

**NARRATIVE INTERRELATION: A COGNITIVE ACCOUNT
OF INTERTEXTUALITY AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE
STUDY OF LITERATURE**

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Abstract

This thesis develops a cognitively grounded framework which operationalises the concept of intertextuality, facilitating linguistic analysis of the role it can play in readers' responses to, interpretations of, and discussions about, texts. The thesis demonstrates the application of this 'narrative interrelation framework' in two contexts: the adult reading group and the secondary school English classroom. In doing so, the thesis reflects on the forms, functions and utility of intertextual booktalk, and explores why intertextuality may manifest differently in different environments.

The research symbiotically unites the fields of education research and cognitive linguistics, advancing our understanding of reading and studying fiction in secondary schools in England. The thesis aims in particular to contribute to our understanding of the use of the 'class reader' - reading a set text as a group - which remains the most prevalent model of reading fiction with students, both in England and internationally.

Class reader units are explored along two key dimensions: conceptualising students and teachers as readers, and considering the classroom as a type of reading space. The first part of this research focuses on understanding and mapping cognition processes which underlie intertextuality, both in terms of how readers make intertextual links between stories as well how they process, understand and engage with the intertextual references they encounter. The second part of this research considers the classroom environment in contrast to another site where readers gather to discuss a text: the reading group. A contrastive analysis of these two environments looks to understand the nature of the reading experience in the classroom and, in particular, how it affects the links students make between stories.

A final part of the thesis will reflect on the aspects of reading and booktalk which are facilitated or inhibited in different discourse environments. Ultimately, the thesis characterises the nature of the 'class reader' experience and considers the implications this has for pedagogy, for engagement and for our understanding of what class readers are intended to, and what they do, achieve as a core staple of the English curriculum.

The research examines two datasets representing two distinct types of reading experience of the same two novels: *Holes* by Louis Sachar (1999) and *Animal Farm* by George Orwell (1945). The first is a 320,000 word corpus of English lesson transcripts comprising two complete 'class reader' schemes of work: a Year 7 mixed ability group studying *Holes* and a Year 9 top set group studying *Animal Farm*. The second 40,000 word corpus captures two sessions of an adult reading group, made up predominantly of English graduates, meeting to discuss the same two texts.

Publications arising from this thesis

Mason, J. (2014) 'Narrative' in P. Stockwell & S. Whiteley (eds.) *The Cambridge Handbook of Stylistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.179-95.

Giovanelli, M. & Mason, J. (2015) "'Well I don't feel that': Schemas, worlds and authentic reading in the classroom', *English in Education* 49(1): 41-55.

Mason, J. (2016) 'Narrative interrelation, intertextuality and teachers' knowledge of students' reading' in D. Clayton & M. Giovanelli (eds.) *Knowing About Language: Linguistics and the Secondary English Classroom*. London: Routledge, pp.162-72.

Mason, J. & Carter, R. (2015) 'The poetics of everyday discourse' in V. Sotirova (ed.) *The Bloomsbury Companion to Stylistics*. London: Bloomsbury, pp.631-45.

Dedication

For my wonderful father, Adrian Telford, who may have actually read this thesis, would have at least pretended to do so, and would definitely have bragged about it down the pub.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This interdisciplinary research offers a cognitively grounded exploration of intertextuality, the act of making links between two or more narratives, and its role in reading. The research is situated at the intersection between the fields of cognitive linguistics, specifically stylistics, and English education research. The thesis advances understanding of intertextuality by examining its manifestations in three contexts where readers discuss texts: online book reviews, adult reading groups and the secondary school English classroom.

The central focus of this research is the linguistic analysis of readers' intertextual 'booktalk', drawing on the best current knowledge of reading and mind. Booktalk simply refers to any discussion of, or relating to, texts (Chambers 1985, 1991, 1993; Eriksson 2002). Focusing on how readers make, share, co-construct, develop and challenge intertextual links, the research presented in this thesis considers the booktalk, and specifically the role of intertextuality within that talk, of readers across multiple sites, including two secondary school English classes studying 'class readers'.

Class readers (a set text read with a group) were introduced as a school practice at the turn of the twentieth century, largely as a result of the perseverance of Matthew Arnold (Marshall 2000: 18-22). Cox discusses Arnold's emphatic belief in the 'civilising power of the humanities' and that 'great literature helps to keep alive our most subtle and delicate feelings, our capacity for wonder and our faith in human individuality' (Cox 1992: 268). Today, class readers remain the most prevalent model of reading fiction with students, both in England and internationally (Dean 2003: 30-1, 2006). In spite of this, the class reader has

received surprisingly little research attention in terms of the type of reading experience it offers to teachers and their students. This thesis considers the class reader as a particular type of reading experience, focusing on readers' making and sharing of intertextual connections in this and other contexts where reading and discussion of texts takes place. In doing so, this thesis aims to problematise, inform, and offer a cognitively grounded account of, the ways in which texts are read and studied in secondary school English.

Researchers often refer to 'something' being ruined or 'getting lost' in the course of studying a text (Maybin 2013; Turvey & Lloyd 2014). That 'something' is also frequently impressionistically described by parties across English education including teachers (Kruger 2014), authors (Brown 2014; Rosen 2015) and students themselves (Vogt-Vincent 2015). Children's author Frank Cottrell Boyce, for example, offers his impression of school reading based on his numerous trips into schools:

Time and time again I come across teachers reading a story and then asking immediately for some kind of feedback. A piece of 'creative writing' 'inspired by' the story. Some opinions about character and wow words. Something to show the parents or the school inspectors. It pollutes the reading experience by bringing something transactional in to play. It destroys pleasure

(Brown 2014).

One young English student expressed a similar perception of studying class readers in a recent comment piece titled 'I love books so why do I hate studying English GCSE?'. She explained,

I'm lucky enough to have nearly always had great English teachers [...] the faults that make English so uninspiring are not a result of their teaching

abilities [... but] we need a route of learning that can inspire. We need books that bring up intense messages of modern themes: sexism, racism, homosexuality. I strongly believe literature is the route to giving teenagers a voice about these themes. [... Yet] to gain full marks, it's all about knowing what to write and how to analyse [...] By how well you can describe the effect of the iambic pentameter, not by a real opinion on Romeo's values or how substantial his love really is

(Vogt-Vincent 2015).

This thesis uses a close analysis of two recorded and transcribed 'class reader' units in order to establish the nature of the school reading experience in two classrooms in England's secondary schools, with teachers following the dominant approach to teaching fiction. This thesis looks contrastively at class reader units and other types of reading experiences, and explores whether the data reveal any support for impressionistic claims such as those made above; that studying a text somehow 'ruins' or 'pollutes' the reading experience. This contrastive analysis will consider how the way fiction tends to be studied in our secondary schools - in incremental fragments, as a group, over an extended period - affects the reading experience. Given that this is such a wide area, the research approaches these comparisons by looking predominantly at the role of intertextual booktalk in the class reader units relative to other reading environments.

1.2 Intertextuality and English education

Studying a class reader is not only the dominant method but virtually the *only* way whole texts are read and studied in formal secondary school English lessons in England (Dean 2003: 30-1; Wright 2008: 111-12). Class readers represent a large investment of class time and school resources, typically taking at least six to eight weeks to complete, sometimes much longer (for example DfES 2007). Class reader

units are intended to achieve several things, one of which is, according to the latest National Curriculum, attending to the fact that ‘pupils should be taught to develop an *appreciation and love of reading, and read increasingly challenging material independently*’ (my emphasis: DfE 2014: 4). Studying fiction in school English is thus positioned as being intended to support and encourage students to become strong independent readers: avid, enthusiastic, self-motivating and critically discerning. Yet a class reader is just one book, one reading experience, and it is only one way in which young people engage with fiction. How the class reader experience is situated in relation to students’ other encounters with and discussions about texts is thus vitally important to assessing the efficacy of the practice per se as well as how it could be improved. The class reader involves a prolonged and centralised focus on one particular text at a time. This makes intertextual booktalk a particularly salient aspect of classroom booktalk to analyse, as this is key to understanding how class readers are situated, by teachers and students, relative to other reading experiences. As readers, any one text forms a small part of our holistic perception of, and interaction with, reading - a process involving the accrual of many reading experiences over time. In order to properly understand the class reader experience, therefore, it is necessary to understand the nature of the class reader as a type of reading experience relative to other reading experiences, especially those which take place outside an educational context. It is necessary to understand how young people, and their teachers, discuss class readers in English lessons in secondary school, especially which areas of text, topics and types of response are privileged and which are neglected, and why. It is necessary to understand how different pedagogical approaches, task types and lesson designs facilitate or inhibit students and teachers in making and discussing intertextual links between the class reader and other narratives that they have encountered outside the classroom. Finally, it is also necessary to

understand what the various stakeholders in studying fiction – teachers, students, policymakers, awarding bodies and school inspectors – perceive the purpose of class readers to be, what type of reading experience these groups are intending class readers to offer, and how this may be affecting approaches to teaching class readers in England's schools.

That is, an understanding of intertextuality is the precondition to understanding how class readers are situated within students' holistic experiences of reading. This thesis addresses these areas, first through the development and application of a 'narrative interrelation framework' – a cognitively grounded account of intertextuality – and then by engaging this framework in order to explore how readers make links between different narratives in a range of contexts.

1.3 Research questions and scope of the research

The thesis will therefore consider the following five research questions:

- 1) What forms does intertextual referencing take in texts and booktalk?
- 2) What functions can intertextual referencing perform in texts and booktalk?
- 3) How do people make and understand intertextual references?
- 4) What features of a discourse environment appear to facilitate intertextual referencing?
- 5) What features of a discourse environment appear to inhibit intertextual referencing?

This is a highly exploratory study. As will be discussed in detail in the following chapter (Sections 2.3 - 2.5), whilst intertextuality has received academic attention, there is currently no model of intertextuality which can be functionally applied to linguistically analyse intertextuality *as it manifests in discourse*. This research will therefore initially investigate the first two questions above in a preliminary

methodological study, which will be 'framework generating'. Here, a corpus of online reader reviews, along with the literary text those readers discuss - *Fifty Shades of Grey* (James 2011) - are closely and systematically analysed in order to taxonomise the various forms that intertextual references appear to take in discourse and the functions they perform. This methodological phase of the study will establish: what do intertextual references look like and what are they used for? This initial phase of the research offers a way in which to consider, through the examination of real data, what can and cannot be considered an intertextual reference and how intertextuality actually manifests in booktalk, albeit with regard to this specific context. This phase will produce an initial descriptive analysis of the various forms in which intertextuality manifests in discourse (addressing Research Question 1), alongside a preliminary assessment of the functions such references serve (addressing Research Question 2).

The study will then move on to apply this knowledge to the development of a cognitively-informed model, the 'narrative interrelation framework', which operationalises intertextuality analysis from conceptual discussion to linguistic tool. That is, using the knowledge gathered in the methodological study, a framework which can be used for the textual analysis of instances of intertextual referencing in discourse will be developed. This phase will consider the most relevant research on literature and the mind, so that the framework accurately reflects, to the best of current knowledge, the cognitive processes involved when a reader generates or responds to an intertextual connection. This phase focuses on the mind: how do people make and understand intertextual references (Research Question 3)?

The study will then move on to apply the framework to real instances of reader booktalk which have been recorded and transcribed in two settings: two sessions

of an adult reading group, and two 'class reader' units following broadly prototypical designs in two secondary school English classrooms. In addition to demonstrating the successful operationalisation of intertextuality as a linguistic framework, this phase will also necessarily consider the fourth and fifth questions posed in this research, which shift focus from the cognitive to the socio-cultural. That is, if a reader makes an intertextual connection in their mind, what are the relevant factors of a given discourse environment which influence whether or not, and how, that connection is shared with others (Research Questions 4 and 5)? This phase of the study draws on the earlier considerations of mind and cognition – the mechanics of how intertextual references are made and processed – but additionally explores the socio-cultural factors which influence intertextuality as it manifests in discourse, which is the ultimate focus of this research. For an intertextual reference to be textually analysed it must move from mental thought to articulated discourse, the latter stages of this study consider the role of the discourse environment which determines if and how the former becomes the latter.

1.3.1 Limitations

Each phase of this research is of course limited in terms of the volume of data it was possible to generate and analyse; to an examination of only one or two corpora of data at each stage, generated in relation to particular texts, and captured in particular booktalk environments. This inevitably impacts how far the findings of this study can be transferred or generalised. Reading and discussing texts, as with any form of interaction, is an activity which is highly affected by a range of social and cultural factors, from the age, background and relationships between participants to the factors that have led to the booktalk occurring at all. These factors are not homogenous or stable within any particular context in which

booktalk takes place, regardless of what that context happens to be. As such this thesis does *not* aim to determine the forms, functions or degrees of manifestation of “intertextuality in online reviews”, nor “intertextuality in reading groups”, nor “intertextuality in English classrooms”.

Instead, the study’s claims to generalisation or transferability are divided into the cognitive and the contextual. On the cognitive side, the research looks to understand how intertextual connections are made and understood in the mind (Research Questions 1, 2 and 3). As such, this strand of the research *does* claim continuity between how participants in these data make intertextual connections in their minds as they read or think about a text, and any other person. This, as will be elaborated in depth in the following chapter, is a fundamental tenet of cognitive stylistics, the disciplinary approach adopted in this research. Whilst this study focuses only on limited sites, it will produce a framework that can be functionally applied to analyse intertextuality as it manifests in *any* instance of booktalk. What cannot, and must not, be overlooked however is the unique composition of every discourse environment in which that intertextual booktalk is, or is not, produced.

Focusing on the context in which the intertextual booktalk reported in this thesis was produced, therefore, there is no intention or attempt to generalise findings to the general settings. That is, the study does not aim to say intertextuality looks like ‘x’ in reading groups and ‘y’ in secondary school classrooms. Rather, this thesis uses the analysis of specific instances of booktalk to gain insight as to how the socio-cultural features of these particular environments, which are unique to these data, appear to affect the forms, functions, and presence of intertextual booktalk. The study aims to identify what factors appear to influence whether intertextual references are made by discourse participants, what forms those references take, and what functions they are used to perform when present. That is, which generic

conditions appear to facilitate, and which inhibit, intertextual booktalk: the word ‘appear’ is deliberately included here to acknowledge that these findings are derived from the examination of limited data. The study focuses on identifying the role of features in these particular discourse environments in order to posit generalisations about those features, not the environments per se. These features, salient to consider in relation to any booktalk environment, include: the participants’ personal characteristics and background knowledge; the participants’ perceptions of their own and others’ knowledge and expertise; the power dynamics within the group; the participants’ degree of freedom to talk spontaneously or choose discussion topics; the participants’ perceptions of the purpose(s) of the booktalk. In this way, the research findings are transferable to other contexts where the features of a booktalk environment are similarly composed, not to the general settings in which these data were captured (Research Questions 4 and 5).

1.4 The genesis of this thesis

This doctoral research encompasses an eclectic range of interests and borrowings spanning a number of disciplines including linguistics, education, literature, neuroscience and psychology. A combination of intellectual curiosity, exposure and chance has led me down a perhaps atypical route to an interest in the pedagogic potential of what I now term ‘narrative interrelation’, which I investigate through the lens of cognitive linguistics, and specifically, stylistics.

My key research interests all focus on understanding reading as a holistic experience, in how readers’ unique mental libraries can accrue over time, and how knowledge of previous stories can frame readers’ understandings of new ones. In particular, I am interested in the inherently subjective aspects of reading: how the same text can leave one reader inconsolable and another unmoved.

I approached the school context as a stylistician interested in reading. However, as time has passed, and my knowledge of, and interest in education has grown, I have moved closer to considering myself an interdisciplinary researcher. This doctorate has been funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) as part of the first cohort of the council's flagship Doctoral Training Centres (DTCs) programme. The key aim of this programme, apart from providing systematic and advanced research training, is to foster links between traditionally distinct disciplines by exposing researchers to each other's work, fostering collaboration across the social sciences and hoping to create an environment in which such collaboration can flourish. Within this diverse group, this research sits not only between disciplines but between 'the Arts' and 'the Social Sciences'.

This doctorate has also been undertaken within an interdisciplinary research centre: the Learning Sciences Research Institute (LSRI). LSRI houses an eclectic range of researchers drawn, historically, from three key disciplines: Computer Science, Education and Psychology. Whilst the group is now housed wholly within the School of Education, these three research strands remain. In the course of my studies I have worked alongside colleagues working on a diverse range of research topics, from the impact of anonymity on peer-to-peer interaction in secondary school, to reflectivity in video gaming, to medical students drawing cadavers. The disciplinary specialisms within LSRI may be different, however we are united under a label of core interest and we physically work in the same space. Thus being a member of an interdisciplinary group is not the same as being an individual 'in between' disciplines.

The final dimension of interdisciplinarity affecting this research is the fact that it has been undertaken in collaboration with two separate departments, Education and English. Working across departments based on two different campuses can

make it difficult to define and position oneself as a researcher and has, in terms of this thesis, had a number of significant effects. It has meant negotiating frequent, often irresolvable, disputes about the definition and scope of terms, who came up with what and where a concept was first discussed, about who has ownership, differences of opinion about ontology, epistemology, the best way to do research, to do fieldwork, the value of fieldwork, whether it has any at all, and many, many more. Being always in *one department or the other* as opposed to a designated interdisciplinary space, means always carrying with you something different and foreign. It means an automatic assumption of your expertise, which fluidly shifts depending on where you are and to whom you are speaking: in the Education department you are the linguist, in the English corridor you are the education person.

There are many sacrifices involved in committing to interdisciplinary research, but significant value in the maintaining the fluid identity which is its reward, because of the simple and inescapable fact that it is so obviously a worthwhile investment of time and energy. Thus most of the first part of this thesis sits firmly in linguistics. The middle combines two sites of research which are of key interest to stylisticians and education researchers respectively and, by about halfway through, these disciplinary interests become fully integrated: as a linguist who moved into an education department, this accurately reflects the way the research was undertaken.

1.5 Thesis overview

This thesis explores the manifestation of intertextuality in readers' booktalk in three contexts: online reviews, reading groups and English classrooms. Chapter Two offers a review of the existing relevant literatures: on intertextuality, narrative, and relevant methodological considerations involved with researching

real readers. This chapter presents the definitions of intertextuality and narrative adopted in this thesis, and the rationale behind both. It reviews the possible methods which can, and have, been employed to gather reader responses in these three contexts, reviewing the strengths and limitations of these approaches and rationalising the design adopted in the present thesis.

Chapter Three reports a prelim study examining intertextual references in a sample of online reader reviews of recent popular novel *Fifty Shades of Grey* (James 2011). This analysis is used to identify the scope and nature of intertextuality in booktalk, sketching the parameters a narrative interrelation framework needs to encompass. The knowledge gathered in this preliminary investigation forms the rationale underpinning the narrative interrelation framework, which is then presented in Chapter Four as a cognitive model of intertextuality. Chapter Five illustrates an application of the narrative interrelation framework to the discussions of an adult reading group. This chapter explores the additional challenges posed when analysing intertextuality in an interactive setting.

Chapter Six and Chapter Seven introduce the school based data. First, Chapter Six gives an overview of the relevant history of policy and practice in English education, focusing on the perceived purposes of the 'class reader' from its inception to the present day. Existing research into reading in secondary school is reviewed, incorporating a consideration of the arguments about the pedagogical benefits of different approaches to reading with young people. Chapter Seven then situates that research in relation to the two class reader units captured in this research. This includes a report of the methods used to generate the dataset, ethical considerations and an overview of the school and particular classes which were recorded.

Chapters Eight and Nine then examine the class reader as a type of reading experience and compares classroom booktalk with reading group booktalk. They examine studying a text in a school context and compare that, at a number of levels, with other types of reading experiences. These chapters examine how intertextuality in these contexts both does and does not manifest, scrutinising features of the two booktalk environments and offering an assessment as to why this appears to be the case.

Finally Chapter Ten concludes the thesis with a reflection on the findings and the implications of those findings for class reader pedagogy. The data examined in each of these chapters is summarised in Table 1.1 below:

Table 1.1, Research design overview

	Phase	Data Generated at this Phase	Purpose of Phase
1	Preliminary study (Chapter 3)	307 online book reviews of <i>Fifty Shades of Grey</i> (James 2012) gathered from online retailer Amazon.co.uk	This preliminary study examines intertextuality in readers' booktalk as a theory-building exercise. The aim was to establish the scope, forms and functions of intertextual links in use in order to identify the parameters and requirements the narrative interrelation framework would need to meet. This phase also offers an assessment of the characteristics of a booktalk environment needed in order for intertextuality to flourish.
2	Framework design and testing (Chapter 4)	None	Using the data generated at Phase 1, the narrative interrelation framework is presented as a fit-for-purpose cognitive model of intertextuality, which draws on the best current knowledge from cognitive science and linguistics, and can be used as a stylistic tool for practical analysis of both literary texts and booktalk.
3	Main study: part one (Chapter 5)	Two transcripts (approx. 36,000 words) capturing two sessions of an adult reading group, comprising mainly graduates who studied English at university, discussing <i>Holes</i> (Sachar 1999) and <i>Animal Farm</i> (Orwell 1945) respectively.	This phase applies the narrative interrelation framework to interactive booktalk within a reading group. Its purpose is to explore and describe the role intertextual references can and do play in booktalk. It also aims to reflect on the reading group as a type of booktalk environment and consider why intertextuality is able to manifest in this context.
4	Main study: part two (Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9)	Two sets of transcripts (approx. 330,000 words) capturing two 'class reader' units: a Year 7 mixed ability group studying <i>Holes</i> (Sachar 1999) and a Year 9 'top set' studying <i>Animal Farm</i> (Orwell 1945).	This phase considers the English classroom as a site of booktalk and the type of reading and discussion which takes place in this context, with a particular focus on intertextuality. Its purpose is to conceptualise both students and their teachers as readers, to better understand class readers in terms of the type of reading experience they provide, and the nature of the booktalk they facilitate.

As illustrated in Table 1.1, the research presented in this thesis examines readers' responses in three sites of booktalk: online book reviews in the preliminary study of recent popular novel *Fifty Shades of Grey* followed by a contrastive examination of two adult reading group sessions and two class reader units. Both datasets examined in the main study capture booktalk focused on the same two texts, *Holes* and *Animal Farm*, facilitating more robust comparison between the two contexts. Generating data in these three diverse sites enables this research to begin to triangulate intertextuality in use both in terms of the range of its forms and functions as well as the factors which facilitate and inhibit its manifestation in booktalk.

The nuances of each site and the methods employed to generate each dataset will be discussed at the point that data is analysed (outlined above), presented as a series of related studies.

CHAPTER TWO: RESEARCHING INTERTEXTUALITY IN REAL READERS' BOOKTALK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces stylistics as the disciplinary approach adopted in this research as well as the two key sub-branches of stylistics from which the research methods are derived: cognitive poetics and corpus stylistics. It then offers an overview of existing research on intertextuality, and explores existing conceptualisations and definitions in terms of their suitability to be operationalised as tools with which to analyse intertextuality in discourse. An assessment of how the intertextual booktalk of real readers can be fruitfully captured and analysed then follows. Three groupings of methods are considered: introspection, active elicitation and capturing naturally occurring reader responses. As it progresses, this review reflects on the strengths and limitations of each means of data generation in turn.

2.2 Stylistics

To explore intertextuality and its role in reading, the thesis adopts stylistics as a methodological approach. Stylistics emerged in the British and American academies in the late 1960s (Stockwell & Whiteley 2014: 1). It is,

simply defined as the (linguistic) study of style [which is] the way in which language is used [...] those aspects of linguistic choice which concern alternative ways of rendering the same subject matter

(Leech & Short 2007: 1, 31).

Stylistics is a discipline within linguistics which champions using a comprehensive knowledge of language as the fundamental cornerstone of any examination of text,

spoken or written, literary or non-literary (Jeffries & McIntyre 2010; Leech & Short 2007; Simpson 2004; Stockwell & Whiteley 2014). At the heart of stylistics is the idea that all texts are composed of language, and that linguistic knowledge therefore offers us the best and necessary tools for any successful, rigorous and evidenced analysis of any text. Stylistics argues that all thoughts about, interpretations and impressions of any instance of language use - any text - come *from* somewhere, namely, the interaction between text and reader (and, more distally, author) which is the act of reading itself.

Contemporary stylistics is dominantly concerned with the analysis of literary works. However, stylistics is not purely intended for literary applications:

models for analysis tend to be part of larger methodological domains, so features of language are viewed within a generally consistent theory of language [... and] stylistic features or readerly effects are available for investigation in the world outside

(Stockwell & Whiteley 2014: 4).

That is, linguistic frameworks do not discriminate in terms of the types of language use to which they can be applied. In fact, it is a central tenet of stylistics that 'literature' and 'literary language' is not fundamentally different or 'special' compared to any other type of language use (Carter 2004, Macrae 2016). As such, the stylistic method can easily be applied to the present context, which examines both the language of texts and also the language produced by readers discussing those texts (booktalk).

A metaphor frequently engaged to characterise the stylistic approach is that of the 'stylistics toolkit' (Carter 2010; Leech & Short 1996; Stockwell 2010; Wales 2014). Wales (2014) argues that stylistics is a discipline which is 'hands-on' and 'requires "spade-work"', which is 'the systematic close reading and analysis of quite specific

elements' (2014: 32-3). This has methodological implications in terms of the volume of data that can be analysed in appropriate depth in any stylistic investigation, as with the present research, as attention to style often at the level of word choice and syntactic structure is highly salient. As such, as will be elaborated below, this study engages a combination of close stylistic analysis, examining small chunks of illustrative data in fine detail, with corpus linguistic analysis, which uses computer software to demonstrate the presence of identified patterns over a much larger dataset. In this way, this thesis is able to draw on hundreds of thousands of words' worth of data whilst also engaging in close stylistic analysis. The limitation of this approach is, of course, that this form of extrapolation sacrifices a degree of nuance, and in terms of patterns across whole datasets limits this aspect of the investigation to an identification of what those patterns are rather than why they are there. Illustrative examples subject to close stylistic analysis will explore this latter aspect, however it cannot be denied that attributing the same explanations to the pattern as a whole is an interpretive leap. Nonetheless, any such leaps are retrievably and transparently presented - another central demand of the stylistic methodology - meaning readers do not need to rely on the researcher's assertions about the data.

