they perceive to be unsuitable, understood here as texts to which they have negative attitudes in one way or another. Firstly, that this is not something that they are very concerned with compared to which texts they find suitable. In both the survey and the interviews, fewer teachers responded to this issue than to the question of suitable texts, and those that did respond provided fewer examples. Secondly, that several teachers express a concern that texts should cater to students' skills and/or interests when assessing a text as either suitable or unsuitable for classroom use.[101] Thirdly, that a handful of texts are deemed suitable by some teachers, and unsuitable by others. This is especially evident in the case of the work Shakespeare.[102]

7.4 Different types of texts in the upper secondary classroom

This section addresses results relating to teachers' use of and attitudes towards different types of texts. The responses to the survey and the interviews demonstrated that teachers are concerned with employing several different types of texts during the course of a school year. Responses to item 31 in the survey, "I use literary texts from several different genres with a class during the course of a school year", showed that 90% of the respondents found this statement accurate or somewhat accurate. However,

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[101] This issue is discussed further in chapter 10, as the student-oriented approach to choosing literature.

[102] This is discussed further in chapter 8.

it is important to note that this item may be interpreted in different ways: "genres" may be understood to relate either to form or to content. When it relates to form, "different genres" refers to for instance novels, short stories, plays, and poems. When "genres" are defined by content, the term refers to for instance classic literature and literature for young adults. Therefore, two approaches to textual variety are discussed in this section; firstly, in section 7.4.1, teachers' use of longer texts; secondly, in sections 7.4.2-7.4.6, teachers' beliefs about and use of content-based genres.[103] It is worth noting that I did not include any definitions of genres when asking teachers questions about them, although I did offer simple explanations and/or examples of texts when the interviewed teachers asked for clarifications. This means that teachers – particularly the survey respondents – may have understood the terms differently and included different texts in their own interpretations of the genres. Furthermore, the genres are not mutually exclusive, which means that the same text could make teachers respond affirmatively to more than one item in the survey.[104] However, despite the possibility of the genre terms being understood differently, I chose to include the teachers' survey responses because they point out broad tendencies in the material, and the interview findings provide further nuances and elaborations on the issue. With this in mind, I now turn to the results. Each sub-section begins with survey findings before continuing with interview responses.

7.4.1 Longer texts

In the survey, items 33 and 34 addressed the teachers' use of longer texts, and the table below shows the teachers' overall responses to these questions. Most teachers report using longer texts with their students: more than 80% think that it is either completely or somewhat accurate to say that they use both shorter and longer texts, and more than

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[103] Included here are comics, illustrated novels, and graphic novels even though these genres could be seen as relating to form in addition to content.

[104] One such example is Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, which is both an example of YA literature and of illustrated literature, as well as a long literary text.

Table 16: Teachers' reported use of longer texts

	Inaccurate	Somewhat inaccurate	Somewhat accurate	Accurate	Total
Uses both short and long literary texts	4	16	34	55	109
Students read at least one longer work	15	11	31	49	106

three quarters state that their students read at least one longer work during the course of a school year. The responses to the open question asking teachers to list literary texts that they thought were suitable for the upper secondary English classroom showed that the type of longer text most teachers are likely to be referring to here is novels. Of all the different texts mentioned as responses to item 15, novels were one of the most frequently mentioned genres: 92 different titles were mentioned, and a total of 71 teachers contributed to this selection of titles. Other categories of longer texts were not as popular: only twelve plays or playwrights were mentioned by fourteen different teachers, and seven biographies or autobiographies were mentioned by a total of eleven different teachers.

Turning to the qualitative data, table 17 below provides an overview of which longer texts – all novels – the interviewed teachers taught in the school years in which I met with them, and with which students these novels were used. The table shows that the only teachers who did not teach a complete longer work during the course of the school year were Anne and Robert – the only two who taught exclusively vocational students. Furthermore, Charlotte, the hesitant, all-round teacher who taught vocational students in addition to general studies students, did not use a complete longer work with the vocational students, only with the general studies students.[105] Of the other teachers who taught exclusively general studies students, only one teacher did not use a longer text with one of his groups, namely Neil, the ambitious and talkative teacher, in his Vg1 group.[106]

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[105] The difference between teachers in vocational and general studies is discussed further in chapter 8.

[106] However, Neil did not teach this group the entire school year; he took over in the beginning of the second term.

Table 17: Novels taught by the interview respondents

Teacher	Titles taught	Student groups taught
Victoria	Self-chosen novel	Vg1 GS
	Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966)	Vg3 Social Studies English
Margaret	Suzanne Collins, *The Hunger Games* (2008)	Vg1 GS
	Cormac McCarthy, *The Road* (2006) George Orwell, *1984* (1949) Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake* (2003)	Vg2 IB students
Robert	-	Vg1 VS (4 groups)
	-	Vg2 VS
Joanna	Mark Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (2003)	Vg1 GS
	Self-chosen novel	Vg2 International English
Neil	-	Vg1 GS
	Sherman Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (2007)	Vg2 International English
	F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (1925)	Vg3 Social Studies English
Anne	-	Vg1 VS (2 groups)
	-	Vg2 VS (3 groups)
Sophie	Self-chosen novel	Vg3 Social Studies English
Charlotte	Paolo Bacigalupi, *Ship Breaker* (2010)	Vg1 GS
	-	Vg1 VS

7.4.2 English-language literature for young adults

YA literature was one of the genres that teachers responding to the survey reported using the most: the table below shows that 82% of teachers used YA literature sometimes, often, or always.

Table 18: Teachers' reported use of YA literature in the survey

Item	Never / rarely	Sometimes	Often / always	Total
21: English-language literature for YA	19	73	16	108

The most interesting findings regarding the interviewed teachers' use of YA literature were that teachers focused on novels when discussing this genre, and that most of the teachers were positive towards YA literature and had experience teaching it.

Sophie, the quick and efficient teacher, was the strongest advocate for YA literature among the interviewed teachers. She had used Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Stephen Chbosky's *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (1999), and Collins's *The Hunger Games* in Vg1 general studies. She said, "I think young adult literature is underrated. That it is, that there are very rough issues in many of them. […] there is a lot of young adult literature that we could use in Vg1 […] I have more and more, kind of, thoughts in my head that this might start several discussions, and it can be linked to a lot of history or politics or culture, social studies" (I1, T, p. 17). Other teachers had also used or referred to some of the YA literature Sophie employed as well as other works. The vocational teacher Robert and Margaret, the native speaker IB teacher, had used Collins's *The Hunger Games*; Neil had used Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*; Charlotte had used Bacigalupi's *Ship Breaker*; Robert wanted to use Lois Lowry's *The Giver* (1993), and Joanna, the student-centered humanitarian, had used Jay Asher's *Thirteen Reasons Why* (2007). Joanna was very positive towards using YA literature, but appeared to be more up to date regarding relevant titles for subject Norwegian: "I feel like we don't have a lot of information about young adult books in English, so I wish I knew a little bit more about it" (I1, T, p. 26). Victoria, the thorough and well-prepared teacher, was the only one who did not use YA literature. When asked about the genre, she did not name any specific titles that she knew and liked, and seemed overall to be a little uncertain of the genre: "I think that there are many good books, I mean quality literature, for young people […] but there is so little focus on it […] and therefore I think that many may think that there are no good books for young people because we don't know, we don't hear about these books" (I1, T, p. 23).

7.4.3 Classic literature

Alongside YA literature, classic literature was the genre that the survey respondents reported using the most: the table shows that more than a quarter of the teachers reported using classic literature often or always, which makes this the highest of all the genres.

Table 19: Teachers' reported use of classic literature in the survey

Item	Never / rarely	Sometimes	Often / always	Total
25: Classic literature	23	57	28	108

Most of the interviewed teachers were very positive towards using classic literature. Both Victoria and Joanna thought that it was important to include classic literature in subject English. Sophie argued that classic literature, especially Shakespeare, was central because of its role in the cultural heritage that was common across the world: "if you know a little bit about Shakespeare, you kind of have, you will have something in common with a lot of people in the world. There is some sense of community, and also universal topics" (I1, T, p. 19). Margaret, although generally positive towards the use of classic literature, argued that focusing too much on older texts would be pointless in the Norwegian context because such a sustained focus would require "the opportunity to connect it to the long tradition, which we don't really have" (I1, p. 23). Margaret, therefore, thought that classic literature was not more important than any other genre because the curriculum lacked a focus on the literary-historical tradition. Neil had used some classic texts and authors in his teaching, including Shakespeare, but was generally skeptical towards using "antiquated" texts (I1, p. 26), which meant that some classic literature would be out of the question for him.

7.4.4 Comics, illustrated novels, and graphic novels

Illustrated literature, including comics, illustrated novels, and graphic novels, was the type of text that was least used by the survey respondents. The table below shows that more than half of the respondents reported that they never or rarely used these types of texts.

Table 20: Teachers' reported use of illustrated literature in the survey

Item	Never / rarely	Sometimes	Often / always	Total
26: Comics, illustrated novels, graphic novels	59	41	8	108

The interviewed teachers were, however, very positive towards various kinds of illustrated literature. Anne and Robert saw potential in the genres even though they had not used them yet. Anne said that, "I've thought about it several times" (I1, T, p. 25). She wanted to use illustrated adaptations of well-known, classic works such as Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1606), Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884), Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), and Charles Dickens's *Oliver Twist* (1837-39) because "it can be an easier, more accessible way of including the classic literature" (I1, T, p. 25). Robert also wanted to use these types of texts more, as he had read research that suggested that texts that combined words and pictures were highly beneficial for second language learners: "I am positive, it's sort of at the back of my mind […] and it's something that I will try […] If I am to get my students to read a longer literary work, then it would have to be as a comic" (I1, T, p. 25).

The other teachers were also mostly positive towards comics, illustrated novels and graphic novels, but not everyone had used these types of texts. Sophie and Neil had used Alexie's illustrated YA novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, and they both chose to present the novel when asked to discuss a literary text that they were happy with in the classroom context. A graphic novel that two of the teachers, Neil and Joanna, mentioned, was Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis* (2007). Joanna mentioned in passing that she had used it, and Neil said that he really wanted to try it

out. On a more general note, Neil said that "especially for weaker students I think graphic novels are very useful" (I1, p. 31). Joanna was enthusiastic about comics, illustrated novels, and graphic novels, and explained how she used these texts in both subject English and Norwegian. Margaret said that "I've come so late to graphic novels, and wish I had discovered them years ago" (I1, p. 23). Although she liked the genre and expressed a desire to learn more about the theoretical, historical, and technical aspects of the genre, she had not used a graphic novel as full-class reading, only as individual, self-chosen reading. She found these works to be particularly suitable for some of the boys she taught. Victoria thought that the use of comics, illustrated novels, and graphic novels could be a good way of creating variety in the classroom, but she had not tried any illustrated texts herself. Lastly, Charlotte did not express a clear opinion regarding this genre: she had used these types of texts a little bit in subject Norwegian, but not in subject English.

7.4.5 Graded readers

Graded readers was another genre that teachers did not report using often: the table below shows that 49% of the teachers responding to the survey reported that they never or rarely used graded readers.

Table 21: Teachers' reported use of graded readers in the survey

Item	Never / rarely	Sometimes	Often / always	Total
28: Graded readers	54	41	14	109

In the interviews, the teachers were generally positive towards using graded readers with their students, with a couple of exceptions. Margaret was one of the teachers who had used these types of texts, and she had good experience of working with a simplified version of Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* with vocational students: "It seems to work extremely well […] they really like that book" (I1, p. 23). Anne had used a book about Helen Keller with a health care class in the past, as well as books from the series Quick

Reads[107] with other vocational students. She had not done that in a while, though, because for some students, any book – regardless of length or complexity – was too much: "I've kind of given up on reading a book because no matter what you bring them, it is too long." (I1, T, p. 26). Robert and Joanna had not used graded reader books with their students, but they had both used simplified versions of short stories and other textbook texts. Robert explained that using different versions of the same text was very helpful in his classroom: "it is alpha and omega for English teaching […] so I am absolutely very positive towards it" (I1, T, p. 25). Joanna said that "it's really important that we have these" (I1, T, p. 28) because she thought they might help the weaker students understand the content of texts.

The remaining four teachers did not use graded readers, but for different reasons. Sophie and Charlotte were both positive towards the genre, but did not use these texts because of the poor selection available to them. Sophie said that "the ones we have here in the school library are very old, with very uninspiring covers" (I1, T, p. 20). Furthermore, she argued that the labeling of these texts as "easy readers" or "graded readers" meant that the students felt inferior. This corresponds with the findings in a recent study, which suggests that graded readers make dyslexic adults feel underestimated and stupid (Berget & Fagernes, 2018). However, whereas Berget and Fagernes focused on the content and structure of the texts, Sophie thought that "if there had been more discreet and nice covers, then they may have helped someone, but we need more recent editions, we need new books" (I1, T, p. 20). For Victoria and Neil, however, the lack of availability was not the issue, but rather their own reluctance towards the genre. Victoria said that she was "a little bit skeptical of these graded texts […] because the students may experience it like, we don't know the language well enough, so they had to change it. And then they may think that the only goal with it is for us to learn English" (I1, T, p. 15). Neil said that "for most students it's better to find a simpler original than to find a simplified version of *The Great Gatsby*, for example" (I1, p. 32). He strongly believed that it was always best to read texts in their original

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[107] Quick Reads are easy reader texts targeted towards adults (see https://readingagency.org.uk/adults/quick-guides/quick-reads/ or The Reading Agency, 2019).

version, and he was, therefore, reluctant towards using graded readers. However, he would not say that other teachers should not use these texts: "they have their place, I guess, but I kind of don't use them very much" (I1, p. 32) – explaining that this was mainly due to his own personal preferences.

In sum, graded readers are used by some teachers, but they appear to be less widespread than the other genres addressed so far in this chapter. This may be due to the lack of availability of suitable texts. Some teachers see the didactic potential of the genre, but are unable to try it out in the classroom because the texts they have access to are outdated or unappealing. Furthermore, some teachers do not use these texts because they feel that adapted texts are not 'real' literature. This means that there may be an issue of perceived literary quality, which is discussed further in the next section.

7.4.6 Light reading

Light reading, similarly to illustrated literature and graded readers, was not used often by most teachers responding to the survey: the table below shows that 46% of the teachers reported that they never or rarely used this type of literature.

Table 22: Teachers' reported use of light reading in the survey

Item	Never / rarely	Sometimes	Often / always	Total
29: Light reading	50	51	8	109

The interview respondents were in agreement regarding the role of light reading in the classroom. No one would read these texts with a full class for the sake of working with them as *literature*, but they would allow students to choose such texts as free reading. Margaret and Victoria both argued that they thought these types of works did not possess the necessary qualities for classroom use; they were concerned with the genre's lack of literary merit, which otherwise was an issue the teachers were remarkably uninterested in. Victoria said that "there are so many other books that are better and

that are more suited to talking about the content, experiences, what we can find out about society here, what we can find out about how these people lived back then, how we can find out history here, and feelings and relationships between people" (I1, T, p. 25). Margaret said that "I probably wouldn't choose it myself […] I don't think I would probably read it in terms of a literary analysis. I certainly could. But I just wouldn't choose it" (I1, p. 24).

Some of the other teachers focused more on how this type of literature was better than nothing at all, and that it could be a stepping-stone for students as they progressed as readers. Anne said, "I think that light reading is better than no literature at all. Because […] it can also be the path into more deep literature, maybe. That you start somewhere" (I1, T, p. 26). Joanna agreed with this view, and said that these texts could work well "as a beginning […] because you don't want to scare the students" (I1, T, p. 28). Sophie saw the genre's purpose in the same way: "There are some students who absolutely do not read at all. But perhaps they can read a sweet story then, that is not super deep and has a super happy ending and all that, but..yeah? They have, they've read something" (I1, T, p. 21). Robert shared this attitude, and explained that he was positive towards using this literature because "with my students, it's about getting them to read something. To find something that they understand, that is not children's literature […] imagine the first time, I'm sure you can imagine, you can check that box the first time you've read a book in English" (I1, T, p. 26). Charlotte explained, "it's about them reading and understanding something, and if it can create a desire to read and a sense of accomplishment and a good experience of the English lessons as something fun" (I1, T, p. 36). The teachers saw this literature as being particularly suitable for vocational students who would not otherwise read anything; this type of literature could be an entry point into reading that would help them to feel more positively about reading and help them develop further as readers.

In sum, light reading appears to be viewed as texts that could be used if it is the only thing some students are able or willing to read. Reading this type of genre is not viewed as a goal in itself, but as a way of encouraging students to read anything at all. This way of viewing literature corresponds with the notion of "reading ladders" or "stages of reading development" (Cart, 2010, p. 23): some texts are only seen to have worth as

being rungs on ladders meant to help readers progress beyond them. The teachers' goals when using light reading always appear to be to inspire the reader to read something else next time.

7.5 Concluding remarks

This chapter has discussed which literature the teachers participating in this study find suitable for their students, as well as which genres they report using in the upper secondary classroom. The survey findings demonstrate that the teachers most frequently mentioned prose literature when they were asked to give examples of suitable texts. Of these, there are some novels and short stories that stand out as more popular than others. When comparing the survey findings with the interview respondents' overviews of the literary texts that they had used within the last year with their students, the short stories prove to overlap the most across the two data sets.

In terms of literary genres, YA literature and classic literature are used the most by the teachers responding to the survey. Graded readers and light reading are used less, and illustrated literature is used the least. However, the interviews demonstrated that this might not be because teachers are unwilling to use the latter genres; in fact, comics, illustrated novels, and graphic novels were the types of texts the interviewed teachers were most positive towards overall. Part of the reason why illustrated literature is used so little might then be because of the same reasons that graded readers are not used extensively: lack of access to updated and appealing reading materials.

Lastly, it is important to note that there does not exist one *de facto* literature syllabus that is used by all, or even the majority of, the teachers in the study. For instance, some of the texts most frequently mentioned as examples of suitable literature were brought up by other teachers when asked to give examples of texts that they perceived to be unsuitable for the classroom. The clearest finding presented in this chapter is, therefore, the variety of texts that teachers saw as suitable for the classroom.

8. Curriculum enactments in vocational and general studies

This chapter begins to answer the second research question: why do teachers choose the texts they do? It explores the different curriculum enactments in vocational and general studies, as analyses of both the quantitative and qualitative data show that the study programs that teachers work with appear to be linked to their choices and beliefs about literature.

The quantitative data presented in this chapter build on crosstabulation analyses, examining teacher characteristics (responses to questions in section 1 of the survey) alongside teachers' reported use of different genres. The teacher characteristics that were examined were age, gender, professional title, study programs taught, years of teaching experience (both in upper secondary school and in general), formal competence in English (college/university degrees), personal reading habits in English, school location, and number of English teachers at the schools where the teachers worked. However, of all these factors, it was only the findings related to the study programs teachers taught that were consistent, and these are, therefore, the results reported on here. The qualitative data presented in this chapter include both the teachers' year plans and overviews of literary texts used during the course of a school year, as well as their responses during the interviews.

8.1 Types of texts used in vocational and general studies

In this section, I present findings related to types of texts used by teachers in different study programs. Each section begins with quantitative data, followed by qualitative data. It is important to note, though, that the bivariate analyses below build on the constructed variables based on items 13 and 14; the vocational teachers are teachers who do *not* teach general studies in addition to vocational, and vice versa. This means

that there is a lower number of respondents in these tables than in the remainder of the dissertation. As these data build on a small sample, the results should be viewed with caution. Similarly, the qualitative data stem from only some of the interviewees, meaning that it is not possible to claim that the data represent the full picture concerning curriculum enactments in vocational and general studies.

8.1.1 Longer texts

The clearest link between the study programs teachers worked with and which genres they used with their students, was teachers' reported use of longer texts. The tables below show that teachers in general studies reported using longer texts to a greater extent than teachers who taught vocational studies.

Table 23: Teachers' use of both short and long texts linked with which study program they taught in the school year in which the survey was conducted

		Vocational studies	General studies	*Difference*
Item 33: Both short and long texts are used	Inaccurate / somewhat inaccurate	48% (N=12)	9% (N=3)	39%
	Accurate / somewhat accurate	52% (N=13)	91% (N=32)	-39%
Total		100% (N=25)	100% (N=35)	

Table 24: Students' reading of longer works linked with which study program teachers taught in the school year in which the survey was conducted

		Vocational studies	General studies	*Difference*
Item 34: Students read at least one longer work	Inaccurate / somewhat inaccurate	46% (N=11)	15% (N=5)	31%
	Accurate / somewhat accurate	54% (N=13)	85% (N=29)	-31%
Total		100% (N=24)	100% (N=34)	

The tables show that there is a clear difference between teachers of vocational and general studies concerning their use of longer texts: 91% of the general studies teachers reported that they use both short and long texts, as opposed to approximately half of the vocational studies teachers. Similarly, whereas only 54% of the vocational studies teachers reported that their students read at least one longer work during the course of a school year, the figure for general studies teachers was 85%. Therefore, these results seem to indicate that the type of study program taught is related to teachers' use of longer texts.

The same tendency emerged among the interview participants. As discussed in section 7.4.1, the only teachers who did not teach a complete longer work during the school year in which I first met with them were Anne and Robert, the two vocational teachers. Both Anne and Robert thought that there should be less focus on literature in vocational studies than in general studies. Robert thought that vocational students should focus more on "writing reports […] writing applications […] more vocational English" (I1, T, p. 9); Anne thought that "vocabulary and things they need in their profession might be more important to prioritize than fiction" (I1, T, p. 9) in vocational studies. Furthermore, Robert thought that many of his students would not be able to read a complete book due to their language skills. He mentioned Lois Lowry's *The Giver* (1993) as a book he would like to use with his students, but when he had tried to start reading it with a class, he found that "it was too difficult for them […] instead, we work with an excerpt […] and then we move on to something else" (I1, T, p. 19). Anne pointed at motivation being the most challenging issue in her classroom. She struggled with getting her students motivated for reading literature, and explained that she had given up altogether on getting them to read entire books: "It is a bit of resignation, I think. And it is a little bit sad […] I haven't found the magical solution yet" (I1, T, p. 26). This means that there appears to be three main reasons for longer texts being used less by teachers in vocational studies than by teachers in general studies. Firstly, that teachers prioritize focusing on aspects of the subject that they see as more relevant for vocational students; secondly, that students' skills might not enable them to read longer texts; and thirdly, that students lack the motivation to read longer texts.

8.1.2 Graded readers

In all of the crosstabulation analyses I conducted linking teachers' use of different genres with the type of study program they taught, teachers in general studies reported using the genres more frequently than vocational teachers – with one exception: graded readers.

Table 25: Teachers' use of graded readers linked with which study program they taught in the school year in which the survey was conducted

		Vocational studies	General studies	*Difference*
Item 28: Graded readers	Never / rarely	36% (N=9)	59% (N=20)	-23%
	Sometimes	36% (N=9)	38% (N=13)	-2%
	Often / always	28% (N=7)	3% (N=1)	25%
Total		100% (N=25)	100% (N=34)	

The table shows that vocational teachers use graded readers more frequently than teachers in general studies: only one of the general studies teachers reported using graded readers often or always, whereas more than one quarter of the vocational teachers did.

As discussed in section 7.4.5, the interviewed teachers were generally positive towards using graded readers; they saw it as particularly helpful to accommodate the needs of weaker students. Only two teachers had experience with using complete books in this category, though: Margaret, the native speaker IB teacher, and Anne, the concerned vocational teacher. None of them used graded readers in the period during which I met with them, though: Anne had used Quick Reads as well as a graded reader about Helen Keller with earlier vocational students, and Margaret had used a simplified version of John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* with a vocational class she had taught some years ago. Anne, as mentioned in the previous section, struggled with getting her students to read books at all. Graded readers was the genre she had attempted to use earlier, but now even that was considered too challenging. With regards to Margaret, this was one of the few examples of work with literature in vocational studies that she mentioned;

she mainly talked about her work with general studies and IB students in the interviews, as these were the types of students she taught when we met. When asked whether she had taught any texts in the genre graded readers, she responded: "In vocational I have. I think that's a very good idea. It seems to work extremely well" (I1, p. 23). This was the only genre to which she responded by specifying that the texts would be most suitable for vocational students; therefore, her views seemingly reflected those of the survey respondents.

8.1.3 Classic literature

Another clear difference between vocational and general studies teachers was with regards to their use of classic literature, as the table below shows. Only 8% of the vocational teachers use classic literature often or always, as opposed to 41% of the teachers in general studies.

Table 26: Teachers' use of classic literature linked with which study program they taught in the school year in which the survey was conducted

		Vocational studies	General studies	*Difference*
Item 25: Classic literature	Never / rarely	40% (N=10)	6% (N=2)	34%
	Sometimes	52% (N=13)	53% (N=18)	-1%
	Often / always	8% (N=2)	41% (N=14)	-33%
Total		100% (N=25)	100% (N=34)	

This difference between teachers in vocational and general studies was also evident among the interview respondents. Charlotte, who taught in both general and vocational studies, stated that she preferred to use classic literature in general studies classes since "it takes a lot of time" (I1, T, p. 35), and the structure of teaching in vocational studies (with three lessons per week in Vg1 and two lessons per week in Vg2) meant that she could not work with classic literature in the way that she wanted with vocational students. Other teachers confirmed these views: Anne and Robert, the only two teachers who taught exclusively vocational students, both stated that they seldom used

classic literature with their students even though they both considered the genre to be an important part of subject English. Anne said that the reason was that "it can be a little difficult to do in vocational studies" (I1, T, p. 25), and that she sometimes talked *about* classic texts and authors instead of reading complete texts. Similarly, Robert said that classic literature could be a part of his text selection, "but as excerpts" (I1, T, p. 24). This was because his vocational students rarely possessed the language level and/or reading skills necessary in order to work with classic literature.

Teachers' views on Shakespeare

William Shakespeare's works have traditionally had a strong influence on the teaching of literature in subject English in upper secondary school in Norway (Ibsen & Wiland, 2000). His works were obligatory reading in all curricula from 1899 until 1974 (Ibsen & Wiland, 2000), but have been on and off the curricula since then. New Structure (1974-1989) included Shakespeare in some of its versions, but he was not mentioned by name in Veierød (1989-1994). In R94 (1994-2006), Shakespeare and his works were mentioned specifically in a subject English curriculum for the last time (KKUF, 2001); his name is not mentioned in the current LK-06.

However, it is clear through both survey responses and interviews that Shakespeare's works are still part of subject English teaching, but he appears to be more present in general studies than in vocational studies. In the survey, ten teachers reported in response to item 15 that they thought Shakespeare's works were suitable for upper secondary school students. They mentioned the plays *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice* (ca. 1596-1599), and *Othello* (ca. 1603), the poem "Sonnet 18", as well as more general remarks, such as "classic plays (Shakespeare)", "excerpt from a Shakespeare play with film", and "William Shakespeare small excerpts". As discussed in section 7.3, however, eight teachers responded to the item asking teachers to name unsuitable texts by referring to Shakespeare and/or his works in one form or another. This means that the teaching value of Shakespeare is disputed; he seems to be both liked and disliked by the survey

respondents. In order to examine this ambivalence in more detail, I turn to the interview respondents and their views on Shakespeare and his works.

In the interviews, only one teacher listed a work by Shakespeare on the year plan or list of literature that they had used during the last school year. This was Victoria, who had used an excerpt from the play *Romeo and Juliet*. When asked if she thought there were any authors that were part of a literary canon for upper secondary subject English, she responded that Shakespeare was someone the students should know about. However, she acknowledged that his works were challenging: "for many students, they will think that […] literature, that's Shakespeare, that's difficult, it's an old language that we don't understand" (I1, T, p. 19). Even though Victoria was the only teacher who listed Shakespeare in her teaching plan, the interviews demonstrated that most of the teachers saw Shakespeare as important and usually incorporated his works in their teaching. Margaret said that "I don't know why, there's really no good reason, but I want them to try a little Shakespeare" (I1, p. 17), Joanna stated that "I'd also like them to read Shakespeare" (I1, T, p. 20), and Sophie argued that "I feel like he's necessary, he's part of the cultural heritage […] He belongs to the canon. Like Ibsen in Norwegian" (I1, T, p. 18). Charlotte said that "Shakespeare, that is someone I return to. Because there is so much available about him, there is so much there that is easy to use" (I1, T, p. 29). However, she was reluctant to use entire works in their original form: "The language is really difficult, I mean if English is difficult to begin with, then this will be even more difficult. It is ok to get through an excerpt, but reading the whole thing might be difficult for them" (I1, T, p. 7).

Lastly, Neil included Shakespeare in his teaching with a slightly different approach than the others:

> We do talk a lot about Shakespeare. But most of that is when we do English as an international language […] It's a big part of the subject, learning how English became English. And then Shakespeare is very important. He created a lot of the words that we still use today. […] So, I do expect everyone to kind of know who Shakespeare is, and know the impact he's had on the English language (I1, p. 25).

This means that Neil, as opposed to the others, focused on Shakespeare's role as someone who developed the English language. However, Neil also said that he had used adaptations of Shakespeare with his students because "almost any author in the last 200 years has some sort of relationship to Shakespeare" and that he, therefore, was "a foundation of a lot of the literature we have. […] I don't spend a lot of time on the original plays, but I do spend time on showing them why Shakespeare is Shakespeare […] we talk more about the concept of Shakespeare than the author, or the literary part of Shakespeare" (I1, pp. 25-26). Neil, then, emphasized Shakespeare as an important influence on later authors and on language, but did not find it necessary to use the original texts in his teaching.