Stylistics emphasises using clearly defined metalanguage within this toolkit to create 'a common currency of technical terminology' (Stockwell & Whiteley 2014: 5). This ensures that all the stages of any analysis are open to scrutiny by other researchers in the field: an agreed vocabulary means that interpretations are disputable because it is clear how they were reached. Stockwell (2012) explains: 'an emphasis on textual evidence [...] ensures that claims made are open to agreement or falsifiability, are open to verification and checking for accuracy, and are fundamentally testable'. As such, all datasets discussed in this thesis have been made available on the attached USB drive. To illustrate the importance of a defined

metalanguage, Simpson describes attending a conference where a writer's style was termed 'invertebrate' (2004: 6). Simpson argues that, because there was no agreed definition of precisely what this term meant with regard to identifiable features or characteristics, it might have meant anything and was therefore effectively unchallengeable (2004: 6). Invertebrate could be ameliorative or pejorative – perhaps an invertebrate style is unconstrained, flexible and fluid or perhaps it is weak and spineless. As such, this thesis engages linguistic metalanguage throughout. The framework, developed and presented in Chapter Four, builds on the most relevant existing research, and utilises established terminology wherever possible. Where new metalanguage proved necessary, clear and precise definitions of those terms are presented.

Stylistics is a discipline that draws on several different areas, theories, frameworks, models and terminologies within the wider field of linguistics. Stylistics, unlike generative grammar (Chomsky 1966, 1972) or systemic functional linguistics (Halliday 1971), is not a framework or model of linguistics in and of itself, rather it is 'a broad set of interrelated approaches united by the commitment to rigorous textual analysis' (Whiteley 2010) which borrows from these and other areas of linguistic study in order to assemble the 'toolkit' described above. Stylisticians then draw on whichever tools are fit-for-purpose in the analysis of style in their chosen text. Areas commonly utilised for the purposes of stylistic analysis include, but are not limited to:

- rhetoric (for example Burke 2014; Hamilton 2014)
- systemic functional linguistics, in particular modality and transitivity (for example Halliday 1971)
- (conceptual) metaphor (for example Kovesces 2002)
- possible worlds theory (for example McHale 2012; Ryan 1980, 1998)

- speech and thought representation, also prevalent in narratology (Leech & Short 2007; Rundquist 2014)
- point of view and deixis (for example McIntyre 2006)
- reader response theories (for example Rosenblatt 1938, 1978; Whiteley 2011)
- foregrounding and deviation, originally derived from Russian formalist linguistics (for example Carter 1993; Emmott & Alexander 2014)
- corpus linguistics (for example Carter 2008; Mahlberg 2012, 2013, 2014)

Earlier work in stylistics did attempt for some time to utilise Chomsky's generative grammar, but it was found to be ineffective and is therefore no longer used within the field. Stockwell and Whiteley explain:

stylistics is progressive in the sense that frameworks and approaches that are tried out and shown not to work are generally abandoned in favour of a better analysis: so in the 1970s it became apparent that generative grammar could not provide a stylistic account, and almost no one these days tries to return to it

(Stockwell & Whiteley 2004: 4).

The remainder of this chapter will review existing models of intertextuality and determine that currently no model exists which is sufficiently capable of being operationalised as a stylistic tool, that is, to be practically applied for the analysis of intertextual booktalk. This thesis thus intends to progress the field of stylistics by constructing a bespoke 'narrative interrelation framework' capable of filling this gap identified in the toolkit.

2.2.1 Cognitive poetics

Stylistics has recently undergone an evolution commonly referred to as 'the cognitive turn', reflecting an explosion of knowledge of language and the mind (Gavins & Steen 2003; Herman et al. 2005; Mason 2014; Stockwell 2002, 2009, 2012). As a result, a significant strand of research involving the 'application of cognitive science to literary reading' (Stockwell 2012), sometimes called 'cognitive poetics', has developed (Gavins & Steen 2003; Stockwell 2002). Cognitive poetics is a magpie discipline which views reading as 'an object that consists not simply of the autonomous existence of a text but which arises from the interaction with an observing consciousness [...] literature does not exist unless it is read' (Stockwell 2012). In this aspect, the field has many close ties to pre-cognitive reader response models such as Rosenblatt's transaction theory (1932),

Cognitive poetics engages the services of all the disciplinary specialisms which can help it in its plight; co-opting, incorporating and borrowing extensively from areas such as psychology, neuroscience, and cognitive linguistics. It is founded upon the key tenet that the human mind uses the same cognitive mechanisms to comprehend and interpret reading a text as it does to experience and act in the physical world around them because the mind is 'embodied'.

There is a plethora of evidence to support the claim for the embodied mind (Bal & Veltkamp 2013; Boroditsky & Ramscar 2002; Dehaene 2009; Gerrig 1993, 1998; Gibbs 1994, 2006; Lacey et al. 2012; Lakoff & Johnson 1980, 1999; Mar et al. 2009; Oatley 1999, 2002; Stockwell 2009). Barsalou explains, 'cognition shares mechanisms with perception, action and introspection' (2008: 635). Whether a person kicks a ball, watches someone else kick a ball or reads about a ball being kicked, their cognitive processes are congruent: when reading the word 'kick', not only the part of your brain involved in decoding language is activated, but also the

part that controls your legs (Narayanan 1997). In other words, language is not distinct or separate from other elements of cognitive processing, instead, language production reflects that processing. The commonality of cognition across real, simulated and imagined action is also evidenced by 'phantom limb syndrome', where amputees can feel pain in limbs they no longer have. Neural pathways in the brain continue to embody the limb, causing the person to perceive and feel the limb as though it still existed because, in the mind, it does. It is the mind, not the limb itself, which controls the sensation and perception of its presence and thus, though physically absent, its embodied presence can remain (Ramachandran & Blakeslee 1998; Ramachandran & Hirstein 1998; Ramachandran & Rogers-Ramachandran 1996).

Similarly, the embodied, shared conceptual system can also account for why readers can feel grief and sadness when a character, someone they know does not and has not ever really existed, dies:

people simulate affective states during comprehension [...] a reader's affective state interacts with the affective content of a text. In Havas et al. (2007), participants faces were configured discretely into states associated with particular emotions prior to judging the sensibility of sentences that contained emotional content. When facial emotion matched sentence emotion, comprehension was better than when they mismatched. Embodied states of the face triggered emotional states which in turn interacted with sentence comprehension

(Barsalou 2008: 629).

Thinking, doing, reading and viewing are all different types of 'experiencing' and engage a continuity of cognitive processes. This means that understanding cognition can offer significant contributions to knowledge of how readers interact

with and interpret fiction. Cognitive poetics adopts the position that, as texts and fictional worlds are understood and responded to using the same cognitive processes as any real experience out in the world, insights and advances from cognitive science can, and should, be applied to the study of readers and fiction (Stockwell 2002, 2009).

Cognitive poetics is an influential strand within stylistics; even those more traditional contemporary stylistic works have been influenced by the cognitive turn. The relationship between cognitive poetics and stylistics, where the two are situated in relation to other strands of linguistics, and where the framework presented in this thesis is situated, is illustrated in Figure 2.1 below:

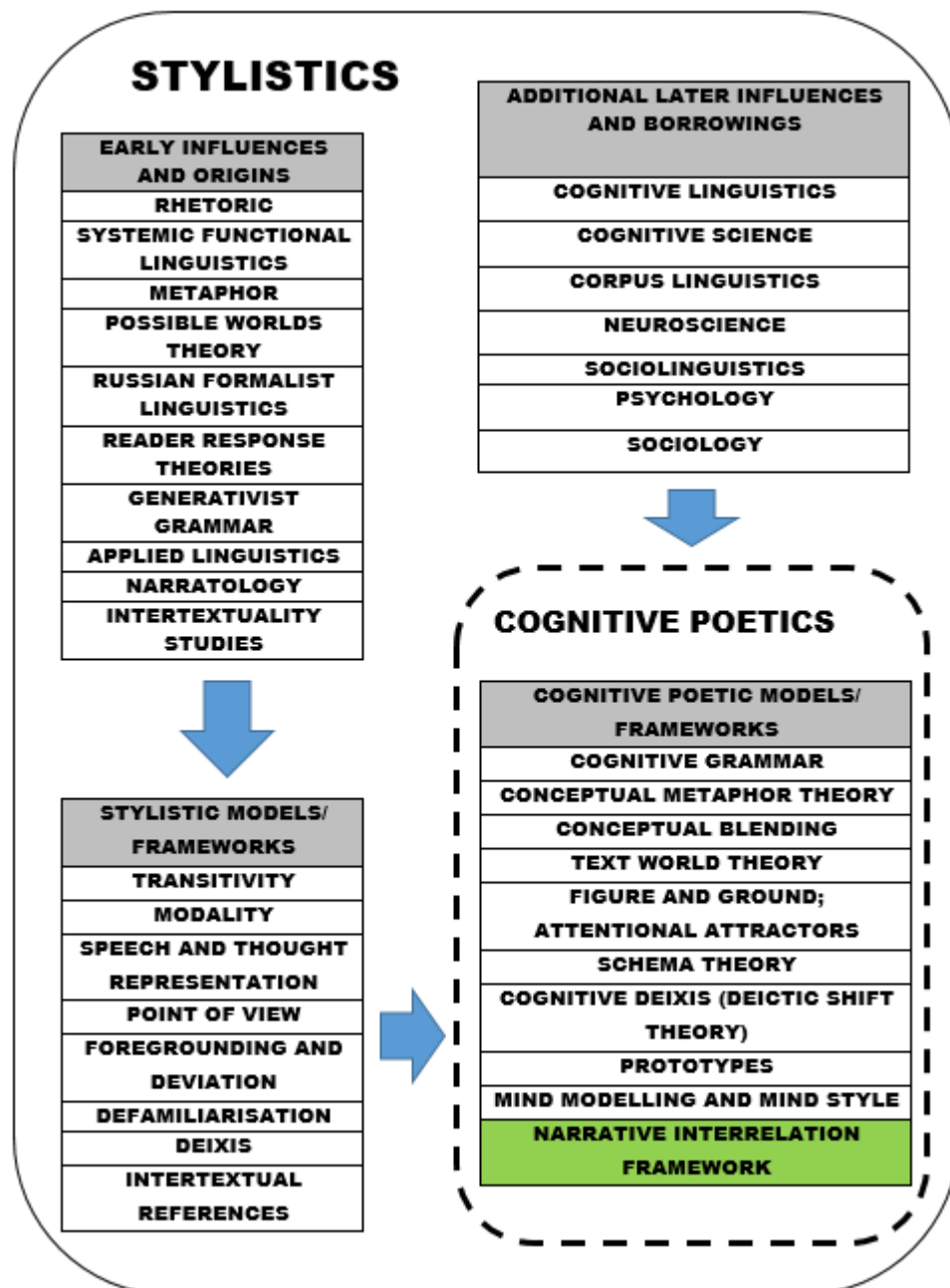


Figure 2.1: Situating stylistics and cognitive poetics

The narrative interrelation framework presented in this thesis thus sits within the field of cognitive poetics, and therefore more broadly within stylistics. Like most other stylistic studies, this research also additionally draws on a number of other models (schema theory and conceptual metaphor theory) and approaches (corpus linguistics and reader response) within the stylistic toolkit. This project thus

reflects the expanding scope of cognitive poetics, both in terms of interest and methodological approach, in three key ways:

- 1) the examination of real booktalk in novel contexts. Where both book reviews and reading group discourse have been explored by stylisticians, there is no existing research looking at booktalk in relation to class readers. Nor is there any work analysing intertextual references in real booktalk in any of these three contexts.
- 2) giving focused consideration to the role of cognition (Stockwell & Whiteley 2014) as well as sociolinguistic factors which arise when individuals read and discuss texts in groups (such as Peplow 2011; Peplow et al. 2016); and,
- 3) incorporating corpus linguistic methods in order to facilitate examination of a larger dataset (such as O'Halloran 2011; Stockwell & Mahlberg 2015).

2.2.2 Corpus linguistics

Due to the volume of data generated and examined in this research, corpus linguistic methods have also been employed at multiple stages to support and facilitate analysis.

Corpus linguistics involves using computer software to analyse and identify patterns in large datasets, or 'corpora': it is 'one of the fastest growing methodologies in contemporary linguistics' (Gries 2009: 1225). The use of corpus analysis is a relatively recent innovation but it is a powerful tool, offering a systematic and rigorous way of identifying patterns in large datasets as well as a way to quickly support or eschew hypotheses formed in the course of qualitative coding. That said, the software is of little value if used in isolation: it can reveal the 'what' but not the 'why'. Corpus methods therefore offer a mainly supporting tool within this thesis; used but not relied upon.

Corpus methods have ‘supercharged’ stylistics in the past twenty years (Stockwell & Whiteley 2014: 2); the ability for analysts ‘to work efficiently through vast swathes of language data (as *corpus linguistics*) has revolutionised the study of language’ (ibid). As such, corpus techniques have become another tool in the stylistic toolkit. Where stylistics was previously bound to small sections of texts by its own requirements for close, reported analysis, corpus software now enables the swift identification of patterns in large datasets such as high frequency words and phrases. Stylistics has embraced the use of corpus linguistics in literary investigation (Biber 2011; Carter 2008; Fischer-Starcke 2010; Mahlberg 2012, 2013, 2014; Semino & Short 2004; Stockwell & Mahlberg 2015; Stubbs 2008). This is not, however, a ‘corpus project’. Instead, the use of very basic corpus methods, namely concordances and word frequency lists, are employed to meet stylistics’ demand for transparency and text evidence within a large dataset. This thesis embarks upon the natural evolution of these converging approaches; the combined use of cognitive and corpus linguistics in the examination of readers’ booktalk.

2.3 Intertextuality: existing research

The origins of intertextuality research are disputed. The most comprehensive précis mapping the field’s development is Allen’s (2000) historical overview, which offers three possible originators: Saussure (1974), Bakhtin (1981, 1984a, 1984b, 1986) or Kristeva (1980, 1981, 1986). Allen goes on to map the development of intertextuality studies, citing Barthes (1977), followed by Genette (1979, 1981, 1987) and Riffaterre (1984, 1990), and finally Bloom (1973, 1988) as the other major contributing voices to the field.

This section will offer a brief overview of this existing research, ultimately situating and justifying the definition of intertextuality adopted in this thesis

within the wider field. The primary consideration for this work is a definition which can be successfully operationalised as an identifying tool. In other words, when faced with an example of real discourse, the definition can be used to categorise an utterance as intertextual, or not, with a rationalisation as to why.

In the search for a definition of intertextuality that is able to be operationalised, Saussure and Bakhtin offer no suitable candidate, as neither ever actually used the term itself. Both championed a dialogic conceptualisation of the world which made later studies in the area of intertextuality possible (Bakhtin 1981, 1984a, 1984b, 1986; Saussure 1974). Central to this notion of dialogism is the notion that all discourse is derived from other discourses, that:

the word is not a material thing but rather the eternally mobile, eternally fickle medium of dialogic interaction. It never gravitates toward a single consciousness or a single voice. The life of the word is contained in its transfer from one mouth to another, from one context to another, from one social collective to another, from one generation to another. In this process the word does not forget its own path and cannot completely free itself from the power of those concrete contexts into which it has entered

(Bakhtin 1984a: 201).

This explanation clearly holds weight insofar as one considers the inescapable interconnectivity of language as the dominant universal currency for communication. Yet, it offers no indication as to how one might go about identifying or tracing the results of this 'transfer' that 'the word does not forget', and it is unclear what precisely this might mean. 'The word' is given agency in Bakhtin's discussion, as though a sentient being with 'life', a memory, and emotional, historical, cultural and social relationships as a person would have. Again, Bakhtin focuses on 'the word' as a conceptual entity. Yet to analyse

discourse requires actual instantiations of 'the word': as a thing visible only when written down, and heard only when articulated by mouth or machine. Bakhtin's definition casts *all* discourse as intertextual and, following his definition of the inherently dialogic nature of language this cannot particularly be disputed. Nonetheless, such a definition does not help us to identify instances of intertextuality in a chunk of discourse.

In other words, dialogism is too unwieldy and amorphous to ever be operationalised – to make the jump from concept to linguistic tool. Kristeva even refers to dialogism as 'the concept of relation' (1980: 88) and central to this concept is the notion that everything is related to everything else. This is certainly not to dismiss dialogism and its relevance to the current work, as an underlying concept. However, this research seeks to narrow the 'transfers' and 'relationships' between different sections of discourse that Bakhtin describes above – the references between different 'texts'- to what can be evidenced and identified: intertextuality as an examinable feature. Selecting particular utterances as instances of intertextual reference cannot be achieved using dialogism as the basis for definition.

Kristeva too, whilst being the first theorist to engage the term 'intertextuality', offers a very broad definition. She claims, 'a text is a permutation of texts, an intertextuality in the space of a given text' (Kristeva 1980: 36). Again, this is not to dispute the conceptual validity to this claim, yet this definition is still too indefinite with regard to identifying intertextuality in discourse, in order to consider how it works in practice. Exploring these early theorists makes it clear that a distinction needs to be made between broader notions about the intrinsic relations between all 'texts' across time and space, and examinable instances of intertextuality as an observable feature within a 'text', spoken or written.

These approaches to intertextuality are concerned, in the main, with highlighting that narratives are necessarily borne out of, and therefore related to, a context. Here, intertextuality becomes more of a philosophical debate than an analytical tool and the job becomes one of situating a text appropriately amongst its extratextual influences from social to historical, literary to aesthetic.

Research that does engage in close linguistic analysis of intertextuality, such as that of Riffaterre, moves to the opposite extreme by seeking concrete instances of intertextual reference within a given text, where presence or absence, and meaning, is determined based on claims of authorial intention. Such analyses posit a set of intertextual references within the text which the author *intended* to include and which the reader is *intended* to identify. This style of examination inevitably leads to a text-centred analysis which imagines a highly idealised reader, equipped with an encyclopaedic arsenal of literary and cultural knowledge which they correctly and efficiently deploy in their quest for meaning. This 'imagined reader' is often the vessel for a series of assumptions made by the analyst, which not only lead away from consideration of real readers but often come close to insulting anyone who is not adept at this game of intertextual hide-and-seek. In an analysis of an André Breton poem, for instance, Riffaterre makes such claims as:

- 1) 'The reader will easily recognise in this the well-known legend' (1990: 60)
- 2) 'Even the most absent-minded readers will find the thread leading to the solution' (1990: 65)
- 3) 'The recovery of an intertext proceeds in two stages both so overdetermined that they are unlikely to elude for long any reader equipped with basic linguistic competence' (1990: 73)

This conceptualisation of intertextuality as both directed by an author and necessary for accessing a text's 'true meaning' is not only a dictatorial and highly

privileged vision of reading but is also ill-equipped, on a purely practical level, to account for readers who do not identify the prescribed references or who make other intertextual connections that fall outside the scope of 'what the author intended'. What Riffaterre in fact presents here is an amalgam of a crib sheet of his own intertextual links with the poem and an attempt to identify André Breton's. This approach to intertextuality can only delineate idealised, highly-informed readings of a narrative which seek to identify the 'appropriate' links to be made by investigating and hypothesising authorial intention. Intertextual links are presented as finite, objectively valid and objectively present in the narrative.

Gerard Genette too offers a highly text-centric and essentially structuralist account of intertextuality, focusing in the main on historiographic investigations as to the intertextual genesis of a given text. Genette's work is considered more comprehensively in the following section (Section 2.3.1).

In virtually all cases existing research on intertextuality adopts the unspoken principle that intertextual links are the result of authorial design, either consciously placed or unconsciously influenced, abstract or specific, and readers either notice them or not. It is my submission that this ignores the most interesting, important and useful aspect of intertextuality: what readers do with it. This thesis therefore reframes the investigation of the relationships between narratives as an active and reader-dependent process. To assess whether any intertextual link, explicitly placed or subjectively perceived, has an impact on reading it is necessary to look not only to texts and authors but also to readers. If a reader does not make a link then it does not exist within their experience of that text and plays no role in their reading.

One significant exception to the text-centred focus of intertextuality research is the work of Douglas Hartman (1995, 2004; Hartman & Hartman 1994). Hartman's

1995 study is most relevant to the present research. In this study he asked readers to perform a 'think aloud protocol' (Ericsson & Simon 1980, 1987) whilst reading several texts Hartman had assembled based around a similar theme. Hartman examined the connections the readers made at three levels: within a text itself, which he termed 'primary endogenous links', across the selection of texts provided, which he termed 'secondary endogenous links' and to other texts and personal experiences which had not been given to the readers, which he termed 'exogenous links' (Hartman 1995). This research focuses on what Hartman calls 'exogenous links', that is, links which naturally arise in the course of readers' booktalk without explicit prompting (2004: 360). Hartman's (1995) sample was very small, with only eight readers participating and, as he actively facilitated the intertextual connections he observed, his research cannot simply be translated to naturally occurring booktalk. Nonetheless his study is highly salient and his term 'primary endogenous links' in particular will be utilised within the present research, adding a dimension to the current consideration of intertextuality which would otherwise have been overlooked (Hartman's work is further distinguished from the present research in a consideration of methodological approaches to researching real readers in Section 2.8.2).

2.4 Why existing models of intertextuality cannot be used for stylistic analysis

Existing research into intertextuality offers no suitable framework which can be used to perform a stylistic analysis. There are three factors which make the existing work unsuitable for either use or adaptation:

1. Lack of a metalanguage, or a metalanguage which is unsuited to practical application

Much existing work on intertextuality lacks a technical vocabulary to describe the processes by which intertextual references are constructed or understood. Where metalanguage is coined or used it is often too imprecise to be applied in a close linguistic analysis.

Gerard Genette's work, for example, which comes closest to providing an appropriate metalanguage (Genette 1979, 1981, 1987), proves unusable because many of his terms overlap in meaning or cannot be used in practice because the criteria for their assignation is often unknowable. As a structuralist, much of Genette's work is concerned with assigning terms to texts based on their genesis; he is interested in determining the intertextual status of texts as static objects. For example, one item of Genette's metalanguage can be used in complement to the narrative interrelation framework, but could not be used for close analysis, which is his concept of hypertextuality:

[hypertextuality is] any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the hypertext) to an earlier text A (I shall of course call it the hypotext) upon which it is grafted in a manner that it is not that of commentary

(Genette 1981: 5).

The difficulty is not the terminology itself but its ability to be used in a dynamic linguistic analysis. Hypertextuality analysis is an exercise in narrative genealogy: the existence of a hypotext which was instrumental in the creation of a hypertext is a matter of historical fact. This is not only often very difficult to determine but is in any case too text-centric a view of intertextuality for current purposes as the existence of a hypotext will not necessarily be known, obvious or relevant to an

individual reader. Simply put, Genette's focus is on the status of texts as intertextual or not, rather than the perceptions and utterances of readers and his metalanguage is therefore unsuitable for either use or adaptation.

Genette offers one example of the issue of unsuitable or absent metalanguage which is reflected across much of intertextuality research. The two most prevalent reasons underpinning the metalanguage problem are either a different focus to the current research (such as Bakhtin 1984a and Kristeva 1981) or a different conceptualisation of intertextuality, typically derived from or following a structuralist paradigm (such as Riffaterre 1990). A differing epistemological approach creates an additional barrier to the application of existing frameworks to the current context.

2. Irresolvable epistemological differences

Riffaterre's (1990) work, discussed above, illustrates the incompatibility of models informed by conflicting (in this case structuralist) epistemological conceptualisations of intertextuality with application in the present research.

Riffaterre does include some clearly defined metalanguage, for instance he defines an 'intertext' as 'one or more texts which the reader must know in order to understand a work of literature in terms of its overall significance' (1990: 56). Couched within this definition, and underpinning his analyses more generally, however, is an approach to intertextual references as something which readers *should* make and *must* understand in order for their readings to be considered worthy and correct. This diverges so absolutely from the reality of what real (as opposed to idealised) readers actually do when confronted with an intertextual reference or when making one of their own that it cannot be resolved with the current focus. Research such as Riffaterre's offers an idealised vision of intertextuality rather than a realistic assessment of its role in individual readings,

and is therefore epistemologically resistant to use as a tool for cognitive linguistic application.

3. No discernible or usable framework

Many existing models, Bakhtin most notable amongst them (see Kristeva 1981), lack a precise technical vocabulary or framework equipped to actually describe the intertextuality they discuss, his terms 'heteroglossia' (Vice 1997) and 'dialogism' being two such examples. In the case of Bakhtin this is due to a different focus of his research (Kristeva 1981). Bakhtin and Kristeva's work is concerned primarily with theorising the conceptual nature of intertextuality, typically at the macro level. Kristeva explains,

Bakhtin shuns the linguist's technical rigor, wielding an impulsive and at times even prophetic pen [...] Bakhtin was one of the first to replace the static hewing out of texts with a model where literary structure does not simply *exist* but is generated in relation to *another* structure [...] as a dialogue among several writings: that of the writer, the addressee (or the character), and the contemporary or earlier cultural context

(1981: 64-5).

To say this work is unsuitable is not a criticism but rather a recognition that such conceptualisations of intertextuality have not (yet) produced a usable model which can be used to analyse readers' intertextual links and how they manifest in discourse.

Any one of these three factors would make application of these approaches problematic. There is no existing model of intertextuality which does not suffer from at least one, sometimes two and occasionally all three of these issues.

2.5 Defining intertextuality: narrative interrelation and intertextual reference

This thesis therefore proposes that a cognitively-informed framework for the study of intertextuality must engage two metalinguistic terms in order to enable close linguistic analysis of the two distinct components involved in any potential instance of intertextuality manifesting in discourse: *narrative interrelation* and *intertextual reference*. These two terms will respectively provide a way of separating intertextuality as a phenomenon in the mind and intertextuality as a visible feature in a text. These two terms are here defined:

- A *narrative interrelation* is the cognitive act of making a link between a narrative and at least one other. Narrative interrelations are mental processes, they cannot be accessed or examined directly. They may occur spontaneously to a reader when they read or think about a narrative, or they may be prompted by the reader's exposure to an intertextual reference.
- An *intertextual reference* is any articulated, examinable product of narrative interrelation. Readers produce intertextual references but also encounter them. Intertextual references can be encountered embedded in narratives, as the textual trace of an interrelation made by the author, or in the discourse, written and spoken, of other readers.

Distinguishing mental process (narrative interrelation) and articulated product (intertextual reference) from the inception of this research is vital. Any cognitive poetic investigation, particularly employing any methodology which extends beyond personal introspection, must address the obstacle that it is impossible to capture cognition directly. It is questionable whether we can accurately examine and reflect upon our own mental processes; however it is a fact that we cannot

directly access the thoughts of other people. The next best data available is the discourse of individuals producing, articulating and reporting those thoughts.

These two terms thus enable acknowledgement of philosophical approaches to intertextuality, such as Bakhtin (1981, 1984a, 1984b, 1986) and Kristeva's (1980, 1981, 1986), by framing dialogism as a form of narrative interrelation operating below the level of conscious awareness. At the same time, distinguishing narrative interrelation from intertextual reference allows us to engage the latter term in order to limit the field of discussion to the focus of the present research: intertextuality as it manifests in discourse.

The introduction of these two terms requires further discussion in order to ensure the clarity and retrievability of what, precisely, falls within the scope of these definitions. This can be described in two questions:

- 1) What is 'interrelation'?
- 2) What counts as a narrative?