The responses of the six teachers mentioned above show that they saw Shakespeare and his works differently. Margaret and Joanna did not express a clear reason why they wanted their students to read Shakespeare; it was just something they felt their students should be exposed to. Charlotte said that she used Shakespeare mainly because of all the available materials that she could choose from when teaching his works. Victoria and Sophie both argued that they used Shakespeare because he was part of a literary canon that students should know – a representative of the cultural heritage. Neil focused on Shakespeare's role in developing the English language, but also on Shakespeare as a concept who has had great influence on literature. This means that the teachers differed greatly from each other in their reasons for using Shakespeare, even though they all agreed that he had a place in the *de facto* syllabus. However, as only one teacher, Victoria, actually included Shakespeare in the year plan, it is possible that the other teachers did not use his works as often as they claimed. Perhaps they had an idea of Shakespeare being important in their teaching, for instance because they saw him as representing the cultural heritage, but that for some reason, they did not actually use Shakespeare's works very often. This is an interesting – and puzzling – finding, which could benefit from further research.

Another important issue is that the six teachers above all worked with general studies students, and all of them were positive towards using Shakespeare in some form or context. However, the two vocational teachers, Anne and Robert, did not feel obligated to use Shakespeare's works after the curriculum no longer specified them. Robert did

not discuss Shakespeare at all during the course of the two interviews, and he did not include any works by Shakespeare in his overview of texts that he used with his students. Anne said that after LK-06 was implemented,

> one feels like one may choose more freely texts that may engage […] I focus first and foremost on texts that I think the students can benefit from, take an interest in, and recognize parts of, rather than it being a specific writer, or epoch or something like that. […] So I'm not concerned with us having to read Shakespeare (I1, T, p. 15).

This means that there appears to be a consistent difference between teachers of general studies and of vocational students when it comes to teaching Shakespeare. Anne stated that "the themes that Shakespeare addresses are by all means relevant today […] But with vocational students, I think that it's not what one should focus on first and foremost" (I1, T, p. 15). She continued with an example of how the previous Vg2 textbook they used, *Tracks 2* (Fuhre, Hunstadbråten, & Murray, 2007), had included excerpts from *Romeo and Juliet* as well as a sonnet. Anne said "we did work with it, but with a little bit like [sighs] Shakespeare, do we have to do that?" (I1, T, p. 15). However, when she had used a modern film adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the film *Get over it* (O'Haver, 2001), the students had enjoyed working with it and been surprised when she told them that they had worked with Shakespeare. This means that it was possible to work with adaptations of Shakespeare's works in her vocational class, but including Shakespeare's works in their original, textual form was considered too challenging.

8.2 Suggested reasons for the differences

So far, this chapter has presented findings that show that longer texts and classic literature – including Shakespeare – are used more often by teachers who work in general studies, and that graded readers are used more often by teachers in vocational studies. Previous research on subject English in upper secondary school has also pointed at differences between vocational and general studies (Brevik, 2015; Brevik,

Olsen, & Hellekjær, 2016; Bøhn, 2015; 2016). Brevik found that "students in general studies read better than the vocational students" (2015, p. 62): 85% of the poor readers in her study were vocational students (Brevik, Olsen, & Hellekjær, 2016, p. 171). This result was explained by examining the similarities between reading in L1 and in L2, as there was a close relationship between students' reading comprehension in both languages. However, this study did not attempt to explain *why* students in general studies read better than vocational students. One of the contributions of the current study is, therefore, not only to discuss that there are differences in the text selection teachers choose for vocational and general studies, but discuss *why* these differences exist.

In order to explore the possible reasons for these differences further, it is necessary to look in more detail at the teachers' views on general and vocational studies. As mentioned in chapter 3, the curriculum outlines an almost identical compulsory English course for all study programs. All students follow the same curriculum and take the same written exams; the only difference is that vocational students take the course across two years whereas the general studies students take it in one. However, according to some of the interviewed teachers, this difference, as well as other issues, affects how the course is taught. Some teachers focused on external, structural differences that influenced how they worked with literature in vocational studies, and others discussed inherent differences between the groups.

8.2.1 Structural differences

The teacher who focused the most on the structural differences that affected her teaching in general and vocational studies, was Charlotte, who taught in both types of study programs. One of the main problems, according to her, was the structure of the course: "English is taught over two years in vocational studies, with three plus two.[108]

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[108] Charlotte is here referring to the number of hours the subject is taught each week: three hours in Vg1 and two hours in Vg2.

It doesn't add up, it's not five, it's a number I can't really tell, it's very messy and fragmented […] because you cannot achieve a really good progression" (I1, T, p. 1). According to her, one of the challenges was that the teacher who had worked with the students in Vg1 did not automatically teach the same students in Vg2. This meant that the teacher working with the students in Vg2 did not always know in detail the subject matter the students had already worked with, which made the situation more challenging for both teacher and students.

Another problem, according to Charlotte, was that each year, there would always be some students who were transferred into the school when starting in Vg2. The teacher would then not have any insight into what this student had worked with in subject English in Vg1: this student might already have worked with issues that the teacher had planned to address in Vg2, and might not have worked with issues s/he had addressed in Vg1 with the rest of the students. A third difficulty was that sometimes, an English teacher would work with one vocational group of approximately 15 students in Vg1, but in Vg2, this group was merged with another vocational group of 15 students. If these two groups were not in the same vocational study program, adapting the teaching to cater to the students' interests was an even more complicated task. Charlotte summarized all of these problems by saying that it was "a bigger challenge to find something that would appeal to them, and to teach them English in vocational studies" (I1, T, p. 1). In comparison, the general studies groups she worked with would for the most part consist of the same students throughout the entire year, and hence she would work with the same group from start to finish. According to Charlotte, then, the main challenge was the difference in course structure, which led to a lack of continuity in the compulsory course for vocational students.

8.2.2 Different groups – different needs

There were also teachers who considered the differences between vocational and general studies to be more inherent, which means that they did not see an external factor such as the structure of the subject to be what influenced teaching in the different study

programs the most. Of the interviewed teachers, Sophie was the most vocal in expressing these views. Like Charlotte, she pointed at the possible problems with the course covering two years – "they may not be able to cover the curriculum in the same way […] it's not complete" (I1, T, p. 8) – but this was not Sophie's main concern. Rather, she wanted the curriculum to be more closely related to the vocation the students wanted to work with because "I like that they are learning about the English-speaking world and the global perspective […] But how many texts will they read about that in their future job? […] They will be working with instruction manuals, orders, things like that, technical English" (I1, T, p. 8). This means that Sophie did not see the immediate use of including general knowledge and issues related to *Bildung* in the vocational students' course. Instead, she thought that there were some fundamental differences between vocational and general studies, which the current curriculum with its identical competence aims did not consider. In turn, she wanted different exams for vocational and general studies that would test students in what was important for the study program in which they were enrolled, rather than in general subject English skills and knowledge.

Sophie's remarks indicated that she saw the main differences between vocational and general studies as inherent in the students' choice of study program. Her view was that vocational students need more practical English in a course that is linked more closely to their future job, and global English and other non-vocational aspects of the course should, therefore, only be taught in general studies. These views go against the development in upper secondary education that was outlined in chapter 2. There, I described how reforms and curricula during the last 45 years have focused on *Bildung* for all students, including vocational students, by including more general subjects in vocational education and by making the common subjects in general and vocational study programs more similar. Sophie seems to want to go back to an educational system where the common subjects in general and vocational studies are more separated, as they were before R94: she wanted a "more subject-specific curriculum in English for vocational studies" (I1, T, p. 8).

The other teachers that were interviewed did not go as far as Sophie in explaining how they would like the English subject curriculum in general and vocational studies to be

more different, but some pointed out differences between vocational and general students that affected the way they taught these classes. Neil said that he preferred to work with students in general studies because in vocational studies, "it's a very different group, and a much more mixed group […] You end up kind of doing a little bit of individual coaching when you know it's needed, and you have to think differently […] They require a lot of attention, and a lot of help as well" (I2, pp. 1-2). Victoria pointed out that vocational students have "completely different expectations of the subject […] They often want it to be related to their vocation" (I1, T, p. 6), and she thought that vocational classes were less interested in working with culture and literature. This led to her using fewer literary texts when she taught the compulsory course in vocational classes than when she taught it in general studies classes. Both Neil and Victoria, then, thought – like Sophie – that the different abilities and interests of vocational and general students had an impact on what they chose to do in these classes, also when it came to literature.

Furthermore, Victoria pointed at a different type of challenge that affected how she taught vocational students. She claimed that the difference between the study programs was evident in the textbooks aimed at vocational and general studies, and that the teaching resources marketed towards vocational English were less advanced: "when I compare texts in the book and tasks, it is at a lower level […] there are more basic things that you're working with" (I1, T, p. 6). This means that the different levels of texts and tasks in the textbooks might also influence what teachers end up working with in the classroom.

8.3 Concluding remarks

This chapter has responded to research question two by examining the different curriculum enactments in vocational and general studies. My findings show that longer texts and classic literature, including Shakespeare, are taught more frequently by

teachers in general studies, and graded readers are taught more frequently by teachers in vocational studies.

Based on the interviews, I identify two possible reasons for the different types of texts used in the study programs. Firstly, that the structure of the compulsory course is different in general and vocational studies, and that this affects how the course is taught in the different study programs. Secondly, that there are differences between the students enrolled in vocational and general studies, and that this affects both what teachers are able to do, as well as what they attempt to do. In my view, both explanations contribute to shed light on the complex educational reality, which combines the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes students bring with them to school, external, contextual, and structural factors that influence what happens in classrooms, and teachers' contributions to students' learning.

Beginning with the second explanation, namely that students in vocational and general studies are different and have different educational needs, both educational policies and research point at this being a widespread notion in Norwegian upper secondary schools. As discussed in chapter 2, there has traditionally been a sharp divide between the more academically oriented general studies and vocational studies. Before the 1970s, the different study programs were found in different schools, and up until the introduction of LK-06 in 2006, the content of subjects such as English was different in the various study programs. From 2006 until now, though, the compulsory English subject has been identical for vocational and general studies, which could seem to indicate a move away from the view that students in vocational and general studies are different and require different curricula in the same subject. Currently, however, the curriculum is being revised; one of the changes is separate competence aims for vocational and general studies (Udir, 2019c). This means that the development seems to be moving back to that of earlier curricula; separate content, aims, and exams for vocational and general studies English.

The first explanation, the different structure of subject English in vocational and general studies, will also be affected by the curriculum changes. In the suggested curriculum, the competence aims for English in vocational studies are all found after

Vg1 (Udir, 2019c), meaning that vocational English will be taught during the course of one school year instead of two. This suggested change indicates that the problem of course structure is something the Directorate for Education and Training has been made aware of, and consequently adjusted in the revised curriculum. As the suggested revised curriculum has not been finalized at the time of writing, though, this conclusion is preliminary. In the next chapter, I seek to provide further answers to research question two by looking more closely at the role of textbooks and current and earlier curricula.

9. The influence of textbooks and curricula

This chapter seeks to respond to research question 2: why do teachers choose the literary texts they do? It does so by examining the role of textbooks and curricula, as they are important contextual factors that can influence teachers' beliefs and choices. In what follows, textbooks are discussed first, followed by different aspects of the present curriculum that may influence teachers' literature selections: literature required or mentioned in earlier curricula, literature's current role in examinations, and the subject curriculum's cultural component. The data referred to in this chapter include responses to items from sections 2, 3, and 4 of the survey and the first round of interviews.

9.1 Textbooks

As discussed in chapter 3, textbooks are important interpreters of the curriculum, and studies show that textbooks are central to English teachers' practices in Norway (A. S. Bakken, 2018; Eikrem, 2006; Ø. Gilje et al., 2016; Ibsen & Hellekjær, 2003; Juuhl et al., 2010). Teachers' use of textbooks is an issue that is given attention in several books aimed at teacher training students in subject English in Norway (Drew & Sørheim, 2016; Fenner & Skulstad, 2018; Munden & Sandhaug, 2017). Aspiring teachers are advised not to use textbooks uncritically, but to assess the materials and make conscious decisions regarding the texts and tasks that they choose to use (Drew & Sørheim, 2016, pp. 122-130). The benefits of using textbooks are acknowledged, especially in terms of how they may "simplify the teacher's work" (Fenner & Skulstad, 2018, p. 334) by helping them save time when preparing teaching; the textbook may, therefore, be an essential tool to help teachers manage their busy jobs, particularly novice teachers (Munden & Sandhaug, 2017, p. 64). Nevertheless, there appears to be an underlying idea that the best teachers are able to craft syllabuses that are uniquely adapted to each group of students by combining texts from various resources rather

than relying heavily on one textbook (Drew & Sørheim, 2016, pp. 130-131). Therefore, teachers who rely heavily on the textbook when they select texts could be seen as less creative and independent than teachers who find texts using other sources, and teachers may feel that they should strive towards using textbooks less.

The findings presented in this chapter indicate that textbooks influence teachers in their choices of texts. However, this influence is far from straightforward; even teachers who rely heavily on textbooks as they choose and use literature wield their professional judgment in their encounters with textbooks.

9.1.1 Survey responses

The survey data showed somewhat inconsistent responses to the items asking teachers to report on their practices concerning the use of textbooks, as the table below shows.

Table 27: Teachers' practices and opinions about literature in textbooks

Item	Disagree / somewhat disagree	Agree / somewhat agree	Total
30: Most of the literary texts I use with my classes during the course of a school year have been taken from the students' textbook	34	75	109
32: I use different sources and texts instead of a textbook when selecting literary texts for the classroom	39	70	109
42: Textbooks are the best sources when I select which literary texts to use with a class	56	54	110

In response to item 30, 69% of the survey respondents indicated that most of the literary texts they taught were taken from textbooks. However, in response to item 32, 64% of the respondents reported that they used other sources than the textbook when choosing literary texts. This seemingly contradicting finding could be the result of teachers understanding item 32 in a different way than it was intended: for instance, by agreeing

to the phrase even if they only *sometimes* used different sources than the textbook.[109] Because of this, it is difficult to say, based on the survey results, that the English teachers participating in this study use textbooks frequently. However, one finding that it is possible to say something about, is that the teachers appeared to be divided in terms of whether they thought textbooks were the *best* sources for finding literary texts (see item 42 in table 27).

In the rest of this section, I turn to a different part of the survey, and focus on short stories. As discussed in chapter 7, texts from this genre were frequently mentioned when asking the survey respondents to list suitable texts for the upper secondary classroom (item 15). According to Hallvard Kjelen, short stories are often used when teaching literature "because the format means that you can both read and discuss the text in a double lesson" (2013, p. 160, my translation). In addition to the format, it seems likely that short stories are taught because this genre is often found in textbooks. In order to explore short stories' textbook presence, I looked at the textbooks that were listed as being used by most teachers in the survey (as a response to item 17):[110]

For Vg1 and Vg2 vocational studies, compulsory course:
- *Tracks 1* (Anvik et al., 2006)
- *Tracks 2* (Fuhre et al., 2007)
- *Tracks: Engelsk for yrkesfag* (Burgess et al., 2013)
- *Skills* (Lokøy et al., 2014; Lokøy et al., 2013a, 2013b)[111]

For Vg1 general studies, compulsory course:
- *Access to English* (Burgess & Sørhus, 2013)
- *Targets* (Balsvik et al., 2015; Haugen et al., 2009)

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[109] This contradiction did not appear during the piloting of the questionnaire, unfortunately. Were this questionnaire to be revised, item 32 would be either changed or removed.

[110] For the textbooks *Targets* for general studies and *Tracks* for vocational studies, I have listed both past and present editions. There are three reasons for this. Firstly, some schools replace textbooks quite seldom, and this means that teachers may still be using the older editions even though more recent editions have been published. Secondly, most teachers responding to the survey did not list which edition they were using when mentioning these titles. Thirdly, it is interesting to see whether texts remain part of the textbook's contents through updates and changes. However, I have only included textbooks published after the introduction of LK-06 in 2006.

[111] The textbook series *Skills* consists of a total of seven books. As the teachers who responded to the survey did not indicate which books they used, I decided to look at the three books employed by the interviewed teacher Anne.

- *Passage* (Burgess & Sørhus, 2009)
- *Tracks SF* (Sjøvoll et al., 2016)

For Vg2 and Vg3 general studies, elective courses:
- *Access to International English* (Anthony, Mikkelsen, & Burgess, 2012)
- *Access to English: Social Studies* (Anthony, Burgess, & Mikkelsen, 2014)
- *Access to English: Literature* (Burgess & Sørhus, 2015)

In addition, I looked at the website NDLA (Gundersen & Frønsdal, 2018) which is meant to serve as a resource for upper secondary school teachers and students across the country, and which was mentioned by several teachers in response to item 17.

In the survey, seven short stories were mentioned as suitable by six or more teachers, and these texts are all found in more than one of the textbooks currently used by the teachers responding to the survey. Table 28 below shows which short stories were listed in which teaching resources, as well as which textbooks that did not contain any of the six most popular short stories. It shows that the short stories most frequently mentioned as suitable are found in several teaching resources currently in use. The short story most frequently mentioned as suitable – by 14% of the teachers in the survey – is also the one that is present in the most textbooks: seven books aimed at students taking the compulsory course in Vg1 general studies or Vg1 and Vg2 vocational studies include Liam O'Flaherty's "The Sniper". Grace's "Butterflies" is another interesting case: based on the textbooks in which it is included, this short story is seen as suitable for students taking the compulsory course in both general studies and vocational studies, but also for students taking the elective Vg2 International English course. Furthermore, it is worth noting that only three of the examined textbooks for the compulsory course, all belonging to the series *Skills* for vocational students, do not contain any of the six most popular short stories – although they do contain other literary texts. In sum, the survey results suggest that there might be a connection between the selection of literary texts in the textbooks teachers use and the *de facto* literature syllabus in upper secondary schools.

Table 28: Short stories in textbooks and NDLA

Short story	Teaching resources containing the story
O'Flaherty, "The Sniper"	*Passage* (2009) *Targets* (2009) *Access to English* (2013) *Targets* (2015) *Tracks SF* (2016) *Tracks 1* (2006) *Tracks: Engelsk for yrkesfag* (2013)
Silko, "Tony's Story"	*Targets* (2009) *Passage* (2009) NDLA (2018)
Grace, "Butterflies"	*Targets* (2009) *Targets* (2015) *Access to International English* (2012) *Tracks: Engelsk for yrkesfag* (2013) *Tracks 2* (2007)
Jew, "Everyone Talked Loudly in Chinatown"	*Passage* (2009) *Access to English* (2013)
Garner, "The Moose and the Sparrow"	*Targets* (2009) *Targets* (2015)
Hemingway, "A Day's Wait"	*Passage* (2009) *Tracks 1* (2006)
Hughes, "Thank You, M'am"	*Targets* (2009) *Targets* (2015)

Textbooks *not* containing any of the short stories listed above:	*Access to English: Social Studies* (2014) *Access to English: Literature* (2015) *Skills* (2013a; 2013b; 2014)

9.1.2 Interview responses

Turning to the interviews, we have seen that most of the respondents relied on their textbooks. However, although most of them saw the textbooks as important, they did not use them as the only teaching resource. Digital resources (especially NDLA) and books (especially novels) were the most popular additional teaching resources.

Several of the interviewed teachers felt strongly about the textbooks they used. At one end of the spectrum was Margaret; she thought that textbooks in general were "boring.

They're really boring, I'm bored, the students get bored" (I1, p. 10). Therefore, she made only limited use of a few literary texts and sections about writing and research skills from the textbook. Instead, she used texts that she located elsewhere as "a piece of evidence or an artefact really, from a culture" (I1, p. 10). Interestingly, even though Margaret had created her own syllabus consisting of texts taken from various sources, she had chosen to include one short story from the textbook *Access to English* (2013) with her Vg1 general studies students: Jew's "Everyone Talked Loudly in Chinatown". The reason was, according to Margaret, that Jew's short story was one of the few texts in the textbook she thought the students would be interested in, and that it "works pretty well […] I've used that one a lot in many different classes. Clear conflict and there, the students have something to say about it, so that's always good" (I1, p. 11).

In the school year in which I first met her, Victoria was not using the textbook either. She had stopped using it for a similar reason as Margaret: "I overheard a conversation between two of the students last year, I mean last school year, and they thought that the book was so boring. It was so boring and, and I partially agree" (I1, T, p. 10). In our first interview, she explained how she had created the year plan herself based on texts she enjoyed teaching instead. Interestingly, the only short story she had included from the textbook (*Access to English*) was "Everyone Talked Loudly in Chinatown" – just like Margaret. When I interviewed Victoria for the second time, however, a new school year had begun, and she had chosen to rely more on the textbook. She said that the reason was that she "spent a lot of time on preparations" (I2, T, p. 2), and using the textbook would save time. When I asked her more about this, she said that she was happier with the text selection when she had designed her own syllabus without considering the textbook; it was her amount of available planning time had led her to use the textbook more.

What I find interesting about Margaret and Victoria's cases are, first of all, that they considered both their students' and their own opinions when making the choice to move away from the textbook.[112] Secondly, even though they had largely done away with the textbook in their teaching, both of them nevertheless chose to include Jew's "Everyone

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[112] This issue is discussed in more detail in chapter 10.

Talked Loudly in Chinatown" from the textbook available to them because it stood out as a text that worked well in the classroom. This indicates that the popularity of the short stories in table 28 may be a result not just of their textbook presence, but also of their qualities as teachable texts.

This point is also evident, although viewed from a different angle, when examining the case of Anne. Unlike Margaret and Victoria, she relied heavily on the textbooks assigned to the different classes she taught, which were different editions of *Skills* (Lokøy et al., 2014; Lokøy et al., 2013a, 2013b): "I might be a little bit tied to the book when I plan, so I pick things that fit in with that […] The chapters of the book steer my literature choices based on the issues they address" (I1, T, p. 15). Her year plans showed that the vast majority of literary texts she used with her classes were taken from the textbooks she used currently, or texts that she copied from other textbooks that she had used earlier. However, this was not how Anne would ideally like her teaching to be: "I haven't quite figured out how I can plan everything without using the textbook […] But I admire the teachers that are able to do it […] Because you have more freedom, perhaps" (I1, T, pp. 15-16). Anne wanted to be less tied to the textbook in order to gain more freedom as she made plans and selected literature, but since she was unsure of how she could do this, she followed the textbook closely instead. One of the reasons why she did this could be because she did not feel that she had succeeded in the past when she had introduced books (graded readers) to her students.[113]

The textbook series *Skills* that Anne used differs from most of the other textbooks mentioned earlier in this section because it includes none of the short stories in table 28. This might be because *Skills* focuses on novel excerpts rather than short stories. Since Anne relied heavily on the textbook as she selected literary texts for her students, one might think that she would not have included any of the short stories in table 28 because they were not in *Skills*. However, she added three literary texts to her year plans that were not in her textbooks; two of these were the short stories "The Moose and the Sparrow" by Garner (which she found in the textbook *Targets*) and "A Day's Wait" by Hemingway (which she found in the textbook *Tracks 1*). When asked in the

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[113] See section 7.4.5.

first interview to present a text that she was very happy with teaching, she chose to discuss Hemingway's short story because she had used it for several years; prior to the introduction of *Skills*, she had incorporated it in all of her classes. At the time of the interview she only used it in her health services class because it addressed a health issue, but Anne thought it worked with all types of students because "it is a really nice story that has a lot of lovely images that you can bring in and discuss" (I1, T, p. 6). She used "The Moose and the Sparrow" because it dealt with bullying in the work place, "which is a really relevant topic" (I1, T, p. 7), and because she thought "it is a really good short story, and it's a little bit different because there is a crime story there" (I1, T, p. 7). This means that Anne, despite her reliance on the textbook, chose to expand her selection of literature in order to include texts she was familiar with and that were not in her current textbook because she thought that Hemingway's and Garner's texts were relevant for her students.

This is another example of the resilience of the short stories in table 28: three of them ("Everyone Talked Loudly in Chinatown", "The Moose and the Sparrow", and "A Day's Wait") made the three teachers discussed above act differently than they did in most of their other text selection processes. These texts remained part of the teachers' text selections both when they chose texts from an abundance of resources and when they changed their main resource, the textbook.

Turning back to Anne, it is worth noting that even though she relied on textbooks in her planning and selection of literature, she was also critical of the texts the books contained, and did not use all of them. She thought that the vocational texts in the *Skills* books were quite good, but in terms of literature, she though that "the text selection is really a little bit weird" (I1, T, p. 6). This was largely due to the many novel excerpts that were used, which she thought made the students "lose a little bit of the context because it's just a little piece of a larger context" (I1, T, p. 6). She thought that some of the texts were written "in a complicated manner" (I1, T, p. 6), which meant that she had to spend a lot of time explaining words to the students. Furthermore, she tended to skip the chapter that included provocative texts because "I'm not able to get these discussions going that I think the authors were hoping that they would create" (I1, T, p. 6). Anne's choices regarding the texts she ended up using showed that she reasoned

according to her concern for her students and their learning; she picked the texts from the textbook that she felt she was able to teach well, and that she saw as being suitable for her students. Furthermore, Anne's wish that she could liberate herself more from the textbooks might be related to her expressed dislike of the literary texts available in them.

Another interesting point concerning Anne is that even though she was bound to the book when choosing literary texts for her students, she was freer when choosing films for classroom use. She described how she would choose films that fit in with the students' different vocational study programs, films linked to culture and history in English-speaking countries, and films that were adaptations of literary texts. In most cases, these were films that were not mentioned in the textbook. The reason for this might be that Anne expressed a deeper personal interest in watching films than in reading literature, and often found it easier to work with film. Furthermore, she focused on her students' responses to the films she showed, and allowed her film selection to be influenced by her students' preferences, while also being concerned with "what fits into the educational context" (I1, T, p. 12). This was a very different approach to that which she had to most literary texts, and shows that the type of material teachers are working with influences how they go about selecting specific works. Anne felt that she could choose films more freely than she could literary texts, probably because she knew more about films and, therefore, had the confidence to work outside of the framework of the textbook.[114]

Another teacher who relied on the textbook when selecting literature was Joanna, the student-centered humanitarian. She used the textbook *Passage* (Burgess & Sørhus, 2009) with her Vg1 general studies students, and her description of how she used it shared some similarities with Anne's. Joanna stated that "I try to follow the topics in the book. But, for my own variation I sometimes switch the order around from year to year. Because it's boring to just start over again. But this year I think that I've followed the topics that are in the book" (I1, T, pp. 9-10). This means that Joanna was tied to the

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[114] An additional explanation could be the lower cost of acquiring one film for classroom use compared with the cost of purchasing a class set of a book (see A. S. Bakken (2016) for a study of English teachers' views on films).

textbook in the sense that it decided the topics she would address, with the textbook functioning as a point of departure (Ø. Gilje et al., 2016). Joanna's approach was similar to Anne's, who also let the chapters of the textbooks decide which topics she would work with and which texts she would use. When discussing *why* she relied heavily on the textbook, Joanna's argumentation was different from Anne's, though. Joanna stated that she stayed close to the textbook "really because the students like it best" (I1, T, p. 10), and that they preferred the predictability and clear structure that the textbook offered.

Joanna stated that she had used and liked to use most of the texts in the textbook available to her Vg1 general studies students, *Passage*. When she chose not to use a certain text, the reason was usually that she wanted to vary her text selection from year to year. The only text she did not use at all was the excerpt from Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* (1897), and this had more to do with her personal preferences: "horror stories and stuff like that. I don't really like them. So that's more because of my own gut instinct" (I1, T, p. 12). This means that Joanna utilized most of the literary texts available in the textbook at one point or another, and changed her selection based on her own desire for variety.

In sum, this means that teachers rely on or discard textbooks for various reasons. Margaret had stopped using textbooks because both she and her students thought they were boring. Victoria had reluctantly turned back to using the textbook despite being happier with the texts she had selected herself, whereas both Anne and Joanna had a clearly textbook-oriented approach to literature selection throughout. The difference between the two latter teachers lay in how they explained their reliance on textbooks, and how they felt about the textbooks they used. Joanna relied on the textbook because she thought it would benefit her students, whereas Anne was unable to do what she thought was best, namely to free herself more from the textbook. What Anne wanted to do was what Margaret and Victoria had done; Victoria, however, had found it to be too time-consuming, and did not repeat the process. It is also important to point out that whereas Joanna was happy with the literary texts in the textbook she used, Anne was not satisfied with the selection. Despite her dissatisfaction, she was not able to free herself from the textbook, but worked within its framework. For Anne, there was,

therefore, a clearer element of text assessment involved; she had to use her professional judgment to pick the texts that she thought would work well with her students to a greater extent than Joanna, who enjoyed teaching most of the texts in the book her class used.

Furthermore, the teachers' attitudes towards textbooks show how the textbook was not the only influencing factor when these teachers chose literature. Margaret and Victoria chose *not* to use most of the texts in their current textbooks, and even textbook-reliant Anne and Joanna skipped some of the literature in their textbooks. This tells us that although the text selection in textbooks may have an influence on teachers' choices, these teachers did not adopt the textbook uncritically. Rather, they used their professional judgment to select which texts to use and which texts to ignore. Textbooks appear to be important in terms of introducing literary texts to teachers, but textbook presence alone does not necessarily lead to their classroom use.

9.2 Curriculum considerations

In this section, I present findings related to three different approaches to the curriculum's influence on teachers' choices and beliefs about literature. First, literary texts specified in earlier curricula are examined; next, I look at written examinations in LK-06, which can be considered official interpreters of the curriculum; then, the cultural components of the English subjects in upper secondary school today are discussed in relation to teachers' literature choices.

9.2.1 Earlier curricula

As discussed in chapter 3, the current LK-06 curriculum does not include any specific authors or texts that students need to read or know about. This was not the case in some of the earlier curricula. In this section, I look in more detail at the literary texts

mentioned in the New Structure, Veierød, and R94 curricula, and compare them to the texts most frequently mentioned as suitable by the teachers in the current study.

Set texts in earlier curricula

In the compulsory English courses in New Structure (1974-1989) and Veierød (1989-1994), there were no lists of set texts. This was also the case with all the English courses in R94 (1994-2006), except for a specification stating that students had to read a play and at least one sonnet by Shakespeare in one of the elective courses (KKUF, 2001). The elective courses in New Structure and Veierød, however, included lists of set texts that students had to read, and it is these that I focus on in this section.