2.6 Defining interrelation

Following the Oxford English Dictionary, which considers an interrelation to be a 'mutual or reciprocal relation', this thesis defines an interrelation as *any link or connection* made between two or more discrete elements, be they concepts, objects, ideas, events, people, animate or inanimate entities. This research focuses specifically on 'narrative interrelation'; that is, when two or more narratives are in some way linked or connected in the mind of a reader. As narrative interrelation is here defined as the cognitive correlate of intertextual reference, it is necessary to establish what is meant by a 'narrative'. This thesis does not claim, however, that a 'narrative interrelation' is a distinct type of cognitive process from any other kind of 'interrelation'. The decision to focus on 'narrative interrelation' specifically

was taken purely to maintain continuity with the existing body of research within the field of intertextuality studies as well as to narrow of the scope of investigation itself.

2.7 Defining narrative

There is no concrete, definitive answer to the question ‘what is a narrative?’ and perhaps one is not possible. However there is widespread agreement on the relevant factors which must be considered as well as a flexible set of common characteristics of a narrative. Entire theses have been dedicated to defining what constitutes a narrative. For the purposes of the present research a brief, broad overview of the prototypical characteristics of narrative as collectively determined by the dominant voices in the field is necessary (Bal 1985; Barthes 1977; Bruner 1992; Chatman 1978; Emmott 1997; Fludernik 1996, 2009; Gerrig 1993; Griemas 1966; Herman 2009; Hühn 2009, 2010; Labov & Waletzky 1967; Labov 1972; Oatley 1999; Prince 1982; Propp 1968; Rimmon-Kenan 1983; Rumelhart 1975; Ryan 2007; Sanford & Emmott 2012; Todorov 1977; Toolan 2001; Zwaan 2004). In this section the question ‘what counts as a narrative?’ will be considered theoretically. This will supply a definition which will be tested on challenging or problematic examples as they arise, allowing reflection on this preliminary definition as it is applied to real data in the course of this thesis.

Toolan (2001) offers that ‘a first attempt minimalist definition of narrative might be: a perceived sequence of non-randomly connected events’ (2001: 6) to which he later adds ‘typically involving, as the experiencing agonist, humans or quasi-humans, or other sentient beings, from whose experience we humans can “learn”’ (2001: 8). Toolan thus stipulates the inclusion of an event that somehow changes, and a sentient agent. The first part of this definition, the inclusion of some sort of event prompting a change, is the determining factor which nearly all theorists

agree on as a necessary feature that must be present in order to qualify something as 'a narrative'. Toolan calls this a 'change of state' (2001: 6), Todorov a 'transformation' (1977: 233), Labov the presence of 'at least one temporal juncture' (1972: 361) and Propp, referring specifically to folk tales, a shift from 'equilibrium' to 'turbulence' and back again (Propp 1928). This feature is broadly agreed upon and seems intuitively logical when its absence is considered. Toolan explains:

"event" itself is really a complex term, presupposing that there is some recognized state or set of conditions, and that something happens, causing a change to that state

(Toolan 2001: 6).

That is, an 'event', by its very definition, is likely to mean its reporting constitutes a narrative. This definition is useful but potentially circular until considered in contrast to what Toolan argues could *not* be considered a narrative,

a pure collage of described events, even given in sequence does not count as a narrative [...] unless someone comes to perceive a non-random connection [which is] a connectedness that is taken to be motivated and significant

(Toolan 2001: 6).

This latter condition is both helpful and frustrating to a working definition of narrative in the present context. It is helpful because it acknowledges a degree of subjective perception which clearly exists - what some may judge to be a narrative, others may not. It is frustrating because introducing individual perception essentially precludes an objective, testable definition which could be applied to categorically determine whether a reader is interrelating with a 'narrative' or not. However, it is a natural human tendency to attempt to find patterns and 'non-

random connections'; a story where perhaps none was intended to exist. This has been discussed extensively with regard to surrealist poetry, which strove to resist coherent 'meaning' but often has such meaning projected onto it by readers anyway (Stockwell 2003a, 2008, 2015; Gavins 2013). As such, acknowledging subjective perception is a necessary step in defining narrative.

Ernest Hemingway wrote what was famed to be the world's shortest narrative (Macrae 2014). Comprising only six words, it is reliant on readers perceiving non-random connections in order to imagine a sequence of related events:

For sale: Baby shoes, never worn

(Hemingway, exact date unknown).

Hemingway's six words can be interpreted as a simple advert, rather than a narrative, if the last two words 'never worn' are superficially interpreted as a post-modifying description of the shoes. The most mundane explanation, that a person makes and sells baby shoes, arguably does not transform this sentence into a narrative. Many readers, however, infer a series of related events having taken place 'behind' these words: an infant death, a stillborn, a miscarriage or perhaps a hoped for but mistaken pregnancy (Macrae 2014). These interpretations realise a narrative from the six words because readers perceive a non-random relationship and thus a story being told: that a person would only buy baby shoes for an anticipated baby and would, therefore, only sell those shoes if the baby did not need them. The final piece of information 'never worn', rules out the possibility that a baby has used and simply grown out of the shoes leaving, many perceive, only one viable conclusion: the baby never had the opportunity to wear them.

Hemingway's story has, in recent years, sparked many other writers to undertake the same challenge: to write a story in six words. One such example is the Twitter account @SixWordStories. Unlike Hemingway's tale, many of these

‘SixWordStories’ include linguistic features which concretely encode Labov’s ‘one temporal juncture’ or Toolan’s ‘sequence of non-randomly connected events’. For example,

Jumped. *Then* I changed my mind

(*my emphasis*: @johndorian1232, 2013).

In this first example, the adverb ‘then’ encodes a temporal shift; the jumping happened first and the changing of the mind *then* followed. To qualify as a narrative, however, still requires a link between these two actions to be perceived, meaning it is still possible to uncouple these events and deny the sentence narrative status. Macrae suggests stories such as these *do* tend to be perceived as narratives because most readers assume that what they are being told is ‘relevant’ (Macrae 2014). Thus, she would argue, readers typically infer the jumping to be a suicide attempt, making the changing of one’s mind tragic because, presumably, too late. A non-narrative interpretation could be, for example, someone deciding what they want casserole for dinner whilst on a trampoline, jumping and, mid-jump, determining they would prefer paella. This would not constitute a narrative because the character’s actions (‘jumping’ and ‘changing my mind’) are not related. Macrae would argue the actions are unlikely to be interpreted in this manner for the same reason; if events are not related they are not relevant to one another and are therefore unlikely to be juxtaposed at all.

Narratives can be easily inferred from a very small amount of information. This story, for instance, is pure dialogue:

“Goodbye Mission Control. Thanks for trying”

(@aiken_, 2013).

Here two 'characters' are present, a protagonist (the unnamed speaker) and 'Mission Control'. Schematic knowledge is activated; 'goodbye' suggests the end of a conversation, implying that an earlier one has taken place, 'Mission Control' communicates with space craft, suggesting two distinct locations across which this communication is taking place. 'Thanks for trying' suggests a problem for which a resolution has been unsuccessfully sought.

Finally, a story can even be inferred from a simple series of noun phrases:

Strangers. Friends. Best friends. Lovers. Strangers

(POTATOCATS, 2014).

This only functions as a narrative if a temporal sequence is inferred and these labels are applied to the same two people. This omits any actual 'events' taking place but these can be inferred from the incremental apposition; that is, readers attribute the changing labels to changing circumstances. Thus a story is perceived and the six words obtain narrative status.

Sanford and Emmott (following Hühn 2009, 2010) suggest a more developed stance on the nature of this 'change': 'a narrative might, in general terms, be classed as telling a story when it is eventful in the sense that something unusual and interesting happens' (2012: 4). This definition introduces another subjective criterion, for where some would consider an event to be 'unusual and interesting' others would disagree: who decides? The most convincing answer, and the viewpoint which will therefore be adopted in this thesis, lies with Labov's notion of *tellability*, which places the burden of responsibility in determining 'eventfulness' with the teller.

Labov claims that narratives all contain some degree of implicit or explicit *evaluation* which attempts to assure the listener that the narrative is of sufficient

perceived benefit to them that they should permit the speaker's extended request for attention for the telling. He explains,

there are many ways to tell the same story, to make very different points, or to make no point at all. Pointless stories are met (in English) with the withering rejoinder: "So what?" Every good narrator is continually warding off this question

(Labov 1972: 366).

Labov places the onus on the teller of a narrative to determine that the event is worth reporting and, in his examination of oral narratives, identifies *evaluation* as the method used by narrators to hold their turn, be able to finish their story and successfully ward off 'so what?'. Unlike Sanford and Emmott (2012), Labov does not claim that all narratives *will* be eventful, rather that if uneventful they are likely to be perceived by the audience as pointless. Crucially for present purposes, narratives considered to be pointless by an addressee are still narratives, just not very good ones.

This distinction illustrates the existence of a subdivision of the 'qualifying features' of a narrative: the features a narrative *needs* and the features a narrative *should* or *can typically be expected* to have. Only the former drives the definition required by this thesis: features a narrative *must* contain. It is easily conceivable, for instance, that upon hearing a narrative they consider to be utterly pointless, a person may link this to another narrative which also wasted their time. Thus, interrelation of narratives is not prevented, and can in fact be prompted by, poor quality, meaning all must be included under the present definition.

2.7.1 Typical features of a narrative

The necessary features of a narrative outlined above can be distinguished from, for instance, Labov's taxonomy of a 'typical narrative syntax': Abstract, Orientation, Complicating Action, Evaluation, Resolution and Coda (Labov 1972: 360-75). The first five of these, he explains, can be understood as a series of questions:

- a. Abstract: what was this about?
- b. Orientation: who, when, what, where?
- c. Complicating action: then what happened?
- d. Evaluation: so what?
- e. Resolution: finally what happened?

(adapted from Labov 1972: 370)

This model of the prototypical narrative syntax is extremely useful, but Labov at no point demands that all these components must be present in order for something to 'qualify' as a narrative.

Structuralist accounts of narrative also tend to focus on particular genres or 'story types' with a view to generating a set of rules as to what narratives in that category do, or should, contain (Griemas 1966; Propp 1928; Todorov 1977). Most famous and comprehensive of these is Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of Folktales* (1928) in which he identified 39 features of the folktale and argued that all fairy/folk tales can be deconstructed to reveal a combination of those features. This highlights that structuralist definitions of narrative are not suited to current purposes because they are interested in the underlying structures underpinning types of narrative with the intention of grouping texts under concrete genre definitions. This thesis is better suited to a definition focused on perception (discussed further in Chapter Three).

Expanding on his notion of 'evaluation' Labov later continues,

it is necessary to know why this narrative – or any narrative – is felt to be tellable; in other words, why the events of the narrative are *reportable* [...] if the event becomes common enough, it is no longer a violation of an expected rule of behavior, and is not reportable

(1972: 370-1).

As a sociolinguist interested in narratives produced by real people (in his case on the streets of Harlem) Labov's work chimes closely with contemporary conceptions of narrative because it takes consideration of cognition. That is, Labov's fundamental criterion is that the teller perceives the events they report to be tellable. This is the definition of narrative adopted in this thesis for precisely the same reason. Other theorists offer criteria for what constitutes a 'good narrative', this research requires a definition which encapsulates *all* narratives - good, great, bad and pointless – because the focus is on real readers; on narrative production in everyday discourse. As such, as long as people tell stories others consider to be a waste of their time (consider the apologetic phrase 'I guess you had to be there'), other definitions which incorporate a notion of quality will be too specific for application to booktalk.

2.7.2 Fictional vs. non-fictional narratives

A further consideration is whether interrelations with both fictional and non-fictional narratives can be considered within the present research. This distinction is of key importance to this thesis because if non-fictional narratives are qualitatively different to fictional ones, then they may fall outside the scope of this research. A superficial separation of these two categories of narrative might be that they are ontologically distinct; fictional narratives are constructed, imagined

creations whereas non-fictional narratives report stories which have a genesis in real lived experience. A closer assessment reveals that this is not the case however; there is a wealth of studies supporting the notion that these narrative types are dealt with using the same cognitive processes (Cantor et al. 2004; Charlton et al. 2004; Gerrig 1993; Gerrig & Rapp 2004; Schreier 2004). As Gerrig explained, 'there is no distinct psychological category for fiction' (1993: 197).

Research into false memory blurs this distinction – between 'fictional' and 'non-fictional' narratives - even further, showing in multiple studies that humans can easily come to 'remember' entirely fictional episodes as a matter of historical fact. A multitude of studies have shown participants recalling fictitious narratives as true memory, including: being lost as a child, (Loftus & Pickerell 1995), being attacked by an animal (Porter, Yuille & Lehman 1999), nearly drowning (Heaps & Nash 2001) and even being subjected to satanic ritual abuse (Perry & Szalavitz 2006). This body of work clearly demonstrates that both fictional and non-fictional narratives are recalled using the same cognitive processes, exemplified by our inability to sometimes distinguish between them, meaning both may be considered in this research.

As such, the conception of fictional and non-fictional narratives in this thesis need only to be distinguished ontologically. For instance, non-fictional narratives engage different expectations than fictional ones, especially an expectation of truthfulness and viability. Individual conditions and variations in treatment will be considered as they arise in the data.

2.7.3 Granularity of 'narrative'

The broad definition of narrative established thus far introduces another important consideration: how to taxonomise the vast range of possible 'sizes' of narrative. Is/are *The Canterbury Tales* one narrative or 24? Do the interludes

between each tale count as part of the preceding or following narrative, as discrete narratives in themselves, or as part of the superordinate narrative arc begun in the prologue with each tale a mini-narrative in between? What if a reader makes an intertextual connection to a genre or other grouping of narratives, and it is not possible to extrapolate which individual narratives are being referenced?

This issue is one of narrative granularity and can be easily resolved: all can be considered narratives, it simply depends on the level of granularity with which the narrative is perceived by a reader. In other words, depending on the scope of a given reader's attention, they can variously make an intertextual link between one narrative and 'Middle English texts', or 'the works of Geoffrey Chaucer', or '*The Canterbury Tales*' or 'The Miller's Tale'. Each of these connections can be considered a narrative interrelation, it is simply the boundary of where the reader perceives the narrative or narrative grouping to begin and end which alters the granularity of what the connection is being made between. Thus, within this thesis, intertextuality is defined as any interrelation made between two or more narratives, groups of narratives, or chunks of narratives, as perceived by a reader. When readers make links between texts, these links do not solely take the form of one specific narrative being compared with another specific narrative. A framework for analysing intertextuality must therefore reflect this; only considering interrelation between complete stories which come neatly packed as single independent units will not suffice.

This broader definition enables the examination of what Hartman labels 'primary endogenous' links, which are 'within the text connections' (1995, 2004: 360, see Section 2.3). Whilst these are not focused on in the present research, the narrative interrelation framework is intended to fill a gap in the existing 'stylistic toolkit' and

should therefore encompass as wide a spectrum of narrative granularity as the integrity of the model permits.

This flexible conceptualisation is also vital to facilitate consideration of the role individual narratives play in a reader's cumulative understanding of genres (such as 'science fiction'), groups of texts (such as 'Ian McEwan novels') and types of text (such as 'great children's literature') (this is explored comprehensively in Section 3.10).

Now the two key metalinguistic terms engaged in this thesis in order to analyse intertextuality in discourse – narrative interrelation and intertextual reference – have been defined both in terms of meaning and scope of application, it is important to consider how the discourse itself (the booktalk of real readers) is to be captured.

2.8 Researching real readers

This thesis examines discussions and reports of intertextual references which are the product of readers' narrative interrelations and not the interrelations themselves. A narrative interrelation, once produced as an intertextual reference by one reader, may prompt other readers to make a corresponding interrelation in their own minds. However those readers do not have access to each other's cognition, only the discourse produced as a result. Intertextual booktalk will therefore always involve a toggling between a potential range of narrative interrelations, which readers undertake in their own minds, and the intertextual references produced as a result, which may be interpreted and responded to differently by different readers.

The gap between the private internal reading and externalising the reading experience means that additional considerations, in particular the context in which

intertextual booktalk is produced, or not produced, must be taken into account. The most relevant of these contextual considerations is the membership and dynamics of the group in which, or for which, the discourse is produced.

Key sites of stylistic explorations into naturally occurring reader discourse, are book reviews (Harrison forthcoming; Nuttall 2015; Stockwell 2009), online discussion boards (Gregoriou 2012; Schreier 2004) and reading groups (Allington & Swann 2009; Allington 2001, 2012; Benwell 2009, Peplow 2011; Peplow et al. 2016; Whiteley 2011a, 2011b, 2014). All of these contexts will differently affect the ways in which individual readers' narrative interrelations are realised into intertextual references, and indeed whether they are realised into intertextual references at all. Both unconscious and conscious perceptions of individual readers regarding what kinds of booktalk are desirable or appropriate and what the booktalk is 'for' will inevitably influence the kind of booktalk which is produced. When people write book reviews, for example, they are not (generally speaking) simply externalising their thoughts about a given narrative because it is commonly established that reviews exist for a particular purpose: to advise others on whether or not they should read a text. As such review writers will usually filter which bits of the narrative are discussed, tending not to include 'spoilers' or reveal what happens at the end, for instance. The nuances and particular conceptualisations of different discourse environments in which booktalk is produced will be considered at points throughout this thesis (book reviews in Chapter Three, reading groups in Chapter Five and the school classroom in Chapters Six and Seven). The very fact that what readers may change what say depending on where and when they say it necessitates parsing 'intertextuality' to reflect this distinction.

Reader response, the researching of real readers and their responses to texts, has a well-established history and is oft-cited as starting with Rosenblatt's observation that texts do not exist in isolation but are always read *by* someone (1938). Thus, Rosenblatt argued, reading is always a transaction between text and reader, and more distally author, and the proper way to analyse texts is by attending to the reader as well as the literary artefact, the text. This truism has endured and evolved into an area known as 'reader response', which now forms a cornerstone of stylistic analysis (Allington 2011; Benwell 2009; Brooks & Browne 2012; Charlton et al. 2004; Hall 2009). Reader response refers to research which looks to understand texts through understanding readers: 'what they notice and what they do with what they notice' (Hall, 2009: 335). Stockwell (2012) argues,

In literary scholarship both old and new, readers as well as authors have for too long been treated as ghosts: idealised, implied, abstracted, rarefied into geniuses, spirited away as books and ideas, or left vague, ill-defined and unexplored. Those times are changing.

This typifies the approach adopted by some of the intertextuality research discussed earlier in this chapter, most notably that of Riffaterre (1990) (Section 2.3), which claims a consideration of readers but where the researcher never actually engages with any reader except themselves. Stockwell (2012) proposes that the ever growing interest in the discourse of real readers has been amplified in the last fifteen years in particular as a result of the 'cognitive turn' in stylistics, which brought readers' booktalk to the fore of researchers' interests (Allington & Swann 2009; Peplow 2011; Peplow et al. forthcoming; Whiteley 2011, 2014, 2015). Hall reiterates the sentiment of Rosenblatt's original claim in his recent introduction to a special issue of *Language and Literature* which looked at real readers in stylistic research, claiming 'without a reader there is no text, without a

text, no reader' (Hall 2009: 331). Thus where reader response was, until the cognitive turn, a useful addition to the stylistic approach, the new emphasis on mind has made consideration of real readers not just additive but imperative.

This interest in real readers and their booktalk has manifested in several strands of methodological approach in stylistics. These approaches can be divided into three broad groupings:

- 1) introspection;
- 2) actively eliciting readers' responses; and,
- 3) capturing naturally occurring booktalk.

2.8.1 Introspection

The introspective method, also known as introspection, describes reflecting on and analysing one's own reading experience; a form of metacognition. Introspection forms the basis of most, arguably all, stylistic analysis because even methods which involve the examination of other readers' responses will be consciously or unconsciously informed by the analyst's own reading and interpretation of the text (Barthes 1977; Montaigne 1877; Sotirova 2014; Wimsatt & Beardsley 1954).

Introspection thus forms the basis of all literary analysis, not only stylistic approaches (Sotirova 2014; Stockwell 2015). The distinction is that where literary criticism often impressionistically reports the critic's thoughts and opinions about the text, stylistics insists that the individual's reading be grounded in textual analysis. That is, the 'introspective method' requires tracing where readings and interpretations have come from. Linking claims based on personal introspection to concrete textual analysis enables others to see where the analyst's claims about whatever aspect of the text they are discussing has originated from, and thereby

assess the merit of the interpretation. Without this, introspection cannot be described as a 'method'.

Introspection has been the subject of much controversy within the literary field (Fish 1980; Mackay 1996, 1999; Short et al. 1998). On the one hand, many researchers argue that the introspective approach offers access to the most accurate data obtainable because we only have direct access to our own thoughts (Fish 1980; Mackay 1996, 1999). Generating data regarding any other person's reading of a text involves a dislocation from that direct reading experience which must then be filtered through spoken or written discourse in order to be accessed by the researcher. This will distort and alter the authentic 'reading response' because discourse is never produced in a vacuum and, therefore, the context in which the report of reading is produced will inevitably affect the way in which it is reported. Advocates for the introspective method argue that the analyst's own reading, explicitly presented, is therefore the best data available.

Other researchers go further, claiming that the subjective nature of one's own reading - the most obvious criticism of reliance on introspection - is less problematic in stylistic analyses because the researcher is not simply asserting their own interpretation as correct, nor are they suggesting it is the only valid reading. Instead, the researcher evidences where that reading has come from through systematic, visible analysis: the interpretation is offered up for scrutiny. As Freeman argues,

these analytical claims can be confirmed or disconfirmed according to the accuracy with which those elements and structure and their projection are articulated

(1993: 15).

Introspection has, however, also been heavily criticised. Opponents of the introspective method argue that, it is a post hoc metacognitive reflection rather than a direct record of the reading experience itself (Fish 1980). Thus, it is argued, introspection is no less subject to distortion than any other source of reader response, and to claim otherwise misrepresents the nature of the data. This school of thought claims that introspection is the act of generating, not retrieving, one's own response and interpretation. This is a valid criticism, though an analyst's generated interpretation can still clearly be classed as their response as a reader. The issue with the introspective method, in my view, is rather that English academics' introspections, whether retrieved or generated, are unlikely to be representative of readers' responses outside the academy. Stockwell claims, 'the academy is interested in professional readings rather than readings in the wild' (2012). In other words, whilst academics focus their attentions on their own readings, the reader responses considered are highly insular, and difficult to transfer to readers more generally, most of whom are not employed to analyse texts for a living.

As a result, increasingly even advocates for the introspective method within stylistics seek to triangulate their introspection using reader response data gathered from other sources. This necessarily involves either locating responses which already exist or actively eliciting them from readers.

2.8.2 Actively eliciting readers' responses

If a researcher wants to analyse reader responses other than their own, they can consider actively eliciting responses by asking readers to share their thoughts and interpretations either during or after reading. Capturing readers' responses to a text whilst they are reading, can be achieved using 'think aloud protocols' (Ericsson & Simon 1980, 1987). This approach was used by Hartman (1995) in his

investigation into the kinds of intertextual links his participants made between several texts he asked them to read. Other active elicitation methods can involve laboratory based psychological experiments, such as Miall's (1988) study examining affective responses to narrative. Other studies have used questionnaires, such as Cantor's (2004) investigation into the enduring effects of horror movies. Active elicitation is well-suited to research which seeks to generate data on topics that are unlikely to predictably arise in the course of naturally occurring booktalk, thus necessitating an active intervention to obtain data.

The obvious advantage of these active elicitation methods is that they ensure the generation of examples of the aspect of the reading experiences the researcher wishes to examine because researchers can ask about specific aspects of a person's reading. Another appeal of active elicitation is that, depending on the text, existing reader responses may either not be available or may be highly limited. This is especially true if a stylistician is analysing a particular extract, which even existing booktalk on the right text may not cover directly. In these cases, active elicitation may be the *only* methodological option available.

On the other hand, data generated by active elicitation is arguably the most interfered with, problematising attempts to transfer the findings to 'real world' equivalent scenarios or behaviours. Active elicitation is likely to result in some degree of 'the necessary artificiality of laboratories [which] can limit their value' (Robson 2013: 94). In Hartman's study, for instance, he asks people to read with the specific purpose of identifying and vocalising the intertextual links they make between the texts he supplied, all of which were chosen because they were based around a similar theme (Hartman 1995: 530). A particular issue with the active elicitation of booktalk is therefore the impact of demand characteristics. In other words, because the experiment Hartman conducted prompted readers to make

intertextual links, there is no way to discern whether or not they would have made those links had they not been asked to do so, or how the forms and functions of those references may have changed because they were elicited. Demand characteristics result from participants' knowledge that they are part of an experiment and certain things are expected from them. This can dislocate data which has been actively elicited from the phenomenon the research attempts to investigate (Orne 1962; Strohmenez 2008). Robson argues that participants' responses in these conditions are 'a complex amalgam of the experimental manipulation and their interpretation of what effect the manipulation is supposed to have on them' (2008: 95). This is not necessarily a problem; it depends what the reader responses are intended to reveal. These approaches are problematic if, as was the case in the current research, the intention is to accrue the naturally occurring responses and interpretations made by readers in situ.

Hartman's study, which probably represents the closest research to the current thesis, was ideally designed to determine the kinds of intertextual references readers can make and how they function. However, by using active elicitation his research arguably lacks 'mundane realism' (Aronson, Wilson & Akert 2007). That is, 'the subjects were encountering events [...] which were very unlikely to occur in the real world' (Robson 2008: 95). Thus Hartman's approach can tell us what kinds of intertextuality readers can engage in but not what role intertextuality plays in real booktalk.

2.8.3 Capturing naturally occurring responses

An alternative approach to generating reader response data is capturing naturally occurring responses: booktalk which has not been generated for the purpose of being researched and would have taken place regardless of whether or not it was being recorded or studied. This approach involves either collecting booktalk post

hoc from sources where it has already been produced for other purposes, or by unobtrusively recording sites where it is known booktalk will occur, such as reading groups. The former approach typically involves reaping data from open sources online, such as book reviews or online forums and messageboards (Gregoriou 2012; Harrison & Stockwell 2014; Nuttall 2014; Schreier 2004).

This research engages, as far as possible, methods of data capture which fall into this last category, of naturally occurring reader responses. The online reviews which form the focus of the framework generating study reported in the following chapter was neither elicited nor interfered with by myself or any other researcher: it is as naturally occurring booktalk as is possible to capture. The reading group and schools data which is the subject of Chapters Five to Nine of this thesis also aims to be as naturally occurring as possible, but is necessarily less so than the online reviews. That is, in order to record booktalk in school lessons or reading groups at all – for both practical and ethical reasons – participants were necessarily made aware that their booktalk was being captured. Thus whilst these data were not actively elicited, they are not free from researcher interference. In the case of the schools data, these classes would have taken place regardless of whether or not I recorded them. Similarly, the reading group sessions would have taken place even if they had not been part of this research project, though in this case the degree of interference was slightly greater as the group read particular texts - *Animal Farm* (Orwell 1945) and *Holes* (Sachar 1999) – to facilitate closer comparison between the schools and reading group booktalk. The nuances of these methodological decisions and the rationale behind them are discussed in greater depth when these datasets are introduced. At the conclusion of this chapter the methodological approach adopted in the generation of the booktalk analysed for the purposes of this thesis can be best characterised as seeking booktalk that is as naturally occurring as possible given the context in which the booktalk took place.