In the New Structure period, two different curricula were in use at the same time. Plan A was less specific than the other curriculum which was called New Structure, but did emphasize that students taking the elective courses in English had to read one play by Shakespeare (or another work by an important author from before 1900) (KUD, 1976b). In the first version of the New Structure curriculum for the elective courses, they could choose between two sets of texts, each containing one novel and two plays. The first set consisted of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* (1954), James Baldwin's *Blues for Mister Charlie* (1964), and Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* (1944), and the second set consisted of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), Arnold Wesker's *Roots* (1958), and T. S. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party* (1949) (Ibsen & Wiland, 2000, p. 38). The sets were changed and reorganized for the first time in 1978. Teachers and students were now to choose three literary works, one from each of the three different sets of texts. Golding's and Baldwin's texts remained, and the plays *Macbeth* (1606) by Shakespeare, *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) by T. S. Eliot, *Death of a Salesman* (1949) by Miller, and *The Death of Bessie Smith* (1960) by Edward Albee were included, as were the novels *The Millstone* (1965) by Margaret Drabble and *The Heart of the Matter* (1948) by Graham Greene (Ibsen & Wiland, 2000, p. 43). Additionally, five selected short stories were included in the set texts. After 1978, the list of short stories was changed regularly, and in the last revision of the New Structure curriculum in 1985, the texts listed as a set were all short stories (KUD, 1985, p. 133).

In the Veierød period, the curriculum for the elective, advanced courses specified the genres that students should read, and included a list of eight works that students had to read during the course of two years. There was some element of choice regarding one of these works, as it was possible to choose between Miller's play *Death of a Salesman*, Orwell's novel *Animal Farm* (1945), and Bernard MacLaverty's novel *Cal* (1983) when it came to the required longer text. Besides this longer work, the list included short stories, poems, and excerpts from an epistolary work: *Letters from an Indian Judge to an English Gentlewoman* (1934) (KUD, 1992, p. 229).

Comparing texts specified in earlier curricula and texts still in use today

In chapter 7, I presented texts seen as suitable by the survey respondents, and tables 11 and 12 provided an overview of the texts most frequently mentioned in response to item 15. The table below compares these to specific texts and authors mentioned in earlier curricula.

Table 29: Texts specified in earlier curricula that were seen as suitable by teachers in the survey

Literary texts	Curriculum	Number of teachers
One play by William Shakespeare	Plan A (1976)	Ten teachers
One play and at least one sonnet by William Shakespeare	Reform 94 (1994)	Plays: Ten teachers Sonnets: Two teachers
Shakespeare, *Macbeth*	New Structure (upd. 1978)	Two teachers
Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*	New Structure (1976)	Two teachers
Orwell, *Animal Farm*	Veierød (1987)	Seven teachers
Miller, *Death of a Salesman*	New Structure (upd. 1978) Veierød (1987)	Two teachers
Golding, *Lord of the Flies*	New Structure (1976) New Structure (upd. 1978)	Six teachers

(Sources: Ibsen & Wiland, 2000; KKUF, 1993b; 2001; KUD, 1976a; 1976b; 1985; 1991; 1992.)

The table shows that some texts and authors appear to remain relevant across time and curricula. William Shakespeare, William Golding, Arthur Miller, George Orwell, and Tennessee Williams are the authors whose specific works mentioned in earlier

curricula are still seen as suitable by some of the teachers participating in this study: 22 different teachers mentioned the texts in the table above (although only two of these teachers mentioned more than one of the texts). The interview respondents, however, did not use the texts in the table above in the school year in which I first interviewed them, with the exception of Victoria, who had – as discussed earlier – used Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. However, Joanna said that she had used Golding's *Lord of the Flies* several times in the past, as well as a different novel by George Orwell, namely *1984*. The latter text was used by Margaret in the school year in which I met her, and she explained that she had used *Macbeth* and sonnets by Shakespeare in the past. As discussed in section 8.1.3, several teachers said that they had used and wanted to use texts by Shakespeare in their teaching. This could mean that in some cases, the authors are more important than their specific works; in terms of Shakespeare, both the New Structure and R94 curricula as well as some of the teachers' responses indicate that what is important is to read anything at all by Shakespeare. This is also arguably the case with Ernest Hemingway. His short story "The Killers" (1927) was part of the curriculum in 1985, and in this study, another one of his short stories, namely "A Day's Wait", was one of the literary texts most frequently suggested as suitable for upper secondary students. This indicates that the specific texts used may change, but the author remains relevant. Furthermore, the fact that some of the texts specified in earlier curricula are still seen as suitable by teachers today could reflect the notion of literary syllabi changing with "glacial slowness" (Applebee, 1992, p. 15; Kjelen, 2013, p. 133) – that it takes time before the *de facto* syllabus changes.

9.2.2 Examinations

Examinations are important interpretations of the curriculum, and it is, therefore, likely that they influence teachers' literature choices. However, as I demonstrated in chapter 3, literature does not play a central part in the written examinations in most of the English courses in upper secondary school. Consequently, few of the teachers I interviewed appeared to be very concerned with examinations as they discussed their

selections of literary texts, with two exceptions: Neil and Sophie, who both had similar experiences with the examinations in the same types of courses.

Examinations influenced Neil's choices in all of the courses he taught: the compulsory course for general studies, Vg2 International English, and Vg3 Social Studies English. When asked whether he used poetry with any of his students, he said, "we use some poems, and sometimes when we analyze songs we treat them as poems. […] But not a lot. I think that's in part because poems are not emphasized on the exams. They tend to focus more on kind of articles and, and short stories, and less on poems" (I1, p. 21). Concerning Vg2 International English, he saw the course as being "a mess, really, when it comes to, to learning goals […] I spend a lot of time looking at previous exams and always, every semester I look at the new exams, like what are they doing, what are they focusing on" (I1, p. 16). This means that he did not think that the competence aims explained clearly enough what he was to focus on, so he used the written examinations as guidelines for his teaching.

Neil found the Vg3 course, Social Studies English, to be the complete opposite, and the examinations thus had a different role here:

> Social Studies English doesn't have much room for literature, because it's the opposite of International English, it has almost no room for interpretation and no room for extra material because it's so crammed with things you have to know to pass the exam almost. It's the only English subject I have that I'm generally, or genuinely worried that people might flunk the exam. Because it..the questions are sometimes extremely complex (I1, p. 19)

For this course, Neil was worried about students failing the exam because they did not know everything they needed to. He said that because of this, he followed the textbook more closely in the Vg3 course in order to make sure that he covered everything the students might be asked. However, this did not apply to literature; he would usually skip most of the literary texts in the textbook and focus on a few selected texts that he wanted the students to read, including a novel. Even though he felt that the Vg3 course and its examination required students to have extensive knowledge about culture, history, and society, and that there was little room for literature, he still thought that

reading literature extensively was extremely beneficial for his students. He focused especially on its positive impact on their language skills: "I always see that when they've just read a novel, and then wrote an essay, that their language is better than it was before they read that novel. Just that, just that one novel. […] really makes a difference" (I1, p. 5).

Neil made sure to include literature when teaching the Vg3 course, but the types of texts he chose were influenced by the examination. He tended to focus on American literature in this course because "we do work more on American politics, we do work more on the American system […] the exam also focuses more on American politics" (I1, p. 25). In Neil's case, then, examinations appeared to have an effect on which types of texts he would read with his students, but they did not affect the *amount* of literature he used. The concern I raised in chapter 3, regarding literature's peripheral role in the examinations leading to literature being used less, appears to be unfounded – at least in the case of Neil.

Sophie was concerned with the same challenges as Neil regarding literature's role in Vg3 Social Studies English: "Vg3 is more difficult, because you unfortunately feel like it steals time away from the work with writing texts yourselves about advanced political and social topics. There is very little literature in the exam, you know" (I1, T, p. 17). Here, she sees the same problem as Neil, namely struggling to squeeze in literature in a course that requires students to possess knowledge about issues that do not have to relate to literary texts.

Sophie also used literature's role in examinations in other courses she had taught, namely the compulsory course and Vg2 International English, as an argument to promote in-depth work with a few texts rather than working superficially with many texts. As discussed in chapter 3, several of the tasks in earlier examinations that referred to literature were quite vague, and students had to choose themselves which text to use when responding. These are the types of tasks that Sophie is referring to below.

> There are often some exam questions, because the exam controls a lot as well of course, that relate to literature you have read or films you have seen this year to explain how a person develops in this way or that, these vague questions. But where they have to pick

for themselves. And if you have, we have skimmed through a lot of texts, then I think it will be difficult for them to choose. But if we have worked more intensely with a few texts and a few topics, then, they are allowed to bring some aids, and then they have notes and we have, we have these packages available. That they can use. (I1, T, p. 22)

This means that Sophie saw in-depth work with literature as an approach that helped students pass examinations. In this sense, examinations can be argued to have had an effect on Sophie's ways of working with literature as well as her text selection.

In sum, it seems that examinations have a certain washback effect on some teachers' literary choices. However, as only two of the teachers brought up examinations in their interviews, it is probably not the most important element affecting the teachers in this study. Furthermore, the two teachers who were influenced by examinations described different types of washback effects: for Neil, examinations affected him in his choices of texts, whereas for Sophie, they affected how she worked with literary texts. Neil and Sophie were, however, in agreement regarding literature's role in Vg3 Social Studies English, and how the examination's focus on other issues than literature meant that they struggled to make literary texts – which they nevertheless saw as important – fit into their teaching plans.

9.2.3 Culture in the subject curriculum

In this section, I discuss the texts presented in chapter 7 as the *de facto* literature syllabus in relation to the geographical origin and focus of literary texts, more specifically the role of Anglo-American literature and texts from other parts of the English-speaking world. It is important to note that the various English courses in upper secondary focus differently regarding Anglo-American and global English. As mentioned in chapter 3, the compulsory course in Vg1/Vg2 and the elective Vg2 course International English are more oriented towards global English, whereas the elective Vg3 courses Social Studies English and English Literature and Culture prioritize Anglo-American literature, society, and culture. However, the responses discussed in

this section do not always distinguish between the different courses, partly because the survey respondents did not always provide that information in their answers, and partly because the interview respondents spoke generally when discussing some of the issues.

Teachers' views on textual variety related to culture

The term "culture" has two broad meanings when it is discussed in the educational context of subject English in Norway. Firstly, it can refer to specific works of art or performances; secondly, it can refer to "collective behaviour and shared ways of understanding the world" (Munden & Sandhaug, 2017, p. 357). The latter meaning is what I refer to when discussing culture in this section. This understanding of culture is closely connected to society, as culture needs to be understood and enacted by people together. Kachru and Smith argue that culture is a complex notion which is "both historic and immediate; it shapes action – verbal as well as a variety of other actions – and is also shaped by them. It is a dynamic process rather than a static, monolithic entity with a stable existence" (2008, p. 31). This means that cultures are continuously changing, and so are people's affinities with different cultures. Furthermore, culture can refer to both "ephemeral, even trivial, aspects of experience" as well as to "deeply held values" (Griswold, 2008, p. 17); it encompasses all kinds of human activities and experiences. In what follows, the term is used mainly to refer to countries – such as the USA – but also to different peoples, especially minorities, within the same country – such as Native Americans and African-Americans.

In both the survey and the interviews, the teachers were asked whether they thought that "the literary texts that students read in English lessons throughout a school year should reflect the variety present in English-language literature and culture" (item 53). Of the eight interviewed teachers, some agreed with the above statement as an ideal. Joanna emphasized an approach that focused on cultural breadth and said that "I am very concerned with them knowing a little bit" and went on to discuss literature and culture from India, different parts of Africa, as well as that of various indigenous peoples (I1, T, p. 21). Similarly, Charlotte agreed without hesitation with the statement, and said that the literature selection should reflect "both geographical and cultural" (I1,

T, p. 36) varieties. Both Joanna and Charlotte, then, appeared to focus on cultural variety in terms of breadth by working with texts from several cultures without emphasizing one above the others.

Some of the other teachers qualified their responses by stating that they did not always include texts from a variety of English-language literatures and cultures because this was hard to achieve in practice. Sophie said that "there are time limitations. […] You have to make some choices, you have to choose not to use some things" (I1, T, p. 22). Margaret went further, and argued that reflecting cultural variation was "an impossible task in the little time you have in a classroom. […] I think it's a valid choice to try to reflect the variation, I think it's an equally valid choice to go in depth in one particular time and culture" (I1, p. 24). Therefore, Margaret and Sophie interpreted the issue of cultural variety in a different manner than Joanna and Charlotte, namely by studying several texts from a few countries where English is a first or official language, and including occasional texts from other countries.

The only interviewed teacher who disagreed with seeing geographic and cultural variety as an ideal was Robert, who had no other criteria for text selection besides the texts being suitable for his students. Therefore, his response to the question of cultural variety was: "No. I think the selection should be adapted to the class, and the level of the class, independently of the selection that exists in English-language literature, because it is so vast and huge" (I1, T, p. 26).

In the survey, 98% of the respondents agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement addressing cultural variety (item 53), making this one of the statements that teachers agreed on the most. However, even though most of the teachers agreed with cultural variety as an ideal, responses to other parts of the survey indicated that this may not be what happens in practice – or that cultural variety may be interpreted differently by different teachers. The table below lists the texts mentioned as suitable for upper secondary students by at least six teachers in response to item 15, and describes their geographical setting and the minority peoples that are central in the texts. The table shows that most of these texts are Anglo-American, and that the perspective of

minorities or indigenous peoples is present in several texts. These two issues are discussed in more detail in the next sections.

Table 30: The geographical setting and the minorities in focus in frequently mentioned texts

Title	Geographical setting	Minorities in focus
Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*	USA	Native Americans
Silko, "Tony's Story"	USA	Native Americans
Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*	USA	African-Americans
Hughes, "Thank You, M'am"	USA	African-Americans
Collins, *The Hunger Games*	USA	
Steinbeck, *Of Mice and Men*	USA	
Hemingway, "A Day's Wait"	USA	
Frost, "The Road Not Taken"	USA	
Hosseini, *The Kite Runner*	Afghanistan / USA	Hazaras
Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*	Great Britain	
Orwell, *Animal Farm*	Great Britain (allegory)	
Golding, *Lord of the Flies*	Unnamed Pacific island	
Jew, "Everyone Talked Loudly in Chinatown"	Canada	Chinese-Canadians
Garner, "The Moose and the Sparrow"	Canada	
Grace, "Butterflies"	New Zealand	Maoris
O'Flaherty, "The Sniper"	Ireland	
Swarup, *Slumdog Millionaire / Q & A*	India	

Indigenous peoples' literature

As discussed in chapter 3, the current curriculum requires literature "by and about indigenous peoples" (Udir, 2013a, p. 9) to be discussed by the students taking the compulsory English course in Vg1 or Vg2. Three of the seventeen texts in table 30 were written by indigenous authors (Alexie, Silko, and Grace), and the content of these texts has a clear focus on native peoples, their histories and cultures, as well as individuals' predicaments. The curriculum's specificity regarding texts addressing native peoples is probably the reason why these texts have acquired a place in the *de facto* literature syllabus; the interviews certainly suggested as much. In fact, Sophie,

208

who taught both subject English and Norwegian, thought the indigenous peoples perspective was the only real difference between the two subjects in Vg1 general studies.

In the interviews, both Sophie and Neil chose Alexie's novel *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* when asked to present and discuss a literary text that they had taught and had good experiences with. When asked why she chose this particular text for her students, Sophie answered, "I thought, this is perfect. It is simple English, funny, and it fits right into the curriculum with the indigenous peoples topic which is, they are supposed to read a little bit the curriculum says, to read literature by and about" (I1, T, p. 6). Similarly, Neil said that he liked using the Alexie novel because "it deals with a lot of the same issues that we deal with in the subject as a whole" (I1, p. 4). Sophie used the novel in the Vg1 general studies course because she emphasized the indigenous peoples aim from the curriculum, whereas Neil used it in Vg2 International English because he wanted to build on their knowledge about Native Americans from Year 10 and Vg1. He saw the competence aims for the Vg2 course as being "open to interpretation" (I1, p. 16), which meant that he could essentially use whichever materials he wanted as long as he focused on central topics. This included making sure that the global nature of the course was included, something he saw the Alexie novel as being a part of. Similarly, Sophie saw the focus on indigenous peoples in the compulsory course as linked to its emphasis on global English: "Vg1 English is very much like the world, English-speaking world […] I'll find pictures of an Australian desert, a Maori canoe..a lot like that" (I1, T, p. 3). For these teachers, then, the indigenous perspective was central to upper secondary subject English because it is explicitly mentioned in the curriculum, but also because it is part of the cultural diversity that they saw as central when teaching English-language literature and culture.

Continued Anglo-American dominance

Of the texts listed in table 30, nine of the seventeen texts originate in or have a close link to the USA. Two texts are set in Great Britain, and one text is set in the Pacific but

209

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209

revolves around British schoolboys. That leaves five texts, two of which originate in Canada, and one that originates in Ireland. This means that there are only two texts that are not set in the USA, Great Britain, or their immediate neighboring countries: "Butterflies" from New Zealand and *Slumdog Millionaire*/*Q & A* from India (and both of these countries are former British colonies and members of the Commonwealth of Nations). This seems to suggest that the Anglo-American approach to literature selection is very much in place in today's *de facto* literature syllabus. This was further confirmed when I examined the list of plays and poetry mentioned by more than one teacher: authors from other countries than the USA and Great Britain were responsible for only two of the poems, and for none of the plays. However, when I looked more closely at the overview of all the prose texts mentioned by more than one teacher,[115] I found that there is a difference between novels and short stories in this matter. Whereas authors from the USA or Great Britain wrote 90% of the novels, Anglo-American authors were responsible for only 56% of the short stories. This indicates a much greater cultural variety among the short stories that teachers see as suitable for the classroom.

Furthermore, I would argue that the situation is even more complex. Several of the Anglo-American texts in table 30 do not represent the majority perspective, which means that even though they are categorized as Anglo-American, they contain elements of cultural variety. Of the nine American texts, one deals with poor, white migrant workers (Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*), two deal with Native Americans, but in widely different manners (Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* and Silko's "Tony's Story"), two deal with the challenges faced by African-Americans, but in different ways (Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* and Hughes's "Thank You, M'am"), one is mostly set in Afghanistan and tells the story of an immigrant to the USA (Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*), and one is set in a fictional future USA (Collins's *The Hunger Games*). This means that the image conveyed of the USA in these texts is multifaceted and multicultural, which links the text selection more to cultural variety than one might immediately assume. Nevertheless, as all of the texts mentioned above

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[115] See appendix 9.

are set in or have a strong link to the USA, they do not represent a global English approach. They all revolve around life in the USA (or, in *The Kite Runner*'s case, includes the life of an immigrant to the USA before he arrived), even if these lives are often seen from another perspective than that of the white American. This text selection, then, appears to confirm the notion that it is first and foremost countries in which English is the first language of the majority that are interpreted to be the "English-speaking countries" referred to in the curriculum, and that Great Britain and the USA still dominate the text selection.

The three teachers Victoria, Neil, and Anne exemplify this. They all acknowledged the importance of cultural variety, but stated that they themselves tended to emphasize Anglo-American cultures. Victoria expressed a wish to be able to teach a wider variety of literatures: "I have only worked with American and British, but it should be like that, like what you asked" (I1, T, p. 25).[116] Neil was open about his preference for the USA, although he wanted to show the students variety as well: "I tend to drift towards American culture and especially Native Americans […] At the same time I do think it's very important to give them an international context, and to give them reading from, from different cultures" (I1, p. 32). Anne included some texts from other parts of the world, but seemed to take for granted that the Anglo-American cultures should be emphasized in the selection of literature: "the bulk is British and American, *of course*, but I try to find, to pick a text of some kind from the most common English-speaking areas" (I1, T, p. 27, italics added). All of these examples were taken from discussions the teachers engaged in regarding the compulsory course in Vg1/Vg2, which is focused towards global English. This seems to indicate that teachers may downplay the importance of global English even though the curriculum encourages them to use it, and there may be several reasons for this.

When considering teachers' beliefs about and employment of Anglo-American and/or global English approaches, it is useful to view the selection of literary texts in relation to their teaching of culture and society. Many of the interviewed teachers saw the link

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[116] Victoria refers here to the question which was identical to item 53 in the survey: whether she though that "the literary texts that students read in English lessons throughout a school year should reflect the variety present in English-language literature and culture".

between literature, culture, and society as an inherent part of subject English, especially when discussing the geographical origin and/or setting and subject matter of the literary texts they selected. As discussed in the previous section, Neil focused on American literature with his students in Vg3 Social Studies English because the overall focus in the examinations was on American politics. This course is, as discussed in chapter 3, oriented towards Great Britain and the USA, so in Neil's case, he downplayed the importance of British culture and literature in order to provide more space for the American. Neil thought that since American politics was emphasized, he also had to emphasize American literature more than British literature.

Another important reason for choosing texts from a particular country or region was which cultures and literatures the teachers were familiar with. Neil's reasons for prioritizing American texts over British were, in addition to the ones mentioned above, because he felt that "when I do American subjects, I can give a lot more back" (I1, p. 25) – he thought that when he taught texts that he knew, he was able to be a better teacher for his students.[117] With regards to the discussion of having an Anglo-American or global English focus when selecting texts, Victoria stated that she had only worked with American and British texts because she preferred to work with classics, and the texts she knew and liked mostly originated in either Great Britain or the USA. She had not included texts from other parts of the world "because I don't have enough time, and perhaps I don't have enough knowledge about […] other types of literature from other countries than just Great Britain and America" (I1, T, p. 26). This indicates that both the link between culture, society, and literature and the teachers' preferences for and knowledge about certain types of literature influence which cultures' and countries' literatures that are taught.

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[117] This is discussed further in chapter 10 as the teacher-oriented approach to text selection.

9.3 Concluding remarks

This chapter has examined two important contextual factors that might influence teachers' choices and beliefs about literature: textbooks and the curriculum. The findings demonstrate that although many teachers are textbook-oriented and the most popular short stories mentioned as suitable for the classroom were found in textbooks, teachers do not seem to adopt literary texts uncritically. Some texts show resilience in terms of them being included in the teachers' syllabi even when they no longer use the textbook in which it was found, and other texts are not used in the classroom even though they are in the textbook currently in use. This indicates that teachers wield their professional judgment in encounters with the textbook.

This chapter has also shown that although the specific texts mentioned in earlier curricula are not in widespread use anymore, some of these texts' authors are still present in the *de facto* literature syllabus today. When addressing the influence of the curriculum presently in use, LK-06, my findings show that examinations do not seem to influence the respondents to a great extent in terms of the amount of literature they use; however, for some, it affects which texts they choose and which approaches to teaching literature they employ. In terms of the subject curriculum's cultural orientation, this appears to have some influence on teachers' literature choices. Additionally, though, teachers' personal preferences for and knowledge about certain cultures and types of literature seem to affect which countries' literature are taught, as well as how closely the teachers link culture, society, and literature together in their teaching.

10. How do teachers select literature?

In the previous chapters, I discussed which specific literary texts and genres teachers use, and suggested reasons why. In this chapter, I seek to shed light on the different ways in which teachers approach text selection by focusing on which *people* influence them in this process. What role do their own literary preferences play, or those of their students, or their colleagues? The different approaches are examined with an emphasis on the interview data, but survey responses have been included where they are relevant. Three dominant approaches to how teachers described their text selection process are presented: teacher-oriented, student-oriented, and collegial. However, the latter category was unexpected: it emerged as I analyzed the data. Since the approaches have been developed through a combination of analysis of data, didactic theories, and previous research, they can be said to have been developed abductively (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009, p. 4).

The identification of the teacher-oriented and student-oriented approaches was supported by ideologies, curricula, and teaching methods discussed in studies of subject English in Norway (Fenner, 2005; Simensen, 2007). In an empirical study, Bjørg Olsen Eikrem examined the difference between the teacher holding "a centre-stage position" and the teacher who "seeks to inspire students' involvement and creativity" (Eikrem, 2006, pp. 175, 198). Eikrem's categorization was not limited to literature teaching, but a similar categorization can be found in one study examining the teaching of literature in L1 subjects in Scandinavia, and an American study of literature teaching. The Scandinavian study is that of Sylvi Penne, who discussed two approaches to teaching literature: on the one hand, the "literary intellectuals" who teach literature in demanding, teacher-oriented manners, and on the other hand, "the pedagogical teachers" who adapt their teaching to their students (2012, pp. 44-45, my translation). Similarly, the American study discussed whether teachers used "inflexible" or "flexible" models of literature selection and instruction, with the level of flexibility relating to the extent to which they considered their students' skills and interests (Agee, 2000, p. 303). Penne's and Agee's studies discussed both text selection and classroom

practices in upper secondary school, but Eikrem's study addressed teachers' methods in the classroom in general and did not investigate upper secondary school. In this study, therefore, I was interested in finding out whether these two attitudes, teacher-oriented and student-oriented, were present in English teachers' text selection processes.

When examining the interviews more closely, however, I found that one of the teachers' approaches to text selection did not fit into this framework; Sophie, the quick and efficient teacher, relied more on collaboration with colleagues than on the other factors. When rereading the interviews with the other teachers using this focus, I found it useful for describing the aspirations of two of the other teachers as well. Thus, I included the collegial as the third approach in the analysis. It is important to note, though, that as this third approach is based on interviews with just one respondent, it should be viewed with more caution than the other two. It exists as a prototype, but it is not strongly represented in my data.

In what follows, I discuss the teacher-oriented, student-oriented, and collegial approaches to text selection.[118] I begin each section by presenting a prototype of a teacher who would use this approach when selecting texts. The prototypes are one-dimensional descriptions of teachers whose beliefs and practices are static and do not change regardless of context. They have been created in order to show clearly what each approach entails, as none of the approaches were found in a pure form in the interview data; the interviewed teachers are, naturally, more complex in their approaches than the prototypes. Their different approaches have found expression in the interviewed teachers' responses to questions relating to text selection, both on the level of individual texts and on the level of year plans. It appears as though the contexts in which the teachers operate may influence the approaches that they use; the same teacher may describe different text selection approaches depending on the student group or literary text s/he is discussing. This means that the same teacher may appear

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[118] It is important to bear in mind that the teachers' approaches to text selection do not say anything about how they actually teach the texts: a teacher who is collegially oriented in their selection of a text may very well be student-oriented when teaching it, and a teacher who is student-oriented when selecting texts may be teacher-oriented when teaching it. This chapter, like the rest of the dissertation, focuses on teachers' decision-making processes *before* they enter the classroom.

in the discussion of several approaches. Some of the teachers, however, are more closely aligned to one approach than to the others, and in order to clarify the theoretical framework developed here, these teachers' views are emphasized in the discussion.

10.1 The teacher-oriented approach

The teacher-oriented approach builds on Agee's description of teachers who based their choices on their "own preferences for literature" (2000, p. 336), as well as combining Eikrem's categories of the teacher as a "supplier" and "director" of knowledge (2006, pp. 194, 204), but only with regard to text selection. The prototypical representative of this approach sees their own literary preferences as the most important grounds for selecting which texts their students are to read. This type of teacher may care about what students think of a text, but their students' preferences are overruled if the teacher does not share them. This teacher's liking of a text may build on their personal literary preferences and/or their knowledge of specific texts and genres. Furthermore, a teacher's preference for certain texts may be influenced by their previous experiences with these texts; that these are texts that have worked well with similar student groups in the past. In this case, even though a teacher's starting point is to select texts based on what s/he thinks of it, their literary preferences for the classroom may be strengthened or weakened based on how these texts are perceived by their students. This means that ultimately, the teachers who focus on their own preferences when it comes to literature may also be influenced by their students' reception of a text. These complexities are addressed in the discussion that follows.

Turning away from the prototype and towards the current educational climate, the term teacher-oriented may hold negative connotations; it is frequently linked to what Eikrem calls "the traditional ritual" (2006, p. 175). In this sense of the term, the teacher is placed in the center not just when it comes to text selection, but also in terms of general attitudes to teaching, students' learning, and teaching methods. This is not the case in

this study, however; the teacher-oriented approach is limited to the teachers' views on text selection.

The teacher whose beliefs and practices were closest to the teacher-oriented approach was Victoria – the thorough and well-prepared teacher. At the time of our first interview, she taught in Vg1 and Vg3 general studies, and she also had experience teaching vocational students. Her main text selection strategy was the same across the different student groups. When asked how she assessed literary texts for classroom use, she responded: "when I choose texts, I choose first and foremost texts that I understand well, and that I like […] That's my first criterion, I need to like it myself" (I1, T, p. 12). This was exemplified when she talked about Collins's *The Hunger Games* (2008); she had used this book with a class once, but only because the teacher who originally taught this class had started a project with the Collins novel, and Victoria had to complete this project when she took over the class. She had not used it again, though, explaining that this was because "even though I know that some students like it, and it might be a good idea to use a series […] because if they […] like part one, there is a chance that they will read more books in that series. But I don't like that type of literature" (I1, T, p. 11). This suggests that Victoria was aware of other ways of thinking about text selection that could be beneficial for her students, but that she nevertheless decided to put her own literary preferences first.

This reluctance to using texts that the students liked but that she did not like herself was not based on selfishness, though, but rather a concern to teach as well as she could. Victoria said that the most important reason why she chose texts that she understood and liked was that this made it easier for her to teach: "it's hard to be engaged and […] teach something that you're not confident about and that you don't like" (I1, T, p. 12). She believed that students benefited the most when the teachers taught as well as they could, and that this could only be achieved when teachers worked with literary texts that they knew and liked. Victoria was aware that her literary taste was different from her students', and she saw the potential problems with her text selection: "I know it can be […] difficult, or it may have negative sides as well. Because I like heavy, difficult texts, and my students may not do that. But I consider them all the time" (I1, T, p. 12). Her last sentence indicates that although she chose texts that she liked and understood,

she also took into consideration what the students were able to read, and what might work in the classroom.

There were two elements that were central to Victoria's approach to selecting literature: that she needed to *like* the texts she taught, and that she needed to *understand* them. Similarly, Hallvard Kjelen (2013) found that many of the subject Norwegian teachers he interviewed selected literary texts that they liked and/or that they knew very well. In his study, the teachers argued for their choice of texts by stating that it was easier for them to teach literature that they liked themselves, texts that they had worked with in university, or texts that they had taught in the past and which they were confident would work well again (pp. 143-144). Victoria also used this line of argumentation; it emerged in her discussion of the text she chose to present in detail in the beginning of interview 1 – an excerpt from Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield* (1850). Victoria explained that she liked the text herself, that she had academic knowledge of it since she had studied it at university, and that she built on previous, positive classroom experiences with the text. She said that she was happy with how she connected with the students when working with *David Copperfield*: "I reached all the students, I think […] And all levels" (I1, T, p. 8). This, in turn, led to her looking forward to using the text again. This means that although the text selection began with her own literary preferences, her positive feelings about the text were strengthened when she saw that the students were able to read, work with, and learn from the text.

Two other teachers were influenced by the teacher-oriented approach to text selection, namely Neil, the ambitious and talkative teacher, and Margaret, the native speaker IB teacher. Both of them taught Vg2 and Vg3 students that were probably motivated for the subject since they had chosen to study English; Neil taught Vg2 International English and Vg3 Social Studies English, and Margaret taught students in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program.[119] Additionally, they both taught the compulsory Vg1 course in the general study program. When discussing how he

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[119] IB students have chosen an internationally oriented study program in Vg2 and Vg3 in which almost all of the teaching is conducted in English; Norwegian and other language subjects are the only subjects which are not taught in English (VilBli, 2019). One may, therefore, assume that these students are, if not always better in English than other students, at least motivated for working in English.

selected texts for his students, Neil thought that it was important to choose texts that he liked himself. He exemplified this by explaining why he chose to teach Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (2007) with his Vg2 International English class:

> I like the story. And I think that's important, that I like the story. 'Cause if I'm going to teach a novel for five weeks that I don't like, it's gonna be hard on everyone. 'Cause it's, it's almost impossible to fake enthusiasm. […] I think that the teaching will be, it's much more interesting if we teach things that we like and things that we are interested in, and things that, eh, we care about (I1, p. 16)

This means that Neil saw his own enthusiasm about a text as being beneficial for his students; much like Victoria, he felt that he would teach best when he liked the text himself. Similarly, Margaret was concerned with her own feelings about a text. When asked about why she used Collins's *The Hunger Games*, she replied "I really like it, first of all, and I think the students like it" (I1, p. 5). Although Margaret here put her own preferences first, she also showed that she had not forgotten about her students; for her, a goal appeared to be that *both* she and her students should like the texts they were working with.

In sum, the teacher-oriented argumentation as exemplified by Victoria, Neil, and Margaret shows that their approach to text selection was not based on selfish interest, but a genuine concern for their students' learning. Victoria and Neil explained that they thought they were able to teach better when they liked the texts they used, and that this would benefit their students. Furthermore, the teachers' literary preferences were influenced by whether the literature worked successfully with their students; both Victoria and Margaret highlighted their students' enjoyment and/or learning when they evaluated their choice of texts. The focus on students in the text selection process is discussed further in the next section.

10.2 The student-oriented approach

The prototypical student-oriented teacher sees the students' literary preferences and perceived motivation for reading as more important than the texts the teacher enjoys the most. It is based on what is described by Agee as flexible models of literature instruction in which teachers "sought and used student feedback" in order to "make strategic changes for differing groups of students" (Agee, 2000, p. 341), including selecting different types of texts for different types of students. It is also linked to what Penne calls "the pedagogical" teachers of literature, who focus more on what the students are interested in and able to do than what the teachers and/or the curriculum wish to address (2012, p. 44).

When adapting the selection of literary texts to different students, teachers may focus on students' skills, interests, or a combination of both. The table below provides an overview of the survey respondents' views on this, and shows that they were more concerned with adapting the selection of literary texts to the students' skills than to their interests.

Table 31: Teachers' adaptation of text selection to students' interests and skills

Item	Never / rarely	Sometimes	Often / always	Total
22: Literary texts are adapted to the students' interests	8	60	41	109
23: Literary texts are adapted to the students' skills	1	22	86	109

Almost 80% of the teachers indicated that they often or always adapted the selection of literary texts to the students' skills, whereas 38% responded that they often or always adapted the selection of literary texts to the students' interests. Very few teachers responded that they never or rarely took the students' interests or skills into consideration. However, it is important to note that I do not know whether the respondents had individual students' skills and interests in mind, or whether they considered the class as a whole.

Several of the teachers who were interviewed were influenced by the student-oriented approach, most notably Charlotte, the hesitant, all-round teacher, and the vocational teacher Robert. Both were concerned with their students' skills and interests, but they weighted the two components differently. Furthermore, they worked in very different contexts; Robert's students were described as possessing much poorer subject skills than Charlotte's, which may have limited his options regarding text selection more than in Charlotte's case.

Charlotte worked with both vocational and general studies students in a fairly small school in a small town. Even though she described the vocational students as mostly having different interests and somewhat poorer English-language skills than the general studies students, she thought that the overall level among both vocational and general studies students was average. When selecting texts for these students, Charlotte had a specific strategy that she used in order to adapt the text selection to the students' interests: "I try to become 16 years old again when I read a text, and then I think […] what's in it for me? I mean, is there anything here that can appeal to a 16-year-old so they think that this is interesting" (I1, T, p. 18). She explained how she adapted the text selection to different classes using the example of Bacigalupi's *Ship Breaker* (2010). In her Vg1 general studies class, *Ship Breaker* worked well, the students appeared to enjoy the novel, and they read the whole book and worked with tasks along the way as well as afterwards. In her vocational Vg1 class, however, *Ship Breaker* did not appeal to the students because they found the language too difficult. Therefore, Charlotte discarded the novel after the first lesson with the vocational students, and worked with other, shorter texts instead. This means that Charlotte adjusted her choice of literature to the interests and skills of her students. Even though her personal experience with the novel told her that it was a success in another class of students of the same age, Charlotte did not assume that it would automatically work with a new group of students, and she showed flexibility in her approach to literature selection. Charlotte stated that "I can't just start with myself" and that she as a teacher had to be focused on what the students liked, "otherwise you fail" (I1, T, p. 29).

Robert worked in a context of solely vocational students, some with a minority language background, and several with very poor English-language skills. His main

222

challenge when selecting literature was to find texts that everyone would be able to understand, and this led to him not being very concerned with which literature he used at all, as long as his students were able to read it: "I think more about the class than […] the literary text […] What's the level of this class […] what do they know?" (I1, T, p. 20). Adapting the text selection to the students' skills in terms of language level and general understanding was, therefore, his first priority; his second was "whether the issue will appeal to them" (I1, T, p. 20) – in other words, their interests. What he himself thought of a text did not enter into Robert's discussion of text selection. However, it is possible that Robert's approach to text selection might have been different if he had taught students who had better language skills. In the context in which he was working, using texts that he enjoyed himself with his students was not possible, as most of his students were not able to read the texts he liked (such as the fantasy novels of Robert Jordan and Brandon Sanderson, or the science fiction works of Douglas Adams).

Unlike the other teachers interviewed, Robert was not very concerned with whether the texts he used with his students were *literary*. When presenting a text in detail in the beginning of interview 1, he chose to discuss a text that dealt with health and safety in the workplace rather than selecting a literary text. He said that "this is not a literary text per se […] but it is a text that is […] made up, but a text that is written like an article" (I1, T, p. 10). He chose it because it was one of the texts he was most happy with teaching; this was due to its relevance for vocational studies. He thought that his students felt more confident when they were allowed to work with vocational issues that they knew well, as opposed to literature, "politics and..and issues in […] society" (I1, T, p. 11). Robert, therefore, preferred to work with texts that could be related to the students' lives in one way or another since "it can be more motivating for them that they […] have the basic understanding of what, what this deals with" (I1, T, p. 11).

In addition to Charlotte and Robert, Neil and Margaret – who were also discussed in the previous section on the teacher-oriented approach – showed traits of the student-oriented approach in their text selection processes. When Margaret discussed how she went about selecting texts for her classroom, she stated that "one thing that always comes to mind first is will they be interested in this? Or can I get them to be interested

in this?" (I1, p. 16). Furthermore, when reflecting on why McCarthy's *The Road* (2006) worked so well with the IB students, she said that "the students, they really like it" (I1, p. 12) – clearly seeing a link between whether the students liked a text and how well it worked in the classroom setting.

Neil said that "something I always try to, eh, think of, is this interesting enough that people will actually pay attention? […] We need something that's, that catches their attention and actually..ehh..gives them something" (I1, p. 8). Furthermore, when asked why he sometimes included the students in the choice of text that they were going to be working with, he said that "one of the reasons is that I want them to feel that it's our project and not just my project" (I1, pp. 16-17). He then moved on to say that "groups are very different"; explaining that this had to do with language level, as well as whether the students liked working with challenging or easier texts (I1, pp. 16-17). For Neil, "balance" appeared to be a key word: "You have to kind of find a balance between what I wanna do, what the students wanna do, and what Udir[120] wants us to do. Yeah. And we try to find the middle ground there" (I1, p. 16). When discussing the Directorate's influence, Neil was concerned with the written examinations – he wanted to use texts that would be relevant for students during their final assessment. Rather than choosing some texts that he himself liked, some that the students liked, and some that would be exam-friendly, Neil tried to incorporate all of these considerations into all of his literature choices.

In sum, the student-oriented approach meant something different for all four teachers discussed in this section. For Neil and Margaret, text selection was a complex combination of considering both the students' literary preferences and the texts they themselves enjoyed teaching; Neil also included the written examinations as a factor in his decision-making process. Robert and Charlotte were more focused on the students' preferences than on any other factor. They were both concerned with making sure the texts they used were suitable for their students in terms of both language level and content – that the students would be able to understand and relate to these texts. However, whereas Charlotte discussed literary texts throughout the interviews, Robert

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[120] Udir refers to the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training.

224

talked about a variety of texts, not just literature. This means that their enactment of the student-oriented approach took different forms in their different contexts.

10.3 The collegial approach

The collegially oriented teacher is different from the other two prototypes presented in this chapter. Where the others might work alone, regardless of their approach, this teacher relies on collaboration with others when choosing literary texts for the classroom. In theory, the other approaches could be used in any type of school context, but for collaboration to work, the teacher needs to be in an environment with colleagues who are eager to work together. As mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, this approach is one of the unexpected findings in the current study. The reason why I did not expect this approach is because a recent study on teachers in Norway found that they tend to collaborate very little (Askling et al., 2016, p. 164), and that the least amount of collaboration was found among teachers working in the upper grades, such as upper secondary school. An earlier study indicated that when teachers do collaborate, they tend to focus on general pedagogical issues such as participation in team meetings and discussion of specific students (Vibe, Aamodt, & Carlsten, 2009, p. 100), and less on subject-specific issues across classes. Furthermore, Horverak's study (2016) found that English teachers in upper secondary school collaborated little regarding teaching materials.

In this study, teachers explained that they collaborated in two different types of groups: in the class team and in meetings with other English teachers. In the class team meetings, they worked with larger projects and general pedagogical issues, and/or challenges related to specific students. The meetings with the other English teachers usually dealt with assessment-related issues. Joanna, Robert, Sophie, Margaret, and Victoria all described how teachers collaborated in their schools: they explained how they could ask a colleague for a second opinion if they were in doubt regarding a student's grade and how the English teachers collaborated on larger tasks, tests, and

assessment. However, some teachers wished they could collaborate more on other issues relating to the subject, including which literary texts to use. The youngest, most inexperienced teachers – Victoria and Robert – appeared to seek collaboration the most. Victoria explained that she would ask her more experienced colleagues for advice regarding what she was planning to do with a text or a task in the classroom: "Is it smart to do it like this, or is it smart to do it like this, or what does this mean, or how would you do it" (I1, T, pp. 4-5). Robert asked for advice when selecting texts for his students: "I talk a little bit with colleagues. I do. Whether this is something that they think that, whether it's something that might be an option for..the students" (I1, T, p. 20). However, the collaboration among teachers at Robert's school was not part of a system, which meant that he had to actively seek out other teachers to ask for advice.

This was not the case with Sophie, who stood out as working in an especially collaborative environment. Many of the literature choices she described were not made by her alone, but by her and her colleagues in the English department: "We […] collaborate on what we're working with now, how we're going to do it, I have something lying around from last year, we can work with that and adapt it" (I1, T, p. 4). This approach was mainly used with Vg1 general studies students, and partially with Vg2 and Vg3 general studies. In addition to selecting texts and topics together, the teachers also collaborated on tests and assessment. Sophie thought that this made the students feel safer in terms of being treated equally: "the students have a clear perception of it being done in a similar way. I mean […] They talk together even though they are in different classes" (I1, T, p. 4). When teaching vocational students, there was less collaboration, though: "They have very different times when they have work practice and such, so it's difficult to follow the same progression, plus the fact that we try to adapt to the vocations, specific vocations like HO [health and upbringing] have more HO adapted English" (I1, T, p. 4).

Unlike many of the other teachers, who used the pronouns "I" and "me" when discussing their literature choices and practices, Sophie often – but not always – used the pronouns "we" and "us" when discussing what she and her colleagues did. I interpret this to mean that she had a more group-oriented identity as an English teacher. This influenced how she chose literature for her students; seldom only according to her

own views or those of her students, but rather in accordance with a plan decided by all of the English teachers together.

In sum, this means that the collegial approach might be something that other teachers than Sophie might wish to employ, especially Victoria and Robert, if the possibility arose. The lack of such possibilities might mean that the collegial approach is less widespread than the other approaches discussed in this chapter, but also that in the schools where it does exist, it may create a more unified literature selection across different teachers' classes. Lastly, it is important to note that as this approach is only based on one teacher's approach to text selection, this result needs to be treated with more caution than the other two. Further studies will be needed in order to find out more about it.

10.4 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have discussed teachers' approaches to selecting literature. Three different approaches were present among the interview respondents: teacher-oriented, student-oriented, and collegial. Some teachers appeared to be more closely bound to one approach, as was the case with Victoria, Robert, Charlotte, and Sophie – although some of them might have used other approaches if they had worked in different types of schools or with different types of students. Other teachers moved between various approaches more, namely Neil and Margaret. This means that the approaches described in this chapter are not static categories that teachers remain faithful to throughout their careers, but they are subject to change as either the teachers, their students, or their schools change. Nevertheless, as some teachers appeared to use the same approach across different classes, it is possible that the way in which they selected texts represented one of their core beliefs about literature teaching. For others, their text selection approach may not have been as central to their identity and practice as English teachers.

11. Dystopian literature in the classroom

In this chapter, I discuss teachers' views on dystopian literature's role in the classroom. These views relate to the genre at large, to specific dystopias that are frequently taught, and to the four contemporary YA dystopias which eight teachers read and were interviewed about. Although a few survey items are included in the discussion in section 11.1, which addresses teachers' perceptions of the dystopian genre in general, this chapter mainly discusses interview data. Section 11.2 addresses the interviewed teachers' beliefs about the four contemporary dystopian YA novels they read in preparation for the second interview. Section 11.3 examines the didactic potential that the teachers see in these four dystopias and other dystopias that they have taught, and section 11.4 links the teachers' assessments of the four dystopian novels with the teachers' beliefs about text selection in general.

11.1 Views on the dystopian genre

In this section, I first present teachers' views on the dystopian genre, as well as their views on its companion genres fantasy and science fiction. In section 11.1.2, I introduce briefly the dystopian texts teachers had used in their teaching prior to the study, or that they considered suitable for the classroom. In section 11.1.3, I revisit the possible drawbacks of using the genre that I presented in chapter 4, and discuss whether they are relevant for the teachers in this study.

11.1.1 Fantasy, science fiction, and dystopias

In the survey, I grouped dystopias with fantasy and science fiction in the item that addressed how often the teachers used specific types of texts with their students

because the genres are closely related.[121] The table below shows how the teachers reported their use of these genres.

Table 32: Teachers' reported use of fantasy, science fiction, and dystopias

Item	Never / rarely	Sometimes	Often / always	Total
27: Fantasy, science fiction, and/or dystopian literature	34	62	13	109

The table shows that 57% of the teachers reported that they used fantasy, science fiction, and/or dystopian literature sometimes, 12% reported using these genres often or always, and 31% stated that they never or rarely used them. As crosstabulation analyses of the survey data did not produce any relevant results relating to what characterized the teachers who used these genres, I turn to the qualitative data to explore the matter further.

In the interviews, the teachers tended to be more concerned with whether they liked or disliked the texts when discussing the genres fantasy, science fiction, and dystopias, than they were with most of the other genres. The exceptions were the vocational teacher Anne and Sophie, the quick and efficient teacher, who were fairly neutral. Anne had not used these types of texts herself, and was a little bit skeptical because she thought "it can be difficult to tie them to contemporary society the way it is today" (I1, T, p. 26). Sophie was more open, and had used both the dystopian YA novel *The Hunger Games* (2008) by Collins and an illustrated version of J.R.R. Tolkien's fantasy novel *The Hobbit* (1937) in the past. The vocational teacher Robert, Neil, the ambitious and talkative teacher, Margaret, the native speaker IB teacher, and Charlotte, the hesitant, all-round teacher, all stated that they liked (or even "loved", in Margaret's case) these types of texts, and everyone except Robert had used one or more genres in their teaching recently. Margaret had used four dystopian novels in the school year in which I interviewed her (McCarthy's *The Road* [2006], Orwell's *1984* [1949], Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* [2003], and Collins's *The Hunger Games*), but stated that

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[121] See chapter 4 for more.

she would not do that again since "it got to be a bit overkill really […] But they do like it" (I1, p. 12). Charlotte had used the dystopian YA novel *Ship Breaker* (2010) by Bacigalupi with her Vg1 general studies class, and stated that she really liked fantasy literature herself. Neil, although a fantasy fan, thought that science fiction was best for teaching, "because if you move something to the future, it often reflects our society in a better, or at least more clear way than fantasy does" (I1, p. 31). Max Brooks's *World War Z* (2006) about a zombie apocalypse was a novel he had considered using, but he feared "it might be challenging for weaker students since it changes settings all the time" (I1, p. 23). Robert, although not having used these types of texts with his own students, was positive towards them, "but perhaps as an optional element" (I1, T, p. 25). Lastly, Victoria, the thorough and well-prepared teacher, and Joanna, the student-centered humanitarian, both said that they did not like these types of texts. Victoria stated that "I'm open for everything, but I think I need to get some more experience first" (I1, T, p. 25), indicating that she relied on texts and genres that she knew well since she was still fairly inexperienced as a teacher. Joanna, on the other hand, had used some texts, like the dystopian novel *1984* by Orwell and *Lord of the Flies* (1954) by Golding, even though she did not really like the genre herself.

Combined, the survey and interview data suggest that fantasy, science fiction, and dystopias are genres that are used sometimes, and that when they are used, it is perhaps as the odd novel rather than as genres that receive sustained attention (the exception being Margaret). Furthermore, teachers appear to feel strongly about these genres – either positively or negatively.

11.1.2 Which dystopias are selected?

The data from both the survey and the interviews suggest that the teachers who actually use dystopias teach all types of dystopias: classic dystopias, contemporary YA dystopias, and contemporary dystopias for adults. In the overview showing which

novels the teachers who responded to the survey found most suitable,[122] the three most popular dystopian novels represent these three sub-genres. Collins's *The Hunger Games* is a contemporary dystopian YA novel, McCarthy's *The Road* is a contemporary dystopian novel for adults, and Orwell's *1984* is a classic dystopia. The interview respondents also used these novels. Each of these three novels was taught by one or more of the interviewed teachers, and several brought the novels into the discussion when talking about suitable texts for the classroom that they had not listed in their year plans. Both the survey and interview respondents viewed *The Hunger Games* as most suitable for students in Vg1 and Vg2, and it was brought up as a suitable text for both general studies and some vocational studies. *The Road* and *1984*, however, were seen as suitable for Vg2 and Vg3 students in general studies, who have chosen English as an elective course. The fact that *The Hunger Games* is a YA novel might influence teachers in their choices to use it with the youngest upper secondary students who are taking the compulsory English course. The Collins novel could be considered as a less challenging read in terms of language and complexity level than the McCarthy and Orwell novels, which were written for an adult audience. This is one reason why the two latter novels may be deemed more suitable for students who have chosen to study English at a more advanced level. In addition to these three novels, some of the interviewed teachers discussed other dystopian texts that they had either used or considered using: the classic dystopia *Lord of the Flies* by Golding, the contemporary children's/YA dystopia *The Giver* (1993) by Lois Lowry, and the contemporary dystopia for adults *Oryx and Crake* by Atwood.

11.1.3 Possible drawbacks of using dystopian literature

As the remainder of this chapter will mainly focus on the didactic potential of dystopian literature, I wish to discuss briefly the negative sides of the genre here. As mentioned in chapter 4, the possible drawbacks of using dystopias in the classroom relate to two

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[122] Responses to item 15 in the survey.

main issues: firstly, the amount of violence in many of these texts, and secondly, the (perceived lack of) literary merit. I suggested that these issues would not affect the participants in this study and their choices of literature due to the lack of censorship in Norway. This was confirmed in my analysis of data. In the survey, two thirds of the teachers responded that they thought that violence, sexual acts, and/or profanities could be present in the texts that they used in their classrooms as long as the texts addressed issues that were important to the students. In the interviews, Margaret argued that the violence of the stories appealed to the students: "they want to, actually, have something really bleak, I think, to talk about" (I2, p. 13). The other issue, literary merit, was something the teachers were largely uninterested in discussing. It seemed to be irrelevant for them when selecting texts for classroom use, including when they considered the didactic potential of dystopian literature.[123]

The inference that neither violence nor literary merit was an important factor when teachers determined whether dystopias were suitable for classroom use was confirmed by Victoria, who was the only teacher who had negative, previous experiences from working with dystopian literature. As discussed in chapter 10, what mattered most to Victoria was that she herself liked and understood the texts she used in the classroom. This was not the case with Collins's *The Hunger Games*, which was the only dystopian work she had taught previously, and which she had not taught by choice. Victoria commented that: "Afterwards, I have never used *The Hunger Games* again […] I don't like that kind of literature" (I1, T, p. 11). The dystopian novel's brutality was not part of her disliking it, as she stated later in the interview that she thought it was perfectly fine to use texts that contained violence, profanities, and sexual acts. In fact, Victoria said, much like Margaret, that these elements might "make the students curious, I think it might make them want to read it" (I1, T, p. 24).

In sum, this means that violence and literary merit are not given as reasons why teachers would not teach dystopian literature. Most teachers appear to be willing to use texts that contain brutality as long as the issues the texts address are relevant for their students, and the question of literary merit appears to be relevant only for a few teachers

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[123] The exception was when discussing light reading, as discussed in section 7.4.6.

in a few instances. As will be discussed in the next sections with reference to the four dystopian novels that the teachers read in preparation for the second interview, the biggest concerns for most teachers were whether the dystopian novels would fit in with the curriculum, and whether they would appeal to their students.

11.2 Introduction to findings related to the novels

In preparation for the second interview, each teacher read one of the following four novels: *The Diary of Pelly D* (2005) by L. J. Adlington, *Ship Breaker* (2010) by Paolo Bacigalupi, *More Than This* (2013) by Patrick Ness, or *Only Ever Yours* (2014) by Louise O'Neill. Each novel was read by two teachers, and the teachers were asked to consider two main issues as they read:

1) What do you think about the novel?
2) Would you use this novel with your students? Why/why not?

This means that the teachers were asked to assess the novels from two different perspectives: as a reader and as a teacher. I consider both of these perspectives to be interesting to the current study for two reasons. Firstly, because it would elicit nuanced views on the novels; the teachers would have to assess the novel as an adult reader, and also consider whether it might work well with their students. Secondly, due to the teachers' different approaches to and reasons for selecting texts for the classroom, having the teachers assess the dystopian novels from two perspectives allowed for a richer view on the issues discussed in chapters 7-10; the *what*, *why*, and *how* of literature selection.

In addition to reading a novel and assessing it from two different perspectives, the teachers were asked to comment on various additional materials that they received a couple of weeks before the second interview.[124] As these materials were meant to help the teachers formulate and express their opinions about the two main issues they were

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[124] See section 6.3.2.

asked to consider, they are not referred to directly in what follows. Rather, the remainder of this section introduces the main points relating to the teachers' assessments of the four novels. These points are discussed further in the sections that follow that address dystopias' didactic potential thematically.

11.2.1 The Diary of Pelly D

Sophie and Charlotte read Adlington's science fiction dystopia, and they mostly agreed in their assessments of the novel. Sophie thought that the novel was "pretty typical of the genre" (I2, T, p. 4), in that it portrayed a pessimistic view of the future, and Charlotte found the novel to be mediocre, mainly because she had "the sense that I've read it before" (I2, T, p. 4). Both teachers thought a nice feature was that the story alternated between the two main characters. Overall, Charlotte thought that the novel was "too unrealistic, with too much science fiction […] especially when you start reading about gills" (I2, T, p. 4). She conceded that this might be due to her personal taste in literature, though, and that the students might like the science fiction elements in the novel. Sophie's main criticism related to what she saw as being average language, characters, and literary style. Furthermore, due to the slow-paced plot, she found it to be "a tiny bit boring" (I2, T, p. 4). Neither teacher liked the ending: Sophie thought that the book left too many loose ends, and Charlotte thought that it ended too abruptly, especially concerning Pelly's family relationships.

Despite their criticism, though, both teachers thought that the novel possessed qualities that could make it a good choice in the upper secondary classroom, but they were unsure of whether they would actually use it. In Sophie's view, a clear benefit was that the novel was short; this meant that it would be a manageable read for most students. She thought that her students might like the book, and that it would be suitable for Vg1 students in general studies. She would not use it with vocational students, though, since she thought it would be "insurmountable" for them (I2, T, p. 6). Charlotte emphasized that her students might be able to identify with the two main characters: "It's brilliant that there are two main characters here, one a boy and the other a girl" (I2, T, p. 7).

Issues that concerned the teachers related mainly to the plot. Sophie stated that, "there is almost too little action. There is a lot of thinking, which is always good, but if we are going to interest these, for example the students who get 3s,[125] they will have problems reading this book" (I2, T, p. 5).

Sophie and Charlotte were in agreement regarding one central element that influenced the perceived suitability of the novel for the classroom; both thought that the lack of details in certain parts of the book might make slow readers struggle with it. Sophie feared that students who had problems completing any book might find it even harder with *The Diary of Pelly D*: "weak readers who read slowly will have problems, because they can't find the answers to simple questions about the book that easily" (I2, T, p. 5). Similarly, Charlotte thought that students who were not avid readers would be "left with some questions" (I2, T, p. 9) and that they might be "unable to see the connections, and that it would be messy for some" (I2, T, p. 8). This appeared to be the most important reason why both teachers were relatively unenthusiastic and undecided about teaching *The Diary of Pelly D*. In Charlotte's words, "my impression of the book is that I can absolutely use this one in the classroom, but I've not completely decided" (I2, T, p. 4).

11.2.2 Ship Breaker

Bacigalupi's novel was read by Neil and Anne, who both enjoyed reading the book. Of the two, Neil was the more enthusiastic. He was very fond of fantasy and science fiction literature to begin with, and enjoyed reading *Ship Breaker*. It took him only a few days to read because he found it "very compelling […] when you start reading it you're very content. There's something about the story that just, there's kind of no lulls in the story, at least not for me" (I2, p. 7). He especially liked the "underdog-ish story" (I2, p. 7), and thought the main characters – Nailer, Nita, and Tool – were all interesting. Anne

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[125] This refers to the grade 3, which is a below average passing grade in Norwegian secondary schools (the grades range from 1-6, with 2 being the lowest passing grade).

was not very interested in fantasy, science fiction, and dystopias, and could thus be expected to have a different reading experience than Neil. However, her first impression was that "I enjoyed the novel, I really did" (I2, T, p. 9). Her only negative remark related to the love story between Nailer and Nita: "I feel that it doesn't fit into the story. Kind of like we need to include that because YA novels need to include some romance" (I2, T, p. 9). As a whole, however, she liked the book enough to want to find out more about what happened to the characters. Therefore, she expressed an interest in reading *Ship Breaker*'s companion novel, *The Drowned Cities* (2012) – as did Neil.

Although both Neil and Anne enjoyed reading *Ship Breaker*, their views differed regarding its teaching potential for their students. Neil thought that the book could work well with all types of general studies classes, but that it would perhaps be most suitable for his Vg2 and Vg3 students: "I would start there, at least […] Because I know they can handle it […] Especially for the third graders, this would be a relatively easy book" (I2, p. 13). Since he envisioned using the novel in the elective English courses in general studies, he would let the students choose one issue to write about in relation to the novel. Anne saw the book as perhaps being suitable for some Vg2 classes in vocational studies, but only "where you have students that are strong readers" (I2, T, p. 13). She could not see herself using it with the classes she was teaching at the time of the interview because there were too many weak readers, and she feared that they would not benefit from working with the book. This means that although Neil and Anne both enjoyed the novel and saw teaching potential in it, only Neil saw it as a realistic reading option for his students.[126]

11.2.3 More Than This

Robert and Joanna read Ness's novel, and they experienced the novel differently. Joanna described how she was skeptical toward *More Than This* to begin with, but that

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[126] Neil actually ended up using the novel with his Vg3 students a few months after we conducted the second interview. I was able to follow up on this, and hope to report those findings in a later publication.

after a slow start, the novel began to grow on her. She enjoyed the story, the characters, and the philosophical aspects of the novel, and thought many of the issues that the novel addressed were very interesting. In particular, she commented on the many complicated family relationships that intrigued her and that had contemporary relevance. Although she thought that the novel contained "too much science fiction" (I2, T, p. 5) at times, she concluded that she liked the book. Robert, however, did not like *More Than This* very much. His first impression was that it reminded him of a well-known film series, and that this influenced his reading experience negatively: "I think that the plot is taken from *The Matrix* films to such an extent that it ruined quite a lot for me, because [...] it is so copied" (I2, T, p. 8). Furthermore, he thought that the dialogue in the novel was slow, that the book was too long, and that the story "is not that credible" (I2, T, p. 8). When summing up, Robert made it clear that he "did not think the book was that great" (I2, T, p. 8) and that he was disappointed.