CHAPTER THREE: READERS' RESPONSES TO *FIFTY SHADES OF GREY*

3.1 Introduction

In order to sketch the parameters that a narrative interrelation framework should encompass, the forms and functions of intertextual references made in booktalk needed to be established. A preliminary study was therefore conducted with the aim of accruing a diverse range of real intertextual references made by real readers. This chapter outlines that study, which examines online book reviews of the novel *Fifty Shades of Grey* (James 2011). Ultimately, the chapter offers a taxonomy of the forms of intertextual references identified in the data, considers the realised and potential contribution of intertextual links to readers' booktalk (their functions), and proposes a preliminary set of conditions which appear to be required in order for intertextuality to manifest and flourish in readers' discourse. The main study will then offer a proof of concept, where the presence or absence of intertextuality will be shown to correlate with the presence or absence of the conditions identified.

3.2 Book reviews as reader response data

Book reviews are the most appropriate data source for a 'framework generating' preliminary study. It is an increasingly common practice to examine book reviews in stylistic and cognitive poetic research, especially as a first step in triangulating personal introspection (for example Harrison 2013; Harrison & Stockwell 2014; Nuttall 2014). Book reviews are widely available on a number of open-source online platforms. This was ideal for a preliminary study as a high volume of data could be collected quickly and easily: there was no need to transcribe any recordings, which would have been extremely time-consuming.

As book review data is pre-existing, it offers the opportunity to examine naturally occurring reader responses without having to resort to unethical approaches such as covert recording. Book reviews are not written for researchers; they are not elicited in response to questions in an academic study. They are examples of readers freely choosing to write for other readers about their own experiences and evaluations of a text. There are a range of constraints put on these responses by the nature and expectations of the 'review format'; however, this is true of any site where booktalk is produced. Book reviews are the best naturally occurring source of reader responses which are also both readily available and easy to collect.

Finally, book reviews are produced by individual readers and form coherent chunks of booktalk in and of themselves. Reviews are not dialogic and therefore represent an ideal testing ground at the first stage. In an interactive setting, for example, one reader might make an intertextual reference which is then expanded by another, or a first reference might prompt a different reader to make a different reference. Questions about where references begin and end, or how one reader's booktalk is influenced when in dialogue with another reader, significantly complicates the close analysis of the references produced. In later chapters the findings from this initial investigation are built upon and intertextuality in interactive booktalk is explored. As a first step, however, it was preferable to limit the number of factors that must be considered simultaneously.

3.2.1 Text choice: *Fifty Shades of Grey* (James 2011)

Fifty Shades of Grey (James 2011, hereafter *Fifty Shades*), by debut novelist E. L. James, was first uploaded as *Master of the Universe* to a popular fanfiction website under the pseudonym 'Snow Queen Ice Dragon' (Steiner 2015) as an explicit reimagining of Stephenie Meyer's Young Adult (hereafter YA) four book series *The Twilight Saga* (Meyer 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2008). Meyer's novels, also hugely

popular, tell the story of 17 year old Bella Swan, an awkward girl who moves from Arizona to a small dull town in Washington to live with her father. There she meets and, with remarkable rapidity, falls in love with Edward Cullen a boy in her class who, we discover, is a vampire, as are the rest of his adopted family. As such it is a sort of coming of age romance tale, with vampires. Over the course of the series, the couple experience various trials all centred on, or catalysed by, the fact that Edward is a vampire, either because he is constantly resisting the urge to bite (kill) Bella or because other vampires are disgruntled by the fact that Bella, a non-vampire, knows that they exist.

Fifty Shades of Grey similarly tells the story of Anastasia Steele, a slightly older 21 year old English graduate who meets and, with equal swiftness, falls in love with Christian Grey. Christian is not a vampire but a young billionaire with his own company, philanthropic intentions and a penchant for BDSM (an overlapping acronym which stands for Bondage and Discipline, Dominance and Submission, Sadism and Masochism). As in *Twilight*, various perils also beset Anastasia throughout the *Fifty Shades* trilogy, the vampiric equivalent being Christian's sexual predilections and various jealous ex-girlfriends (or former 'submissives').

To many who have read *Twilight*, the divergences between the two series appear stark. In *Twilight*, for example, Edward refuses to have sex with Bella until they are married, which does not happen until book four. When (on a beach, on their honeymoon) the scene finally arrives, the literary camera respectfully 'pans away' and then jumps to 'the morning after' in the manner one might expect from a series that was aimed primarily at a YA audience. *Fifty Shades*, on the other hand, contains over ten extended sex scenes. There is also no fantastical or supernatural aspect to *Fifty Shades* where this is both a focal point of *Twilight* and is intrinsically bound up with several key plot advancements.

Choosing a controversial, ex-fanfiction erotic novel as the subject of the preliminary study may initially appear to be an unorthodox decision. The text was not chosen because of its intertextual origins in spite of these two texts having, in Genette's terms, a concretely provable hypotext/hypertext relationship (1981: 5). In fact, though aware of the novel's genesis, I personally made very few narrative interrelations between the two during my own reading experience. The data show that many readers *did* make such interrelations whilst reading, however, so having selected this text does make another interesting dimension of readers' intertextual behaviour available to be explored (which it is in detail in Section 3.9.2).

The primary reason *Fifty Shades* was chosen was in fact methodological. At the time this study was conducted in 2012, the range of people reading and, crucially, discussing, James' novel was far more diverse and numerate than one could ever normally hope for in an examination of naturally occurring reader response. Stylistic analyses which try to incorporate reader responses often suffer from both an extremely small pool of available data and the sample that does exist being potentially highly unrepresentative. At the time of writing, for example, Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, has only 145 Amazon reviews and Franz Kafka's *Metamorphosis* only 87. This is because in many respects reviewers of, for instance, nineteenth century canonical literature are a self-selecting sample; unlikely to be 'typical' readers, even acknowledging that typicality is a problematic concept. This is generally not an issue for close stylistic or cognitive poetic analyses, which use introspection as their primary method, as here the additional reader responses act as a complementary means of validating or diversifying the analyst's own reading(s). Additionally, the text itself is often the core focus of such analyses so whilst the available reader responses may not be 'typical' from an externalist viewpoint, they may well be typical of readers *of that text*.

However, the purpose of this preliminary investigation was to capture as broad a cross section of reader booktalk as possible, and *Fifty Shades* attracted a wide enough set of vocal readers to create a more satisfactory range: as close to a representative purposive sample as can be achieved researching in this area, even if one were to use an active elicitation method in a large-scale study.

3.3 Method

The book reviews were collected from two websites: amazon.co.uk and librarything.org. Access to these sites is open source and freely available. Readers know reviews will be viewable by the public and there are therefore no ethical issues around collecting and examining these for research purposes.

150 Amazon reviews formed the first component of the dataset. Amazon is a global online retailer, established in 1998, which initially specialised in selling books but has since expanded to offer a huge range of items from books to cars to pet supplies. Amazon currently has over 275 million customers who have bought a product from the site in the last year (North 2015). Amazon offers all visitors to the site the opportunity to post their own reviews of any product they view or purchase.

There were far too many reviews on amazon.co.uk to examine them all (over 3000 at the time of collection). As such, reviews were collected so as to broadly to correlate with the distribution of the star ratings. Reviews were polarised at one and five stars with these two groupings being similar in size but more than double the two, three, or four star categories combined:

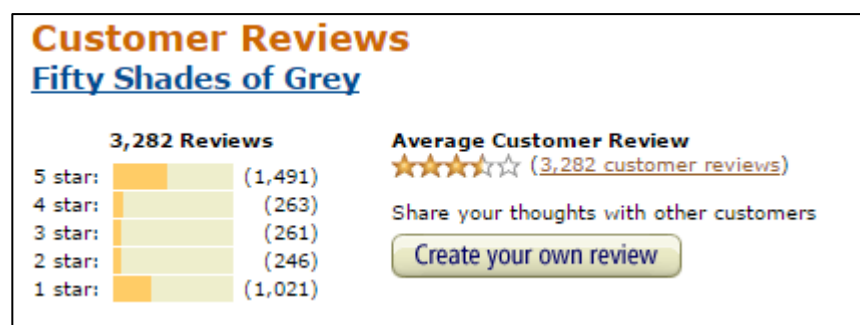


Figure 3.1, Distribution of Amazon’s reviewer ratings for *Fifty Shades of Grey* in July 2012.

To broadly reflect this distribution, taking 3 star reviews to be representative of three middle ratings, the dataset comprised:

- 60 x 1 star reviews (17,207 words)
- 30 x 3 star reviews (6,132 words)
- 60 x 5 star reviews (8,570 words)

The reviews were selected using Amazon’s ‘Most Helpful’ sorting tool. This organises reviews, in descending order, according to the number of other site users who have rated the review as helpful. The rationale for this was that these reviews had been most endorsed by other readers and were therefore less likely to be very unusual or anomalous.

The Amazon dataset was, in total, 31,909 words. A second dataset of a similar size (32,821 words) was then collected from another reader review website, LibraryThing. As a much smaller site there were only 157 reviews posted on LibraryThing at the time of the study so all were collected. The two datasets were combined giving a total of 307 reviews comprising 64,730 words. This was so as to create a dataset which maintained a broadly even sample size from the two sites, both in terms of word count and number of reviews and which was as large as manageably possible, given the need for close qualitative linguistic analysis. From these data it was possible to begin to classify the different forms intertextual

references take in real booktalk and the different purposes for which they were being used.

Reviews were gathered from two platforms rather than one in order to check whether the forms, functions and scope of the intertextual references identified in reviews on one site were mirrored in reviews gathered from another. That is, to ensure the dataset was not somehow anomalous to a particular platform.

3.3.1 Identifying intertextual references

To determine which elements of the reviews could be considered intertextual references the dataset was read multiple times and candidates were identified using the definition laid out in the previous chapter of this thesis: an intertextual reference is any articulated, examinable product of narrative interrelation. A narrative interrelation is the cognitive act of making a link between one narrative and at least one other. Intertextual references can be embedded in narratives, as the textual trace of an interrelation made by the author, or in the discourse, written and spoken, of other readers (see Section 2.5).

Given that this was a preliminary study I initially identified any booktalk which could possibly be considered as making a link between *Fifty Shades* and any other narrative or narratives. All potential intertextual references were then considered in relation to one another and ranked from those I was most to least confident could be counted as instances of intertextuality. A number of candidate references at the bottom of this scale were reassessed and discarded following close linguistic analysis. For example, 'WOW what can I say the book is very erotic' (LibraryThing, 4 star review) was initially identified as a possible intertextual reference on the basis that erotica is a fictional genre and this statement therefore assigns *Fifty Shades* to a group of narratives. On reflection, however, the copulative construction 'the book *is*' coupled with the use of the intensifier 'very' signalled that the word

'erotic' is being used as an adjective to describe the book rather than as a category assignation such as 'the book is a work of erotica'. As such, though the reviewer may indeed have generated this description based on narrative interrelations with other 'erotic books', this is not sufficiently visible in their booktalk for the instance to be counted as an intertextual reference. Crucially, the test used was whether an intertextual reference – intertextuality *manifesting* in the booktalk – could be identified. There were several comments which I suspect may have been underpinned by, or resulted from, a reader making a narrative interrelation, however this could not be sufficiently evidenced by stylistic analysis of the utterance and, as such, were excluded. This is not to deny that such comments may be intertextual, but simply to adhere to the parameters of the present research, which focuses on manifestations of intertextuality in discourse. This exemplifies the necessity of parsing 'narrative interrelation' and 'intertextual reference'.

25 references from across the scale were then selected and added to 25 other random excerpts from the reviews that had been judged not to qualify as instances of intertextuality. An inter-rater agreement check was then performed to ensure the identification of intertextual references was robust (Chi 1997). For the check, a colleague was given the definition above and asked to consider whether she judged each example to be an intertextual reference or not. If my colleague was unsure or dubious the example was discussed. Of the 50 potential references my colleague's decisions matched my own in 48 cases, giving an inter-rater reliability of 96%.

A sample of the intertextual references captured in the reviews is available in 'File A' of the attached USB drive.

3.4 Booktalk in Amazon reader reviews: general analysis

Before proceeding to close consideration of the intertextual references themselves, it is worth reporting some general points which emerged in the course of this analysis. This will help to characterise the dataset and thus support understanding of the particular make-up of '*Fifty Shades* online reviews' as a type of booktalk environment.

The length of different star reviews was noticeably different in the Amazon sample (LibraryThing users can rate in 'half stars' as well as 'whole stars' and so have been excluded from this section of the general analysis). The one star Amazon reviews are dramatically longer than either the three or five star reviews. In fact, the length of reviews decreases in increments, with the five star reviews also being significantly shorter than the three star reviews and the one star reviews, on average, being double the length of the five star ones:

Table 3.1 , Average length of Amazon reviews by star rating

No. of stars	No. of reviews.	Average words per review	Total words	Proportional total words
1 *	60	287	17,207	17,207
3 ***	30	204	6,132	12,264
5 *****	60	143	8,570	8,570

There are several explanations for this trend, one of which is politeness (Brown & Levinson 1987; Grice 1975). Western conversational norms dictate that it is not considered polite to be offensive and unkind about things. Therefore, if incensed enough to break the norms of everyday politeness, as many of these one star reviewers *clearly* are, it may be that readers feel compelled to give more comprehensive accounts in order to justify their meanness. Regardless of the

reason, one consequence is that, whilst the number of reviews in the sample was equally split between very bad and very good, with a proportional representation of those in between, most of the forthcoming examples offer negative responses to the text. This dramatic discrepancy in the length of the reviews is worth highlighting as it might otherwise create the impression that readers use intertextual references more frequently to make negative comments about texts and there was no particular trend to this effect. More of the examples are negative simply because the one star reviewers used more than double the number of words to express their emphatic dislike for *Fifty Shades* than the five star reviewers spent praising it.

A deep investigation into the tendency for reviewers to write more when giving a negative assessment of the text is for the most part not relevant to the current focus but would merit further exploration in a separate study. There was a trend within these very negative reviews to describe the book as a waste of time or life, or to use some variant of the idiomatic phrase 'x hours of my life I'm never getting back'. For example,

- 1) Personally I would just say that there goes a day of my life that I will never get back. (Amazon, 1 star review: length 679 words)
- 2) What makes me sad, really, is knowing that a book like this can make a woman like James rich, and take thousands and thousands of hours from the lives of people all over the world. What makes me even more sad is that I am one of them (Amazon, 1 star review: length 591 words)
- 3) I must have done something truly noble in my past life because I was lucky enough not to spend money on this trash. Maybe I was a professional kitten rescuer. Or maybe I saved a pope from being raped by rabid dogs. i was however unfortunate enough to waste my time,

precious time which will not be coming back (Amazon, 1 star review:
length 744 words)

It seems counterintuitive to ‘waste’ even more time writing a long review about how awful an experience reading the book was and how you do not want to read, open or think about it ever again. This suggests that dislike for a text itself does not preclude the enjoyment of discussing it. In fact, the expressions about having one’s time wasted were predominantly reviews which were much longer than even the other one star reviews (average length 243 words, see Table 3.1), as is reflected in the lengths of all three examples above. This suggests that some sense of reward or catharsis is gained from venting at length about a disliked book. In reading groups, and in our reading practices in general, it is considered a perfectly healthy aspect of a reader’s identity to dislike (or even hate) certain things they read without it compromising their enjoyment of reading in general (Hartley 2001).

The next section will now explore what the study revealed regarding the practicalities of systematically analysing intertextuality in booktalk. The LibraryThing data did include intertextual references to some narratives that were not explicitly referenced in the Amazon sample (discussed below) but otherwise bore no noticeable differences to the Amazon data. Crucially, there were no novel forms of intertextuality in the LibraryThing booktalk which had not already been observed in the Amazon booktalk. As a result, the following analysis does not distinguish which site the references appeared on.

3.5 Readers’ intertextual references with *Fifty Shades of Grey*: an overview

The reviewers produced a huge variety of intertextual references. Ten or more reviews independently made references to:

Table 3.2, Text-driven references in reader online reviews

Narrative referenced	Narrative type or grouping	No. of references
<i>Twilight</i> (novels: Meyer 2006, 2007a, 2007b, 2008, films: Hardwicke 2008; Weitz 2009; Slade 2010; Condon 2011)	Book(s) and/or film(s) (often impossible to distinguish)	56
<i>Tess of the d'Urbervilles</i> (Hardy 1891)	Book	16

Ten or more reviews also referenced the following broader groupings:

Table 3.3, Intertextual references appearing in ten or more online reader reviews

Narrative referenced	Narrative type or grouping	No. of references
Erotica	As a genre	39
'True stories'	Non-fictional narratives from the news, history, or the reports of other individuals	31
Romance	As a genre	18
Porn	As a genre	17
'Child writing' with multiple references to 'school assignments' and 'teenagers' diaries'	As a group of texts with a characteristic style	12
Self-narratives	Non-fictional narratives of personal stories and experiences	10

Between four and nine reviews made links between the story and:

Table 3.4, Intertextual references appearing in between four and nine online reader reviews.

Narrative referenced	Narrative type or grouping	No. of references
'Mills and Boon'	As a group of texts	9
'Jane Austen'. Only one of these references cited a particular work, which was <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> (1813)	As a text or group of texts by the author	8
'Dan Brown'. 3 reviewers made specific reference to Brown's novel <i>The Da Vinci Code</i> (2003);	As a text or group of texts by the author	4
<i>The Hunger Games</i> trilogy (Collins 2008, 2009, 2010), with no text in the trilogy identified in particular.	Books	4

Between two and three reviews independently made reference to:

Table 3.5, Intertextual references appearing in between two and three online reader reviews.

Narrative referenced	Narrative type or grouping	No. of references
<i>Lady Chatterley's Lover</i> (Lawrence 1928)	Book	3
'[William] Shakespeare', with no specific work identified	As a play or group of plays by the author	3
<i>Pretty Woman</i> (Marshall 1990)	Film	3
<i>Jane Eyre</i> (Brontë 1847)	Book	2

Finally, individual reviewers made links to the following narratives:

- *Jaws* (film) (Spielberg 1975);
- *White Teeth* (book) (Smith 2000);
- *The Wizard of Oz* (book/film: origin unclear);
- *Dracula* (book/film: origin unclear);
- *Le Morte d'Arthur* (book) (Malory 1470);
- *The Social Network* (film) (Fincher 2010);
- 'Jackie Collins' (author). No specific texts were identified;
- 'Joanna Trollope' (author). No specific texts were identified;
- *Law and Order: Special Victims' Unit* (TV series) (Wolf 1999 – present). No specific episodes were identified;
- *The Notebook* (film) (Cassavetes 2004);
- *Outlander* (book) (Gabaldon 1991);
- *Ninety Days of Genevieve* (book) (Carrington 2012);
- *11 Minutes* (book) (Coelho 2003);
- *The Seducer's Diary* (book) (Avon 2012);
- 'Laurell K Hamilton' (author) misreported as 'Lauren K Hamilton'. No specific texts were identified;
- Anaïs Nin (author). No specific texts were identified;
- *Bernard's Watch* (TV series) (Cobham 1997 – 2005);
- *Sweet Valley High* (book series) (Pascal 1984 – 2002). No specific texts were identified;
- *Humpty Dumpty* (nursery rhyme);
- *Batman* (origin unclear);
- *Pinocchio* (book/film: origin unclear);
- *The Diary of Adrian Mole age 13 ¾* (book) (Townsend 1982);
- *Birdsong* (book) (Faulks 1993);
- *Harry Potter* (books). No specific text within this series was identified;

- *Angelique: The Marquise of the Angels* (book) (Golon 1972);
- *Spot the Dog* (picture book series) (Hill 1980 - present).

3.6 Intertextuality in reader reviews: analysis

The preliminary study of the *Fifty Shades* reviews revealed that intertextuality manifests in readers' booktalk in two ways:

- Readers making intertextual references based on their own narrative interrelations; and,
- Readers responding to intertextual references they have, or believe they have, encountered, either from other readers or within the text itself.

The list above illustrates that readers can make a hugely diverse range of interrelations with narratives across a host of media, from novels to films, television series to children's picture books, to stories from their own and others' lives. 'Narrative interrelation' and 'intertextual reference', must therefore be viewed as umbrella categories. Narrative interrelations are clearly not homogenous, either in their formulations or in the purposes to which they are employed, no more are the intertextual references readers produce as a result of making such interrelations.

Further investigations into other reader responses to *Fifty Shades* would yield links to many more narratives not on this list. It is also apparent that there are a few narratives, or narrative groupings, which multiple readers make intertextual connections with when reading or reflecting on *Fifty Shades*. As will be demonstrated in the next section however, the actual links readers perceive can still be extremely different, even between the same elements of the same two narratives. Finally there are a few narratives which do prompt multiple readers to

make similar intertextual links. Possible reasons for, and implications of, this phenomenon are explored below.

This analysis illustrates that, unfortunately, there is no way to predict either the specific or the range of intertextual links that individual readers will make. This is an important observation because, as will be discussed in later chapters, many people consider that teachers drawing occasional specific intertextual links between a class reader and other narratives their students may have encountered constitutes an intertextual classroom. However, this study suggests that there is no way for teachers to predict the links that will resonate with their students, nor what form students' intertextual links might take, nor which texts might catalyse productive critical discussion of the text in classroom booktalk.

The texts that reviewers reference span across mediums, period (which spans 1470 to the present), genre and perceived degrees of 'literariness' (Carter 2004: 66-7; Carter and Nash 1990: 175). Some referenced narratives are not particularly surprising, such as the references to Mills and Boon or to other narratives defined by readers as erotic fiction. Even having never heard of it before, one can immediately conceive of a possible link made between *Fifty Shades* and a text called *The Seducer's Diary*, for instance. Others are rather unexpected: *Batman* and *Spot the Dog* being the first I would identify. There is also a huge range of granularity within the referenced narratives, with readers making links between *Fifty Shades* and everything from whole genres of texts to an author's portfolio to individual texts to tiny chunks of individual narratives.

3.7 Bases

Most metalanguage proposed by this thesis is introduced in the next chapter, in order to present the narrative interrelation framework as a coherent whole. However, attempting to report the analysis of readers' intertextual references

between several different narratives, often at a variety of levels, for a variety of different reasons, revealed a significant potential for confusion and difficulty in tracking which text is being discussed at a given point. As such, this merits the immediate introduction of a term to facilitate clarity in the framework generating study itself.

By their very nature, regardless of whether it is a large narrative grouping or an individual named text, intertextual references always involve at least two 'narratives'. For the sake of clarity, therefore, the narrative under primary discussion by a reader will always be referred to as the *Base*. The term is capitalised for continuity, because it will often stand for a narrative title (such as *Fifty Shades*) which would have likely been capitalised itself.

In a reading group the Base is likely to be the narrative the members read in order to prepare for the meeting. In a classroom it is likely to be the class reader. In reviews, such as in the present study, the Base will likely be the narrative which is the subject of the review (here *Fifty Shades*). Exceptions arise, typically in interactive booktalk, when conversation shifts from an original Base onto another text, in which case whichever new text comes to form the primary focus of the discussion becomes the Base.

A Base is often not named directly in intertextual references because it has already been co-textually or contextually identified. In this case for example, reviewers are already posting their comments as a '*Fifty Shades of Grey* review' and there is therefore no need to actually state that this is the text being linked via the intertextual reference. Once the Base has been identified, as with any other repeated reference to the same noun phrase (in this case the book title but the same would be true for a person or place name, an object, event or concept), readers commonly shift into anaphoric reference; substituting the full noun phrase

for a less specific pronoun, such as ‘it’. The term Base (chosen because it indicates a foundation or a starting point) clarifies the discussion of individual utterances in close linguistic analysis as these are often dislocated from the original context in which they were produced, thereby losing their anaphoric reference point.

3.8 The range of intertextual references in non-interactive booktalk

The remainder of this analysis will address the types of intertextual reference in the *Fifty Shades* data. All reviews have been accurately reproduced leaving any spelling or grammatical errors as in the originals. Reviewers’ usernames have not been listed but all examples detail the number of stars the review gave the Base as well as in which sample (Amazon or LibraryThing) the example appears. Figures for the number of intertextual references falling into each category have not been provided as they may fall into a number of categories and, given that this study is framework generating, the focus is on the range of forms and functions a cognitive model needs to be able to account for, rather than the prevalence of individual types. The intertextual references identified in the data will be considered along two dimensions, addressing the first two research questions posed by this thesis:

- What forms the intertextual references take; and,
- What functions in booktalk the readers use intertextual references for.

The first type of intertextuality this thesis will explore is ‘text-driven intertextual reference’.

3.9 Text-driven intertextual references

Analysis of the dataset shows a split between two categories of the intertextual references made by the readers: text-driven and reader-driven. *Text-driven* intertextual links are those references which engage with, or respond to,

corresponding intertextual references embedded within a Base. *Fifty Shades* contains a number of overt references to many different narratives. Some narratives are referenced only once or twice, others more than twenty times.

Sometimes it is impossible to know definitively whether an intertextual reference is truly present, or whether a reader has simply perceived something to be a reference to another text which was never intended (by the author) to be so. These are the murky waters of intertextual 'hide and seek' which preoccupies researchers such as Riffaterre (1990). In the next chapter I will offer the terms 'marked' and 'unmarked' to try to capture these distinctions more precisely. However, the present analysis will consider two narratives which do *objectively* have intertextual relationships with the Base: *The Twilight Saga* and *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*.

3.9.1 Reader responses to a hypotext/hypertext relationship

Genette describes one type of objective intertextual relationship between texts as 'hypertextuality'. He defines this as:

any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the hypertext) to an earlier text A (I shall of course call it the hypotext) upon which it is grafted in a manner that it is not that of commentary

(Genette 1981: 5).

Following Genette's definition, *Fifty Shades* has a clear hypotext/hypertext relationship, with Stephanie Meyer's series of YA novels *The Twilight Saga* being the earlier 'hypotext', and *Fifty Shades* the later 'hypertext', as James originally wrote *Fifty Shades* as *Twilight* fanfiction. The characters in *Fifty Shades* were even originally called the same names as the characters in *Twilight* (Steiner 2015). *Fifty Shades* was not, however, James' attempt to simply lift the characters out of

Twilight and transplant them into a new story, though much fanfiction does do this, with amateur authors writing what are best understood as extensions to a Base by co-opting world builders from a hypotext (discussed further in Section 3.11.1). 'Christian' in *Fifty Shades*, for example, was initially called 'Edward' after the male protagonist in *Twilight*. However 'Edward', later 'Christian', in *Fifty Shades* was never a vampire. The two men's attitudes to sex before marriage are also irreconcilable. Christian Grey is thus clearly a reimagining of, or a character inspired by, Meyer's Edward Cullen rather than James' reincarnation of the original character in her own story.