In terms of the novel's didactic potential, Joanna thought that the novel "could be suitable" for upper secondary students (I2, T, p. 11), and Robert agreed. He was positive about the language level, as well as the themes, which he thought were relevant for his students: "issues like for example suicide, the main character is gay […] conflicts among a group of friends in a young adult environment, jealousy […] bullying" (I2, T, p. 8). However, due to the novel's length and genre, he did not think that it would be a good choice for most of *his* vocational students. Instead, he thought that students with a particular interest in science fiction and dystopias might like it if they were also avid readers who could manage a book of this length. For the same reasons, Joanna thought that the novel would be most suitable for Vg2 general studies, and she would only use it as voluntary reading. She argued that the novel would be best suited for the more experienced readers because "they need to have […] some references, that they have read something before […] they need to understand symbols" (I2, T, pp. 11-12). This means that Robert and Joanna agreed in their conclusions regarding the teaching potential of *More Than This*; it was too long and complicated to be used for full-class reading, but individual students who were interested in the issues it addressed might enjoy reading it.

11.2.4 Only Ever Yours

Victoria and Margaret read the feminist dystopia by Louise O'Neill. They had different experiences when reading the novel, but assessed its didactic potential similarly. Victoria was, as described earlier, not very fond of dystopian literature to begin with. She did not like *Only Ever Yours* at first either, but soon changed her mind: "it really turned out that it was a real page-turner and I really liked it, I enjoyed it […] because it was so different […] I was actually surprised that I, that I liked it so much" (I2, p. 4). Furthermore, as she tended to enjoy "novels about women and men and relationships between, between them" (I2, p. 4), she was pleasantly surprised to find that the O'Neill novel addressed these issues. Margaret, on the other hand, was very fond of dystopian literature in general, and had read and taught a number of dystopian works. She was much more critical towards *Only Ever Yours* than Victoria; she thought it was "an ok book", which "felt very much like a first novel" (I2, p. 1). She thought the characterization, world-building, and theme were all "very simple […] all aspects of it being a bit thin" (I2, p. 1). Both Victoria and Margaret commented on the novel's ending, in which the protagonist is punished by being taken Underground – which seems to mean her death. Victoria thought that "it was so strange […] I was disappointed. I didn't expect such an ending" (I2, p. 5). Similarly, Margaret said: "The ending. It surprised me, I didn't see it coming" (I2, p. 5). Both of them agreed that such an ending was necessary: Victoria stated that "an ending which you don't expect is maybe better for this kind of novel" (I2, p. 5), and Margaret said that "it fit with the book" (I2, p. 6). Where they differed, however, was in terms of how emotionally affected they were by it: Victoria was "almost heartbroken" (I2, p. 5), while Margaret stated that: "dark endings don't bother me […] the end was alright" (I2, p. 6).

Although they differed in terms of how much they liked *Only Ever Yours* personally, both Victoria and Margaret saw teaching potential in the novel. Victoria thought that it would be suitable for Vg1 students in general studies, as well as Vg2 vocational students. She thought it would work well as full-class reading, but was unsure of whether the vocational students would be able to read the whole book. Margaret thought that it could serve as an introduction to the dystopian genre for young adults –

if they liked it, they could move on to something more complex later. However, she was not sure whether she would use it in a class with a lot of boys: "I was imagining trying to read this with a class […] and thinking well, the boys are represented so badly […] it seems like an attack on them, almost" (I2, p. 3). Another issue of central importance to both teachers was the link between O'Neill's novel and contemporary society. This issue, among others, is addressed in the next section.

11.3 The perceived classroom relevance of dystopian literature

In my interviews with the eight teachers, it became evident that one of the most important reasons why they used, or considered using, dystopias in their classrooms, was this genre's potential for addressing the social studies component of subject English. This corresponds with studies of the genre's classroom relevance conducted in other contexts (Hill, 2012; Marshall, 2014; Matz, 2015; Simmons, 2014; Wilkinson, 2010). Dystopian works' relevance for understanding contemporary culture and society was particularly emphasized by the interviewed teachers, as well as their focus on environmental concerns and the call to social action. Furthermore, some teachers brought up aspects relevant for *Bildung* that dystopian literature could encourage. In what follows, I discuss the teachers' views on these issues in relation to both dystopian works that they had previous teaching experience with, and their assessments of the four novels that they read and assessed for this study. Additionally, I discuss the teachers' views on the role of dystopias in subject English teaching in vocational and general studies.

11.3.1 Understanding contemporary culture and society

As discussed in chapters 3 and 4, culture, society, and literature are part of the subject English curriculum for both the compulsory and elective courses. This is a strong argument for including dystopias in the upper secondary classroom: dystopian fiction could be used as a resource to work with issues related to culture, history, and society.

Margaret was the interviewee who used dystopias the most at the time when we first met, and she saw dystopias' potential for helping students understand contemporary culture and society. In the school year in which the first interview was conducted, she taught three dystopian novels with her IB students – McCarthy's *The Road*, Orwell's *1984*, and Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* – in addition to having worked with Collins's *The Hunger Games* with her Vg1 general studies class. When asked why she used so many dystopias, she said that, "I think it is realistic […] In another sense […] It's a wonderful way to start exploring connections between literature and our cultural context" (I2, p. 14). Furthermore, she argued that dystopias were "a way of maybe exploring anxieties, of course, about trends in our society" (I2, p. 15). She saw the call to social action as central, because "we want to fight against these bad trends in our society somehow" (I2, p. 15). This means that Margaret not only wanted her students to understand contemporary culture through these works, but that she believed the literature could also help change the way they thought about themselves in relation to their society.

Joanna's views on dystopian literature's role were similar to Margaret's. Joanna had used Orwell's *1984* several times, a novel she thought was "more difficult and less easily accessible" than a lot of other texts (I1, T, p. 8), but that she thought was "a classic that you carry with you throughout your life" (I1, T, p. 23). She used this novel in the elective courses, either Vg2 International English or Vg3 Social Studies English. When teaching it, her focus was for students to see how the novel was relevant for contemporary society, for instance by discussing the case of Edward Snowden and government-controlled surveillance. Furthermore, she combined Orwell's novel with the dystopian film *V for Vendetta* (McTeigue, 2005) because she thought the two works had a lot in common, most notably the link to contemporary challenges in society. Joanna said that the students "see the similarities […] and they recognize a lot of the

totalitarian regimes that we have today" (I2, T, p. 14) in these two works. She went on to discuss some of the negative trends that are apparent in today's society, which included the gradual deterioration of international alliances such as the EU and NATO, and how modern technology leads to a surveillance society. The latter she linked directly to the Big Brother of Orwell's *1984*, whereas the former was part of a more overall concern, which the students could be made aware of when linking dystopian literature and film to the contemporary situation.

When discussing the four novels the teachers read in advance of the second interview, several commented on the link between these future societies and our own present and past. Sophie, who read *The Diary of Pelly D*, thought that when teaching it, she would be "very reliant on using the parallel to, for example, the Second World War in order to be able to go in depth" in her work with the novel (I2, T, p. 5). However, she felt that this would require her to move too far away from the subject curriculum, which does not focus on history. Working in a cross-curricular manner was an option she considered, but as students in general studies do not have History until Vg2, and she saw Adlington's novel as most suitable for Vg1, this was not ideal. Similarly, Charlotte saw a link to the Second World War in Adlington's novel: "I thought about Anne Frank, that someone had written it […] and that we have no idea what has really happened here" (I2, T, p. 11). She thought that *Pelly D* was the Anne Frank story transported to a science fiction future reality that it took a while for the reader to enter into and understand. However, she also thought that the original Second World War book was better suited to teaching about the War because "Anne Frank was more reflected than this protagonist" (I1, T, p. 11).

The teachers who read *Only Ever Yours* also focused on the novel's link to challenges in contemporary society. When discussing her first impression of the novel, Victoria said that her expectations were that the novel would be unrealistic, "about stuff that will never happen and […] scary things" (I2, p. 4). However, she soon thought that "the novel turned out to be so realistic, so based on the contemporary world where you can see many references to, to today's world" (I2, p. 4). She especially liked how the girl characters in the school were based on contemporary models, actors, and celebrities, and that the way the school was organized reminded her of TV shows like

America's Next Top Model, makeover shows, and reality cooking shows. Margaret saw the same links to contemporary society and popular culture, but she felt that the novel's emphasis on one trend in contemporary society, namely a focus on girls' and women's appearances, lacked nuances: "this theme is oversimplified. It's not that bad" (I2, p. 4). Margaret argued that women are more than their appearances, and although that might also be the message the novel was trying to get across, it was not very successful. This was one of the reasons why Margaret was less enthusiastic about the novel than Victoria, who saw this aspect of O'Neill's novel as something that made it particularly relevant for classroom use.

Both teachers who read *Ship Breaker*, Anne and Neil, linked the novel to contemporary society. When asked what she thought about the novel, Anne's first response was the following:

> The themes in the book are very relevant […] even though it is happening in a dystopian world where, kind of, society has collapsed, it is not so distant from, I mean, we could be there in a few years, in one form or another. And many of the people living today are kind of living in this world already, so in that sense, the themes affected me. (I2, T, p. 8)

This means that Anne saw a clear link not only to what our future might look like, but also to the lives of people in other parts of the world today: she mentioned favelas in Rio and slums in Manila as examples of places where people live in similar manners to the protagonist in Bacigalupi's dystopia. In her opinion, this made the novel particularly relevant for classroom use. Similarly, when Neil read the article I brought with me into the second interview that discussed real ship breakers in Bangladesh (see Ketels & Griebeler, 2014), this link to contemporary society made him more positive towards using *Ship Breaker* in the classroom: "I think it's much more interesting to do literature if it has real world connotations. So this is kind of perfect. It even looks like Nailer, like I'd expect him" (I2, p. 16). Furthermore, Neil saw another link between the novel and contemporary society that would be particularly relevant when teaching Vg3 Social Studies, namely the role of corporations. This issue was already addressed in his teaching, and using the novel to highlight it would make it even clearer for his students:

> You have something that looks like a corporate war, almost, brewing in the book, where corporations have become more powerful than governments. And that's already true, in a lot of the world, there's a lot of countries where you have major corporations that have much more power than the actual government in that country, and much more money as well. So there's a frightening future where companies take over for governments. (I2, p. 11)

This means that the novel's description of corporations' power fitted well with what he wanted his students to learn about in the elective Vg3 course. Building on this issue, he saw the possibility of linking *Ship Breaker* to contemporary American politics, more specifically whether contemporary politics is "more about money […] than it is about actually saving the world" (I2, p. 12). Furthermore, he thought the traditional American ideology of "rugged individualism" (I2, p. 12) was especially relevant for this novel, as the society of survival that the protagonist lives in means that everyone has to rely on him- or herself. Lastly, both Neil and Anne thought that the focus on environmentalism made the novel especially relevant for understanding contemporary culture and society, and this is addressed further in the next section.

11.3.2 Environmental concerns

Environmental and technological concerns are a reoccurring issue in contemporary dystopian literature. Several of the interviewed teachers emphasized the focus on the environment as particularly relevant for the works' potential classroom use, especially Neil and Anne, who both read Bacigalupi's *Ship Breaker*. Neil saw *Ship Breaker* as a "wake-up call" (I2, p. 8) in terms of environmental issues, and he thought it could make the students think twice about the way we treat the environment in our contemporary society. He thought that the way the characters in the novel spoke about our generation's treatment of the planet, "as though we were crazy people" (I2, p. 8), was especially apt. When asked what he would focus on if he were to teach the novel, environmentalism and climate change was the first issue he brought up, and he said that it "would probably be the most interesting" to teach as well (I2, p. 8). Similarly,

Anne mentioned climate change as an issue that made the novel relevant for contemporary readers: "it is not beyond common sense, I mean, the sea rising is something we know is coming, and the poles melting" (I2, T, p. 9). She discussed the possibility of addressing the environmental issues by working in a cross-curricular manner with the subjects Science and Social Science, as these subjects address "sustainable development and distribution of resources […] the consequences of global warming" (I2, T, p. 14). This means that both teachers who assessed *Ship Breaker* saw environmental concerns as a component of the novel that made it relevant for the classroom.

Environmental challenges were a part of the plot in *More Than This* as well, and Robert found this aspect of the novel interesting. When animals started appearing in the narrative, he thought, "it gives a little hope […] I pictured it taking a turn where it would move towards resurrection" (I2, T, p. 11). He saw this aspect of the novel as being something he could address in the classroom if the students remarked on it, and that it would be possible to work cross-curricularly with Science when focusing on the environmental issues.

The fourth teacher who discussed environmental concerns as particularly relevant when teaching dystopian literature was Margaret. She, however, did not address it in the context of the novel she read in advance of the second interview, but in terms of the genre's general suitability. When asked whether dystopian literature would fit in with the curriculum in the elective subjects in Vg2 and Vg3, Margaret emphasized the focus on environmentalism as especially salient since "one of the themes we're supposed to take up is global issues. Many people look at environment, and so certainly you could read some sort of environmental disaster dystopian fiction" (I2, p. 13). She thought this issue was especially important for Vg2 International English. Other curriculum aspects entered into my interviews with some of the other teachers as well, and these are addressed in the next section.

11.3.3 *Bildung* and the core curriculum

Three teachers stood out as focusing more on aspects of *Bildung* and the core curriculum when discussing dystopian texts' classroom potential. Firstly, Sophie brought up these issues in relation to both her past experience with teaching dystopian literature, and when addressing the novel she read for this project, *The Diary of Pelly D*. When discussing the latter, she saw the novel's focus on values and human worth as difficult to link to the subject curriculum: "The competence aims are not directed towards, perhaps not that directed towards values, and this is to a large extent about values, what kind of values we have as people, societies" (I2, T, p. 6). However, she did see the possibility of linking it to the core curriculum: "This is general, I'm thinking that this is general knowledge. There is a core curriculum as well, that we need to address. So it would not be a problem to […] make it fit in" (I2, T, pp. 6-7). Her emphasis on values was also apparent in the first interview, when she explained how she had used Collins's *The Hunger Games* with her Vg1 general students in the past. In the year in which the second film, *Catching Fire* (Lawrence, 2013), was released, her students had read excerpts from the first novel and seen the second film. When working with the novel excerpts, Sophie's main teaching focus was "the choices one has to make […] What do you do, what are you willing to sacrifice […] moral questions" (I1, T, p. 9). This means that Sophie linked this dystopian work to moral issues that were central to the human condition in general, which makes her approach to teaching dystopias relevant for developing the *Bildung* ideals present in the core curriculum.

The second teacher who emphasized this approach in her teaching was Joanna. As was the case with her view on literature's role in subject English in general, Joanna wanted dystopias to help students develop healthy values in their future roles as citizens and fellow humans. An important part of this was to help open their eyes regarding what was happening in the world around them. This was what she focused on when explaining how she had worked with Orwell's *1984*, as discussed in section 11.3.1. Furthermore, she linked Ness's *More Than This*, the novel she read in advance of her second interview, to an issue that was relevant for both the subject curriculum for Vg2

International English and the core curriculum, namely multicultural societies. She also saw the possibility of using the novel in a cross-curricular context with the Vg3 general studies subject Religion and Ethics due to the many ethical problems the novel raises – issues that are also relevant for the core curriculum.

Lastly, Victoria hoped that her students, by reading O'Neill's novel *Only Ever Yours*, could develop into more confident and less superficial people – values that one could argue are implicit in the core curriculum. She hoped that reading the novel could help her students care less about their appearances, "that they would maybe get some thoughts, that it's not what is the most important thing in life, what you look like" (I2, p. 12). Furthermore, she hoped that the novel could make them become more critical towards what they were watching on TV and exposed to on social media. Victoria discussed how this novel could be especially apt for some of her vocational students, more specifically the ones specializing in skin care, since "there is so much focus on being beautiful" (I2, p. 10) in that group. She thought that the novel could help them see beyond appearances, but that she would have to be careful when teaching it so the students did not think that she was "commenting on what they are doing" (I2, p. 10). The next section discusses further how teachers saw dystopian literature being taught in vocational and general studies.

11.3.4 Vocational and general studies

The teachers who were interviewed appeared to assess the suitability of dystopian novels differently according to whether they taught vocational or general studies. As mentioned in section 11.2.2, even though both Neil and Anne enjoyed reading *Ship Breaker* and thought the topics the novel addressed were relevant for the upper secondary classroom, only Neil thought that he could use the novel with his students. This had to do with the perceived level of the students they taught. Neil taught general studies students, and especially his Vg2 and Vg3 students would not struggle with reading the novel at all. Anne's vocational students, however, were weak readers, and her not being able to use it with her current students was therefore not because of the

book itself, but because it was *a* book. Completing any novel would be too big a task for many of her students, she believed, and that was the reason why she concluded, "it would be really difficult to use the book" (I2, T, p. 16).

Robert, the other teacher besides Anne who taught exclusively vocational students, explained his views in a similar manner when he concluded that Ness's *More Than This* would not be suitable for his students. He thought that only about one third of his students would be able to read a book like Ness's novel, and that was the main reason why he would not use it. He said that it would be possible to use it "in a stronger class" (I2, T, p. 14) where the students' skill levels were more similar, but that the novel's length gave him pause in terms of using it in any class. Similarly, Sophie said that reading the entire *The Diary of Pelly D* would be "insurmountable" (I2, T, p. 6) for the vocational students she had taught in the past, but that it could be possible to use some excerpts that could interest them – for instance chapters that included demolition with students in the building and construction program. Margaret, like Victoria, thought that *Only Ever Yours* could be a good reading choice for some vocational students. Victoria emphasized skin care students, and Margaret mentioned aspiring hairdressers, because these students were "very fashion-conscious, and I think sort of would be more interested in being the type of girl who's like a fashion model" (I2, p. 7). In other vocational classes, though, Margaret thought that the novel would be too long, but that it might be possible to use excerpts.

Lastly, Charlotte had experienced firsthand how a contemporary YA dystopian novel could work very differently in groups of students of the same age – one general studies, and one vocational studies. As discussed in section 10.2, she used Bacigalupi's *Ship Breaker* with her Vg1 general studies class, and later attempted to use it in her vocational Vg1 class. She explained that "it was like, oh, like two different worlds, it was like I had tried it at two different levels" (I1, T, p. 8). Although the work she did with Bacigalupi's novel in her general studies class was what she considered her most successful teaching during the entire school year, it was impossible for her to replicate that success in her vocational class.

This means that the perceived teaching potential of contemporary YA dystopias – and, in fact, of *all* books – varies greatly according to whether the teacher is assessing the texts for use in a vocational or a general studies class. These findings correspond with the discussion in chapter 8. In the remainder of this chapter, I discuss other findings that emerged from the teachers' readings and assessments of the four dystopian novels that correspond with findings in earlier chapters.

11.4 Teachers' literature selection processes

The purpose of having eight teachers read four contemporary dystopian novels for young adults in this project was twofold. Firstly, to explore teachers' beliefs about a genre that has not traditionally been part of the literature employed in schools, and secondly, to see how teachers' assessments of texts that were previously unknown to them might shed further light on their general beliefs about text selection. I have discussed the former issue earlier in this chapter; in this section, the latter issue is addressed – how the teachers' assessments of specific literary works are linked to their broader beliefs about the selection, employment, and purpose of literature in upper secondary subject English.

In chapter 10, I discussed how teachers chose literary texts by presenting three different types of approaches: teacher-oriented, student-oriented, and collegial. In the case of two of the teachers, their responses to the dystopian novel they had read in advance of the second interview resonated particularly strongly with the findings discussed in chapter 10. Firstly, Victoria was the teacher who relied the most on a teacher-oriented approach when selecting literary texts, which means that she put more emphasis on her own preferences when assessing literary texts as suitable or unsuitable for her students. She was very enthusiastic about the novel *Only Ever Yours* on a personal level, and was, in turn, very positive regarding using it with her students. Although she saw the same potential problems with the novel as Margaret did, Victoria concluded in a different manner. Margaret was reluctant to using the novel as full-class reading due to

the controversial and possibly alienating effect the subject matter might have on some of her students, whereas Victoria saw that these problems were there, but argued that she wanted to use it nevertheless. This means that although Victoria's teacher-oriented approach to text selection may not be the only factor that made her reach a different conclusion than Margaret, it could have influenced the conclusion she drew about the didactic potential of O'Neill's novel.

Secondly, Charlotte, who was more student-oriented in her approach to text selection, largely disregarded her own feelings about *The Diary of Pelly D* when assessing its suitability for her students. She was not very fond of the book, but kept qualifying her negative assessments with comments like "it might be my grown-up eyes that think so" (I2, T, p. 4), and stating that her students might feel differently about the book than she did. This indicates that Charlotte distinguished more clearly between herself and her students when assessing a literary text, and that she referred to the imagined judgments of the students more than to her own. In this sense, her student-oriented approach to choosing texts applied to her reading of the Adlington novel as well as to her general approach to text selection.

I would also like to bring up Anne, who, as discussed in section 9.1.2, relied heavily on the textbook. She was the only one of the eight teachers who linked her reading of the novel, in her case *Ship Breaker*, to the textbook she was using:

> With regards to the textbook we're using, this fits in very nicely with..two of the chapters in it. I mean chapter 7, which addresses kind of the future and environment and global challenges, and chapter 10 which is the science fiction future chapter. As an alternative to *The Hunger Games* and the other texts that are represented there (I2, T, p. 13).

This indicates that her reliance on the textbook was very strong, and that she viewed the textbook's topics as the real curriculum that she should follow with her students – something that also influenced her assessment of Bacigalupi's novel.

Lastly, I wish to mention a fourth teacher, Neil, whose views on *Ship Breaker* were closely linked to his overall teaching focus in terms of topics. As discussed in section 9.2.3, Neil preferred to work with American literature and culture, and in section

11.3.1, I mentioned how he saw the possibility of linking Bacigalupi's novel to American history and contemporary politics. The text selection he discussed in the first interview, as well as his assessments of *Ship Breaker*, clearly reflect this American focus. Since Neil preferred to teach American literature by linking texts and contexts together, focusing on American history, culture, and politics, he might have been less enthusiastic about a similar dystopian novel set elsewhere than in a future USA.

11.5 Concluding remarks

This chapter has addressed the interviewed teachers' responses to and assessments of the four dystopian novels *The Diary of Pelly D*, *Ship Breaker*, *More Than This*, and *Only Ever Yours*, their experiences and views on the didactic potential of other dystopian works, and the survey and interview respondents' views on the dystopian genre in general. Overall, the teachers were open for teaching dystopias, but some of the interviewed teachers had concerns regarding bringing the specific novel they read in preparation for the second interview into the classroom. For Margaret, the brutal subject matter and the way in which boys were portrayed made her cautious of bringing *Only Ever Yours* into some classes, whereas Victoria was more positive towards the novel. For both Joanna and Robert, the complexity of *More Than This* meant that they saw it as suitable only for students with a particular interest in the topics the novel addressed. For Sophie and Charlotte, the way in which *The Diary of Pelly D* was written might give some of their students problems reading it, and they were somewhat reluctant towards bringing the novel into the classroom because of this. The novel teachers were most positive towards was *Ship Breaker*. Both Anne and Neil liked the book and wanted to use it, and Neil actually used it with his Vg3 Social Studies English students. At the time of writing, this is the only novel read in preparation for the second interview that has been used in the classroom by the interviewees.[127]

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[127] Although this was not an aim in itself, I think it demonstrates the level of enthusiasm Neil felt about the novel.

However, I would argue that the teachers' overall views on the didactic potential of the genre were more positive than their assessments of the specific novels they read. The teachers emphasized the possibilities the genre provides in terms of understanding contemporary culture and society, addressing environmental concerns, and working towards aims of the core curriculum, especially *Bildung*. These issues were seen as important in subject English, and the teachers thought their students would benefit from addressing these issues in class. All of the eight teachers were positive towards teaching dystopian literature, but they were also concerned with finding the right text for their students. For Anne and Robert in particular, what influenced their assessments of texts most was that they taught exclusively in vocational studies; they thought that many of their students would be unable to read books at all. In sum, this means that the teachers showed constant concern for their students' educational needs.

12. Discussion

This study looks at teachers' choices and beliefs about literature in the upper secondary classroom in Norway. It has so far responded to the research questions by presenting which texts and genres teachers use and showing that the most important influences on teachers' choices and beliefs are study programs taught, contextual factors such as textbooks and curricula, and whether teachers are teacher-oriented, student-oriented, or collegially oriented when selecting literary texts. Also in the embedded case study on dystopian literature, the subject and core curricula and which study programs were taught emerge as important aspects of the discussion. The findings outline an intricate web of influences on teachers' choices and beliefs.

In this chapter, I seek to systematize this web of influences in an explanatory framework and discuss the findings from chapters 7-11 in light of theory and previous research. I start by looking at the role of beliefs in teachers' text selection processes, more specifically how beliefs about students, teachers, and subject matter function as filters when teachers select texts, and the stability of different types of beliefs, including core and peripheral beliefs. Next, I examine the importance of context in this study, including both the wider educational context and the school contexts in which the teachers work. Lastly, I discuss the limitations of the current study.

12.1 Teacher beliefs as filters

One of the functions of teacher beliefs is as filters for interpretation (Borg, 2018; Fives & Buehl, 2012; Pajares, 1992; Phipps & Borg, 2009). In the current study, several findings can be categorized in this manner. In what follows, I employ two types of filters that I have called, firstly, beliefs about teachers and students, and secondly, beliefs about subject matter.

12.1.1 Beliefs about students and teachers

Teachers' beliefs about students' abilities and motivations and their beliefs about themselves and their colleagues as teachers of literature constitute important filters through which they make decisions about text choice. In this section, I will show how these two apparently distinct filters are related, and why I therefore have selected to address them in the same section.

Beliefs about students

Teachers' beliefs about students in different study programs were discussed in most detail in chapter 8, where I demonstrated that teachers use different types of texts with students in vocational and general studies. The interviews showed that teachers saw two main reasons for this: the structural differences between the study programs and the inherent differences between the groups of students. In section 8.2.2, I discussed the latter reason by presenting the views of Sophie, the quick and efficient teacher. She did not think that vocational students needed to know about all of the same issues as students in general studies, and believed that they would benefit more from a clearer vocational focus in subject English. Her attitudes resonate with those of the teachers in Bøhn's doctoral dissertation (2016). He discussed assessment practices in subject English in upper secondary school, and in one of the articles, he addressed differences between English teachers in vocational and general studies when assessing students' oral proficiency (Bøhn, 2015). He found that some teachers were more lenient when assessing vocational students, and one of the reasons was that "they're going to become hairdressers and they're going to work at [the local supermarkets]" (2015, p. 6). One may infer from this that the teachers did not think that the students needed to know as much about some of the more abstract topics as the students in general studies, who were aiming for higher education after completing upper secondary school.

This indicates that neither Sophie nor the teachers in Bøhn's study thought that *Bildung*, in the sense of knowledge that can be shared by all members of a society (Biesta, 2003, p. 63), was equally important for all student groups. However, it is also

possible to view Sophie and the teachers in Bøhn's study as trying to fulfil the requirements of the law governing education: that the teacher needs to adapt education to the abilities of the individual (see § 1-3 in Opplæringslova, 1998). As they saw vocational students as inherently different from students in general studies, it could be considered their duty as teachers to teach differently, including using different literary texts, in different study programs. This could also indicate that the teachers' beliefs about adaptive education were core beliefs that would override more peripheral beliefs about *Bildung* for all. As mentioned in section 8.3, the suggested revised curriculum seems to point in the same direction as these teachers, as the competence aims for vocational and general study programs differ (Udir, 2019c). This means that teachers' beliefs about students in vocational and general studies, which seem to influence their text selection practices, will soon be acknowledged in national educational policy as well.

In order to elaborate further on teachers' beliefs about the need to adapt education according to students' skills and interests, I turn to the issues discussed in chapter 10. Here, I argued that some of the interviewed teachers were student-oriented when selecting literary texts for their classroom. This indicates that their beliefs about students include viewing students' opinions and aptitudes as important when planning their teaching, and that considering students' needs is important in order to succeed in the classroom.

Penne (2012) outlines two different types of literature teachers: "the pedagogical", who are mainly concerned with reading texts that can be of personal relevance to the students (pp. 44, 50, my translation), and "the literary intellectuals", who focus on meeting the more advanced aims of the curriculum without necessarily adapting the materials to the students' interests (p. 44, my translation). She argues that it is easier to belong to the latter category when teaching students with stronger abilities and interests in the subject, as teachers of students who are less motivated for reading are the ones who tend to take the pedagogical approach (pp. 54-55).

My findings point in the same direction as Penne's. In section 10.2, I present the vocational teacher Robert, who was one of the teachers with the clearest student-

oriented approach to literature selection. He explained that he worked at a school where many students had poor English-language skills, and in order to get the students to read anything at all, he had to find texts that were simple and that dealt with subject matter that could appeal to the vocational students. This is exactly what one of Penne's teachers described: "something that can appeal to them so they read a book at all, it is that simple and basic, actually" (2012, p. 50, my translation).

The other teacher whose views were examined in detail in this section was Charlotte, the hesitant, all-round teacher. She attempted to use Bacigalupi's *Ship Breaker* (2010) with both general and vocational students, but based on how the vocational students responded to the beginning of the novel, she discarded it after the first lesson. Therefore, her approach to text selection seems more closely aligned to that described by Agee (2000), as she "sought and used student feedback" in order to adapt her text selection to different groups (p. 341). Charlotte thought that it was important to do this because she did not think the students would learn unless they liked the literature that they were reading.

This seems to indicate that teachers who hold beliefs about the inherent differences between students of vocational and general studies and teachers who are concerned with adapting teaching to students' skills and interest are really discussing the same issue. The goal is for students to learn successfully about relevant issues, and in order for this to happen, beliefs about their aptitudes and motivation serve as filters for text selection.

Beliefs about teachers

In chapter 10, I discussed two other approaches to text selection alongside the student-oriented, namely the teacher-oriented, which focused on teachers who relied first and foremost on their own literary preferences, and the collegial, which suggested that some teachers rely heavily on collaboration with colleagues. Since both of these approaches to text selection focus on teachers rather than students, one might think that they represent somewhat of a contrast to the beliefs discussed earlier in this section. However, I would argue that they belong to the same main category of beliefs, and that

in seeing them in relation to one another one can draw a more complex and accurate picture of the interplay of beliefs and context. As discussed in section 10.1, teachers thought that it would benefit their students if they taught texts that they liked and knew well themselves. Rather than the teacher-oriented approach representing a self-centred belief, therefore, it rather shows that these teachers held different beliefs about what contributes more to students' learning. Where student-oriented teachers thought that the most important thing was that the materials were adapted to students, the teacher-oriented teachers thought that the teacher's ability to teach texts well was more important for students' learning.

This illustrates how beliefs can be understood as "integrated systems" (Fives & Buehl, 2012, p. 477) where different beliefs carry different weight (Borg, 2018, p. 77), or where "beliefs are prioritized according to their connections or relationship to other beliefs or other cognitive and affective structures" (Pajares, 1992, p. 325). In the examples above, beliefs concerning text choice appear to be linked to beliefs concerning the importance of teaching materials (the student-oriented approach) versus the importance of the teacher (the teacher-oriented approach) for successful learning when teaching literature.

The collegial approach, which was discussed in section 10.3, seems to be primarily linked to beliefs about the importance of a shared syllabus. This is in line with the arguments in favor of a literary canon in school as presented by Fleming (2007a) in chapter 3: a list of set texts to be read "prevents the *de facto* canon from being left to chance", "ensures some element of curriculum entitlement for all pupils", and makes sure that reading content is not arbitrary (p. 37) – even if it is only in the context of one school. Interestingly, Sophie, the only interviewed teacher who said that she followed a collegial approach to text selection, described a different approach when selecting texts for vocational students. She explained that it was more difficult to collaborate because these students had work practice at different times, and the teachers wanted to adapt their teaching to the various vocational study programs. This exemplifies how context and beliefs combine to influence text selection.

12.1.2 Beliefs about subject matter

Teachers' beliefs about one aspect of subject English, namely literature, is at the core of this study. This dissertation has so far shown that teachers select literature based on beliefs about different aspects of the subject, a consequence of the current curriculum's open attitude with regards to which literature should be read in upper secondary school. However, *which* beliefs about subject matter that serve as filters through which teachers make their text choices varies from teacher to teacher, as does the stability of these beliefs. Earlier chapters in this dissertation point towards the following beliefs about subject matter as particularly relevant for teachers' text choices: the role of different literary genres in the classroom, the role *Bildung* and the core curriculum should play in the school subjects, and the role of culture in the subject curriculum.

The role of different literary genres

As discussed in chapters 7, 8, and 11, different literary genres play different roles in the upper secondary classroom. The interviews demonstrated that teachers' attitudes towards and uses of the various genres depended on a variety of factors, including which student groups they taught, their personal reading habits and feelings about the genre, and their knowledge about the genre. For instance, when discussing young adult literature (see section 7.4.2), both Joanna, the student-centered humanitarian, and Victoria, the thorough and well-prepared teacher, argued that they did not know enough about the genre to make good text choices. When discussing graded readers (see section 7.4.5), Neil, the ambitious and talkative teacher, explained that he did not use these types of texts due to his belief that it was always best to read texts in their original version. These findings are in line with those of Kjelen (2013), who discussed lower secondary Norwegian teachers' text selection strategies and argued that teachers' tastes in literature and educational background were among the factors that influenced which texts they selected (p. 155). Similarly, Munden and Skjærstad (2018) found that among lower secondary English teachers' reasons for not using poetry were their "lack of competence" and "not knowing suitable poems" (p. 269).

This means that, as was the case with beliefs about students and teachers above, my findings indicate that beliefs about literary genres are part of complex belief structures and weighted differently by different teachers (Borg, 2018; Fives & Buehl, 2012; Pajares, 1992). Furthermore, some beliefs about literary genres proved to be subject to change, an issue that is discussed in more detail in section 12.1.3.

In addition to beliefs, though, my findings – like those of Kjelen (2013, p. 155) – indicate that the availability of suitable texts in the different genres influenced teachers' choices. When discussing graded readers (see section 7.4.5), Sophie and Charlotte both stated that even though they had access to graded readers, the books were old and unappealing, and the lack of modern, inspiring texts in the genre therefore led them not to use it at all. This contextual factor returns to the discussion in section 12.2.

The role of Bildung *and the core curriculum*

Another belief that served as a filter in teachers' text selection processes was the role *Bildung* played in subject English. It emerged in chapter 11, as the interviewed teachers discussed dystopian literature's classroom potential. Sophie, Joanna, and Victoria linked, respectively, the novels *The Diary of Pelly D* (2005), *More Than This* (2013), and *Only Ever Yours* (2014) to issues pertaining to *Bildung*. Of the three, Sophie was the only one who explicitly mentioned the core curriculum, while the others brought up values and topics addressed in the novels that could be linked to *Bildung* and the core curriculum. The teachers were concerned with issues related to understanding society, as well as the moral and ethical questions raised by the novels. The former can be linked to the idea of *Bildung* promoted by von Humboldt, namely "the linking of the self to the world" (2000, p. 58). The latter can be linked to *Bildung* as self-education or self-transformation (Løvlie & Standish, 2003, p. 5), as the teachers wanted students to reflect on moral and ethical issues when reading the novels, not just know something about these issues. The teachers' two approaches to *Bildung* are also found in the purpose section of the English subject curriculum: literature is supposed to help students develop "a deeper understanding of others and oneself" (Udir, 2013a, p. 1).

In his dissertation, Kjelen (2013) argued that many of the teachers he interviewed thought that *Bildung* and literature were closely linked in subject Norwegian, even though they struggled to define what *Bildung* meant when teaching literature (p. 104). A similar finding emerges from my data: teacher beliefs about *Bildung* and literature are, with the exception of Sophie, based on teachers discussing issues that are implicitly relevant for *Bildung*. Whether the teachers who did not discuss *Bildung* as such did in fact link issues raised by the novels to the educational concept or the core curriculum themselves, is not clear. In hindsight, I could have explored this issue more in the interviews.

Culture in the subject curriculum

In section 9.2.3, I discussed culture in the subject curriculum, paying particular attention to teachers' views on textual variety related to culture, the geographical setting and minorities in focus in specific texts, indigenous peoples' literature, and the continued Anglo-American dominance in teachers' text selection. Even though the interviewed teachers held different beliefs about textual variety relating to culture and the position of Anglo-American culture and literature in the subject, analyses of the texts that the survey respondents saw as suitable showed that with the exception of short stories, where Anglo-American literature constituted "only" 56% of the mentioned texts, literature from the USA and Great Britain dominated the text selection. Considering the point made in chapter 3, that only the curriculum for the elective Vg3 courses has a predominantly Anglo-American focus (see Udir 2006a; 2013a), it is evident that the reason for this dominance cannot be found by looking at the current curriculum. Instead, I argue that teachers' beliefs about the importance of Anglo-American culture and literature that result in the text selection discussed in this study are easier to understand when looking more closely at the structure of textbooks, the content of examinations, earlier curricula in English, and the cultural context in which we live.

Several textbooks used by teachers participating in this study organize their content according to geography and pay special attention to the USA and Great Britain (see

section 3.2.2 for specific examples). Even though teachers are not required to use textbooks in Norwegian upper secondary schools, studies show that textbooks still serve as important influences on classroom practice (A. S. Bakken, 2018; Ø. Gilje et. al., 2016). In upper secondary, where textbooks are used less than in primary and lower secondary school, they are particularly important when it comes to teachers deciding which topics to teach (Ø. Gilje et. al., 2016) – such as focusing on the USA and Great Britain. Furthermore, examinations influence teachers' choices, as discussed in section 9.2.2: Neil, in particular, argued that he chose predominantly American literature in Vg3 Social Studies because the examinations frequently focused on American politics.

In addition to examining contemporary textbooks and examinations for an explanation of teachers' beliefs about the importance of Anglo-American culture that seem to influence their text selection, it might be sensible to look beyond the current educational context to fully understand them. The overview of texts and authors specified in the earlier curricula New Structure, Veierød, and R94 that were seen as suitable by teachers in the current survey (see section 9.2.1, table 29) contained only Anglo-American literature. This is hardly surprising, considering that almost all of the specified texts in these curricula were written by authors from the USA and Great Britain. Since many of the teachers participating in this study were probably educated when these earlier curricula were in effect (Holgersen, Ekren, & Steffensen, 2017), it is possible that what they themselves experienced as students of English following these more Anglo-American-oriented curricula could influence their choices of literature today. This would be in line with two of Pajares' fundamental assumptions about teacher beliefs, namely that "beliefs about teaching are well established by the time a student gets to college" since "beliefs are formed early and tend to self-perpetuate" (1992, p. 324, 326).

Building on this, it is relevant to bring teachers' knowledge into the discussion. The teachers participating in this study probably learned more about Anglo-American literature and culture when they were in school themselves. Furthermore, living in Norway, we are immersed in English-speaking popular culture and entertainment such as music, television, and movies (Rindal, 2014), most of which come from the USA and Great Britain. This could mean that Anglo-American cultures are what teachers

know best both from their own upbringing and education, as well as from the cultural expressions they consume in their spare time. Teachers' use of Anglo-American literature is, therefore, probably influenced by both their beliefs and their knowledge.

Another relevant issue to consider is whether teachers see the different components of the subject, particularly literature, culture, and society, as separate or linked. According to Bakken (2018), subject English in Norway is "inherently cross-curricular" (p. 6), but that does not necessarily mean that the components language, literature, and culture and society are integrated in the teaching. In this study, several of the interviewed teachers saw the purpose of literature in the subject as closely linked to that of understanding culture and society (see teacher profiles in section 7.1.2), and the teachers' considerations of the classroom relevance of dystopian literature in chapter 11 made this connection particularly clear. When teachers hold the belief that literature is best used to teach culture and society, it can function as a filter in the text selection process by leading them to choose texts that can be linked to social studies. This is exemplified by Sophie, who was reluctant to using *The Diary of Pelly D* (2005) with her Vg1 students (see section 11.3.1). One of the reasons was that the main teaching approach she saw for the novel was that of its historical parallel to World War 2, and this did not fit with the curriculum's social studies focus in Vg1 subject English. This meant that she would probably not use the novel.

One of the reasons why teachers hold the belief that literature, culture, and society should be taught together in subject English is probably the curriculum, as the components are linked in the main subject area called "Culture, society and literature" in both the compulsory and elective courses (Udir, 2006a; 2013a). Furthermore, competence aims such as "discuss and elaborate on texts by and about indigenous peoples in English-speaking countries" (Udir, 2013a, p. 9) seem to encourage teachers to connect the components; this aim clearly signals cultures from which students should read texts.

In order to illustrate how teachers' beliefs about culture in the subject curriculum can serve as filters when selecting literary texts for the classroom, I turn to the respondent Neil. As discussed in chapters 9 and 11, Neil preferred teaching texts, history, and

social studies that could be linked to the USA, and he thought literature and social studies were a natural fit in subject English. In terms of his literature selection, the American focus was most evident in his Vg2 and Vg3 classes: five of nine texts in the former and both texts in the latter were American, including both of the novels that were selected for full-class reading.[128] In the Vg3 course, part of his reasoning around text choice was that because American politics were emphasized in his teaching, it was natural that the literature he selected should also be from the USA. Thus, Neil's beliefs about the importance and relevance of American literature and culture and his beliefs about the links between literature, culture, and society in English teaching influenced which texts he selected. A fair assumption might also be that his knowledge of American literature and culture affects his choices and beliefs – an issue which is discussed further in the next section.

12.1.3 The stability of teachers' beliefs about literature

Several reviews of the field have pointed out how different studies struggle to agree on a clear definition of teacher beliefs (see e.g. Fives & Buehl, 2012; Pajares, 1992; Skott, 2015). Fives and Buehl argued that this is because researchers disagree on "the nature of teachers' beliefs" (2012, p. 472), and outlined five characteristics where studies diverge. In this section, I look more closely at one of these, namely beliefs' "stability over time" (p. 473), as well as the related issue of core and peripheral beliefs (Borg, 2018, p. 77; Pajares, 1992, p. 318).

According to Fives and Buehl, "beliefs exist along a continuum of stability" (2012, p. 474). This means that beliefs are not either stable or dynamic, but that the different beliefs held by any one teacher can be found in different places along a stability continuum. Pajares argued that "the earlier a belief is incorporated into the belief structure, the more difficult it is to alter" and that "newly acquired beliefs are most vulnerable to change" (1992, p. 325). This is in line with Fives and Buehl's argument

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[128] See appendix 10.

263

that "long-held, deeply integrated beliefs" are more stable and "new, more isolated beliefs" are more dynamic (2012, p. 475).

In order to shed further light on this topic, I turn to the respondent Victoria. Her view on dystopian literature changed throughout the project, and I use this finding to explore the stability of her beliefs. As discussed in chapter 11, Victoria was skeptical of dystopian literature at the outset of the study, and, because of her teacher-oriented text-selection process, this meant that she was also reluctant to teaching these texts. However, after having read *Only Ever Yours*, she stated that she wanted to read more dystopian literature herself, and was also more positive towards teaching it. What brought about this change in her perception of the genre?

Victoria's initial skepticism towards dystopian literature was not only based on her not liking the genre, but also that she knew little of it: she said that she had not read many dystopian texts herself. This means that her initial belief seemed to be more grounded in her few and limited encounters with the genre than on knowledge, and when she learned more about it, her beliefs changed. This is in line with research suggesting that development of skills and knowledge (e.g. in the context of pre-teacher and in-teacher training) can contribute to change in beliefs (Borg, 2006). Furthermore, it seems as if two conflicting beliefs about literature converged while she was reading O'Neill's novel. On the one hand, her perception of dystopian literature, which was based on the genre being unrealistic and scary, and, on the other hand, her appreciation of literature that was realistic and dealt with relationships. When the two were combined, and she realized that dystopias could also be realistic and address relationships, this led to change in Victoria's view of dystopias. If following Pajares's (1992) and Fives and Buehl's (2012) reasoning, this would indicate that her belief about dystopian literature was weaker, more recently acquired, and less incorporated into a belief structure than her appreciation of realistic literature describing relationships. It could also mean that Victoria's belief about dystopian literature was in the periphery rather than at the core of her belief systems, as "core beliefs prevail over those that are peripheral" (Borg, 2018, p. 77).

Fives and Buehl also point out the importance of considering "which teachers' beliefs may be more open to change and what factors, including teaching experience, may contribute to change" (2012, p. 475). They suggest that experienced teachers may be more reluctant to change, and as Victoria was one of the teachers with the shortest teaching experience, this could be part of the explanation for her changing beliefs. However, I think it is of more importance that Victoria was *willing* to adjust her beliefs on the matter; she had volunteered, after all, for a project that included the reading of a dystopian novel, which indicates that she was curious and open-minded.

The case of Victoria indicates that beliefs change for three reasons: the development of skills and knowledge relevant for the belief, the nature of the belief itself, as core beliefs are the strongest and will be harder to alter, and the teacher's personality, especially their openness for change. Concerning the second issue, it seems like – in accordance with Borg (2018) – one way of determining whether beliefs are core or peripheral is to pit different beliefs against each other in order to create tensions. This was not something I set out to do in this study, but it nevertheless happened when Victoria's contrasting beliefs about which literature she liked to read were challenged in her reading of a dystopian novel. Researchers interested in examining this aspect of teacher beliefs could, therefore, develop this methodology further.

As a final thought in this section, it is worth noting that I do not know whether Victoria's change in beliefs had a lasting effect. As her beliefs about dystopian literature did not appear to be part of her core beliefs about literature, it is possible that they could change yet again were she to encounter other texts that were not as realistic and did not have relationships as a central component.

12.2 The importance of context

In chapter 9, I argued that the broader educational context, including curricula, examinations, and textbooks, influences teachers' choices and beliefs about literature. In this section, I also include contextual factors pertaining to the schools where teachers

work, including the selection of literary texts available, the extent to which teachers collaborate, and which study programs they offer.[129] Acknowledging the importance of context for teachers' beliefs and practices is in line with Kubanyiova and Feryok's suggestion that researchers "embrace the complexity of teachers' inner lives in the context of their activity" (2015, p. 436), and Fives and Buehl's claim that "teachers' beliefs are activated by context demands" (2012, p. 475).

Some of the contextual issues mentioned above have already emerged in the discussion in 12.1, and this illustrates the interrelated nature of beliefs (Borg, 2018; Fives and Buehl, 2012; Pajares, 1992). Furthermore, according to Fives and Buehl, "different situations or contexts may activate specific beliefs that influence the teachers' understanding and actions" (2012, p. 475). This indicates that the beliefs themselves do not necessarily change in different contexts, but that context may influence which beliefs that are active or dominant.

This point can be illustrated by taking another look at Neil's "American filter", which was discussed in the previous section. It is possible to argue that his ability to allow his belief about American culture and literature to influence his text selection relied on the context in which he operated. He would not have been able to choose mostly American texts if the curriculum had not allowed it, or if the curriculum had prescribed which texts or countries should be taught. This means that in another context, he might still have held his belief about American culture and literature, but not been able to act on it. This shows how the broader educational context affects the extent to which teachers are able to act according to their beliefs about literature, but it is also possible for school factors to influence teachers. For instance, had Neil worked at a school where teachers collaborated when selecting texts, as Sophie did, he would have had to take into consideration other teachers' beliefs about suitable and interesting literature. Furthermore, as discussed in section 12.1.2, the selection of texts available at the school could also influence the extent to which Neil could act in accordance with his beliefs.

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[129] Additionally, as outlined in the section addressing the role of Anglo-American literature above, contemporary popular culture is dominated by the USA and Great Britain, and this could potentially influence teachers. Exploring this issue is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but it is nevertheless worth mentioning.

12.3 Limitations of the study

In this last section of the chapter, I consider the limitations of the current study that need to be addressed when discussing the findings. There are two main categories of limitations: those relating to the survey, and those relating to research on teachers, more specifically studies of teacher beliefs and teacher cognition.

The survey was designed and conducted at an early stage of this study. As little research had been conducted previously on literature practices in subject English in Norway, and no studies that I had been able to locate used quantitative methods to do so, the questionnaire was exploratory. Looking back, I see several aspects of the survey that could be improved.

Firstly, I would distinguish more clearly between literary texts that teachers find suitable and literary texts that teachers use. As discussed in section 7.2.2, the term "suitability" was ambiguous when used in this context. The results would have been easier to interpret if items 15 and 16, instead of asking teachers to list suitable and unsuitable texts, had asked teachers to list texts they taught and thought worked well in the classroom, and texts that they did not think worked well in the classroom.

Secondly, I would have aimed to have teachers respond in a way that made specific reference to which student groups they taught, and which texts and genres they used in different study programs. As many of the respondents reported that they taught in both vocational and general study programs, it was not clear which study program they referred to when responding to items in sections 2, 3, and 4 of the survey. The exception was teachers who followed the instructions for items 15 and 16 and included in their response which student group they thought the texts were suitable for. For this reason, I decided to use only a sub-set of the survey respondents in my discussion of vocational and general studies: the 25 teachers who taught vocational studies and did not teach general studies, and the 35 teachers who taught general studies and did not teach vocational studies. Although this made the data clearer, there are disadvantages of doing it, first and foremost because these findings are based on a smaller sample. Furthermore, as many of these teachers reported that they had earlier taught in other

study programs, and the questionnaire did not make it clear whether they should respond according to their current and/or past practices, they *could* have had other groups of students in mind than those they currently taught when responding. The main reason why I chose to include these findings despite the limitations of the survey was that the interviewed teachers displayed some of the same tendencies as those found in the bivariate analyses.

When looking at the study as a whole, the qualitative data has been given more weight in the presentation and discussion of results. As discussed in chapter 6, it is not uncommon to give the different components varying emphasis in mixed methods studies (J. C. Greene, 2007). My decision to give more sustained attention to the interview respondents was based on two things: because the qualitative data provided the richest material and because the challenges outlined above related to the survey's validity underline the tentative nature of the quantitative findings.

This study has aimed to examine teachers' choices and beliefs about literature, and the issue of terminology was one I reflected extensively on. I decided to use the term teacher beliefs to discuss teachers' views, attitudes, thoughts, and perceptions about literature, even though – as discussed in chapter 5 – there is little consensus concerning the nature of teacher beliefs. There have been challenges connected with relying on a notion which is defined and approached in different manners, and the vagueness of the concept is arguably one of this study's limitations. Although teacher beliefs is a complicated notion to grapple with and it would probably have been possible to explore the research questions without relying on the research field of teacher beliefs and teacher cognition, I nevertheless found it to be worthwhile. This is mainly due to the discussion of teacher beliefs in this chapter, which, in my opinion, adds valuable insight into teachers' decision-making processes.

Teachers' choices and beliefs were investigated by asking teachers about which texts they use, why and how they select and use these texts, and how they assess contemporary dystopian literature's classroom potential. One evident limitation of this is that I only have the teachers' accounts to go on. Including other elements, such as students' perspectives and/or classroom observation would have provided me with

richer data that could have said more about teacher's practices. As pointed out by Borg (2003), teachers' beliefs are closely related to their classroom practice, and studies that only focus on reported beliefs rather than beliefs in combination with classroom practice could be seen as not saying enough about the subject being studied (p. 105). Since I assembled year plans and literature lists from the interviewed teachers and had the survey respondents list texts and textbooks, though, I would argue that I did manage to gain insight into which texts and genres teachers use *without* entering classrooms. I have no doubt that classroom observation would have broadened the picture further, but given the scope of this study, it was not feasible.

13. Conclusion

This dissertation has examined English teachers' choices and beliefs about literature in the upper secondary classroom. Teachers from five Norwegian counties participated in the study: 110 teachers completed a questionnaire about their choices and beliefs and eight teachers were interviewed to gain a deeper understanding of their teaching practices and views on literature. The interviewed teachers also took part in a case study which involved them reading and assessing a work of contemporary dystopian YA literature. Mixed methods have, as I hoped when I started working on this project, provided rich data for analysis and allowed me to explore the same issues from several angles, giving me further insight into teachers' literary choices and beliefs.

13.1 Summary of findings

13.1.1 The *de facto* literature syllabus

Earlier studies in the Norwegian context have shown that secondary teachers rely on the literary texts present in textbooks (Kjelen, 2013; A. S. Bakken, 2018), but there have not been any attempts at systematizing the specific texts teachers choose in subject English. This study has shown that teachers find a wide variety of literary texts suitable for classroom use. This reflects the open and non-specific competence aims of the subject curriculum, the focus on *Bildung* in the core curriculum, and the law requiring adapted education (KKUF, 1993a; Opplæringslova; Udir, 2006a; 2013a), which allow – and even encourage – this variety. The teachers participating in this study varied in their opinions on this matter: from enjoying the freedom the curriculum gives (Margaret), to wanting clearer guidelines in terms of which texts they should use (Victoria). Because teachers hold different beliefs, it is of importance that we consider both the advantages and disadvantages of the current situation. The biggest advantage is that teachers can adapt their literature selection to their students, as well as to what

they prefer teaching. The clearest disadvantage is that students across different classes have no common reference points in terms of the literature they have read. This lack of common literary reference points is reflected in the marginal role that literature currently plays in examinations.

However, even though no specific texts were used by all of the teachers who participated in this study, there were some patterns that emerged from the lists of texts that were generated on the basis of the survey results. These lists do not form a fixed or enforced syllabus, but make up a set of texts that I refer to as the *de facto* syllabus. This literature selection is largely contemporary, but also dominated by male, Anglo-American authors.

Most of the prose fiction was written in the 20th and 21st centuries, with the list of novels being more contemporary than the list of short stories. The selection of plays and poetry included more variety in terms of time periods; two thirds of the plays and almost one third of the poems were written before 1900. As there were more prose texts mentioned as suitable than plays and poetry, this did not change the description of the overall text selection as contemporary. Furthermore, poetry, short stories, and novels by male authors were mentioned approximately three times as often as works by female authors. This difference was even greater when looking at the selection of plays, where Shakespeare dominated, and no female playwrights were mentioned at all. Anglo-American writers were mentioned a lot more than authors from other parts of the world. This tendency was the same across all genres, although there was more cultural variety among the short stories listed. This means that the *de facto* literature syllabus cannot be said to reflect the English-speaking literatures of the world, even if the perspectives of minorities, especially in the USA, are represented in these literary texts. This is quite interesting, particularly given the focus on global English in the curricula for both the compulsory course and the elective Vg2 course International English (Udir 2006a; 2013a).

Concerning teachers' reported use of different genres, classic and young adult (YA) literature were used far more frequently than genres such as graded readers and comics, illustrated novels, and graphic novels. The latter genres, which are highly adaptable,

could have helped solve some of the problems of the teachers who reported that they struggled with using longer literary texts with vocational students who had limited language skill levels. However, although the interviewed teachers showed an interest in using these genres, few of them had actual experience with them, and some reported that a lack of available materials stopped them from trying them out. This could mean that the *de facto* syllabus also reflects the materials that are available to teachers: even though the curriculum allows teachers to choose literature freely, the selection of texts in the school and in libraries restricts their actual choices.

Another central finding of this study is that the textbook is still an important source for many teachers when choosing texts. All of the most popular short stories mentioned in the survey were present in more than one of the textbooks in current use in upper secondary school, which indicates a close link between textbooks and the *de facto* syllabus. Interestingly, short stories was the genre in which there was the most cultural variation. Since most of the short stories teachers mentioned were found in textbooks, this could mean that textbooks interpret the curriculum – and, in turn, steer the teachers towards – a more multi-cultural, global English approach to literature selection. However, mere textbook presence does not guarantee a text's entry into the *de facto* syllabus: the teachers in this study use their professional judgment in order to decide which texts to use and which to discard, even those teachers who report that they rely heavily on textbooks.

In sum, this study indicates that the *de facto* literature syllabus is a result of a complex combination of several elements. Firstly, that well-established authors, cultures, and genres are represented; secondly, which materials that are available to the teachers, both in libraries and in textbooks; thirdly, the influence of the curriculum (in the case of literature by and about indigenous peoples) and examinations; and lastly, the teachers' professional judgment in assembling a syllabus for their classes. The latter point, as discussed in chapter 12, is influenced by their beliefs about students, teachers, and subject matter, and these beliefs serve as filters when teachers make their text selection.

13.1.2 Different curriculum enactments

The finding that was most consistent across the different methods and that emerged from my analyses of responses to several of the research questions, was that teachers find different texts suitable for vocational and general studies, even in the compulsory course, which has the same curriculum across all study programs. Bivariate analyses of the survey responses showed that longer texts and classic literature were more used by teachers in general studies than by teachers in vocational studies, and that graded readers were more used by teachers in vocational studies than by teachers in general studies. The interviewed teachers tended to confirm these findings, but added more insights into their perception of other genres: for instance, they saw light reading as more suitable in vocational studies than in general studies.

The reasons given for these differences in text selection focused on the structural difference of subject English and on the inherent differences between students attending various study programs. The interviewed teachers stated that it was more difficult to motivate vocational students to read longer literary texts, and that there were usually more students who struggled with English and reading in vocational classes than in general studies classes. Although some of the teachers emphasized that there were vocational students who read in their spare time and that not all vocational students had poorer language skills than students in general studies, all of the teachers who had experience teaching English in vocational studies expressed this view on literature teaching. This also influenced their assessments of the didactic potential of the four contemporary YA dystopian novels that they read – the teachers did not think that it was feasible to work with an entire book in most vocational classes. Additionally, the structure of the compulsory English course in vocational studies was thought to be unhelpful for working with longer texts. If teachers were already hesitant towards teaching books due to the students' lack of skills and interests, the fact that they would only meet their students once a week further discouraged them because of the fragmented nature of English teaching that resulted from such a course structure.

The interviewed teachers who had experience in teaching vocational students were all aware of these challenges, but they were uncertain as to what they should do. In my

opinion, the professional judgment they wielded proficiently when discussing the didactic potential and selection of literary texts for general studies was largely absent when discussing literature in vocational studies. There was a gap between what they wanted to do, which was what they thought was best for the students, and what they were actually able to do with the materials, time, and didactic approaches at hand. Due to this, the curriculum was enacted differently in the general and vocational study programs in terms of the specific texts, genres, and amounts of literature that were read. This is not necessarily negative, as it can be argued that teachers did what the law requires them to do, namely to adapt their teaching to their students. However, it is important to consider the possible consequences.

The most striking consequence is that the content of vocational students' compulsory English course differs greatly from that of general students. Does that really mean, then, that all students receive the same preparation for higher education in their compulsory English course, which is the intention of the curriculum, or are vocational students less equipped to handle the demands of English in higher education due to the different focus and content of their enacted upper secondary English program? Some of the teachers participating in this study argued that vocational students would move on to work in a profession rather than study at university level, and that this was an important reason why they focused on different things when teaching these students. However, this may put the vocational students who actually do go on to studies in higher education in a difficult position: statistics from 2017-18 indicate that more than 11 000 vocational students attended the additional school year which qualified them for studies in colleges and universities (Udir, 2018c). The English course they have attended qualifies them formally for college and university education, but they have not worked to the same extent with the types of issues, or with the literary genres, that students in general studies have. Therefore, they might not be equally equipped for higher education.