This genesis of the *Fifty Shades* story was discussed frequently in the popular media around the time this data was collected. Intertextual references to *Twilight* manifest in 56 of the 307 reviews: it is uncontroversial to suggest that an active knowledge of the hypo/hypertext relationship is at least partially responsible for many of these intertextual links. However, this is not exclusively the case. In some reviews readers explicitly disclose their knowledge that *Fifty Shades* is a hypertext of *Twilight*. For example:

- 1) Christian and Ana are the two most icky lead characters in a novel since Edward and Bella. I guess this makes sense since they're loosely based on Edward and Bella. But that doesn't make them any less awful (LibraryThing, 0.5 star review).

In other responses, however, it is not possible to tell whether the reader has interrelated the Base with *Twilight* as a result of their knowledge of the hypo/hypertext relationship or because the reader has independently recognised parallels between the two narratives. For instance:

- 2) My first thought was that Bella Swan had a twin sister who was equally oblivious to danger (Amazon, 1 star review).

- 3) First of all, I need to get this off my chest. This is the biggest *Twilight* rip-off I have ever read. I'm not even a die-hard *Tw*-hard, and I'm disgusted by how similar these books are. Seriously, at least *Twilight* has vampires, albeit sort of silly ones. So let's compare.

Setting: **Twilight**- Washington. **Fifty Shades**- Washington.

Characters: Female protagonist – **Isabella Swan**- Prefers to be called Bella. Pale, dark hair, sort of nondescript so that most young women can easily put themselves in her shoes. Awkward, clumsy, socially defunct, sexually inexperienced. Two divorced parents, sort of sweet, hare-brained mother who lives with stepfather in the south. Has tastes that are not common for her age. Likes to read classic literature. No self-esteem. Apparently living in 1995 because Email is her main way to keep in touch over, say, text messaging. Emphasis placed on her researching online to learn more about Edward. drives a rickety old car that causes edward concern. **Anastasia Steele**- Prefers to be called Ana. Pale, dark hair, sort of nondescript so that most young women can easily put themselves in her shoes. Awkward, clumsy, socially defunct, sexually inexperienced. Two divorced parents, sort of sweet, hare-brained mother who lives with stepfather in the south. Has tastes that are not common for her age. Likes to read classic literature. No self-esteem. Apparently living in 1995 because Email is her main way to keep in touch over, say, text messaging. Emphasis placed on her researching online to learn more about Christian. drives a rickety old car that causes christian concern [...] (LibraryThing, 0.5 star review).

Unlike the first example, neither of these latter reviews make any reference to knowledge that the Base is a hypertext of *Twilight*, and it is perfectly possible that the reviewers are not aware that this relationship exists. These two readers may

have read the Base and made narrative interrelations between it and *Twilight* by recognising parallels resulting from the hypertextuality rather than because they had active knowledge of the relationship.

Whether or not a hypo/hypertext relationship is known can play a role in how intertextual references are interpreted by individual readers. This reviewer, for example, makes the following metacognitive reflection:

4) I really don't know why this book is popular. Maybe it's because I haven't read / seen *Twilight* (well done me for staying clear of that!), so it doesn't link up with anything for me (Amazon, 1 star review).

This reader is able to make an intertextual link between the Base and a narrative (*Twilight*) of which they have no direct experience; they have neither read the books nor seen the films. The reader does have knowledge that *Twilight* is a hypotext of the Base but has no personal reading experience of that text on which to draw. Interestingly, the reader appears to hypothesise that having 'read/seen' *Twilight*, to be able to 'link up' (interrelate) the two texts, might make the Base more enjoyable. At least, they identify their own lack of mental access to a personal viewing/reading experience for *Twilight* as a possible reason for non-enjoyment. Despite never having read *Twilight*, however, the reviewer does have an opinion about it; the reflexive praise 'well done me for staying clear of that!' suggesting a negative evaluation.

This analysis of reviewers' discussion of the hypertextuality of the Base reveals several things about intertextuality in booktalk. Readers do not need to have personally experienced a narrative (by either reading, watching or listening to it) in order to form interrelations between that narrative and another. This reveals that intertextual references are not always prompted by direct knowledge of a narrative's content but can also be prompted by knowledge relating *to* a narrative.

A cognitive framework of intertextuality must therefore be able to describe readers' knowledge associated with the narrative which they may have accrued from other sources - such as what others have said or written - as well as their knowledge of the narrative's content resulting from direct personal experience.

3.9.2 Readers' responses to text-driven intertextual references

When readers engage with the intertextual references that they encounter, they variously acknowledge, agree with, elaborate, challenge or refute the links drawn. Some readers offer additional connections, or point out divergences between the referenced narratives. They may offer their own interpretation of the links or evaluate their efficacy. Responses to an encountered reference can also be used as a springboard for a reader to share their own interrelations between the Base and a different narrative, either by offering additional links which extend the scope of the reference already made or by offering an alternative text as a better candidate for intertextual comparison.

The referenced text which is engaged with most by the reviewers in the present study is Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891, hereafter *Tess*), which is discussed in 16 reviews. *Tess* is referenced over 20 times in the Base. First edition copies of *Tess* appear as physical objects in the *Fifty Shades* world, bought by Christian Grey for Anastasia Steele:

'I [Anastasia] open the parcel, and inside I find a half leather box containing three seemingly identical old cloth-covered books in mint condition and a plain white card. Written on one side, in black ink in neat cursive handwriting, is: *Why didn't you tell me there was danger? Why didn't you warn me? Ladies know what to guard against because they read novels that tell them of these tricks...* I recognise the quote from *Tess*. I am stunned by the coincidence as I've just spent three hours writing about the novels of Thomas Hardy in my final examination. Perhaps there is no coincidence ... perhaps it's deliberate. I inspect the books closely, three volumes of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. I open the front cover of one of the books. Written in an old typeface on the front plate is: **London: Jack R. Ofgood, McGloine and Co., 1891.**

Holy shit – they are first editions. They must be worth a fortune, and I know immediately who's sent them. Kate is at my shoulder gazing at the books. She picks up the card.

"First editions," I whisper.

"No." Kate's eyes are wide with disbelief. "Grey?"

I nod. "Can't think of anyone else."

"What does this card mean?"

"I have no idea. I think it's a warning – honestly, he keeps warning me off. I have no idea why. It's not like I'm beating his door down." I frown.

"I know you don't want to talk about him, Ana, but he's seriously into you. Warnings or no."

[...]

"This quote – Tess says it to her mother after Alec D'Urberville has his wicked way with her."

"I know," muses Kate. "What is he trying to say?"

"I don't know, and I don't care. I can't accept these from him. I'll send them back with an equally baffling quote from some obscure part of the book."

"The bit where Angel Clare says fuck off?" Kate asks with a completely straight face.

"Yes, that bit." I giggle. I love Kate; she's loyal and supportive.

(James 2011: 54-5)

The introduction of physical copies of *Tess* catalyses several loaded discussions about the two protagonists' relationship, for instance:

'As I [Anastasia] sit, I'm struck by the fact that I feel like Tess D'Urbyfield looking at the new house that belongs to the notorious Alec D'Urberville. The thought makes me smile.

"What's so amusing?"

He sits down beside me, turning to face me. He rests his head on his right hand, his elbow propped on the back of the couch.

"Why did you give me *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* specifically?" I ask. Christian stares at me for a moment. I think he's surprised by my question.

"Well, you said you liked Thomas Hardy."

"Is that the only reason?" Even I can hear the disappointment in my voice. His mouth presses into a hard line.

"It seemed appropriate. I could hold you to some impossibly high ideal like Angel Clare or debase you completely like Alec D'Urberville," he murmurs and his eyes flash dark and dangerous.

"If there are only two choices, I'll take the debasement." I whisper gazing at him. My subconscious is staring at me in awe. He gasps.

"If you're going for option two, debasement, you'll need to sign this [a Non-Disclosure Agreement]."

"And if I don't want to sign anything?"

Then it's Angel Clare high ideals, well, for most of the book anyway."

(James 2011: 95).

Below are four examples of reviewer's booktalk responding to the text-driven references to *Tess*:

- 1) It tries so hard to drag itself into an intelligent arena by name-dropping - repeatedly - real literature: Austen, Bronte, Hardy, Shakespeare. At one point I literally found myself screaming "GET YOUR DIRTY LITTLE HANDS OFF THOMAS HARDY, JAMES", because frankly crap of this standard has no right whatsoever trying to claw its way out of the literary swamp by quoting sections of *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* and comparing its protagonist to one of the most fragile, brave, three dimensional heroines ever written (Amazon, 1 star review).
- 2) Ana and Christian are compared to the ruin and redemption of Hardy's *Tess of the D'urbervilles* and while that can hold true, the real ruin and

redemption isn't Ana's, but Mr. Grey's. In that aspect, the novel reminded me of another great ebook that I read just before it, Robert Avon's dark comedy *The Seducer's Diary*, where the seducer may just become the seduced (Amazon, 5 star review).

- 3) Anastasia (really?) is an obvious 'modern' version of Tess of the Durbervilles. Just like Tess I would love to tell her to wake up smell the coffee and stop being such a victim (Amazon, 1 star review).
- 4) When wondering whether to sign the contract or submit to some unnecessary act of sexual dominance Ana thinks about how her literary heroines would respond [...] She then actually comes to the grotesque conclusion that 'Tess would have done it'. What an insult to Thomas Hardy and an insane interpretation of his novel! Tess never loves Alec, is raped by him and only returns to him near the end of the book because she believes Angel has abandoned her permanently and Alec blackmails her by supporting her mother and her five younger siblings, who would have starved to death otherwise (literally). I don't think Christian would have taken kindly to being slapped with a gauntlet...or murdered so Tess could go off with her true love, Angel!! Yes, Angel had double standards regarding purity, but the novel was written in the 1890s and Hardy is criticising these. He would have loathed this novel and so did I (Amazon, 1 star review).

These examples demonstrate a range of functions readers can perform through the use of intertextual reference, even though all four readers are, primarily, discussing references between the same two texts (*Tess* and the Base).

Responses to text-driven references can clearly vary and some of these responses sit in diametric opposition to one another. Readers 1 and 4 clearly disagree with

the validity of the *Tess* references in the Base. Reader 4 seems to have a rich knowledge of Hardy's novel and feels that the content is misrepresented in the Base, offering a series of concrete examples drawn from the content of the *Tess* narrative to reject the validity of the text-driven links. Like Reader 4, Reader 1 interprets the Base's references to Hardy's novel as offensive, disagreeing in particular with the validity of the parallels being drawn between Anastasia Steele and Tess. To Reader 1, Tess is 'one of the most fragile, brave three dimensional heroines ever written' whereas the Base is 'crap' occupying the 'literary swamp'. Reader 1 does not offer any concrete reason why the text-driven references are wrong or inappropriate in terms of features that the two female protagonists do or do not possess, though it could be inferred that Ana is cast as 'not fragile', 'not brave' and 'not three dimensional'. Reader 1 does not refute the text-driven intertextuality on these grounds, however, but appears more upset that the links are drawn at all, due to a perceived chasm between where the two texts are situated on a 'literary cline' (Carter 2004: 66-7; Carter and Nash 1990: 175). This cline is metaphorically realised in Reader 1's review with the Base positioned as being low down, dark and unclean ('dirty little hands'; 'claw its way out'; 'the literary swamp'; 'crap') casting Hardy's novel, and Tess herself, in a contrastively elevated space which is light and clean. The image of the Base attempting to 'drag itself' towards this space encodes a contaminating quality, as though 'real literature' such as *Tess* will be sullied if contact is permitted. Reader 1 thus rejects the references based on a more holistic assessment of the texture of the two narratives, whereas Reader 4 anchors their challenges in concrete divergences in narrative content. Thus whilst the two responses converge in their ultimate assessments that the text-driven references in the Base are incongruous with their own knowledge of *Tess*, the respective rationales as to why this is the case are realised very differently.

The amount, and nature, of a reader's pre-existing knowledge of a referenced narrative is therefore clearly crucial to the kinds of narrative interrelations they make, and therefore the forms of intertextual references they produce. Here, all four readers have demonstrably written their reviews drawing on different mental 'versions' of *Tess*. These versions incorporate differing degrees of knowledge of the text as well as different interpretations of and personal responses to it. Reader 2 considers the references to *Tess* 'can hold true' whereas Reader 4 thinks the Base offers 'an insane interpretation'. Reader 3 thinks drawing a parallel between Ana and Tess is fine because both women need to 'wake up', 'smell the coffee' and 'stop being such victim[s]'. This interpretation sits in stark contrast to Reader 1's perception of Tess as a brave, fragile, three-dimensional heroine. It is these two readers' pre-existing conceptualisations of *Tess*, not the Base, which is at the root of their differing responses: both agree that Anastasia Steele is an irritating protagonist, it is just that Reader 3 considers this to be the case with Tess as well.

The visibility of the connections being drawn between the two novels also varies wildly. Reader 2 claims that the 'ruin to redemption' story 'works' but it is not possible to discern their reasoning behind this claim. That is, the interrelated features are not visible in the intertextual reference; Reader 2's mental process is irretrievable from their discourse. Reader 4, by contrast, clearly identifies several points in *Tess* and argues explicitly why specific features of the two texts do not legitimately correspond. Reader 1 may have made the same narrative interrelations as Reader 4; both, after all, come to similar conclusions. However this is impossible to conclude as, whilst expressing a similar sentiment to Reader 4, none of Reader 1's specific interrelations have manifested in their intertextual references. Thus, the forms intertextual references can take exist on a cline, where the specific features being interrelated, and therefore underpinning the reference,

can be anywhere from 'highly visible' in a reader's booktalk, to completely 'invisible'.

All these responses to text-driven references involve some degree of identifying points of similarity or difference between the Base and the referenced narrative; in this case either *Tess* or *Twilight*. This is discussed in further detail below (Section 3.12). Text-driven references present readers with intertextual references that they did not generate themselves: they are not the product of our own narrative interrelations but someone else's; the author. This same phenomenon also occurs whenever a reader encounters an intertextual reference in the form of the spoken and written discourse of other readers. This aspect of the study is thus highly salient with regard to generating the narrative interrelation framework as, unlike the online reviews focused on here, most instances of booktalk involve multiple readers in a dialogic setting. In other words, the ability to analyse how readers may engage with intertextual references that they encounter, rather than initially generate themselves, is a key function that the framework needs to be able to perform in order to cope with data generated in dialogic settings.

Reader responses which involve the critical assessment of encountered intertextual references, in this case in the Base but also if made by other readers, can be understood as a process of analogical reasoning because 'candidate inferences must be checked for validity' (Gentner 1989: 206). That is, readers must check other discourse participants' assertions against their own mental versions of the Base and the referenced text in order to determine whether or not they agree with the connection being made. As is clear in the responses to *Tess* examined above, this assessment can prompt readers to make additional or distinct connections of their own, to dispute the validity of the references they have encountered, or to amend or refine them. As such this suggests that interactive

intertextual booktalk has a clear pedagogic potential, as aspects of the Base are necessarily scrutinised and assessed relative to other instantiations of that feature as it appears in other narratives.

This element of the study also highlights another aspect of intertextuality analysis which will be an important consideration moving forward: the status of the person who makes the intertextual reference, and the status of those who assess its credulity. Clearly no person is immune from having their intertextual references called into question - the present examples, for instance, involve an author's references within their own work being deemed 'illegitimate' by readers. In other words, no assessment of power dynamics can be predictive of the manifestation or otherwise of intertextuality in a given environment. However, returning to the distinction drawn between narrative interrelations (internal mental process) and intertextual references (textually manifested product, spoken or written), the particular composition and dynamic of a booktalk environment is clearly an important consideration when considering if and how the former manifests as the latter. That is, power, sense of identity and status within a group are likely to influence whether and how readers transmit their narrative interrelations as intertextual references. If a group member who is perceived as powerful is, for instance, disdainful of popular culture, we may expect that this could deter other members from sharing such interrelations with that group (Allington 2011). We might also anticipate that any references made by the 'powerful' group member are more likely to be accepted by the others, or at least less likely to be challenged (Allington 2012). Similarly, if a reader does not have confidence in their own identity as a reader, we may expect that they would be more likely to share references which they perceive as bolstering the version of themselves they wish to project within the group, and less likely to share those references that may

threaten that identity. The role of identity and power is further considered in several of the examples in the remainder of this chapter.

Finally, this examination of readers' responses to text-driven references also highlights the importance of the perceived purpose of the booktalk in a given context. In the present study, booktalk is broadly for the purpose of offering up subjective evaluations of the quality of the Base, however, this is in an unconstrained environment where readers are not moderated on adherence to this goal, and may also go on for as long as they please. As such, readers are free to select which topics, sections of text and aspects of their reading experience they discuss – if a reader makes an interrelation and wishes to share it they can. In other contexts, where the purpose of the booktalk is conceived more narrowly, especially if this is in any way enforced, this is less likely to be the case: here interrelations are likely to be shared as intertextual references only if deemed by the reader to align with the purposes of the booktalk. Even then, in a dialogic setting, as opposed to the non-interactive context in the present study, other readers may also curtail or close down avenues of booktalk, including other readers' intertextual connections.

3.10 Genre associations and narrative groupings

Intertextuality also manifests in booktalk when readers situate the Base within, or in relation to, a group of narratives. References such as these, unlike those which cite specific individual narratives by title as in the previous section, are less obviously instances of intertextuality. However, reflection on the existing literature on intertextuality, and crucially the definitions of 'narrative interrelation' and 'intertextual reference' demand their inclusion.

Some reviewers use multiple groupings, rejecting the Base from one before assigning it to another, for example. These groupings can be loosely divided into

established genre categories and ad hoc group labels. The former are the types of labels one would expect to find in a bookshop; most readers, at least in Western cultures, will have a broadly homogenous understanding of the prototypical features of narratives in that category (Stockwell 2002). Dealing first with established genre groupings, the Base is variously assigned to, or rejected from, the genres of 'erotic fiction' or 'erotica', 'romance' and 'pornography'. For example:

3.10.1 Erotic fiction/Erotica

- 1) It is about time that **erotic literature** made its way into the adult mainstream fiction market (Amazon, 5 star review).
- 2) **This should not be classified as erotica** [...] If you are new to reading Erotica **this would be a good start**, but there are far better and steamier out there. For long time fans of Erotica, you might just want to skip this one (LibraryThing, 3 star review).

3.10.2 Romance

- 3) For me the thing that makes it unbearable, is hearing people describe it as "romance". Seriously?! [...] **I cannot understand what book people are reading when they suggest Christian Grey is romantic** (Amazon, 1 star review).
- 4) Despite people saying its all vulgar. the story line is brilliant[...] If you love **a fast pace romance novels** and are not a prude this is the book for you (Amazon, 5 star review).

3.10.3 Pornography

- 5) **Good basis for an R rated sex video**, characters are weak, storyline is fragile (LibraryThing, 3 star review).

- 6) Absolute **guilty pleasure read**. It's **totally smut porn** that happens to have a storyline. The sex scenes are fun and hot but the possessiveness I found annoying (LibraryThing, 4.5 star review).

As with *Tess* and *Twilight* in the previous section, readers demonstrably have different 'versions' of both the genre groups and the Base, with the relative conceptualisations of both contributing to the differences in category assignment. One person reads *Fifty Shades* and perceives a 'fast pace romance novel', another finds this genre attribution so disjunctive that they 'cannot understand what book people are reading' to suggest this.

This again suggests a process of analogical reasoning, where proposed category assignments are 'checked for validity' (Gentner 1989), both in terms of those categorisations made by others and by the reader themselves. This necessarily involves narrative interrelation as Bases are considered, via an assessment of degrees of similarity and difference, in relation to accrued groups of narratives stored in memory. Unlike references to individual narratives, booktalk involving genre or category assignment tends to involve much lower visibility in the reader's discourse regarding which narratives are being interrelated in particular. This may well reflect a greater opacity in thought, as most mental processes operate below the level of conscious awareness.

As well as attributing the Base to the established genre categories above, there is also a surprising level of agreement in the assignment of the Base to narrative groupings which are not as well established. Several reviewers assign the Base, using a cluster of different terms, to the more ad hoc categories of 'a holiday read' or 'child writing':

3.10.4 Holiday reading

- 7) If you want to just read **a trashy book on the beach, in the tub, under the covers**, this is for you (LibraryThing, 5 star review).
- 8) Don't poke about in it looking for a treatise on the power relations between men and women, just **read it in the sun with an ice cream** (Amazon, 5 star review).

3.10.5 Child writing

- 9) It feels as though I'm reading **a young teens diary** it's just drivel, very repetitive "I bite my lip" "his long fingers" -_- The way things are worded as well are just awful "he starts to touch me... 'there' " I am **sorry but that is the sort of thing a 16 year old would say** (Amazon, 1 star review).
- 10) The book is so badly written, its as if it was **a school homework assignment**. How many times does the author write "I rolled my eyes", "I peeked from beneath my lashes", "he suppressed a smile" OMG it drove me crazy to read the same sentence over and over again (Amazon, 1 star review).

This suggests the existence of a relatively hegemonic conceptualisation amongst readers of what constitutes, for instance, a 'holiday read', which is arguably more experientially based rather than a learned categorisation propagated by media or marketing. For example, Readers 5 and 6, who label the Base as 'pornography' both justify this categorisation based on features the Base contains which are approximately agreed upon: weak characters, fragile or non-existent storyline and lots of sex scenes. These are intertextual references because they require readers to have accessed their knowledge of pornography narratives in order to have first produced this crib sheet of prototypical features, and then interrelated that

knowledge with a mental version of the Base. Readers 7 and 8, however justify the 'holiday read' categorisation in experiential terms using adverbial phrases containing lexis from the sematic field of 'holiday and relaxation', and describing where and when the book should be read ('in the sun'; 'with an ice cream'; 'in the tub'; 'under the covers' and 'on the beach') rather than features it contains. These too are clearly intertextual references but here the interrelated features concern circumstance of reading rather explicit features of the narrative content: in order to deem something a 'holiday read', a reader must compare the Base with other texts they would also consider fall into that category. These are likely to be a combination of personally and communally accrued criteria – based on previous reading experiences – as to the features of a book one might read on holiday.

Neither Reader 7 nor 8 offer any positive statements about the literary quality of the Base and in fact Reader 7 describes it as 'trashy'; these readers instead offer a context in which it would be acceptable to read and enjoy the Base. This is an interesting behaviour as it deflects their positive comments about *Fifty Shades* away from their wider reading identity. That is, both readers construct a space, and a version of themselves within that space, where they can read *Fifty Shades* with impunity. This 'on holiday' version of themselves is distinguished from their main identity. In this way they separate themselves from those other five star reviewers who 'seriously' like *Fifty Shades*, or 'genuinely' consider that it is an excellent book. This demonstrates that readers can deploy strategies to engage in booktalk without allowing their identity as a reader – and indeed as a person – to be threatened.

The only reader in these examples who uses positive adjectives to describe the Base is Reader 4 who categorises it as a 'romance', claiming that the story line is 'brilliant' and 'fast pace'. Like many other readers, Reader 4 states their awareness

of what 'other people' have said about the text, in this case casting aspersions on those who would not consider their categorisation accurate: 'if you like a fast pace romance novels and are not a prude this is the book for you'. Here the association between text preference and identity manifests in reverse, with a five star reviewer levelling a critique against those who 'say it's all vulgar'. This reasserts the relevance of group dynamic and context when analysing intertextuality as it manifests in discourse.

In all these cases, whether situating the Base in relation to an established or ad hoc category, this form of intertextuality involves readers making subjective (potentially transient) decisions about whether they perceive the Base to have enough, or particular, features to qualify as a member of a named category of narratives.

There are two ways in which features of a category being considered in relation to the Base appear to have been generated. First, readers appear to have a set of 'prototypical criteria' for a given genre category. This can include both the readers' own set of criteria as well as their perception of other readers' criteria for membership to that category. Features also sometimes include the 'type' of reader who would or would not read narratives in that grouping, as well as assumed knowledge of the sorts of views other readers might hold about that grouping. For example, readers who rate *Fifty Shades* highly often suggest that low raters do not like the novel because they view it as pornography, and are therefore too prudish to let themselves enjoy it, or because they only read canonical literature and therefore hold *Fifty Shades* to too high a standard. As such, they see *Fifty Shades* as a novel for people who are more relaxed both about quality of writing and narrative content. At the same time, one star raters often call the intelligence of pro-*Fifty Shades* into question, with one such reviewer commenting: 'You will like

it if the only other book you have read in your life is *Spot the Dog*' (Amazon, 1 star review). Second, readers have experientially accrued, through their own lifetime of reading, an amalgamated sense of narrative categories, both commonly established and dynamically constructed; membership is assigned or denied based on the Base's resemblance to other narratives they have encountered.

Analysis of these reviews suggests that readers use and negotiate a combination of the two: their own direct knowledge of the Base and other narratives, and their broader perceived knowledge of prototypical cultural conceptualisations of different narratives. In other words, readers engage both their own intertextual connections and their knowledge and understanding of those communally accrued over time.

Reviews also assign the Base to, or reject it from, entirely personal narrative groupings, as in the following examples:

11) This is totally NOT **my genre of reading** (Amazon, 5 star review).

12) Simply **the worst book I've ever read**. To give it any more thought would be to consider it a novel. I hated it. Awful (Amazon, 1 star review).

Readers 11 and 12 offer intertextual references which are entirely insular because both the texts being interrelated and the features being compared are invisible in the booktalk. Reader 11 refuses the Base membership to the grouping 'my genre of reading' but gives no indication as to why, what the features of this genre are, or which narratives do fall within the category. Reader 12 again invokes a literary cline but an entirely personal one; there is no way to know which narratives they judge to be better than the Base, nor why.

Readers also define the Base as part of, or in contrast to, groupings which are so vague that their intertextual references are virtually opaque (and therefore more difficult for other readers to agree with or, perhaps more importantly, challenge):

- 1) Grey, who is being cited as this epitome of raw sexuality and heroism is actually **just a character ripped from other sources** (Amazon, 1 star review).
- 2) When I'd finished 50 SoG, it was a relief to go back to **some proper literature**, feeling saddened, cheapened, almost used, by having read it (Amazon, 1 star review).

In these instances it is not possible to extract from the intertextual references which narratives are being interrelated; 'other sources' could be virtually any narrative with a male character, though the scope of the reference is narrowed down slightly by the inclusion of this concrete feature, stating the basis for the interrelation(s) in spite of withholding knowledge of which narratives they have in mind. Readers 11, 12, 13 and 14 all use labels for their referenced group of narratives; however the labels have no commonly established meaning, making it impossible to discern which narratives were being interrelated based on how the references have manifested in the booktalk.