13.2 Looking ahead

This study has contributed with new knowledge in the field of literature didactics in Norway by examining teachers' choices and beliefs about literature in upper secondary subject English. In addition to the findings discussed above, I would like to emphasize three main contributions of this dissertation. Firstly, although mixed methods is common in Norwegian studies of English didactics in general (Rindal & Brevik, 2019a), this is the first mixed methods study examining teachers' literature choices conducted in the Norwegian context. Secondly, this study has included both vocational and general studies, and both the compulsory and elective English courses. Although other studies in English didactics have discussed the subject across study programs before, this is the first time literature has been the primary focus. This means that this study examines the complete picture of literature teaching in subject English in upper secondary school. Thirdly, this project has focused on the voices of teachers, and an important contribution is that of showing their beliefs about the current situation. The results show that teachers use their belief structures to develop their professional judgment when there are no formal requirements, including finding material that they think is appropriate for their students' level. Teachers constantly mediate between larger educational and didactic issues and practical classroom detail, and they use their freedom responsibly.

As mentioned in chapter 5, studies of teachers in one country are not necessarily directly transferable to teachers in other countries due to the differing contexts. This is also the case with the current study, which is of most relevance for subject English teaching in the other Scandinavian countries due to the similar language and curriculum contexts (Penne, 2012). However, I argue that some of the findings discussed in this study are relevant beyond Scandinavia as well. This applies particularly to the discussion of teacher beliefs about students, teachers, and subject matter as filters for text selection in chapter 12, as this framework could be adapted to and used in other contexts. Furthermore, teachers' views on and reported uses of different literary texts and genres in the FL/L2 English classroom could be used as a starting point for research in other countries and contexts.

There are also many other possible paths to follow in terms of further research. In earlier chapters, I suggested examining teachers' uses of and beliefs about Shakespeare in more detail, as well as exploring the collegial approach to literature selection. Another interesting research topic could be to study closely the role of literature in examinations and the washback effect of examinations on teacher' practices. Building on and moving beyond the issues discussed in the current study, the most important perspective that was not included here is that of upper secondary students. Therefore, looking at students' beliefs about and attitudes towards literature would be a logical next step. In my opinion, it would be of particular importance to include students in both vocational and general studies in order to find out whether the teachers' views of these students' abilities and interests correspond with those of the students. What do students think the role of literature in subject English is, or should be? Which literary texts do they think that they would benefit from and/or enjoy reading? Of equal importance is what teachers and students actually do with these texts in these classrooms; how are they taught? Research looking into teachers' and students' perceptions of the less used genres that the teachers in this study nevertheless argued had didactic potential – illustrated literature, graded readers, and light reading – would also be worthwhile. Lastly, exploring dystopian literature's classroom potential, by including both teachers and students in classroom research, would be relevant in order to see if the teachers' ideas of the dystopian novels' suitability hold true in practice.

It is impossible to look ahead without discussing the current curriculum revisions. The new core curriculum is already finalized, and the new subject curricula will be finalized during the fall of 2019. Regarding vocational studies, both the structure and content of subject English are currently in the melting pot. As mentioned in earlier chapters, there will probably be different competence aims for general and vocational studies, and the compulsory course in vocational studies looks like it will be taught over one school year instead of two (Udir, 2019c). For both general and vocational studies, it seems likely that the new subject curriculum will be even more open than the current in terms of which texts should be taught. The earliest draft of the new curriculum did not even include specifications concerning whether *literary* texts should be used (Udir, 2019a), but this has been slightly amended in the most recent draft (Udir, 2019c). This means

that this dissertation will still be important even though the formulation of the competence aims change. Teachers will still have to make their own choices regarding which texts to use, and perhaps also – for some Years and/or study programs – regarding whether to use literary texts at all. My last words are, therefore, words of hope and encouragement: that this study will demonstrate the importance of *literature* in upper secondary English, and that teachers will continue to exercise their professional autonomy and judgment to choose and use literary texts with their students.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: NSD evaluation

Appendix 2: E-mail to principals

Appendix 3: E-mail to teachers

Appendix 4: Information letter to teachers

Appendix 5: E-mail to teachers (reminder)

Appendix 6: Survey

Appendix 7: Interview guide 1

Appendix 8: Interview guide 2

Appendix 9:   Prose texts mentioned at least twice in the survey

Appendix 10: Literary texts used by the interview respondents

Appendix 1   NSD evaluation

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES

Marit Elise Lyngstad
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Postboks 4010 Bedriftssenteret
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Vår dato: 13.11.2015   Vår ref: 45426 / 3 / MHM   Deres dato: Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 30.10.2015. All nødvendig informasjon om prosjektet forelå i sin helhet 12.11.2015. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

45426	*Contemporary dystopian literature in the secondary classroom*
Behandlingsansvarlig	*Høgskolen i Hedmark, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig	*Marit Elise Lyngstad*

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

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

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

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

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 30.09.2018, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

Marianne Høgetveit Myhren

Kontaktperson: Marianne Høgetveit Myhren tlf: 55 58 25 29
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Personvernombudet for forskning

Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Prosjektnr: 45426

Utvalget informeres skriftlig og muntlig om prosjektet og samtykker til deltakelse. Informasjonsskrivet er godt utformet.

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at forsker etterfølger Høgskolen i Hedmark sine interne rutiner for datasikkerhet.

Forventet prosjektslutt er 30.09.2018. Ifølge prosjektmeldingen skal innsamlede opplysninger da anonymiseres. Anonymisering innebærer å bearbeide datamaterialet slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes. Det gjøres ved å:
- slette direkte personopplysninger (som navn/koblingsnøkkel)
- slette/omskrive indirekte personopplysninger (identifiserende sammenstilling av bakgrunnsopplysninger som f.eks. bosted/arbeidssted, alder og kjønn)
- slette digitale lyd-/bilde- og videoopptak

Appendix 2   E-mail to principals

Hei _____,

I forbindelse med doktorgradsprosjektet "English teachers' and students' choices and beliefs about literature in the secondary classroom" vil jeg sende ut en spørreundersøkelse til engelsklærerne ved din skole i løpet av _____ 2016. Undersøkelsen blir sendt ut til alle engelsklærere i videregående skole i Møre og Romsdal, Nord-Trøndelag, Oppland, Sogn og Fjordane og Sør-Trøndelag. Formålet er å finne ut hva slags litteratur lærerne bruker i sin undervisning, hvordan de velger ut denne litteraturen, samt hvordan de vurderer spesifikke tekster opp mot disse kriteriene.

I tillegg til å se på bruken av litteratur i engelskfaget er det også en viktig kartleggingsdel innbakt i prosjektet; jeg håper blant annet å få en oversikt over hvor mange engelsklærere som jobber i videregående i disse fylkene. I forkant av undersøkelsen har jeg derfor behov for å få en oversikt over engelsklærerne på din skole, og siden jeg ikke fant noen fagoversikt på nettstedet deres henvender jeg meg til deg. Merk at jeg også gjerne vil nå lærere som har undervisningskompetanse i engelsk, men ikke underviser i faget på nåværende tidspunkt. Jeg vil sette stor pris på om du kunne sendt meg en navneliste slik at jeg får kartlagt engelsklærerne i disse fylkene og sendt ut informasjon om undersøkelsen til de rette lærerne. Alternativt er det fint om du kan sette meg i kontakt med engelsklærernes avdelingsleder eller fagkontakt, så kan jeg ha den videre kommunikasjonen om med dem.

Deltakelse i prosjektet er selvfølgelig helt frivillig og opp til hver enkelt lærer – lærerne er på ingen måte forplikta til å svare selv om jeg får navnene deres for å sende ut informasjon til dem.

I vedlegget vil du finne mer detaljert informasjon om forskningsprosjektet. Ta gjerne kontakt om du har spørsmål.

Med vennlig hilsen

Marit Elise Lyngstad

Stipendiat i profesjonsrettede lærerutdanningsfag

Høgskolen i Hedmark, campus Hamar

Tlf.: 625 17 294 / 977 66 963

E-post: marit.lyngstad@hihm.no

Appendix 3   E-mail to teachers

Hei,

Du mottar denne e-posten fordi du jobber som lærer i videregående skole i
_____ og har engelsk som fag.

Jeg er en tidligere engelsklærer i videregående skole som nå jobber som
doktorgradsstipendiat ved Høgskolen i Hedmark. Prosjektet mitt har arbeidstittelen "English
teachers' and students' choices and beliefs about literature in the secondary classroom" og
jeg undersøker hvordan lærere og lærerstudenter ser på ulike aspekter ved litteratur og
litteraturundervisning i engelskfaget.

Jeg håper du vil ta deg tid til å svare på en elektronisk spørreundersøkelse om dine syn på
litterære tekster og litteraturundervisning i engelskfaget i videregående. Undersøkelsen vil ta
anslagsvis 15-30 minutter å gjennomføre, og du vil være helt anonym. Noen av spørsmålene
i undersøkelsen er generelle, og jeg forstår at du kanskje kan ha ulike svar for ulike
studentgrupper og/eller fag. I disse tilfellene ber jeg deg om å svare ut fra gjennomsnittet for
gruppene du har inneværende skoleår.

Lenke til spørreundersøkelsen: _____ (åpen til og med _____).

Jeg er interessert i å høre fra så mange engelsklærere som mulig, og jeg vil gjerne ha svar fra
alle typer engelsklærere (uavhengig av eksempelvis alder, utdanningsnivå og hvilke
klassetrinn/studieretninger du underviser på). Utgangspunktet mitt er ikke at enkelte
metoder, tekster og/eller framgangsmåter er bedre enn andre; jeg er interessert i å finne ut av
hva som foregår og hvorfor.

Dersom du synes at dette temaet er interessant kan du også melde deg frivillig til å bli
intervjuet. Da sender du et svar på denne e-posten (til marit.lyngstad@hihm.no) hvor du
oppgir følgende informasjon:

- Navn
- Alder
- Hvilken skole du jobber på
- Hvilke studieretninger du underviser på

I vedlegget vil du finne mer detaljert informasjon om intervjuene og forskningsprosjektet generelt. Ta gjerne kontakt om du har spørsmål.

Mvh
Marit Elise Lyngstad
Stipendiat, engelsk
Høgskolen i Hedmark, avd. Hamar
Tlf.: 625 17 294 / 977 66 963
http://www.hihm.no

Appendix 4   Information letter to teachers

English teachers' and students' choices and beliefs about literature in the secondary classroom

Bakgrunn og formål

Denne studien skal utforske hvordan engelsklærere og lærerstudenter vurderer litterære tekster i engelskfaget: hvordan de velger ut tekster til bruk i klasserommet, hva de ser på som kvalitetslitteratur, hva som er egnet litteratur i klasserommet, og hvordan de ser på engelskspråklige dystopier for ungdom opp mot disse kategoriene. Prosjektet er et doktorgradsstudium innen ph.d.-programmet Profesjonsrettede lærerutdanningsfag ved Høgskolen i Hedmark.

Du er spurt om å delta fordi du er lærer i videregående skole i Møre og Romsdal, Nord-Trøndelag, Oppland, Sogn og Fjordane eller Sør-Trøndelag og har engelsk som fag. I tillegg til lærere i videregående skole vil tre kull ved lektorprogram, praktisk-pedagogisk utdanning (PPU) og grunnskolelærerutdanning 5-10 i engelsk ved Høgskolen i Hedmark bli spurt om å delta i denne studien.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

Deltakelse innebærer å svare på en anonym, elektronisk spørreundersøkelse om temaene over (denne undersøkelsen sendes ut til alle engelsklærere i de fem fylkene). Du blir også spurt om du er villig til å stille opp til intervju. Dersom du sier ja til dette og blir valgt ut til å delta, vil du bli bedt om å sende dine årsplaner i engelsk til stipendiat, samt oppgi hva slags læringsressurser (læreverk, bøker, etc.) som benyttes i dine engelsktimer. Deretter vil du møte stipendiat til et innledende intervju om litteratur i engelskfaget som tar utgangspunkt i din egen praksis (varighet: 1-2 timer). På et seinere tidspunkt vil du møte stipendiat til et oppfølgingsintervju hvor dere skal diskutere en ungdomsroman som dere har blitt enige om å lese. Dette intervjuet vil dreie seg om hvorvidt denne boka er egnet for klasserommet, og i tillegg kan relevant tematikk som du, andre lærere og/eller lærerstudenter har diskutert tidligere i undersøkelsen bli tatt opp (varighet: 1-2 timer). Lydopptaker vil benyttes under begge intervjuene.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt; kun stipendiat vil ha tilgang til dem. Personopplysninger og koblingsnøkkel (som kobler navneliste til kodene i det transkriberte datamaterialet) vil oppbevares på et annet sted på stipendiats datamaskin enn selve intervjuopptaket og -transkripsjonen. Alt vil være beskyttet av passord som kun stipendiat kjenner.

Deltakerne vil ikke kunne gjenkjennes i avhandlingen, som etter planen skal ferdigstilles i oktober 2018. Lydopptak og personopplysninger vil da slettes, og det transkriberte datamaterialet vil anonymiseres ytterligere så det vil være umulig å identifisere deg.

Frivillig deltakelse

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om deg bli anonymisert (merk at opplysninger fra den elektroniske spørreundersøkelsen er anonymisert fra start).

Dersom du ønsker å delta og har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med stipendiat Marit Elise Lyngstad på **tlf. 62 51 72 94 (jobb)** eller **97 76 69 63 (mobil)**, eller via **e-post: marit.lyngstad@hihm.no**.

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

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta som informant i intervju:

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Appendix 5   E-mail to teachers (reminder)

Hei _____-lærere!

Dette er en siste påminnelse om spørreundersøkelsen jeg sendte ut til dere tidligere denne måneden og gjennom fagnettverket. Dersom dere ikke har svart har dere anledning t.o.m. _____ til å svare. Dersom noen av dere er interesserte i å stille opp til intervju må dere bare melde dere – jeg vil gjerne ha flere informanter.

Mitt mål er at dette prosjektet skal gi noe tilbake til lærerne som deltar. Derfor vil jeg gjerne besøke fagnettverkene i de deltakende fylkene for å legge fram funnene mine om et år eller to, og dermed forhåpentligvis være med og bidra til kunnskapsutvikling innen litteraturundervisning i engelskfaget. I tillegg vil lærerne som stiller til intervju få anledning til å benytte meg som gjesteforeleser/hjelpelærer ved en seinere anledning.

Jeg håper dere vil bidra til forskningen min!

Lenke til spørreundersøkelsen: _____

Mvh
Marit Elise Lyngstad
Stipendiat, engelsk
Høgskolen i Hedmark, avd. Hamar
Tlf.: 625 17 294 / 977 66 963
http://www.hihm.no

Appendix 6   Survey

Denne undersøkelsen består av totalt 54 spørsmål, og er inndelt i fire deler. Første del består av kartleggingsspørsmål (14 spørsmål); andre del består av spørsmål om konkrete tekster og læreverk (3 spørsmål); tredje del består av spørsmål om din klasseromspraksis (20 spørsmål); fjerde del omhandler dine syn på litteratur og litteraturundervisning generelt (17 spørsmål). Spørsmålene i del 1 er obligatoriske, men det er mulig å hoppe over spørsmål du ikke kan/vil svare på i del 2-4. Helt til slutt vil du bli spurt om du har kommentarer til undersøkelsen. Dersom noen spørsmål oppleves som uklare blir det satt stor pris på om du nevner dem her.

På forhånd takk for at du tar deg tid til å svare på denne undersøkelsen!

Del 1, spørsmål 1-5: Velg ett svaralternativ.

1) Arbeidsfylke:
- ☐ Møre og Romsdal
- ☐ Nord-Trøndelag
- ☐ Oppland
- ☐ Sogn og Fjordane
- ☐ Sør-Trøndelag

2) Alder:
- ☐ 20-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ 60-69
- ☐ 70 og over

3) Kjønn:
- ☐ Kvinne
- ☐ Mann

4) Stillingskategori:
- ☐ Adjunkt
- ☐ Adjunkt med tilleggsutdanning
- ☐ Lektor
- ☐ Lektor med tilleggsutdanning
- ☐ Lærer
- ☐ Faglærer uten pedagogisk utdanning
- ☐ Annet

5) Høyeste fullførte utdanning i engelsk:

☐ Ingen/mindre enn 60 studiepoeng (ikke fullført årsstudium/grunnfag)

☐ Årsstudium/grunnfag

☐ Fordypning på bachelornivå/mellomfag

☐ Mastergrad/hovedfag

☐ PhD/Dr. Art.

Del 1, spørsmål 6-8: Velg beskrivelsen som passer best for deg.

6) Jeg leser engelskspråklig skjønnlitteratur på fritida.

     Aldri   Sjelden   Av og til   Ofte   Veldig ofte

7) Jeg leser norskspråklig skjønnlitteratur på fritida.

     Aldri   Sjelden   Av og til   Ofte   Veldig ofte

8) Jeg leser skjønnlitteratur på andre språk enn norsk og engelsk på fritida.

     Aldri   Sjelden   Av og til   Ofte   Veldig ofte

Del 1, spørsmål 9-12: Velg ett svaralternativ.

9) Antall års undervisningserfaring i videregående:

☐ 0-5   ☐ 21-30

☐ 6-10   ☐ Mer enn 30

☐ 11-20

10) Antall års undervisningserfaring totalt:

☐ 0-5   ☐ 21-30

☐ 6-10   ☐ Mer enn 30

☐ 11-20

11) Skolen jeg jobber ved dette året ligger i en..

☐ Storby (mer enn 50.000 innbyggere)

☐ Mindre by (mellom 5000 og 50.000 innbyggere)

☐ Bygd (under 5000 innbyggere)

12) Anslå hvor mange engelsklærere som jobber ved din skole:

☐ 1-5   ☐ 11-15

☐ 6-10   ☐ Mer enn 15

Del 1, spørsmål 13-14: Flere svar mulige - merk av alle som passer.

13) Dette skoleåret underviser jeg i engelsk på følgende linjer og/eller områder:

☐ Yrkesfaglige linjer   ☐ Annet (f.eks. tilrettelagt opplæring,

☐ Studieforberedende linjer   spesialundervisning)

☐ International Baccalaureate (IB)   ☐ Jeg underviser ikke i engelsk dette

☐ Voksenopplæring   skoleåret

☐ Påbygg

14) Jeg har tidligere undervist i engelsk på følgende linjer, områder og/eller skoleslag:

☐ Yrkesfaglige linjer   ☐ Andre skoleslag: grunnskole

☐ Studieforberedende linjer   (barneskole/ungdomsskole)

☐ International Baccalaureate (IB)   ☐ Andre skoleslag: høyere utdanning

☐ Voksenopplæring   ☐ Andre skoleslag: annet

☐ Påbygg   ☐ Jeg har aldri undervist i engelsk

☐ Annet (f.eks. tilrettelagt opplæring,

spesialundervisning)

Del 2, spørsmål 15-16: Som svar på disse spørsmålene kan du oppgi så mange tekster du vil, gjerne fra ulike sjangre.

15) Gi eksempler på litterære tekster som du synes fungerer/passer godt i engelsk i videregående (spesifiser gjerne for hvilke årstrinn/linjer).

16) Gi eksempler på litterære tekster som du IKKE synes fungerer/passer godt i engelsk i videregående (spesifiser gjerne for hvilke årstrinn/linjer).

Del 2, spørsmål 17: I dette svaret skal du angi titlene på læreverkene du bruker og rangere dem ved å bruke beskrivelsene "veldig fornøyd", "fornøyd", "tilfreds", "litt misfornøyd" eller "veldig misfornøyd". (For eksempel: Steps 5 = tilfreds; Stairs 7 = fornøyd.) Dersom du ikke bruker læreverk er det fint om du skriver det i stedet for å hoppe over spørsmålet. <u>NB:</u> Merk at det kun er snakk om utvalget av litterære tekster i læreverkene, ikke læreverkene som helhet.

17) Hvilke læreverk bruker du og hvor fornøyd er du med utvalget av litterære tekster i dem?

Del 3, spørsmål 18-29: Velg beskrivelsen som best angir hvor ofte du utøver følgende praksis når du underviser i engelsk.

18) Jeg velger de litterære tekstene som elevene mine skal lese.

    Aldri   Sjelden   Av og til   Ofte   Alltid

19) Jeg bruker læreverket eller lærerveiledningen for å lede klassediskusjoner om litterære tekster.

    Aldri   Sjelden   Av og til   Ofte   Alltid

20) Alle elevene i klasserommet mitt leser de samme litterære tekstene samtidig.

    Aldri   Sjelden   Av og til   Ofte   Alltid

21) Engelskspråklig ungdomslitteratur blir lest i mitt klasserom.

    Aldri   Sjelden   Av og til   Ofte   Alltid

22) De litterære tekstene som elevene leser i klasserommet mitt er tilpasset elevenes interesser.

| Aldri | Sjelden | Av og til | Ofte | Alltid |

23) De litterære tekstene som elevene leser i klasserommet mitt er tilpasset elevenes ferdigheter.

| Aldri | Sjelden | Av og til | Ofte | Alltid |

24) Jeg lar elevene mine velge de litterære tekstene som de skal lese selv.

| Aldri | Sjelden | Av og til | Ofte | Alltid |

25) Klassiske litterære tekster som inngår i den engelskspråklige verdens kulturarv blir lest i mitt klasserom.

| Aldri | Sjelden | Av og til | Ofte | Alltid |

26) Tegneserier, illustrerte romaner og/eller tegneserieromaner blir lest i mitt klasserom.

| Aldri | Sjelden | Av og til | Ofte | Alltid |

27) Fantasy, science fiction og/eller dystopisk litteratur blir lest i mitt klasserom.

| Aldri | Sjelden | Av og til | Ofte | Alltid |

28) "Graded readers" (f.eks. forenklete versjoner av kjente litterære tekster) blir lest i mitt klasserom.

| Aldri | Sjelden | Av og til | Ofte | Alltid |

29) Lett underholdningslitteratur blir lest i mitt klasserom.

| Aldri | Sjelden | Av og til | Ofte | Alltid |

Del 3, spørsmål 30-37: På en skala fra 1-4 hvor 1 = stemmer ikke og 4 = stemmer helt, angi hva som best beskriver deg og din praksis som engelsklærer.

30) De fleste litterære tekstene jeg bruker med mine klasser i løpet av et skoleår er tatt fra elevenes læreverk.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Stemmer ikke   Stemmer helt

320

31) Jeg bruker litterære tekster fra flere ulike sjangre med en klasse i løpet av et skoleår.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Stemmer ikke   Stemmer helt

32) Jeg benytter meg av ulike kilder og tekster i stedet for et fast læreverk når jeg velger ut litterære tekster til klasserommet.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Stemmer ikke   Stemmer helt

33) Jeg bruker både korte litterære tekster (f.eks. dikt og noveller) og lengre litterære tekster (f.eks. skuespill og romaner) med en klasse i løpet av et skoleår.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Stemmer ikke   Stemmer helt

34) Elevene mine leser minst ett lengre verk (f.eks. skuespill, roman) i løpet av et skoleår.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Stemmer ikke   Stemmer helt

35) Det er noen litterære tekster jeg gjerne skulle brukt i klasserommet som jeg av ulike grunner ikke bruker.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Stemmer ikke   Stemmer helt

36) Jeg tror elevene mine liker å jobbe med litterære tekster i engelsktimene.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Stemmer ikke   Stemmer helt

37) Jeg tror elevene mine lærer mye av å jobbe med litterære tekster i engelsktimene.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Stemmer ikke   Stemmer helt

Del 4, spørsmål 38-45: Velg den beste beskrivelsen av ditt synspunkt.

321

38) Det er viktig at elever i videregående leser engelskspråklig litteratur.

Helt enig   Litt enig   Litt uenig   Helt uenig

39) Jeg synes det er noen litterære sjangre som er bedre egnet for bruk i klasserommet enn andre.

Helt enig   Litt enig   Litt uenig   Helt uenig

40) Som lærer står jeg helt fritt til å velge de litterære tekstene jeg synes passer for elevene mine.

Helt enig   Litt enig   Litt uenig   Helt uenig

41) En litterær tekst av høy kvalitet kjennetegnes ved at den påvirker leseren dypt.

Helt enig   Litt enig   Litt uenig   Helt uenig

42) Læreverk er de beste kildene når jeg skal bestemme hvilke litterære tekster jeg skal bruke med en klasse.

Helt enig   Litt enig   Litt uenig   Helt uenig

43) Det er ikke så farlig hva slags litteratur elever leser, så lenge de leser.

Helt enig   Litt enig   Litt uenig   Helt uenig

44) En litterær tekst av høy kvalitet kjennetegnes ved at den holder seg over tid.

Helt enig   Litt enig   Litt uenig   Helt uenig

45) Litterære tekster som brukes i klasserommet bør inneholde gode moralske forbilder for elevene.

Helt enig   Litt enig   Litt uenig   Helt uenig

Del 4, spørsmål 46-54: Velg den beste beskrivelsen av ditt synspunkt. <u>NB:</u> Merk at skalaen er omvendt!

46) De litterære tekstene som brukes i engelsktimene bør være korrekte språklige forbilder for elevene.

Helt uenig   Litt uenig   Litt enig   Helt enig

47) En litterær tekst av høy kvalitet kjennetegnes ved at den er kompleks og utfordrende.

Helt uenig   Litt uenig   Litt enig   Helt enig

48) Så lenge tekstene som brukes i klasserommet tar opp tema som er viktige for elevene er det ikke så farlig om de inneholder vold, seksuelle handlinger og/eller banning.

Helt uenig   Litt uenig   Litt enig   Helt enig

49) De litterære tekstene som leses i engelsktimene bør gi elevene kunnskap om den klassiske litteraturen som inngår i den engelskspråklige verdens kulturarv.

Helt uenig   Litt uenig   Litt enig   Helt enig

50) Det er viktigere at tekster som brukes i klasserommet er velskrevne enn at de har god moral.

Helt uenig   Litt uenig   Litt enig   Helt enig

51) En litterær tekst av høy kvalitet kjennetegnes ved godt språk (f.eks. variasjon, troverdighet, tilpassa lesermålgruppe).

Helt uenig   Litt uenig   Litt enig   Helt enig

52) De litterære tekstene som elevene leser i engelsktimene bør være en motvekt til populærkulturen.

Helt uenig   Litt uenig   Litt enig   Helt enig

53) De litterære tekstene som elevene leser i engelsktimene i løpet av et skoleår bør gjenspeile variasjonen som finnes i engelskspråklig litteratur og kultur.

Helt uenig   Litt uenig   Litt enig   Helt enig

54) Litterære tekster for barn og unge følger ulike kvalitetskriterier enn litterære tekster for voksne.

Helt uenig   Litt uenig   Litt enig   Helt enig

Kommentarer til undersøkelsen:

This survey consists of a total of 54 questions, and has been divided into four parts. The first part consists of introductory questions (14 questions); the second part consists of questions about specific texts and textbooks (3 questions); the third part consists of questions about your classroom practice (20 questions); the fourth part deals with your general views on literature and literature teaching (17 questions). The questions in part 1 are obligatory, but it is possible to skip questions you do not want to/are not able to answer in parts 2-4. At the end, you will be asked whether you have comments concerning the survey. If you think that any questions were unclear, it would be appreciated if you mention them here.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this survey!

Part 1, questions 1-5: Choose one option.

1) Name the county where you work:
- ☐ Møre og Romsdal
- ☐ Nord-Trøndelag
- ☐ Oppland
- ☐ Sogn og Fjordane
- ☐ Sør-Trøndelag

2) Age:
- ☐ 20-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-59
- ☐ 60-69
- ☐ 70 and up

3) Gender:
- ☐ Kvinne
- ☐ Mann

4) Professional title:
- ☐ Adjunkt
- ☐ Adjunkt med tilleggsutdanning
- ☐ Lektor
- ☐ Lektor med tilleggsutdanning
- ☐ Lærer
- ☐ Faglærer uten pedagogisk utdanning
- ☐ Annet

5) Formal competence in English:

☐ Nothing/less than 60 study points (incomplete "årsstudium"/"grunnfag")

☐ 60 study points (completed "årsstudium"/"grunnfag")

☐ Bachelor degree/"mellomfag"

☐ Master's degree/"hovedfag"

☐ PhD/Dr. Art.

Part 1, questions 6-8: Choose the best description of you.

6) I read English-language fiction in my spare time.

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Very often

7) I read Norwegian-language fiction in my spare time.

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Very often

8) I read fiction in other languages than Norwegian and English in my spare time.

Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Very often

Part 1, questions 9-12: Choose one option.

9) Years of teaching experience in upper secondary:

☐ 0-5

☐ 6-10

☐ 11-20

☐ 21-30

☐ Mer enn 30

10) Years of teaching experience in total:

☐ 0-5

☐ 6-10

☐ 11-20

☐ 21-30

☐ Mer enn 30

11) The school I work at this year is in a..

☐ City (more than 50000 inhabitants)

☐ Medium-sized town (between 5000 and 50000 inhabitants)

☐ Small town (less than 5000 inhabitants)

12) Provide an estimate of how many English teachers that are working at your school:

☐ 1-5   ☐ 11-15

☐ 6-10   ☐ Mer enn 15

Part 1, questions 13-14: More than one answer possible – check all that are suitable.