These examples collectively demonstrate that a cognitive model of intertextuality must be able to account for readers' subjective understanding of established genre labels as well as dynamic categorisations. It should also offer a way to describe distinct degrees of visibility which can separate the actual links being made in a reader's narrative interrelation from how that interrelation is then realised as an intertextual reference in their booktalk. This analysis also suggests the narrative interrelation framework needs to taxonomise the granularity of referenced narratives, from sections of individual texts to wide narrative groupings.

3.11 Intertextual references which assume common knowledge

Certain types of intertextual references assume that others will share the referencer's knowledge of the cited narrative. When readers and writers assume common knowledge, intertextual references can then perform three additional functions: as 'world builders', as synecdoche, and for the creation of novel similes and metaphors.

3.11.1 Intertextual references as 'world builders'

'World builders' are the physical elements which populate a text world, from objects, to settings, to characters (Gavins 2007; Hidalgo-Downing 2000; Werth 1999). Narratives can feature as objects in a text world in the same way the novels on my bookshelf exist in the real world. Examples of intertextual references as world-builders in the Base include:

- 1) I feel like I'm on a giant film set; **José's favorite film maybe, Blade Runner.** (James 2011: 91)
- 2) That's what I'm hindered by in this game of seduction. He's the only one who knows and understands the rules. I'm just too naïve and inexperienced. My only sphere of reference is Kate, and she doesn't take any shit from men. **My other references are all fictional: Elizabeth Bennett would be outraged, Jane Eyre too frightened, and Tess would succumb, just as I have.** (James 2011: 225)

These are narratives which characters, like readers, encounter, make their own intertextual references to and have opinions about. Readers' intertextual booktalk in relation to world building tends to be text-driven; in other words, talking *about* 'world building' references in a Base rather than engaging in the practice

themselves. This can be observed in many of the reviews engaging with the *Tess* references in the Base, where Hardy's novel appears as a physical object within the text world.

The reviews also demonstrate, however, that reader-driven references that use intertextuality to introduce 'world builders' from other narratives is also possible. For example,

3) How one person can bite their lip so much is beyond me. How a 27 year old man can have achieved so much is also beyond me, **he must have bought Bernards Watch** (Amazon, 1 star review).

Bernard's watch is an object which appeared in a children's television show of the same name and was able to stop time (Cobham 1997-2005). This review thus introduces the watch as an additional world builder in order to (sarcastically) propose a resolution to a perceived plot hole in the Base. When readers write amateur fan fiction, for example, they use intertextual referencing to perform the same function, co-opting world building elements from another narrative in order to populate their own.

When readers engage with intertextual world builders, some may understand the reference as essentially random and attribute no significance to it. Others, however, interpret intertextual world builders as synecdoche.

3.11.2 Intertextual references as synecdoche

Intertextual references can be used for and, or, perceived as synecdoche. A synecdoche 'is defined as a relation in which a part stands for a whole or a whole stands for a part' (Seta 1999: 92). *Tess* is another world builder in the Base; as discussed above, it is a book which the female protagonist is described reading, receiving copies of and writing essays about:

- 1) I work on my essay on *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. Damn that woman was in the wrong place at the wrong time in the wrong century (James 2011: 21).

Many readers may pass over this intertextual reference. Ana is an English student writing an essay on a text so it makes sense for James to pick one text in particular rather than write: 'I work on my essay' or 'I work on my essay on this week's novel'. Some readers, however, infer, or believe the writer wants them to infer, meaning. In the latter case the reference is perceived as synecdoche. For example, one reviewer writes:

- 2) Then she comes home and completes an essay on **Tess of the D'urbervilles** (this is how we know Ana is clever) (Amazon, 1 star review).

Here the reference to *Tess* is interpreted by the reviewer as 'standing for' intelligence in whichever character reads it. Another sarcastically comments,

- 3) A brief list of the many lessons this novel has taught me [...] The more **ham-fisted allusions to Thomas Hardy**, the more gravitas (Amazon, 1 star review).

Here James' references to *Tess* appear to be interpreted by this reviewer as an attempt at synecdoche: references to Thomas Hardy 'stand for', and thereby imbue the Base with, high quality literature and 'gravitas'.

3.11.3 Intertextual references in similes and metaphors.

Intertextual references are used to form similes and metaphors both in Bases and in readers' booktalk. These also suggest that other readers' common knowledge of the referenced narratives is assumed, as they are often reliant on this knowledge for successful comprehension. In *Fifty Shades*, intertextual references are used in

similes comparing the female protagonist to Eve from the story of creation in the Bible:

- 1) “**Like Eve**, you’re so quick to **eat from the tree of knowledge**.” He smirks. (James 2011: 74)

This only makes sense if readers are able to draw on pre-existing knowledge of the Genesis story, without which ‘Eve’ would be an unknown character and the ‘tree of knowledge’ an unknown object. Thus the simile can only function if the reader is able to draw on knowledge of the other narrative. Similarly, Christian’s company building is compared to *The Stepford Wives* (Levin 1972):

- 2) Another elegant, flawlessly dressed blonde comes out of a large door to the right. What is it with all the immaculate blondes? It’s **like Stepford here**. (James 2011: 6).

Again, the meaning of this reference is not discernible without the reader being able to run a corresponding narrative interrelation for themselves and access pre-existing knowledge as to why the presence of ‘immaculate blondes’ would make the company ‘like Stepford’.

Readers also use intertextual references to form similes and metaphors in their reviews:

- 3) Here's a brief list of the many lessons this novel has taught me [...] 4. A 'mega-industrialist tycoon' talks **like a character from Le Morte D'Arthur** (Amazon, 1 star review).
- 4) Dear Mr. Grey, I do believe you **to be a kinky Batman**, don't you agree? (Amazon, 5 star review).

Related to this are two superordinate functions of intertextuality in interpretive and evaluative booktalk: the identification of similarity and difference.

3.12 Intertextuality as identifying similarity or difference

Many intertextual references extend into critical assessment by situating narratives in relation to one another. This involves identifying ways in which the Base is similar to, or different from, another narrative or narratives. For example,

I think Ana is one of the least likeable characters I think ever written. **She's more spineless and annoying than Bella Swan, equally needy and ridiculously, unhealthily willing to comply with a man she met only recently. I give Bella Swan benefit of the doubt in her case, but Anastasia Steele just stumbles on forward with her relationship while this STRANGER continuously treats her like a child or an object... then is surprised or confused when his personality shifts dramatically** (LibraryThing, 0.5 star review).

Often this can evolve into an extended assessment where both similarities and differences are incrementally identified and then sometimes also reflexively examined. This is essentially a process of self-directed analogical reasoning and is thus of particular relevance to the present research, as it seems likely to be a form of intertextual referencing which is potentially pedagogically valuable. Vosniadou and Ortony explain,

successful learning often depends on the ability to identify the most relevant bodies of knowledge that already exist in memory so that this knowledge can be used as the starting point for learning something new

(1989: 1)

This is applicable to the current focus as intertextual booktalk involves engaging knowledge of previously encountered narratives and using that knowledge to make sense of, interpret and evaluate a new one. There is a substantial body of research dedicated to the field of analogical reasoning and learning (Day & Gentner 2007; Gentner 1989, 1999, 2010; Kotovsky & Gentner 1996; Markman & Gentner 2005; Vosniadou & Ortony 1989). Under a broad definition, all identifications of points of similarity or difference could potentially be termed analogies and disanalogies (Vosniadou & Ortony 1989). However, Gentner would argue for sub-categorisations of different types of similarities which can be drawn between two scenarios or, in the present context, two narratives (Gentner 1989, 1999, 2010; Kotovsky & Gentner 1996). She would therefore dispute that all identifications of similarity can be considered analogy (1989) and would instead distinguish between:

- 'chiefly object attributes', which she terms *mere-appearance matches*,
- 'only relational predicates', which she terms *analogy*; and
- 'both relational predicates and object attributes', which she terms *literal similarity*.

(Gentner 1989: 206)

Gentner also then argues that 'analogy and literal similarity lie on a continuum of degree-of-attribute overlap' (1989: 208).

In booktalk, however, it is often unclear what exactly is being interrelated as the specific feature, or features, are not always identified. When intertextual booktalk has multiple contributors, the nature of the similarity or similarities being drawn can also rapidly shift between the three sub-categories Gentner identifies. It could also be possible that in booktalk between two readers, one could be interrelating using analogies and the other mere-appearance matches, as this depends 'on the

state of knowledge in the learner' (Gentner 1989: 201). These differences will not necessarily manifest in booktalk. As such, the present research will not distinguish beyond identification of similarity. Two concepts from the field of analogical reasoning can, however, be adapted for application to intertextuality in booktalk: disanalogy and pure matching.

3.12.1 Intertextual references as disanalogy

Disanalogy is inherently linked to analogy and involves the identification of a point of difference between two narratives. In many cases, the disanalogy forms part of the link itself. That is, the intertextual connection centres on a feature that two narratives have in common, but which is distinct in its manifestations in each story. Fauconnier and Turner explain:

we are not disposed to think of a brick and the Atlantic Ocean as disanalogous, but we are disposed to think of the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean as disanalogous. Disanalogy is coupled to Analogy. Psychological experiments show that people are stymied when asked to say what is different between two things that are extremely different, but answer immediately when things are already tightly analogous.

(2002: 99)

Recognising that two things are analogous is an act of comparison which comprises two related processes:

- 1) Seeing that two things are similar (that there are 'points of contact' between them)
- 2) Seeing that the two things are not identical, in which case they would not be analogous but the same.

Disanalogy is thus an inescapable part of analogy. Noticing ways in which things are similar and dissimilar are both elements of the same process: comparison. Both are acts of interrelation, and interrelations require, as a fundamental component, the recognition of a feature in common. It is this which prompts the juxtaposition of a person's knowledge of the two or more things being compared. Examples of this pattern can be observed in the *Fifty Shades* reviews, where disanalogies are drawn out following initial identifications of points of similarity:

- 1) To me it was **very clear that it was written, by a horney twilight fan. The only difference being that Edward is dangerous to Bella because he wants to drain her dry and Christian is itching to serve her several lashings with a belt if she does things he doesn't like** (Amazon, 1 star review).
- 2) As a sixty something retired lady, I felt quite daring ordering this "risque" book. **It took me back to my teens when I found Lady Chatterley's lover in my parents bedroom. Unlike then, I found it boring and badly written**, there is very little substance to storyline and the language is juvenile to say the least (Amazon, 1 star review).

Following Fauconnier and Turner's explanation above, both of these reviewers are prompted to identify these disanalogies in order to distinguish the Base from another narrative they have initially identified as having features in common: 'the only difference being', 'unlike then'.

Thus what Fauconnier and Turner actually describe when they talk of people being 'stymied when asked to say what is different between two things that are extremely different' is their struggle to locate a feature in common around which to coherently formulate their disanalogies. Disanalogies do not tend to arise in the reviewers' booktalk without an initial anchor, a point of contact, to organise the

disanalogies around and make the reader perceive the difference as worth reporting. Examples which do not explicitly identify any point of initial similarity still encode a connection to the narrative or narrative grouping through the assertion of a positive absence, as in the following comment:

3) This is **totally NOT my genre of reading** (Amazon, 5 star review).

In his seminal work *Don't Think of an Elephant* (2004), Lakoff explains this phenomenon,

Don't think of an elephant! Whatever you do, do *not* think of an elephant. I've never found a student who is able to do this. Every word, like *elephant*, evokes a frame [...] The word is defined relative to that frame. When we negate a frame, we evoke the frame

(Lakoff 2004: 3).

Thus by identifying the Base as 'NOT my genre of reading', the reviewer causes the reader to conceptualise a group of narratives which *are* 'their genre of reading': the Base is then cast as absent from this group. Disanalogies create 'negative blobs' (Carstensen 2007) or, in stylistic terms, 'lacunae' (Stockwell 2009a: 31-2), which is a 'positive' or 'felt' absence. Lacunae occur when a reader's attention is trained on the edges of a feature which is not present, perceived because its absence is 'felt', marked out by the edges which remain.

Disanalogy is as much a part of the interrelation process as identifying similarities, and underlying both is the recognition of a link between two narratives. In conjunction these paired acts of comparison appear to be the forms of intertextuality in booktalk most likely to produce critical engagement with, and analysis of, both the Base and the referenced narrative. This is because analogies and disanalogies are a process of situating two (or more) narratives in relation to

one another, which requires the iterative refinement of ways in which the narratives are related or unrelated. In the present study readers have made these links in isolation. In an interactive booktalk, readers would be able to challenge similarities with suggestions of disanalogy, identify and evolve each other's identifications of similarity and difference and so collectively refine and define a Base in terms of its relationship to other narratives. Park argues,

reading communally, a reader is likely to encounter multiple or conflicting perspectives, thereby becoming more aware of the assumptions she is bringing to the text and more open to the consideration of alternatives [...] In reading together, individuals' literary interpretations as well as their worldviews and interpretive lenses become public and, therefore, open to re-examination

(2012: 194).

As such, intertextual booktalk which involves comparison seems most likely to be pedagogically valuable.

3.12.2 'Pure match' intertextual references

'Pure matching' is also a term borrowed from analogical learning (Gentner 1989: 201). A 'pure match' intertextual reference describes instances where a reader simply recognises that the Base shares an identical feature with another narrative. For example,

When [Christian] says to Ana that he didn't know what she'd want to eat so he ordered everything, I was astounded by how ripped off that was from Pretty Woman and Richard Gere's Edward (LibraryThing, 0.5 star review).

'Pure matching' intertextual references such as this one are contained observations rather than catalysts for challenge or elaboration; there is often little more to say. In analogical terms a link of this nature would not even be considered an analogy but would instead be referred as a 'surface similarity' (Gentner 1989: 227). However, a pure match reference, as an initial link, can often be elaborated or lead to further, more substantive links being identified. For example:

This is a landmark piece of literature: not just the fastest book ever sold in the UK, but **conclusive evidence that you are allowed to steal somebody else's novel, take out the only element that made the original bearable, add a bit of middle-age-fantasy S&M and hit the "replace" key for all names**, and inexplicably not get sued for it (Amazon, 1 star review).

It is impossible to tell definitively in this instance whether this reviewer is aware that *Fifty Shades* is an openly acknowledged hypertext of *Twilight* or not. It is likely they *are* aware of the relationship because the character names were indeed changed when the books were taken up by a publisher so as to make them 'different enough' to avoid copyright issues. In either case, the reader clearly judges that there are too many pure matches between *Twilight* and the Base for the latter to merit status as an independent novel. The reviewer reports the intertextual relationship as a formula but finds it necessary to extend beyond the initial pure match in order to do so. Not:

Fifty Shades of Grey = *Twilight*

but rather:

Fifty Shades of Grey = (*Twilight* - 'the only element that made it bearable' + 'a bit of middle age fantasy') x 'Replace character names'

There are two final types of intertextual reference which merit consideration. These are intertextual references to particular ‘types’ of narratives: non-fictional narratives and a subset of these: self-narratives.

3.13 Intertextual references to non-fiction

As discussed in Chapter Two (see Section 2.7.2), there is no distinct psychological category for ‘fiction’ within cognition (Gerrig 1993; Stockwell 2009). That is, fictional and non-fictional narratives are perceived by readers as being ontologically distinct but can be intertextually referenced in an identical fashion. Intertextual booktalk between a Base and a non-fictional narratives appear in two forms in the *Fifty Shades* reviews: references to the narrativised experiences of others and references to self-narratives.

3.13.1 Intertextual references to non-fictional narratives of others

Reviewers also linked aspects of the Base to stories of others. These include links to historical narratives, narratives reported from the media or the reported experiences of others. Interestingly, these referenced narratives can also take the form of prototypical story types rather than specific instances. That is, readers construct what I will term a *dummy narrative*, which contains all of the features from the Base the reader wishes to connect with real world events, even if no actual instance of that story really taking place is cited. For example,

The way [Christian] treated Ana often reminded me of a parent talking down to a child, or of a European man talking to a woman he considered his “property” rather than a human being (LibraryThing, 2.5 star review).

These references claim the existence of non-fictional narratives without supplying a concrete example. In this way, readers can use intertextual reference to claim a

real world equivalence of an element within a Base, without needing to evidence that such an equivalence actually exists.

3.13.2 Intertextual references to 'self-narratives'

A self-narrative is defined by Bruner as a metacognitive account of our own memories and experiences:

our own homely accounts of happenings in our own lives are eventually converted into more or less coherent autobiographies centred around a Self acting more or less purposefully in a social world

(1991: 18).

Interrelations with self-narratives are likely to have strong personal resonance for readers as they involve making connections between a Base and events in the reader's own life (Miall 1988; Sielman & Larsen 1989). On the one hand, this may mean that self-narratives are likely to be perceived as less 'tellable' (Labov 1972), and therefore the least likely to successfully transition from private narrative interrelation to articulated intertextual reference. When references to self-narratives appear in the *Fifty Shades* reviews, it appears to be for one of three reasons.

First, references to a self-narrative can be used to invoke *category entitlement* which is defined by Potter as,

the idea certain categories of people, are treated as knowledgeable [...] simply being a member of some category – doctor, hockey player, hospital worker – is treated as sufficient to account for, and warrant, their knowledge of a specific domain

(1996: 133).

This is a behaviour also observed in reading group booktalk by Peplow (2011) and is used to justify the individual assuming a position of knowledge and authority regarding some aspect of the Base. Rather than naturally acquiring the category entitlement, via a known occupation for instance, readers can assert their right to a category entitlement by revealing a self-narrative. For instance, if a text is centred on adoption, a reading group member might share a self-narrative about their own adoption as this situates them as a 'group expert' on this aspect of the text (Peplow 2011).

Secondly, self-narratives appear to be shared when the individual perceives that the self-narrative has multiple features in common with the Base, deeming the connections relevant or numerate enough for their interrelation to be shared. Here, the interrelation appears to have been articulated because the reader wishes to share what they perceive to be their correlating personal experiences with an element of the Base, even if the relevance of the self-narrative to other readers is difficult to discern. For example,

Seriously her first time was that good -- yeah come on I don't believe it -- have never heard from one women that losing her virginity was that pleasurable (yeah Dave I totally faked it I didn't want to hurt your feelings, you were so sweet and tried so hard) [...] Brought back some painful moments of me at the same age and the stupid shit I did for the man I was attracted to [...] I don't like to be out of control in ANY situation - hence why I don't do drugs or get drunk (Well except for those couple of times right sweetheart & one day I will forgive you for letting me fall down in those snowbanks with my mini skirt) (LibraryThing, 3.5 star review).

In this instance, the reviewer appears willing to abandon consideration of the relevance, or even comprehensibility, of these self-narratives to other readers, out of a compulsion to share these interrelations. This is evidenced in the partially reported narrative fragments such as 'painful moments' and 'falling down in those snowbanks', neither of which is comprehensible to other readers. The specific referents, 'Dave' and 'sweetheart' are also addressed directly, suggesting that these references are not really for the benefit of other readers of the review but rather a sharing of personal response fuelled by a desire to do so. These references, which are relevant to the reader but not to others, are more likely to flourish in a non-dialogic context, such as an online review, because readers do not have to address the 'so what' question in order to maintain their turn in the booktalk (Labov 1972). On the contrary, online reviewers may continue for as long as they wish without being stopped or admonished for their contributions.

Finally, self-narratives appear to be shared when the reader assumes that others will have not common, but correlating experiences. The individual reports a personal experience but believes that their story is in some sense generic, that is, that other members of the group will have parallel self-narratives which mirror their own. The presence of these correlates mean that whilst the narrative itself is highly individualised and personal, it 'speaks to' common knowledge.

3.14 Intertextuality and booktalk: findings

Based on this preliminary study, the conditions necessary for intertextuality to manifest in booktalk can be divided into two categories:

- 1) The forms intertextuality can take and the functions it can perform in booktalk; and,
- 2) The environmental conditions which facilitate intertextuality manifesting in readers' booktalk.

This preliminary study is limited in the sense that it can only offer examples of intertextuality which did manifest; it cannot reveal the narrative interrelations which readers made but did not include in their reviews. Nonetheless, the study still reveals several insights as to the kinds of links readers make and the contexts in which they may or may not be willing to share them.

Narrative interrelations are intrinsically linked to personal response. They involve readers making connections between a Base and their own unique mental library of narratives, both fictional and non-fictional. The books a reader is willing to admit they do, or do not like – by transforming their private interrelations into intertextual references – can clearly be attached to their sense of identity. Revealing a like or dislike can leave readers open to criticism and ridicule. In this study, no evaluation escaped such criticism: readers who like *Fifty Shades* are labelled ‘thick’ or stupid, whereas those who hate it are boring prudes.

A more dislocated form of this can be observed when readers respond to others’ intertextual references – here only observable in responses to text-driven references. In these cases, initially at least, readers have not generated the reference themselves, and it seems logical to suggest that engaging with these references should be less influenced by concerns (conscious or unconscious) about identity. Nonetheless, as was clear from reviewers comments about both *Tess* and *Twilight* in this study, this practice does still involve narrative interrelation – and therefore personal response – because readers assessments of the intertextual references they encountered were hugely diverse. In these instances, the relationship between intertextual reference and narrative interrelation works, at the first iteration, in reverse: rather than making a narrative interrelation and then producing an intertextual reference as a result, readers encounter an intertextual reference which can result in them performing a narrative interrelation in order

to make sense of it. Thus, the reviewers in section 3.9.2 all ran E L James' intertextual references against their own mental version of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, with a range of results. Here we see the process of intertextual booktalk begin to emerge as a series of iterations, as the readers then produce their own intertextual references in response to James'. In a dialogic setting, such as a reading group or a classroom, readers then have the possibility of continuing this process, resulting in a series of intertextual references which prompt narrative interrelations, which prompt further intertextual references, and so on. In this way, intertextuality can be a collaborative process and intertextual references can clearly be related to one another, whilst taking different forms and performing different functions as a conversation progresses. This reveals that the narrative interrelation framework needs to be able to account for the distinctions between intertextuality in the mind and intertextuality as it manifests in discourse and, in particular, how the two are related. It also suggests that any categorising labels for different types of intertextual references will need to be flexibly applied.

With a view to the forthcoming assessment of the role of intertextuality in critical interpretation and evaluation, these findings about intertextuality are highly salient. First, this study suggests that in order for intertextuality to flourish in booktalk readers need to feel able to offer their personal responses, which includes the kinds of associations they make between the Base, other narratives populating their reading history, and stories from their own (and others) lives. This means that intertextual booktalk is most likely to thrive in environments where readers' views will either not be ridiculed or become face threatening, or in an environment where readers are comfortable with being challenged. The latter is preferable if the aim of the booktalk is to develop readers' critical interpretations of and responses to a Base because a lack of engagement with, especially challenge to, initial intertextual links means that they are unlikely to be refined and developed.

Imagine, for instance, if the reviewers responding to the *Tess* references in the Base were able to interact with one another.

This study also reveals that readers can perceive a wide range of connections between two texts and often disagree about a link's efficacy, validity or scope. It shows that prior knowledge of referenced texts can dramatically influence how encountered references are understood, interpreted or evaluated: readers make different interrelations depending on their subjective knowledge of both the Base and other narratives. It demonstrates that intertextual reference in booktalk is used to facilitate discussion moving beyond the Base as the sole focus. Themes, events, features and characters are evaluated and interpreted by reference to instantiations of that aspect of the Base in other narratives. Bases are evaluated as better, worse or similar to other stories the reader has previously encountered.

Intertextual references seem to be encouraged when they can act as a category entitlement, imbuing the reader with expert status. In some scenarios being a reader of erotic fiction may be something a reader would not share and like to keep hidden. Here, intertextual references to other works of erotica will not manifest, even if those interrelations are made. However the data also contains instances where this knowledge marks one out as an expert whose interpretations of the Base should therefore be held in high regard by other readers. This enforces the idea that readers share their narrative interrelations when they are confident that this will not have a negative impact on their identity, and indeed here that readers are encouraged to share intertextual connections when they perceive it will have a positive effect on their identity.

3.15 The parameters of a cognitive model of intertextuality: findings

Reviewing the findings from this study, several models within stylistics were applied to the data generated to establish whether any existing tool could be used or adapted. All applications were unsuccessful making it necessary to design a bespoke model: the narrative interrelation framework, which will be presented in the next chapter. There is no space to explore the inappropriateness of other stylistic frameworks for present purposes in any detail: existing models were simply not fit-for-purpose. The issue common to all was that the analyses they produced became too complicated to function as good descriptive accounts; there is no point engaging in an explanation which is prohibitively more complicated than the data it seeks to explain. In his discussion of the 'cartographies of cognitive poetics', Stockwell (2008) explores the test for an appropriate linguistic framework, using the analogy of a map commissioned by a disgruntled emperor. In Stockwell's analogy, the emperor demands the map to contain so much detail that, when complete, it proves to be the same size as the land it charted. It is,

absolutely accurate as a representation, because it is no longer a *representation* at all. It has become identical with the data. At the other end of the scale, the smallest map is the handiest but it equally useless [...] Useful maps (models, frameworks, theories, approaches, paradigms) need to compromise [...] the relationship between data and theory is not an embedded one nor a viewing of one through the other, but a matter of a cline of informativity

(2008: 587-8).

This analogy captures precisely the problem with using any existing stylistic model as well as offering the rationale for the narrative interrelation framework. No other

stylistic model proved suitable for this kind of initial exploratory application because none had been designed for the purposes of investigating intertextual referencing in either texts or readers' booktalk about those texts. As such, this thesis offers a bespoke framework designed with this specific application in mind, and is therefore fit-for purpose.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE NARRATIVE INTERRELATION FRAMEWORK: A COGNITIVE ACCOUNT OF INTERTEXTUALITY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter lays out the narrative interrelation framework. It presents a defined metalanguage for the various mechanisms and components involved in making a narrative interrelation as well as a taxonomy for the types of intertextual references which may be produced by an individual from the interrelation they have made. Building on the analysis reported in the previous chapter, the different ways in which readers are exposed to intertextual references and how that can affect the narrative interrelations they make as a result is also investigated. Well-established and tested psychological concepts, most notably schema theory, are drawn on extensively.

4.2 Defining a stylistic framework

As was discussed at length in Chapter Two, stylistics is a discipline that strives to present analyses which are rigorous, replicable and retrievable (Simpson 2004, see also Section 2.2). As such, stylistic analysis involves the use of clearly defined metalanguage. Rather than piecemeal applications of such terminology, however, many stylistic models and frameworks gather together sets of linguistic metalanguage, underpinned by a coherent theoretical approach to a particular aspect of language use. These frameworks are then applied in service of analysing that particular aspect, in this case intertextuality. Stylistic frameworks typically have their roots in, or draw heavily on, other established models: Text World Theory, for example (Werth 1999; Gavins 2007) engages elements of Possible Worlds Theory and Systemic Functional Linguistics, and Text World Theory

analyses very frequently incorporate other linguistic frameworks (for example Gavins 2013; Giovanelli 2013; Whiteley 2011), such as deixis. In this way, stylistics is systematic but also coherent and cohesive.

At the same time, stylistics is highly context sensitive, and therefore frameworks are tailored in each application to best suit the text being analysed. Discussing stylistics' historical roots as a 'direct descendant of rhetoric' Carter and Stockwell explain:

stylistics overlaps considerably with 'elocutio', the selection of style for an appropriate effect. (The other four divisions of rhetorical skill were: invention, the organisation of ideas, memory and delivery.) It is important to note the dual aspect in the discipline: rhetoric was concerned not only with linguistic form but also inextricably with the notion of the appropriacy of the form in context

(Carter & Stockwell 2008: 292).

With this dual aspect in mind, stylistic analyses which involve the application of a particular framework will use the elements of that framework which the researcher judges to best fit the text in context. In this way, stylistics has been termed as neither an entirely 'arts style' qualitative form of analysis, nor a wholly 'scientific' one, but rather 'an artful science' (Stockwell 2012). As such, it is worth prefacing the introduction of the narrative interrelation framework with a discussion of how such a framework would typically be applied in line with stylistic methodology.

4.2.1 Applying a stylistic framework: methodology

Linguistic analysis involving the application of a framework or model to a text, spoken or written, is in some respects a necessarily qualitative approach. As a

methodology, it relies on an individual researcher (or possibly group of researchers) to first select appropriate extracts of a text for close analysis, and second to apply salient aspects of a selected framework. The latter reliance is countered, however, by the transparent and consistent use of metalanguage within the field, which means that the analysis is open to scrutiny from other researchers. That is, other linguists will be able to judge for themselves whether the relevant parts of the framework have been applied, and the relation of the stylistic features in the selected extract to other parts of the text. This returns to the 'toolkit' metaphor discussed in Chapter Two (Section 2.2) (Wales 2014). Stylistics is a discipline founded on knowledge of its 'tools', which can be applied to any linguistic data. In this way, stylisticians are experts in reading and textual analysis rather than in particular types of 'texts' (which could include, for instance, reading group or classroom discourse).

Thus, this chapter sets out all the concepts and terminology that the framework generating study reported in Chapter Three has indicated are necessary to equip a researcher with the appropriate tools for analysing intertextuality as it manifests in discourse. Crucially, however, any application of this framework – as evidenced later in this thesis – will be data-dependent and data-driven. In other words, not all elements of a framework will always be applied in the course of every analysis, in fact this is relatively unlikely: terms and concepts are engaged as and when they are salient to the particular analysis. This is because stylistic frameworks offer comprehensive but flexible accounts that consider an aspect or area of language - here intertextuality - holistically, and as such may extend beyond what may be relevant to individual examples.

Much of the terminology forming the narrative interrelation framework is scalable between the macro and micro levels of intertextuality analysis. That is, the

framework can be easily scaled to be used both as a tool for the close analysis of intertextual references in individual examples, and for a more holistic exploration of the cognitive processes of narrative interrelation from which those intertextual references derive.

At the conceptual level, the framework draws extensively on well-established psychological models of cognition, specifically schema theory. This can then be applied in the analysis of individual examples, or an examination of intertextuality across a particular text.

4.3 Narrative interrelation framework: an overview

The rest of this chapter will outline and discuss the various components of the narrative interrelation framework. The terms and concepts introduced, which taken together constitute the framework, are:

- Base;
- narrative schema;
- mental archive;
- point(s) of narrative contact;
- spreading activation;
- narrative granularity;
- markedness, including four broad categories:
 - generic unmarked references;
 - generic marked references;
 - specific unmarked references;
 - specific marked references;
- highly recognisable features; and,
- scope refinement.

In addition, the framework can be understood to include the metalinguistic items introduced in the previous chapter, such as Base. Each of these terms, and their relation to one another as part of a holistic framework, will be discussed in detail below. First, schema theory, the foundational model on which much of the narrative interrelation framework is based, is outlined and reviewed.

4.4 Schema theory

The origin of schema theory is disputed, seeming to have come into use through a number of academic channels at a similar point. In its oldest incarnation, it can be traced back as early as Leibniz (1710) and Kant (1781). The earliest inception of a cognitively informed version of 'schema theory' used in contemporary research is Bartlett (1932). Schema theory is widely used across several academic disciplines, including, but not limited to, education and developmental psychology (Piaget 1936, 1945, 1957, 1958; Piaget & Cook 1952), cognitive science (Anderson 1983) linguistics (van Dijk & Kintsch 1983), and computer science (Schank 1982a, 1982b, 1984; Schank & Abelson 1977). Most relevant to this project, schema theory has also been adopted and developed in stylistics and cognitive poetics (Cook 1994; Culpeper 2001; Jeffries & McIntyre 2011; Miall 1989, 1990; Rumelhart 1975, 1980, 1984; Semino 1997; Spiro 1980, 1982; Spiro et al. 1980; Stockwell 2002, 2003).

As is often and understandably the case when models are utilised by multiple fields, schema theory has evolved in different directions. This has manifested in different sets of attached terminology: what education calls 'accommodation' (Piaget and Cook 1952), linguistics calls 'tuning', for instance (Cook 1994; Semino 1997; Stockwell 2002, 2003). As narrative interrelation is a linguistic model, however, this thesis will prefer the established terminology used in cognitive linguistics, following Stockwell (2002). Stockwell summarises five terms particularly pertinent to the utilisation of schemas in this context:

- **Tuning** – the modifications of facts or relations within the schema.
- **Restructuring** – the creation of new schemas.
- **Schema reinforcement** – where incoming facts are new but strengthen and confirm schematic knowledge.
- **Schema accretion** – where new facts are added to an existing schema, enlarging its scope and explanatory range.
- **Schema disruption** – where conceptual deviance offers a potential challenge

(Stockwell, 2002: 79-80).

Disciplines agree on the fundamental tenets: schema theory makes claims about how people organise their background knowledge. Relevant associated chunks of our knowledge are formed into schemas, and we have the ability to access these in order to make sense of new situations on a daily basis. That is, humans do not make sense of new scenarios and experiences afresh. For instance, a person who has been to, or has been told about, restaurants is likely to know that meals are eaten there, what menus are, that a member of serving staff will assign tables and take orders, that money will be required to pay at the end. This is because the person has a 'restaurant schema'.

There is a general agreement across disciplines that schemas are dynamically constructed to suit specific new contexts. That is, schematic knowledge is not static but dynamic and, as new information 'accretes', it might cause a person to 'tune' other stored information. Schemas can also be 'tuned' to fit individual types of restaurant.

If a person has never been to *Nandos*, a popular restaurant chain specialising in chicken, they might walk in, sit at a table and wait for someone to come and take

their food order. However, *Nandos* requires customers to go to the till to place food orders: the generic restaurant schema has not supplied all the necessary information needed for a successful visit. The new customer is unlikely to sit indefinitely waiting for a waiter or waitress: eventually they are likely to notice other customers going up to the counter and shortly thereafter receiving their food. In other words, this deviation from the generic restaurant schema is likely to be realised eventually. This new knowledge will be 'accreted' to the *Nandos* schema and next time the person goes to *Nandos* they will know to order at the counter; there will be no need to re-enact the process and realise the differentiation from the generic schema again.

Schematic knowledge can be accreted from other people as well as from direct experience. For instance, a person who has never been to *Nandos* will know to order at the counter if they have read the previous paragraph. Schematic knowledge can also be easily called up without being physically present in the relevant context. Nor do people tend to get confused, for example, about the distinct features of different restaurant chains. This demonstrates that, in addition to a generic restaurant schema, individual restaurant schemas exist and are somehow coherently organised. It is possible to think about any restaurant chain and enjoy immediate access to a host of related information as well as rapidly switch between thinking about different restaurants without issue. This additionally demonstrates some sort of structured organisation.

Humans can call up not just individual pieces of information but units of related information with ease, and without having to pore over other irrelevant bits of knowledge such as the day's news, thoughts about an old family cat or the shape of a watering can. This shows that background knowledge is not simply a *mêlée* of floating chaos. Schema theory is, in this sense, intuitively obvious; any

metacognitive exercise will substantiate that it is at least descriptively accurate. That is, even if schemas do not reflect the actual organisation of neural networks responsible for knowledge stored in memory, though many would argue this is indeed the case (Thorndyke & Yekovich 1980), schemas do correlate with metacognitive perception.

Schemas were first discussed in relation to the cognition of literature by Bartlett (1932) in a catalogue of psychological experiments involving memory. In the key study, Bartlett asked participants to read a Native American folktale called *The War of the Ghosts*. The story differed in many ways from a prototypical western fairytale and, when Bartlett's participants were asked to recount the story a week after reading it, he found that these unusual features were often misremembered as their more prototypical counterparts. The story did not have a clear resolution as most western folktales do and upon their retelling many participants reframed the story to give it just such a resolution. Unusual features with no real equivalent in traditional westernised tales tended to be forgotten. This, Bartlett claimed, proved that the participants were drawing on some sort of pre-existing 'fairytale schema' when they read *The War of the Ghosts* and that the passage of time had caused some of these unique tunings to decay from memory. When this happened the readers were replacing these features with information from their prototypical fairytale schema.

The key point of dispute between theorists is contestation regarding whether schemas are dynamically constructed and organised into bespoke chunks of information as required, or coherently organised in their schematic form in the brain itself (Thorndyke & Yekovich 1980). The source of the discrepancies in the various incarnations of the schema model are interdependent. These are:

- what different disciplines want to use schema theory to describe and account for; and,
- the relative thresholds of testable certainty these applications require in order to adequately 'prove' the model for the purposes required.

At one end of the spectrum, computer science and artificial intelligence use schema theory to direct computers to appropriate information in order to perform processing tasks (Anderson 1983; Schank 1982a, 1982b, 1984; Schank and Abelson 1977). This requires a concrete definition of schemas and their function because these schemas require coding. Thus, whilst computer scientists may hypothesise that the human brain uses the same cognitive architecture, there is no necessity for the field to be satisfied this is the case in order to use schemas as a model for practical programming. Here the emphasis is functionality and, as artificial intelligence can use the schematic model to organise its information, that discipline is satisfied with its utility.

Developmental psychology on the other hand, uses schema theory to describe the processes of developmental and associative learning (Piaget 1936, 1945, 1957, 1958; Piaget & Cook 1952). This means that the demand for certainty that the schema model is actually how the mind is 'organised' is increased. The model is therefore disputed in this field with some pointing to the ambiguous, ill-defined relationship between a generic level and more specific schemas as a fundamental flaw (Thorndyke & Yekovich 1980). The falsifiability criticism claims that,

schema theory provides a plausible and descriptive framework for understanding human knowledge processing [... but] allows sufficient flexibility to accommodate *post hoc* many empirical results [...] because of this flexibility, the theory is of limited predictive value and is not testable as a scientific theory in its current form

(Thorndyke & Yekovich 1980: 23).

This is a legitimate criticism which must be acknowledged, however, it does not pose a problem for employment in the current context. Stylistics is data-driven; similar to computer science, the key test is functionality (Carter & Stockwell 2008; Gavins and Steen 2003; Leech and Short 2007; Short et al. 1998; Simpson 2004; Stockwell 2002; Stockwell & Whiteley 2014). In the current context, schema theory enables the effective description of the phenomenon observed in the *Fifty Shades* study. That study demonstrated the inherently subjective nature of intertextuality in booktalk, making schema theory's 'limited predictive value' irrelevant. In other words, the narrative interrelation framework is intended as a tool which can be rigorously and replicably applied to data, not to predict what that data will look like. Individuals demonstrably have different degrees of knowledge of the narratives they encounter over the course of their lives in terms of richness, content and personal response. When readers draw on that knowledge it can influence and change their interpretations of both the Base and the interrelated narrative. Schema theory offers a descriptive tool which enables an analysis able to produce a convincing account of the ways in which readers subjectively make narrative interrelations, as well as how they understand and respond to intertextual references. This thesis explores intertextual links as they manifest in thought, and the discourse produced as a result. As schema theory correlates with humans' metacognitive perception of the interaction between current context and background knowledge, it offers the ideal basis for the narrative interrelation framework.

The major debates around schema theory centre on the relationship between a schema in dynamic use and its formulation in long-term memory (Scott Terry 2009; Thorndyke & Yekovich 1980). This is also not a problem for a stylistic

framework because the distinction, whilst extremely interesting, is not relevant to the aspect of cognition investigated in this thesis. At the point at which they can be traced in discourse, the schemas which are relevant are the ones readers have immediate mental access to, the existence of which are evidenced by the very fact of their being used. Stylistics is a magpie discipline which borrows (steals) shiny and useful research from whatever field offers useful advances for its purposes (Herman 2002, Herman et al. 2005; Leech & Short 2007; Mason 2014). This means interdisciplinarity in the sense of relying on disciplines which *do* have other relevant expertise and utilising that research. Crudely put, stylistics cannot answer the questions which form the major points of dispute about schema theory. As and when other disciplines do answer these questions stylistics will amend, evolve or discard its models accordingly. In this sense stylistics is able to remain a cutting edge discipline because it takes advantage of the most current knowledge. Mahlberg and Stockwell explain that stylistics, specifically cognitive poetics, seeks to search out and apply ‘our best current knowledge of reading and mind’ (2015: 130). Assessed in these terms, schema theory offers the best available tool, based on the most recent knowledge of reading and mind, which can be adapted to provide a practical framework capable of analysing narrative interrelation and its manifestations in intertextual booktalk.

4.5 Narrative schemas

Schema theory offers an ideal tool for an investigation into the ways in which readers make links between texts because it can be used to capture the subjectivity of an individual reader’s knowledge of each text and also allows us to consider all the information readers attach to texts which they have not accreted from actually reading it. This is the key contribution of ‘narrative schemas’, which cannot be offered by any existing model in the stylistics toolkit: this concept facilitates

analyses moving beyond an examination of the point of interaction between text and reader to a more holistic consideration of a reader's text knowledge and its role in their reading – from 'reading response' to a reader's response.

A narrative schema is a reader's version of a narrative: this simple definition suddenly allows us to describe and understand individual differences in working text knowledge and therefore enables a grounded linguistic analysis of subjectivity in readers' responses.

Schemas have been used in relation to narrative to reductively homogenise individual difference amongst readers and thus facilitate broad generalisations regarding readerly interpretations or what readers 'do' when they read. The tradition of 'story schemas', at the generic level or in relation to genre and story types (fairy tale, horror story, romance and so on), has a well-established history (de Beaugrande 1987; Gerrig 1993; Miall 1988, 1989; Rumelhart 1975, 1980). These story schemas are highly effective for making general categorisations of different story 'types' and the concept is extremely valuable in examining prototypical responses and conceptualisations. Story schemas are, however, limited in their utility to a cognitive poetic investigation of real reader responses. This is because they are derived from a structuralist paradigm concerned with capturing patterns and rules common across genres and 'types' of stories (for example Propp 1968) and thus entail a homogenising and flattening which hazes out precisely the aspects of individual reading that this research seeks to examine.

The application of schema theory in the present context achieves the opposite: a capturing of difference and nuance rather than the identification of underlying similarities. Narrative schemas, like all schemas, 'belong to readers not to texts' (Stockwell 2003: 269). When practically applied in the analysis of concrete data, the proposed framework is not gesturing to a conceptual schema as a way of

overcoming subjective unknowns. Instead the narrative interrelation framework populates an examined reader's narrative schema based on the textual evidence offered in their own response. Thus, in the case of the four readers' responses to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* in the previous chapter (see Section 3.9.2), the textual content of those responses offers evidence as to the form and content of each reader's narrative schema.

Narrative schemas, as the primary building blocks of the narrative interrelation framework, enable an analysis to incorporate consideration of individual differences in response in a way that other frameworks have acknowledged exist but have previously deemed impossible to examine (Emmott 1997; Stockwell 2009).

Readers do not only think of the text itself when they think about, for example, *Lord of the Flies* (Golding 1954). They may also recall things related to their experience of the text (I, for instance, think about the fact that I read it at school). Readers can also talk about books they have never read (Bayard 2008); this would not be the case if individual knowledge was solely derived from the actual act of reading. This ability to concretely consider the role readers' 'other knowledge' of a text, is key to the continuing advancement of stylistics, especially cognitive poetics, as a discipline per se. However it is also of particular importance to the present investigation into reading in the school context because it offers the potential to distinguish and identify knowledge of a text within a student's narrative schema which has not been accreted from their own reading. Crucially in the present research, narrative schemas enable consideration of knowledge of a text which has not come from the direct act of reading but from sources such as what a reader has read or heard about the story.

Narrative schemas offer a tool to describe and analyse differences between individuals' working knowledge of the same text, and consider how readers interrelate these different versions of the stories they encounter. If two people read the same ten books and were then asked to write down a list of the last ten books they had read, their reading experiences would appear, superficially, to be identical. In reality, however, each would have different *narrative schemas* for each text. Both would have accreted, thought about, retained, engaged with, ignored and forgotten different things. The schematic model also allows for individual difference in terms of levels of knowledge about a particular narrative; for the fact that where one reader may have read a text ten times in the last month another may have skimmed it once several years ago. Where one person fell asleep before the end of a film, another may have watched it fifteen times; one person skimmed a book ten years ago, another read it with great enthusiasm last night, a third may have heard about it but never read it for themselves. Parts of a narrative will be forgotten where others may be remembered in acute detail, whole passages may be memorised or complete narratives obliterated entirely.

The shape, form and content of an individual's reading of any narrative is also neither fixed nor static. Factors such as memory, recency of reading, perception of salient features, interrelations with other narratives, tastes, preferences and attentional focus can all affect the nature of a reader's recollection of a narrative (Bartlett 1932; Emmott & Alexander 2014; Gerrig 1993; Stockwell 2002: 75-89, 2003). Schemas therefore provide the best model to cope with conceptualising individual accounts of narratives stored in memory.

Schema theory also does not need to discriminate between different narrative mediums (books, films, oral narratives and so on), or whether the narrative is factual or fictional. This enables the narrative interrelation framework to be

applied to links made in and across narratives from different modes, as well as personal memories and ‘true’ stories told by others, without difficulty. This a necessary feature for such a model for, as long as readers interrelate indiscriminately across these narrative categories, any framework wishing to model intertextuality must be able to deal with and account for the full range of narrative types. The framework generating study demonstrated that readers can interrelate a Base with the full range of these narrative types, and the concept of narrative schemas can successfully account for all of them.

The key advantage of schemas in the current context is their simplicity. Stockwell argues ‘it is precisely the crudeness of schema theory that makes it a useful tool for understanding the macro-level’ (2003: 253). Exploring the role of intertextuality as an aspect of the reading experience has always been problematised by the unmanageable volume of material involved in such examinations; schemas offer a basic but highly functional tool with which to capture individual nuance without becoming entangled in extraneous detail.

4.6 A ‘mental archive’ of stories

Over the course of a lifetime, every person will accrue a whole host of narrative schemas. Within the narrative interrelation framework this will be termed the *mental archive*. The narrative schemas forming the contents of an individual’s mental archive represent the potential store of information with which the reader may identify an interrelation when reading a new narrative.

An accurate depiction of an individual’s mental archive would then be a complete inventory of all stories encountered: some schemas holistic and general, others narrow and highly accurate. These schemas will shift in form and nature over time and with concentration. This is the true context into which new narratives enter: a library where everything looks exactly as the reader remembers it.

Bruner refers to a macroscopic version of this accumulation of stories, in relation to whole communities, as ‘narrative accrual’ (1992). He states, ‘narratives do accrue and, as anthropologists insist, the accruals eventually create something variously called a “culture” or a “history” or, more loosely, a “tradition”’ (Bruner 1992: 241). The mental archive describes the same process at the level of the individual. This notion has also been discussed, using schema theory by Rumelhart (1975), Bartlett (1932) and Gerrig (1993) in relation to cumulatively constructed concepts of genre. Emmott also identifies a similar process at the micro level, suggesting that as a person reads an individual text they store information in a ‘central directory’ in order to comprehend later plot events in relation to previous ones (1999).

Simply put, readers add new reading experiences to their different *mental archives*. They make different narrative interrelations based on a combination of factors such as which stories are contained within their mental archive, how rich those narrative schemas are, how recently they have been accessed and so on.

4.7 Points of narrative contact: a cline of visibility



Figure 4.1, Points of narrative contact: visibility scale

The *Fifty Shades* study demonstrated that, common to all narrative interrelations, no matter the size or specificity of the things they interrelate, is the recognition of at least one feature in common which underpins the interrelation; this is what catalyses the process. If a narrative interrelation is connecting or linking two or

more narratives, the point of contact is that connection; without recognising a 'point of narrative contact' (PoNC), narrative interrelation cannot occur. This is not to say that readers will always be actively aware what specific point of contact they have made for, as Lakoff and Johnson explain, 'most thought is unconscious thought' (1999: 3). Metacognitive reflection may enable readers to 'pinpoint' the point of contact specifically, however, which makes articulating our interrelations in booktalk a key motivator in refining and clarifying our own intertextual links. As reflected in the framework generating study, the point of narrative contact which underpins a reader's interrelation can manifest in an intertextual reference along a wide spectrum of visibility.

At one end, the links prompting the reference can be highly visible: two narratives are not simply being juxtaposed but the grounds on which they are being linked are explicitly presented to other readers. This means that others are both more likely to understand the intertextual reference being made and are therefore more likely to run a corresponding interrelation themselves. Those other readers will still, however, be linking *their own* narrative schemas for the Base and the referenced narratives and may therefore draw different conclusions about the reference's efficacy, perceive other points of contact or draw on different knowledge about one or both narratives. The features one person interrelates may be absent from the narrative schemas of another, rendering that aspect of the intertextual reference incomprehensible.

At the other end of the spectrum, references can specifically identify the narrative being interrelated but leave the point of contact completely invisible. In these cases the point of narrative contact must be inferred in order for the reference to be comprehended.

There are thus two interacting components of any intertextual reference: the specificity with which a reader identifies the narrative schemas being linked, and the visibility of the point(s) of contact linking them. Narrative specificity tells us which narratives are the subject of a link; which schemas to 'look at'. The point of narrative contact reveals which features are being linked; these tell others where in the schema to look.

The visibility of a point of narrative contact can separate intertextual reference from narrative interrelation. When the point of narrative contact is explicitly provided by the intertextual reference, readers (those who do not pass over or ignore it) are likely to make the corresponding interrelation. However, just as with the narratives being referenced, we cannot always 'see' the point of narrative contact. The 'visibility' of these points of narrative contact is therefore a crucial additional consideration in ultimately determining the specificity of an interrelation. A vague narrative grouping can quickly be narrowed and filtered by a highly visible point of narrative contact whilst at the other end of the scale, an invisible point of narrative contact can render a specific reference to a particular narrative extremely vague.

4.8 Spreading activation

'Spreading activation' is a term borrowed from cognitive science. It describes the process whereby information in the working memory activates a spreading chain of associations enabling retrieval of other relevant information from long term memory (Anderson 1983; Gentner 1989; Gentner & Markman 1995; Lerner et al. 2012; Saunders & MacLeod 2006). *Spreading activation* within the narrative interrelation framework refers to any process whereby one narrative interrelation prompts the recognition of further interrelations. For example, a reader makes one

point of contact between two narrative schemas and, catalysed by that juxtaposition, more points of contact come to mind.

Spreading activation can also occur across multiple schemas, where the recognition of a feature which is somehow connected in two narrative schemas prompts a realisation that the same feature is also present in a third narrative schema, and so on. In booktalk, spreading activation can also cross multiple readers. That is, one reader's intertextual reference can catalyse spreading activation in other readers: other points of contact with the referenced text are recognised, other narrative schemas which also share a mentioned feature can be identified.

4.9 Degrees of narrative granularity

As the intertextual references identified in the *Fifty Shades* study revealed, readers can identify their interrelations using a wide range of specificity in their terms, from very particular such as 'the novel reminded me of another great ebook that I read just before it, Robert Avon's dark comedy *The Seducer's Diary*,' (Amazon, 5 star review) to very vague, for instance 'absolute guilty pleasure read' (Amazon, 5 star review). Based on the analysis of the data generated in the *Fifty Shades* study, I propose the narrative interrelation framework recognises four categories of specificity of the intertextual references readers can produce, situated along a cline. This offers a precise metalanguage with which to distinguish between different manifestations of intertextuality without forcing a strict taxonomy. Broadly speaking, any narrative which forms part of an interrelation can be identified as falling into one of the following four categories of *narrative granularity*:

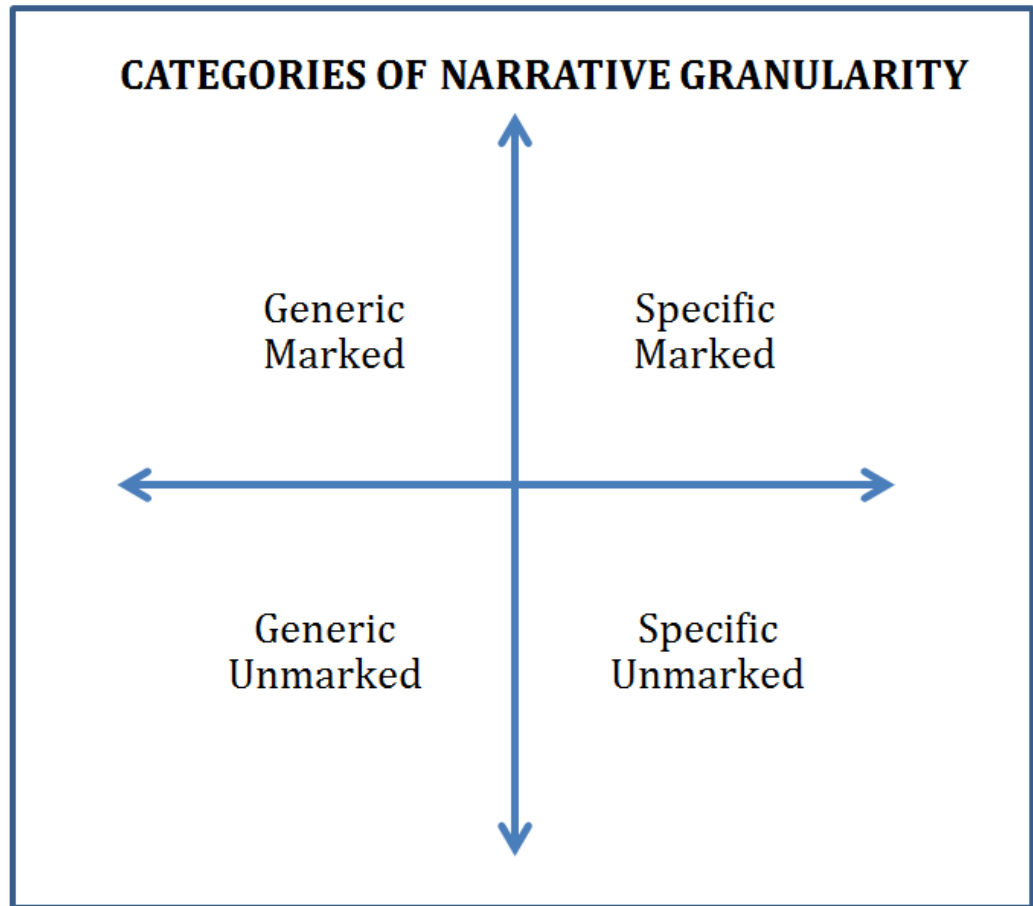


Figure 4.2, Categories of narrative granularity

I will now explore these four categories (generic unmarked, generic marked, specific unmarked and specific marked) in more detail.