13) I teach English in the following study programs this school year:

☐ Vocational programs   ☐ Add-on course for vocational students

☐ General studies programs   ("påbygg")

☐ International Baccalaureate (IB)   ☐ Other (e.g. adapted education)

☐ Adults ("voksenopplæring")   ☐ I do not teach English this school year

14) In the past, I have taught English in the following study programs and/or schools:

☐ Vocational programs   ☐ Other (e.g. adapted education)

☐ General studies programs   ☐ Other schools: primary and lower

☐ International Baccalaureate (IB)   secondary

☐ Adults ("voksenopplæring")   ☐ Other schools: higher education

☐ Add-on course for vocational students ☐ Other schools: other

("påbygg")   ☐ I have never taught English

Part 2, questions 15-16: In response to these items, you may list as many texts as you like, preferably from different genres.

15) Give examples of literary texts that you think work well/are suitable in upper secondary subject English (feel free to specify for which Years/study programs).

16) Give examples of literary texts that you think do NOT work well/are NOT suitable in upper secondary subject English (feel free to specify for which Years/study programs).

Part 2, question 17: List the titles of any textbooks you are using, and rank them by using the descriptors "very happy", "happy", "satisfied", "somewhat unhappy", or "very unhappy". (E.g.: Steps 5 = satisfied; Stairs 7 = happy.) If you do not use any textbooks, it would be great if you could write that instead of skipping the question. Note that you are only asked to consider the selection of literary texts in the textbooks.

17) Which textbooks do you use and how happy are you with their selection of literary texts?

Part 3, questions 18-29: Choose the alternative that best describes how often you engage in the following practices when teaching English.

18) I choose the literary texts that my students read.
     Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

19) I use the textbook or the teacher's guide to lead class discussions about literary texts.
     Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

20) All of the students in my classroom read the same literary texts at the same time.
     Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

21) English-language literature for young adults is read in my classroom.
     Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

22) The literary texts that the students read in my classroom are adapted to the students' interests.
     Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

23) The literary texts that the students read in my classroom are adapted to the students' skills.
     Never   Rarely   Sometimes   Often   Always

24) I let my students choose the literary texts they are going to read themselves.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

25) Classic literature that is part of the cultural heritage of the English-speaking world is read in my classroom.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

26) Comics, illustrated novels, and/or graphic novels are read in my classroom.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

27) Fantasy, science fiction, and/or dystopian literature are read in my classroom.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

28) "Graded readers" (e.g. simplified versions of well-known literary texts) are read in my classroom.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

29) Light reading is read in my classroom.

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always

Part 3, questions 30-37: On a scale of 1-4 where 1 = inaccurate and 4 = accurate, respond according to what best describes you and your English teaching practice.

30) Most of the literary texts I use with my classes during the course of a school year have been taken from the students' textbook.

1	2	3	4
Inaccurate			Accurate

31) I use literary texts from several different genres with a class during the course of a school year.

1	2	3	4
Inaccurate			Accurate

328

32) I use different sources and texts instead of a textbook when selecting literary texts for the classroom.

1	2	3	4
Inaccurate			Accurate

33) I use both short literary texts (e.g. poems and short stories) and longer literary texts (e.g. plays and novels) with a class during the course of a school year.

1	2	3	4
Inaccurate			Accurate

34) My students read at least one longer work (e.g. play, novel) during the course of a school year.

1	2	3	4
Inaccurate			Accurate

35) There are some literary texts that I would like to use in the classroom that I for various reasons do not use.

1	2	3	4
Inaccurate			Accurate

36) I think my students enjoy working with literary texts in their English lessons.

1	2	3	4
Inaccurate			Accurate

37) I think my students learn a lot from working with literary texts in their English lessons.

1	2	3	4
Inaccurate			Accurate

Part 4, questions 38-45: Choose the best description of your opinion.

38) It is important that students in upper secondary read English-language literature.

Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree

39) I think there are some literary genres that are more suitable for the classroom than others.

Agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree

329

40) As a teacher, I am able to choose freely which literary texts I find suitable for my students.

      Agree   Somewhat agree   Somewhat disagree   Disagree

41) A high-quality literary text affects the reader deeply.

      Agree   Somewhat agree   Somewhat disagree   Disagree

42) Textbooks are the best sources when I select which literary texts to use with a class.

      Agree   Somewhat agree   Somewhat disagree   Disagree

43) It does not matter which literature students read, as long as they read.

      Agree   Somewhat agree   Somewhat disagree   Disagree

44) A high-quality literary text remains relevant over time.

      Agree   Somewhat agree   Somewhat disagree   Disagree

45) Literary texts that are used in the classroom should include good, moral role models for the students.

      Agree   Somewhat agree   Somewhat disagree   Disagree

Part 4, questions 46-54: Choose the best description of your opinion. Note that the scale has been reversed.

46) The literary texts used in English lessons should provide correct language models for the students.

Disagree   Somewhat disagree   Somewhat agree   Agree

47) A high-quality literary text is complex and challenging.

Disagree   Somewhat disagree   Somewhat agree   Agree

48) As long as the texts used in the classroom address topics that are important to the students, it does not matter if they contain violence, sexual acts, and/or profanity.

Disagree   Somewhat disagree   Somewhat agree   Agree

49) The literary texts read in English lessons should provide students with knowledge of classic literature that is part of the cultural heritage in the English-language world.

Disagree   Somewhat disagree   Somewhat agree   Agree

50) It is more important that texts used in the classroom are well-written than that they have good morals.

Disagree   Somewhat disagree   Somewhat agree   Agree

51) One of the features of a high-quality literary text is good language (e.g. variety, credibility, adapted to the audience).

Disagree   Somewhat disagree   Somewhat agree   Agree

52) The literary texts that students read in English lessons should serve as a counterbalance to popular culture.

Disagree   Somewhat disagree   Somewhat agree   Agree

53) The literary texts that students read in English lessons throughout a school year should reflect the variety present in English-language literature and culture.

Disagree   Somewhat disagree   Somewhat agree   Agree

54) Literary texts for children and young adults adhere to different quality criteria than literary texts for adults.

Disagree   Somewhat disagree   Somewhat agree   Agree

Comments for the survey:

Appendix 7   Interview guide 1

Intervjuguide lærere: **INTERVJU 1**

<u>Fem hovedtema fordelt på to intervju:</u>

Intervju 1:

1) Introduksjonsspørsmål

2) Teksters egnethet i klasserommet

3) Tekstutvalg: kvalitet og problematisk tematikk

4) Utdyping av spørsmål fra spørreundersøkelsen

Intervju 2:

5) Én konkret ungdomsdystopi og denne bokas kvalitet og egnethet for klasserommet

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Introduksjonsspørsmål

1) Generelt om læreren:

    a. Alder, skole, bosted, stillingskategori

    b. Hvilke trinn/studieretninger underviser du på? (Både nå og før.)

    c. Hvilke andre fag underviser du i?

    d. Hvor lenge har du jobba som lærer? (Erfaring fra andre skoleslag?)

    e. Hva er din utdanningsbakgrunn i engelsk og litteratur?

2) Lærerens forhold til litteratur:

    a. Leser du mye?

    b. Hva liker du å lese?

    c. På hvilke språk?

    d. Hva med film/annen kultur (eks. kunst, spill)?

    e. Synes du litteratur har/bør ha en viktig plass i engelskfaget i videregående?

3) Generelt om skolen:

    a. Hvor mange engelsklærere?

    b. Jobber engelsklærerne sammen?

    c. Hvordan er samarbeidskulturen generelt?

Teksters egnethet i klasserommet

1) Læreren snakker om teksten/økta han/hun har valgt å forberede.

    a. Hvorfor denne teksten?

    b. Ville denne fungert på samme måte med andre elevgrupper?

2) Lærerens årsplan:

    a. Hvordan går du fram når du skal planlegge året? (Eks. læreboka først, temaer først, tekster først, etc.?)

    b. Snakk om ditt forhold til læreboka:

        i. Hvorfor disse tekstene fra boka?

        ii. Hvordan går du fram når du skal jobbe med dem (bruker du lærerveiledningen/spørsmål i boka)?

        iii. Hvorfor har du ekskludert enkelte tekster?

3) Hvilke kriterier bedømmer du tekstenes egnethet etter?

    a. Har du forskjellige kriterier til ulike grupper elever/ulike studieretninger?

    b. Hvordan går du fram når du skal finne ut om en tekst skal brukes i klasserommet? (Eks. kun din lesning, eller også kollegers/elevers reaksjoner?)

    c. Tilpasser du utvalget til elevenes ferdigheter og interesser, eller tenker du at de «skal gjennom» et visst pensum/kanon av tekster?

4) Har du konkrete eksempler på tekster som..

    a. Egner seg spesielt godt i klasserommet? Hvorfor?

    b. Absolutt ikke egner seg i klasserommet? Hvorfor?

    c. Tekster du gjerne skulle brukt, som du av ulike grunner ikke bruker? Hvorfor?

5) Bytter du ut tekster ofte, eller holder du deg til en «kanon» av tekster?

6) Bør man lese alle litterære tekster felles (hele klassen leser det samme), eller bør elever også få velge noen tekster sjøl?
    a. Bør læreren godkjenne tekstene på forhånd hvis elever velger sjøl?
    b. Er det viktigst at elevene leser, eller at de leser god litteratur (og er det det samme som «kvalitetslitteratur»)?

Tekstutvalg: kvalitet og problematisk tematikk

1) Hva legger du i ordet kvalitet når man snakker om litteratur?
    a. Er «kvalitet» noe det finnes en felles oppfattelse av?
    b. Enig i beskrivelsene i undersøkelsen? (Påvirker leseren dypt; holder seg over tid; kompleks og utfordrende; godt språk.)

2) Har du eksempler på bøker/tekster av høy kvalitet? Hvorfor disse?

3) Har du eksempler på bøker/tekster av lav kvalitet? Hvorfor disse?

4) Er det forskjell på kvalitetslitteratur for voksne og kvalitetslitteratur for ungdom?

5) Bør kvalitetslitteratur ha en stor plass i litteraturundervisninga i skolen?
    a. Er det forskjell på ulike studieretninger i videregående?
    b. Er det forskjell på engelskfaget og norskfaget?

6) Kan vold, seksuelle handlinger og banning være tilstede i en litterær tekst som skal brukes i klasserommet?
    a. Er det forskjell på ulike studieretninger i videregående?
    b. Er det forskjell på tekster og filmer?

Utdyp spørsmål fra spørreundersøkelsen

1) **Spm. 25-29:** Synes du følgende sjangre hører hjemme i engelskfaget i videregående?

    a. Klassiske litterære tekster som inngår i den engelskspråklige verdens kulturarv

    b. Tegneserier/illustrerte romaner/tegneserieromaner

    c. Fantasy, sci-fi, dystopier

    d. «Graded readers»

    e. Lett underholdningslitteratur

2) **Spm. 52:** Synes du at utvalget av litterære tekster i engelskfaget bør være en motvekt til populærkulturen?

3) **Spm. 53:** Synes du at utvalget av litterære tekster i engelskfaget bør gjenspeile variasjonen som finnes i engelskspråklig litteratur og kultur?

4) **Spm. 36:** Tror du at elevene dine liker å jobbe med litteratur i engelsktimene?

5) **Spm. 37:** Tror du at elevene dine lærer mye av å jobbe med litteratur i engelsktimene?

Interview guide teachers: **INTERVIEW 1**

Five topics spread out across two interviews:

Interview 1:

1) Introductory questions

2) Classroom suitability of texts

3) Text selection: quality and problematic topics

4) Elaboration of questions from the survey

Interview 2:

6) One specific young adult dystopia and this book's quality and suitability for the classroom

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Introductory questions

1) About the teacher:

    a. Age, school, where you live, professional title

    b. Which Years/study programs do you teach? (Both now and earlier.)

    c. Which other subjects do you teach?

    d. How long have you worked as a teacher? (Experience from other schools?)

    e. What is your academic background in English and in literature?

2) The teacher's relationship with literature:

    a. Do you read a lot?

    b. What do you like to read?

    c. In which languages?

    d. What about film/other cultural expressions (e.g. art, games)?

    e. Do you think literature has/should have an important place in subject English in upper secondary?

3) About the school:

    a. How many English teachers?

b. Do the English teachers work together?

c. What is the culture for collaboration like?

Classroom suitability of texts

1) The teacher talks about the text/lesson s/he has chosen to prepare.

   a. Why this text?

   b. Would it have worked in the same way with other student groups?

2) The teacher's year plan:

   a. How do you proceed when planning the year? (E.g. textbook first, topics first, texts first, etc.?)

   b. Talk about your relationship with the textbook:

      i. Why these texts from the book?

      ii. How do you proceed when working with them (do you use the teacher's guide/questions in the book)?

      iii. Why have you excluded some texts?

3) Which criteria do you assess the suitability of texts by?

   a. Do you have different criteria for different groups of students/study programs?

   b. How do you proceed when determining whether a text should be used in the classroom? (E.g. only your own reading, or also reactions of colleagues/students?)

   c. Do you adapt the selection according to the students' skills and interests, or do you think that they need to work with a certain syllabus/canon of texts?

4) Do you have specific examples of texts that..

   a. Are particularly well suited for the classroom? Why?

   b. Are definitely unsuitable for the classroom? Why?

   c. Texts that you would like to use, but that you do not use for various reasons? Why?

5) Do you replace texts often or do you stick to a "canon" of texts?

6) Should one read all literary texts together (the entire class reading the same), or should students also choose some texts themselves?
    a. Should the teacher approve texts beforehand if students choose for themselves?
    b. Is it more important that students read, or that they read good literature (and is that the same as "quality literature"?

Text selection: quality and problematic topics

1) How do you define the word quality when talking about literature?
    a. Does there exist a common perception of what "quality" is?
    b. Do you agree with the descriptions in the survey? (Affects the reader deeply; remains relevant over time; complex and challenging; good language.)

2) Do you have examples of high-quality books/texts? Why these?

3) Do you have examples of low-quality books/texts? Why these?

4) Is there a difference between quality literature for adults and quality literature for young adults?

5) Should quality literature have an important place in the teaching of literature in school?
    a. Is there a difference between various study programs in upper secondary school?
    b. Is there a difference between subject English and subject Norwegian?

6) Can a text that is to be used in the classroom contain violence, sexual acts, and profanity?
    a. Is there a difference between various study programs in upper secondary school?

b. Is there a difference between texts and films?

Elaboration of questions from the survey

1) **Questions 25-29:** Do you think the following genres should be present in subject English in upper secondary?

   a. Classic literature that is part of the cultural heritage of the English-speaking world
   b. Comics/illustrated novels/graphic novels
   c. Fantasy, science fiction, dystopias
   d. «Graded readers»
   e. Light reading

2) **Question 52:** Do you think the selection of literary texts in subject English should serve as a counterbalance to popular culture?

3) **Question 53:** Do you think the selection of literary texts in subject English should reflect the variation present in English-language literature and culture?

4) **Question 36:** Do you think you students enjoy working with literature in the English lessons?

5) **Question 37:** Do you think your students learn a lot from working with literature in the English lessons?

Appendix 8   Interview guide 2

Intervjuguide lærere: **INTERVJU 2**

Oppfølgingsspørsmål

Varierer fra lærer til lærer.

Romanen

1) Ditt førsteinntrykk av romanen: hva synes du om den som en litterær tekst?

2) **Vedr.** *Ship Breaker***,** *More Than This* **og** *Only Ever Yours***:** Se på anmeldelsene du fikk tilsendt i forkant. Hvilke(n) er du mest enig med, og hvorfor?

3) Synes du romanen egner seg for elever på videregående? Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke?
   a. Hva slags elever?
   b. Hva mener du elevene kan få ut av å jobbe med denne boka?
   c. **Kun** *Only Ever Yours:* Kunne denne boka vært «farlig» for noen? (Se: «triggere» i en av anmeldelsene.) Hvordan håndterer man f.eks. anoreksi- og bulimireferansene?

4) Hvordan ville du jobbet med denne romanen i klasserommet?
   a. Felleslesing eller individuelt?
   b. Hele romanen, eller utdrag? (Og hvilke utdrag, i så fall?)
   c. Ville du knytta den til den samfunnsfaglige delen av pensum, eller kun jobba med den som en litterær tekst?
   d. Hva slags oppgaver/vurdering?

Vedr. *The Diary of Pelly D* **og** *Ship Breaker***:** Hva synes du om undervisningsopplegget du ble tilsendt i forkant?

Interview guide teachers: **INTERVIEW 2**

Follow-up questions

Vary from teacher to teacher.

The novel

1) Your first impression of the novel: what did you think of it as a literary text?

2) **Concerning *Ship Breaker*, *More Than This*, and *Only Ever Yours*:** Look at the reviews you were sent in advance. Which do you agree with the most, and why?

3) Do you think the novel is suitable for students in upper secondary? Why/why not?
   a. What kind of students?
   b. What do you think the students could gain from working with this book?
   c. **Only *Only Ever Yours:*** Could this book be "dangerous" to anyone? (See "triggers" in one of the reviews.) How do you handle e.g. the references to anorexia and bulimia?

4) How would you work with this novel in the classroom?
   a. Full-class reading or individually?
   b. The entire novel or excerpts? (And which excerpts, in that case?)
   c. Would you link it to the social studies part of the curriculum, or only work with it as a literary text?
   d. What kind of tasks/assessment?

Concerning *The Diary of Pelly D* and *Ship Breaker*: What did you think of the teacher's guide you were sent in advance?

Appendix 9 Prose texts mentioned at least twice in the survey

Novels mentioned by two or more teachers as responses to item 15 in the survey

Title	Author	Year of publication	Author's gender	Author's geographical origin	Mentioned by teachers
Of Mice and Men	John Steinbeck	1937	Male	USA	21
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian	Sherman Alexie	2007	Male	USA	11
The Hunger Games	Suzanne Collins	2008	Female	USA	11
The Kite Runner	Khaled Hosseini	2003	Male	Afghanistan/USA	11
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time	Mark Haddon	2003	Male	Great Britain	8
To Kill a Mockingbird	Harper Lee	1960	Female	USA	7
Animal Farm	George Orwell	1945	Male	Great Britain	7
Lord of the Flies	William Golding	1954	Male	Great Britain	6
Slumdog Millionaire / Q & A	Vikas Swarup	2005	Male	India	6
The Perks of Being a Wallflower	Stephen Chbosky	1999	Male	USA	5
Oliver Twist	Charles Dickens	1837-39	Male	Great Britain	5
Black and White	Paul Volponi	2005	Male	USA	5
The Road	Cormac McCarthy	2006	Male	USA	4
About a Boy	Nick Hornby	1998	Male	Great Britain	3
Whale Rider	Witi Ihimaera	1987	Male	New Zealand	3
1984	George Orwell	1949	Male	Great Britain	3
The Catcher in the Rye	J. D. Salinger	1951	Male	USA	3
The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas	John Boyne	2006	Male	Ireland	2
Jane Eyre	Charlotte Brontë	1847	Female	Great Britain	2
Wuthering Heights	Emily Brontë	1847	Female	Great Britain	2

The Great Gatsby	F. Scott Fitzgerald	1925	Male	USA	2
Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close	Jonathan Safran Foer	2005	Male	USA	2
The Fault in Our Stars	John Green	2012	Male	USA	2
The Old Man and the Sea	Ernest Hemingway	1952	Male	USA	2
A Thousand Splendid Suns	Khaled Hosseini	2007	Male	Afghanistan/USA	2
Dead Poets Society	N. H. Kleinbaum	1989	Female	USA	2
Harry Potter *	J. K. Rowling	1997-2007*	Female	Great Britain	2
The Grapes of Wrath	John Steinbeck	1939	Male	USA	2
The Pearl	John Steinbeck	1947	Male	USA	2
The Hobbit	J. R. R. Tolkien	1937	Male	Great Britain	2
The Color Purple	Alice Walker	1982	Female	USA	2

* Novel series consisting of seven books; teachers did not specify which book they meant.

Short stories mentioned by two or more teachers as responses to item 15 in the survey

Title	Author	Year of publication	Author's gender	Author's geographical origin	Mentioned by teachers
"The Sniper"	Liam O'Flaherty	1923	Male	Ireland	16
"Tony's Story"	Leslie Marmon Silko	1981	Female	USA	9
"Butterflies"	Patricia Grace	1987	Female	New Zealand	8
"Everyone Talked Loudly in Chinatown"	Anne Jew	1991	Female	Canada	8
"The Moose and the Sparrow"	Hugh Garner	1966	Male	Canada	7
"A Day's Wait"	Ernest Hemingway	1933	Male	USA	6
"Thank You, M'am"	Langston Hughes	1963	Male	USA	6
"Father and Son"	Bernard MacLaverty	1982	Male	Great Britain	5
"The Toilet"	Gcina Mhlope	1987	Female	South Africa	5
"The Story of an Hour"	Kate Chopin	1894	Female	USA	4
"Lamb to the Slaughter"	Roald Dahl	1953	Male	Great Britain	4
"Hills Like White Elephants"	Ernest Hemingway	1927	Male	USA	4
"Eye Witness"	Ed McBain	1982	Male	USA	4
"Good Advice Is Rarer Than Rubies"	Salman Rushdie	1994	Male	India	4
"Brackley and the Bed"	Samuel Selvon	1957	Male	Trinidad	4
"Desiree's Baby"	Kate Chopin	1893	Female	USA	3
"The Landlady"	Roald Dahl	1959	Male	Great Britain	3
"The Way Up to Heaven"	Roald Dahl	1954	Male	Great Britain	3
"Dead Man's Shoes"	David Evans	1998	Male	South Africa	3
"The Case for the Defence"	Graham Greene	1939	Male	Great Britain	3
"Going Home"	Pete Hamill	1971	Male	USA	3

"Chicken!"	Don James	- [130]	Male	USA	3
"The Green Frock"	Charan Jit Kaur	1993	Female	India	3
"Mr. Know-All"	William Somerset Maugham	1924	Male	Great Britain	3
"The Tell-Tale Heart"	Edgar Allan Poe	1843	Male	USA	3
"They Sold My Sister"	Leteipa Ole Sunkuli	1989	Male	Kenya	3
"True Love"	Isaac Asimov	1977	Male	USA	2
"Dad, Can I Come Home?"	Malorie Blackman	1990	Female	Great Britain	2
"I See You Never"	Ray Bradbury	1947	Male	USA	2
"An Honest Thief"	Timothy Callender	1990	Male	Barbados	2
"Man From the South"	Roald Dahl	1948	Male	Great Britain	2
"A Soldier's Bride"	Chike Emenike	1980	Male	Nigeria	2
"The Shining Mountain"	Alison Fell	1986	Female	Great Britain	2
"The Moment Before the Gun Went Off"	Nadine Gordimer	1988	Female	South Africa	2
"The Last Leaf"	O. Henry	1907	Male	USA	2
"The Carpet Engagement"	Karen King-Aribisala	1990	Female	Nigeria	2
"Panache"	William Patrick Kinsella	1977	Male	Canada	2
"My Son the Fanatic"	Hanif Kureishi	1994	Male	Great Britain	2
"The Larder"	Morris Lurie	1977	Male	Australia	2
"Blackout"	Roger Mais	1943	Male	Jamaica	2
"The Things They Carried"	Tim O'Brien	1990	Male	USA	2
"A Great Day"	Frank Sargeson	1940	Male	New Zealand	2

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[130] I have not been able to find the publication date of James's short story. My sources for the short story are the textbooks *Gateways: Engelsk for SF* (Rugset & Ulven, 2011a) and *Gateways: Engelsk for YF* (Rugset & Ulven, 2011b).

"Robert and the Dog"	Ken Saro-Wiwa	1986	Male	Nigeria	2
"Long Walk to Forever"	Kurt Vonnegut	1960	Male	USA	2
"Everyday Use"	Alice Walker	1973	Female	USA	2

Appendix 10   Literary texts used by the interview respondents

Texts present in the interviewed teachers' year plans[131]

Teacher	Class	Short stories	Novels	Poems	Plays
Victoria	Vg1 GS	O'Flaherty, "The Sniper" Jew, "Everyone Talked Loudly in Chinatown"	Dickens, *David Copperfield* (excerpt)	Dickinson, "The Heart Asks Pleasure First" Auden, "Funeral Blues" Kipling, "Have You News of My Boy Jack?"	Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* (excerpt)
	Vg3 GS (SSE)		Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*		
Margaret	Vg1 GS	Jew, "Everyone Talked Loudly in Chinatown" Winton, "Neighbours"	Collins, *The Hunger Games* Smith, *The Embassy of Cambodia*	Nash, "The Purist" Four haiku poems (in the textbook *Access to English*, Burgess & Sørhus, 2013) Williams, "The Red Wheelbarrow" Crane, "I Saw a Man" Crane, "The Wayfarer" Carroll, "Jabberwocky"	

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[131] Songs, films, and other types of texts (such as biographies) are not included in this overview.

	IB		McCarthy, *The Road* Orwell, *1984* Atwood, *Oryx and Crake*		
Robert	Vg1 and vg2 VS[132]	Balcita, "Raising the Mango" Cisneros, "No Speak English" O'Flaherty, "The Sniper" Grace, "Butterflies"	Collins, *The Hunger Games* (excerpt) Lowry, *The Giver* (excerpt) Volponi, *Black and White* (excerpt) French, *Dora* (excerpt) Abdel-Fattah, *Does My Head Look Big in This?* (excerpt)	Emerson, "Success"[133] Hughes, "Harlem" McMillan, "Connected" Noonuccal (earlier Walker), "Son of Mine" Burns, "Sure You Can Ask Me a Personal Question"	

[132] Robert did not send out a year plan or list of literary texts that he used. Instead, he based his teaching on the textbook, and adapted the selection as he went along. In the first interview, we discussed our way through the literary texts in the textbook he used, *Tracks: Engelsk for yrkesfag* (2013), and the texts listed here are the texts from the textbook and novel excerpts that Robert said that he used with his students regularly.

[133] Note that although this text is commonly attributed to Emerson (for instance in the textbook *Tracks: Engelsk for yrkesfag*, which Robert used), Emerson is not the author (Keyes, 2006, pp. 56-57).

Joanna	Vg1 GS	Hemingway, "A Day's Wait"	Hosseini, *The Kite Runner* (excerpt)	Dr. Seuss, "Green Eggs and Ham"	Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun* (excerpt)
		Burgess, "Whose Face Do You See?"	Ihimaera, *Whale Rider* (excerpt)	Nash, "The Purist"	
		Jew, "Everyone Talked Loudly in Chinatown"	Haddon, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*	Four haiku poems (in the textbook *Access to English*, Burgess & Sørhus, 2013)	
		Fish, "Hijack"		Williams, "The Red Wheelbarrow"	
		Silko, "Tony's Story"		Crane, "I Saw a Man"	
		Mais, "Blackout"		Crane, "The Wayfarer"	
		Salih, "A Handful of Dates"		Hughes, "A Dream Deferred"	
		O'Flaherty, "The Sniper"		Johnson, "Sonny's Lettah"	
		Fell, "The Shining Mountain"			
		Kneale, "Paradise"			

| | Vg2 GS | Grace, "Butterflies"

Saro-Wiwa, "Robert and the Dog"

Winton, "Neighbours"

Greene, "A Shocking Accident"

Orner, "The Raft"

Mangla, "Air Mail"

Marx, "Audio Tour" | Swarup, *Slumdog Millionaire / Q & A* (excerpt)

Tan, "When Rich Came to Sunday Dinner" from *The Joy Luck Club* (excerpt)

Hall, *Salaam Brick Lane* (excerpt)

Self-chosen novel

Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions* (excerpt) | Agard, "Reporting From the Frontline of the Great Dictionary Disaster"

Nichols, "Wherever I Hang"

Adamu, "Global Village"

Dharker, "The Right Word"

Jones, "The Song of the Banana Man" | |
| Neil | Vg1 GS | Mhlope, "The Toilet"

"Good Advice is Rarer Than Rubies"

Garner, "The Moose and the Sparrow"

O'Flaherty, "The Sniper"

Silko, "Tony's Story" | | | |

	Vg2 GS	Grace, "Butterflies" Saro-Wiwa, "Robert and the Dog" Greene, "A Shocking Accident" Orner, "The Raft" Mangla, "Air Mail"	Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* Tan, "When Rich Came to Sunday Dinner" from *The Joy Luck Club* (excerpt) Hall, *Salaam Brick Lane* (excerpt)	Agard, "Reporting From the Frontline of the Great Dictionary Disaster"	
	Vg3 GS (SSE)		Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*	Nash, "The Politician"	
Anne	Vg1 VS	Taylor, "First Day at Work" (excerpt) Herriot, "Parting with a Friend"	Lowery, *Socks Are Not Enough* (excerpt)	Hughes, "Dreams" Redfort, "Sticks and Stones"	

	Vg2 VS[134]	Carrier, "The Hockey Sweater" Garner, "The Moose and The Sparrow" Hemingway, "A Day's Wait"	McCall Smith, *Look at Africa* (excerpt) McCall Smith, *Big Car Guilt* (excerpt)	Koyczan, "We Are More" Carter, "Põwhiri"	
Sophie	Vg1 GS	Hemingway, "A Day's Wait" Fish, "Hijack" Silko, "Tony's Story"	Collins, *The Hunger Games* (excerpt) Alexie, *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*		
	Vg3 GS (SSE)	Leavitt, "Gravity" MacLaverty, "Walking the Dog"		Larkin, "MCMXIV" Brooke, "The Soldier" Sassoon, "Does it Matter?" Owen, "Dulce Et Decorum Est" Fiacc, "Enemy Encounter" Curtis, "The Disturbance"	

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[134] Texts used with three different student groups have been combined here.

Charlotte	Vg1 GS	Hamill, "Going Home" Dahl, "The Way Up to Heaven" Selvon, "Brackley and the Bed" Somerset Maugham, "Mr Know-All" Bradbury, "I See You Never"	George, *For Your Best, Son!* (excerpt) Bacigalupi, *Ship Breaker*	Addoy, "On Passing a Village School" Smith, "Not Waving But Drowning" Dickinson, "I'm Nobody" Hughes, "Thank You, M'am"	
	Vg1 VS	Cisneros, "No Speak English"	Bacigalupi, *Ship Breaker* (excerpt)	Emerson, "Success" Hughes, "Harlem"	