4.10 Markedness

In Section 2.7.3, it was identified that narratives need to be named in some way in order for booktalk to be successfully focused on the same chunk of text. The nature of that name affects which and how much of a narrative is collectively agreed to be the subject of discussion: *The Canterbury Tales* signals the whole of Geoffrey Chaucer's work, *The Miller's Tale* or *The Prologue* points to one story or chunk in particular. Other forms of naming could be *Animal Farm* versus *The Battle of the Cowshed* (the name given by the animals in Orwell's novel to their successful defence of the farm from the humans' attempts to reclaim it), or even *Chapter 7 of*

Animal Farm. Naming can also be utilised for the discussion of non-literary narratives which do not already have agreed titles available: *9/11* or *that time at Tracey's birthday party last year*. The specificity of these labels can vary dramatically in terms of the degree of narrative granularity they indicate; in other words, where readers interpret that they should draw the boundaries of the narrative schema. *Animal Farm*, for instance, is highly specific with little room for ambiguity; the story may even exist on a reader's bookshelf as a bounded object. *Chapter 7 of Animal Farm* indicates a smaller level of narrative granularity, limiting the reference to a chunk of a longer story, but the narrative schema readers produce when hearing this 'title' is likely to be more variable, because this naming strategy requires readers to know where in *Animal Farm* Chapter 7 begins and ends. Similarly, a narrative title such as *9/11* could be interpreted across a wide degree of variance of narrative granularity: some may think only of immediate events on that particular day, others may broaden the scope out to the weeks before and after. The contents of individuals' schemas generated upon hearing the title *9/11* is also likely to vary: people old enough to remember the event may include what they were doing at the time of hearing the news, people in different countries may have encountered different versions and heard different interpretations of the event, conspiracy theorists may incorporate features such as 'CIA involvement' which others will not. The particular label given to name a narrative in the course of an intertextual reference is thus a key factor in the interaction between the narrative interrelations a person makes and how the intertextual reference they produce is interpreted by another reader.

To account for this, the narrative interrelation framework introduces the concept of *markedness*. When people make intertextual references these can be either *marked* by an established title or genre label or *unmarked*, when terms problematise the consistent identification of the referenced narrative across

readers. This is a useful measure when considering interrelations as it signals whether or not others can tell which narrative an interrelation has been made with and, in the case of references to specific narratives, can often signpost the fact an interrelation has been made at all.

The terms 'marked' and 'unmarked' refer to whether or not the narrative being interrelated with the Base is detectable in the discourse and should also be envisaged as extreme ends of a cline rather than absolute categories, the reasons for which are illustrated by the examples above. The reference can be considered marked if it is likely another individual will be able to identify, through some visible word or phrase, which narrative or group of narratives were interrelated. The most obvious and explicit way in which marking may manifest is by reference to the title of a specific text. However, degrees of marking may also occur in other forms. Other ways of marking may include, but are not limited to, explicit mention of: names of characters, plot events, themes, places, objects or lines of text or dialogue which appear in the narrative. Taking *The Wizard of Oz* as an example, mention of 'red slippers', 'Dorothy', 'Toto', 'Kansas', 'the yellow brick road' or the phrase "there's no place like home" can also indicate that an intertextual reference to *The Wizard of Oz* is being made.

Marking seems to function most effectively when it takes the form of a narrative's agreed title. Titles are integral as metonymic indicators which prompt people to 'look at' the right narrative schema with the right degree of granularity. If one reader makes an intertextual link between a Base and *Cinderella*, the best way for that reader to ensure that other readers make a corresponding interrelation between the same two narratives is to explicitly mark *Cinderella* as the narrative 'in mind'. If other readers have only the point of narrative contact to work with – for instance 'Disney princess who falls in love with a prince' - they may identify the

feature which prompted the initial interrelation in a *different* narrative, and thus proceed in parallel but with a mismatch between the interrelations made by each reader. The same is true if the reference is generic; if one reader says ‘all Disney princesses fall in love with princes’ then they may be thinking of *Sleeping Beauty* but other readers who encounter the reference may be prompted instead to think of *Aladdin*. If the reader references *Cinderella* specifically but instead of marking by title only discusses ‘glass slippers’ or ‘pumpkins’ for instance, then other readers might not recognise that a reference has been made, and therefore run no interrelation at all: ‘not marking’ can therefore equate to ‘not telling’. Titles prototypically therefore represent a most efficient and most reliable method of marking an intertextual reference.

These different degrees of markedness are qualitatively distinct, especially in terms of the likelihood that they would prompt readers to make a corresponding narrative interrelation. Rather than discussing these distinctions hypothetically, the next section explores different levels of marking with reference to real examples taken from my data in the following discussion of my four levels of narrative specificity: generic unmarked, generic marked, specific unmarked and specific marked.

4.10.1 Generic unmarked intertextual references

Definition: In a generic unmarked intertextual reference, reference is clearly being made to other narratives, however the scope is very general and no established group or genre of texts is specified. Other narrative schemas are being drawn on but it is not possible to discern which ones.

Examples

- 1) This is totally **NOT my genre of reading** (Amazon, 5 star review).

2) A **great summer beach read** (LibraryThing, 3 star review)

One could argue that no interrelation can be *completely* unmarked, as even terms such as 'NOT my genre of reading' or 'great summer beach read' can point, particularly when considered in context, towards a vague grouping or criteria for the sort of narratives being referenced. References in this category will not use marking which enables the analyst to identify either a specific narrative schema or an agreed genre grouping.

Generic unmarked intertextual references mask, in their vagueness, more specific narrative interrelations the reader has made (if only subconsciously) which underpin the reasoning behind the reference produced. For instance, the phrase 'great summer beach read' presupposes that the speaker has made reference to multiple other archived narratives. 'Summer beach read', especially preceded by the use of the indefinite article 'a', reveals a determination that other narratives also fall within that category. Like the examples in the previous chapter (Section 3.10.4), the noun phrase points to a more experiential sense of categorisation: indicating where and when the book should be read as opposed to its content. In order to make more generic statements a reader must perceive that the Base shares at least that feature with at least one other narrative schema in their mental archive, even if they have not consciously identified which schema it is. This is why these generic unmarked references *must* be included in a model of narrative interrelation; they necessarily involve making links with other narratives.

4.10.2 Generic marked intertextual references

Definition: A generic marked intertextual reference still indicates a generic group of narratives, however that group is an established genre or category of texts.

Examples

- 3) If you're looking for **Shakespeare** go buy **Shakespeare**, not this, this has spanking (although Christian Grey does have a fatal flaw, **like any Shakespearean protagonist**) (Amazon, 5 star review).
- 4) It makes **Mills & Boon** look like literature (Amazon, 1 star review).

The distinction between a generic unmarked and a generic marked reference can be determined by whether the 'generic' term signals an established group or category of texts to an external observer. That is, examples such as those in the previous category 'my genre of reading' or 'summer beach read', reveal that the person making this statement is doing so in mental reference to other narratives, however *which* narratives is not discernible to anyone but the speaker. 'If you're looking for Shakespeare, go buy Shakespeare' and 'Mills & Boon', on the other hand, indicate which narratives *in particular* the speaker might be referencing, precisely because they have signalled a genre within the frame of cultural common knowledge, not one which has been individually and subjectively constructed.

Generic marked references use terms which offer some signposting, whilst not to specific narratives, to the *kind* of narrative schemas being interrelated which might have prompted the reference. The marking uses established categories, which readers encountering the reference are likely to interpret consistently, even if it activates interrelations to different narrative schemas for those readers. Readers who are exposed to a generic marked reference will generally have strong enough sense of the sort of narratives which are being referred to that they are able to reconstruct and run a similar narrative interrelation themselves.

Markedness is still, however, a matter of degree rather than an absolute measure. This reasserts the necessity to situate these categories on a cline. That is, 'my genre of reading' is broad enough to refer to almost anything, and leaves the listener reliant on the person who made the interrelation to offer more information. 'Mills

& Boon', on the other hand, allows another reader to run corresponding narrative interrelations, using texts within their own mental archive. Whilst these may not be the *same set of texts*, they should be the *same type of texts*, because both readers are interrelating within a marked pool of narratives.

Relying on the notion of bodies of established knowledge within a cultural consciousness means that markedness in this context is not a precise measure because it is subject to variation depending on the group, culture, and changes over time and place. 'Mills & Boon' only marks successfully if the reader has a clear sense of the types of narratives that publisher sells, for example, and for readers who have never heard of the company the label is useless. However, interrelations are always produced within a subjective context and therefore the notion of a cline of markedness can be seen as adaptable and dynamic and is, in this sense, more useful than a rigid binary.

To describe a Base in counterpoint to Shakespeare is generic in the sense that it does not reference any one text in particular. However, it does refer to a category of narratives marked to such a degree as to have a 'specific' criteria for membership of that 'generic' group: they must be written by William Shakespeare. 'Mills & Boon', on the other hand, may be perceived as a proxy for the more general category of 'erotic fiction' rather than stipulating a reference which only extends to texts which were printed by that specific publisher. Thus even within the 'generic marked' category there is still a broad spectrum of how specific intertextual references are able to be, even without referring to one narrative in particular.

4.10.3 Specific unmarked intertextual references

Definition: A specific unmarked reference indicates one narrative in particular. However the narrative is not marked by title and must therefore be recognised as intertextual references otherwise they are passed over unnoticed.

Examples

- 5) **Toto**, I don't think we're in **Kansas** anymore (Amazon, 1 star review).
- 6) **Reader**, it is so bad [...] I'm sorry, **reader**. But reading this book made me feel stupid (Amazon, 1 star review).

Example 5 is a specific unmarked intertextual reference which metaphorically, links *Fifty Shades* to *The Wizard of Oz*. However this is discernible only if a reader first has, and second recognises, the features 'Toto' and 'Kansas' in their *Wizard of Oz* schema, otherwise no interrelation will be made. Presenting this example in a lecture, students were asked to raise their hand if they could identify which narrative was being referenced. Of approximately 50 students only two did not recognise this sentence as an intertextual reference: both were Chinese students who subsequently explained *The Wizard of Oz* is not popularly known in their areas at home. These students could not recognise the link because the recognisable features were the only markers an intertextual link was being made, there are no other words or phrases indicating this.

References to specific unmarked narratives are often difficult to categorically identify. That is, it is sometimes impossible to tell whether a narrative actually contains an intertextual reference (in which case it is specific and unmarked and any response is text-driven), or, whether the reader or listener has made a narrative interrelation based on what they *perceive* to be a specific unmarked reference where none in fact exists (in which case the intertextual booktalk is

reader-driven). For instance, the first example above, ‘Toto, I don’t think we’re in Kansas anymore’ is relatively uncontroversial in that there are two features from *The Wizard of Oz*, ‘Toto’ (Dorothy’s dog) and Kansas (where she lives). ‘Toto’ in particular is also an unusual lexical item, appearing only 53 times in over 100 million words in the British National Corpus, many of which are references to *The Wizard of Oz* (BNC 2007). In other words, it is highly unlikely that the inclusion of this word could be anything other than an intertextual reference.

The second example, by contrast, has been included because I perceive it to be a specific unmarked reference to Jane Eyre’s declaration, “Reader, I married him” (Brontë 1864: 479). Crucially, however, I may be wrong. As such it is salient to introduce a principle of *recognisability*. In particular, it is useful to identify that some specific unmarked references can utilise *highly recognisable features*. That is, we can reasonably (though not categorically) assume that, for people who do have an archived narrative schema for *The Wizard of Oz*, that schema is likely to include ‘Toto’ and perhaps ‘Kansas’, or even the highly popularised quote “Toto, I don’t think we’re in Kansas anymore”. Other examples might include ‘ruby slippers’ or ‘yellow brick road’. In this sense, highly recognisable features arguably ‘mark’ out the presence of a specific unmarked reference almost as effectively as the use of a narrative’s title, and are therefore much more likely to prompt an interrelation in others.

In order to identify a specific unmarked intertextual reference onus is placed on the reader or listener to recognise that the chunk of narrative referenced belongs to another narrative: they must already have a corresponding narrative schema in their mental archive, as well as recognise the feature used to ‘mark’ it. Readers who do not have an archived version of a referenced narrative - or have one but do not recognise a point of narrative contact with it - do not recognise an intertextual

reference at all, but pass over it seeing only part of the Base. Thus the examples in this category are specific unmarked intertextual references, because they prompt corresponding interrelations *only* if they are recognised. Simply put, if a reader does not recognise that an intertextual reference has been made, they cannot and will not run a corresponding narrative interrelation.

Specific unmarked references pose a problem for any model of intertextuality which characterises intertextual references as stable and concrete; as definitively present or absent. This is because this position:

- a) forces the imposition of a hierarchy onto individual readings, presupposing a 'correct' reading which recognises all specific unmarked intertextual references and therefore includes all corresponding narrative interrelations;
- b) cannot cope with the uncertainty of whether or not a specific unmarked reference is actually present within a text. It is problematic to categorically assert the presence or absence of something which is by its very nature hidden;
- c) privileges text-driven intertextual references (which all readers must recognise and run accordingly otherwise their readings are deficient) (Riffaterre 1990). It also potentially ignores reader-driven references and interrelations entirely, transforming intertextuality into a game of 'author-intended' reference-spotting and thus devaluing the interrelations readers make which are not as a result of text-driven references.

This is a particular strength of the narrative interrelation framework as, by parsing intertextual reference and narrative interrelation into two distinct processes, the analyst is able to circumvent getting tangled in this debate. The true presence or

absence of a specific unmarked intertextual reference is often a question only historiography can answer and then perhaps not with certainty. Application of the narrative interrelation framework offers concrete determinations: if an unmarked intertextual reference is not recognised by a reader then no narrative interrelation is made.

Specific unmarked references are less problematic when made by readers in interactive booktalk environments (such as a reading group or an online messageboard) where other readers can probe such references and cause their makers to 'mark' them. The transient nature of most reader-driven interrelations versus the enduring static presence of references in texts is also obviously relevant. Readers do not usually have the opportunity to review and dwell on the presence or absence of reader-driven references.

4.10.4 Specific marked intertextual references

Definition: Specific marked intertextual references identify one narrative in particular using an established title.

Examples

- 7) Yes, it is unputdownable, but in the same way that **the Da Vinci Code** is. Frankly, if you liked one, you'll like the other, 'nuff said (Amazon, 1 star review).
- 8) Fifty Shade of meh, **Pretty Woman** gone kinky (LibraryThing, 2 star review).

It is this type of reference most people will prototypically have in mind when thinking about what constitutes an intertextual reference. This category highlights that the degree of specificity with which a narrative being referenced is identified in a reader's discourse is not the only relevant component. Example 7 incorporates

a visible point of narrative contact: Example 8 does not. The function visible points of narrative contact can perform therefore merits further investigation so that the narrative interrelation framework can yield more nuanced analyses.

4.11 Scope refinement

It is clear that readers can engage in a process which will be termed *scope refinement*, in order to indicate the focus of their intertextual reference. The framework generating study suggests that *scope refinement* can be enacted in two ways, both of which involve increasing the visibility of components of the reference.

4.11.1 Refining the scope of the narrative granularity

Refining the scope of the narrative granularity involves narrowing the focus of the reference to a specific part of narrative or narrative grouping. For example,

- 1) **When he says to Ana that he didn't know what she'd want to eat so he ordered everything**, I was astounded by how ripped off **that was** from *Pretty Woman* and Richard Gere's Edward. (Given that this was originally fanfiction and the character WAS called Edward, it seems even more odd).
(Amazon, 1 star review)

The scope of the reference is refined from the specific marked narrative *Pretty Woman* to a particular scene in the Base where Christian 'says to Ana that he didn't know what she'd want to eat so he ordered everything' and an indicated correlate in *Pretty Woman*. The scope refinement is even deictically realised here with the use of the demonstrative pronoun 'that'. Deixis can be translated as 'pointing to', so the inclusion of this deictic marker clearly directs (and thus refines) our attention, from a general *Pretty Woman* schema to linguistically 'point at' this feature in particular (Stockwell 2002). In this instance there is then also evidence

of a spreading activation, where the reviewer recognises an additional pure match between the name of the male protagonist in the referenced narrative and a former version of the Base. The point the reviewer is trying to make here is vague, offering only that it 'seems even more odd' and, as this is a non-dialogic context, the reviewer is never asked for clarification.

4.11.2 Refining the scope by making visible the point of narrative contact

The second way in which refining the scope of an intertextual reference can be achieved is by identifying the particular features being referenced. In other words, by making visible the point(s) of narrative contact. For example,

- 2) 'Dear Mr. Grey, I do believe you to be a kinky Batman, don't you agree? You have **expensive vehicles of all kinds, devilish charm, an outrageous amount of money, can fight if you have to and swoop in to save the day, and** need I say **your own array of special toys**? Although it frightens me to ask what you may have in place of a grappling hook... I write this letter to you today not to be bothersome, but to offer my services, should you accept them. If you ever find yourself in need of a Robin, don't look too far!' (LibraryThing, 5 star review)

Here the scope of the reference is already quite narrow. The first line of this review could be classed as specific and unmarked, but for the fact that the character being referenced, Batman, is the eponymous protagonist of many narratives. This means that, by naming the character, the reader essentially marks the narrative by default. This could be disputed, however, the reference could even be called generic unmarked as the reviewer could actually be referring to a host of narratives in which Batman features as a character, or even to one specific narrative which does not have the word Batman in the title, such as recent films

The Dark Knight (Nolan 2008) or *The Dark Knight Rises* (Nolan 2012). This reference thus again exemplifies the need for degrees of both specificity and markedness to be conceptualised as a cline. In spite of the lack of clarity as to which narratives are or are not being interrelated, this is unproblematic with regard to comprehension because the multiple visible points of narrative contact serve to refine the scope of the reference to the extent that the links being made are clear: Christian Grey is compared to Batman because both have 'outrageous amounts of money', 'expensive toys of all kinds' and similar personality traits (devilish charm). Disanalogous aspects of the two characters are addressed and drawn into the comparison via tuning through the premodifying adjective 'a *kinky* Batman' and the suggestion Grey in the Base owns a 'kinky equivalent' to a grappling hook. That is, the points of contact identify ways in which the two characters are similar but not identical.

4.12 Review

Established bodies of the most relevant research in cognitive science, in particular schema theory, have been drawn on in this chapter. The narrative interrelation framework has been presented as a cognitive model of intertextuality capable of being applied in the analysis of both texts and booktalk. A practical application of the framework will now be demonstrated in the next chapter of this thesis. This chapter has proposed a series of metalinguistic terms, engaging or adapting existing terminology wherever possible. The terms which, as a composite, form the narrative interrelation framework are: narrative interrelation, intertextual reference, Base, narrative schema, mental archive, spreading activation, point of narrative contact, markedness, the principle of recognisability and scope refinement. In addition the framework incorporates four categories of narrative

granularity (see Figure 4.2) which can be used to distinguish different degrees of specificity and visibility in a given intertextual reference.

CHAPTER FIVE: READING GROUPS, INTERTEXTUALITY AND INTERACTIVE BOOKTALK

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will now apply the narrative interrelation framework laid out in the previous chapter to intertextuality in interactive booktalk. To do this, two sessions of an adult reading group were recorded, respectively discussing *Holes* (Sachar 1999) and *Animal Farm* (Orwell 1945). Dialogic interaction introduces new dimensions to the role intertextuality can play in booktalk. In an interactive setting initial references may be built on, challenged, elaborated or act as a catalyst for other references being made. The chapter will first discuss the characteristics of the particular reading group whose booktalk is captured in this research as well as how the data was generated. In other words, it will contextualise the intertextual booktalk analysed in the latter part of the chapter.

Through a combination of corpus and close stylistic analysis, the chapter identifies the words and phrases which these data suggest are associated with intertextuality in booktalk. It then considers whether any conclusions can be drawn regarding the different functions and effects of different types of references.

The remainder of this thesis now turns to intertextuality in social reading, which is here defined as booktalk where more than one reader interact.

First, given that the reading group and school classes which form the focus of the next four chapters read and discussed the same two texts, a short summary of those texts is presented.

5.2 Text one: *Holes*

Holes is a YA novel which was written by American author Louis Sachar in 1999. It was the subject of the first adult reading group session discussed in this chapter, as well as a Year 7 mixed ability class (introduced in Chapter Seven). The story is set at Camp Green Lake, a juvenile detention centre for boys in the Texan desert. The novel jumps between two sets of characters: the boys at the prison camp in the present, and the inhabitants of a town called Green Lake which had existed at the same site a hundred years before.

The novel follows Stanley Yelnats, apparently cursed with bad luck, who ends up at Camp Green Lake having been wrongly accused of stealing a famous baseball player's trainers. The Yelnats curse came about courtesy of Stanley's 'no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather', Elya Yelnats. Family legend tells how Elya was given a pig by the mysterious Madame Zeroni, which he used as an offering to win the hand of his true love. The woman of his dreams failed to reciprocate however and Elya, distraught, fled to America forgetting to repay Madame Zeroni by carrying her up a mountain and singing a lullaby to her.

Years later, Stanley and the other boys imprisoned at Camp Green Lake are made to dig holes every day in the desert, told by the staff that this will 'build character' and 'turn them into good boys' (Sachar 1999: 5). In reality, the Warden of the camp is looking for treasure. That treasure was buried a hundred years before by a schoolteacher turned outlaw, Kissin' Kate Barlow, who lived in the town of Green Lake which once existed at the site now inhabited by the camp. Kate turned to a life of banditry when her lover, Sam the onion man, was shot and killed by the townsfolk, his crime: being a black man who fell in love with her, a white woman. On the day of Sam's death the rain ceased to fall and the lake after which the town was named dried up.

The treasure the Warden seeks in the present day was stolen by Kate from another of Stanley's ancestors, also called Stanley. Stanley senior was relieved of his considerable wealth and left to die in the desert but family legend tells how he found refuge on 'God's Thumb' and was eventually rescued.

The bulk of the novel follows Stanley junior and the other boys as they serve out their sentences at Camp Green Lake. Stanley junior develops a friendship with one boy in particular, Zero, a homeless 'ward of the state'. Stanley teaches Zero to read and write and, when Zero runs away, follows him into the desert. Lost and desperate, with Zero grievously ill, the two boys find 'God's Thumb', an oasis up a mountain in the harsh and hostile desert which saves their lives as it had done for Stanley's great-grandfather years before. It transpires that 'Zero' is in fact a 'Zeroni', descended from the same Madame Zeroni who had cursed the Yelnats men. In carrying Zero up to God's Thumb, singing a family lullaby in a frantic attempt to soothe his dying friend, Stanley unwittingly repays the debt and breaks the curse.

Upon returning to Camp Green Lake, the boys find the treasure and are rescued from the Warden and the camp councillors. For the first time in a hundred years, rain begins to fall. Zero and Stanley become 'almost millionaires', Zero hires a private detective to find his mother, and the novel ends with the camp closed down and all the boys having a party at Stanley's house.

5.3 Text two: *Animal Farm*

Animal Farm was written by British author George Orwell and published in 1945. It was read by the adult reading group who are the focus of the current chapter, as well as a top set Year 9 class (also introduced in Chapter Seven). It tells the story of the animals of Manor Farm who are told of a dream for a farm where humans are banished and all animals live in harmonious equality by a revered pig, Old

Major. Led by three pigs - Napoleon, Snowball and Squealer - the animals revolt and claim Manor Farm for themselves by overthrowing the drunk farmer, Mr Jones, and renaming the place 'Animal Farm'. The animals devise the Seven Commandments of Animalism:

1. *Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy.*
2. *Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend.*
3. *No animal shall wear clothes.*
4. *No animal shall sleep in a bed.*
5. *No animal shall drink alcohol.*
6. *No animal shall kill any other animal.*
7. *All animals are equal.*

(Orwell 1945: 17)

These commandments are painted on the barn door as the animals' fundamental guiding principles for governing their new utopian society.

For a while the animals are fairly successful in their endeavour but, over time, the fair society they establish collapses around them. A leadership contest between Napoleon and Snowball turns sour when Napoleon is revealed to have trained a litter of puppies as ferocious attack dogs who enable him to seize control, declaring Snowball to be a traitor and chasing him from the farm.

Things turn from bad to worse as a windmill the animals build to enable their self-sufficiency is repeatedly destroyed. The animals are forced to trade with humans and the commandments on the barn door are mysteriously incrementally altered as the pigs, led by Napoleon, take more power and privilege for themselves. Every infraction is explained away to the other animals by Squealer, aptly described by one of the Year 9s as a 'one pig propaganda machine'. In a meeting in the barn many of the animals are charged with treachery. Many others voluntarily step forward

to confess to their own traitorous activities, recruited by the evil, banished Snowball to bring down Animal Farm: all are summarily executed.

Boxer the horse, tireless advocate and supporter of the pigs, whose motto in life is 'I must work harder' eventually grows old and suffers injury. When the vet comes to take him away Benjamin the donkey, one of the few animals who can read, shouts that the 'vet's van' actually belongs to the glue maker. The other animals make frantic attempts to rescue Boxer and call to him to escape which he makes valiant efforts to do. But old age and a life of labour leave him unable to break down the van door. Later, Squealer explains that the vet had recently bought the van and had not yet changed the lettering: Comrade Napoleon had spared no expense in Boxer's treatment at the vet but he had, unfortunately, died peacefully in his sleep. That evening the pigs receive delivery of a crate of whisky.

The novel ends with the animals looking through the windows of the farmhouse at a party the pigs, who have now taken to standing on their hind legs, are hosting for neighbouring humans: 'the animals look from man to pig, and pig to man, and man to pig again, but it was already impossible to tell which was which' (Orwell 1945: 102).

The novel is commonly acknowledged, and was identified by Orwell himself, as an allegory of the events of the Russian Revolution.

5.4 Interactive booktalk: one text, many readers

Before proceeding, it is necessary to consider the additional dimension introduced in the intertextual booktalk which forms the focus of the remainder of this thesis: dialogic interaction.

Whenever readers discuss a text with one another, each person has a narrative schema for that Base, which may contain similar or overlapping features, but will

not be identical. Similarly, readers will bring to any booktalk their unique mental archive comprised of different narrative schemas, each accreted to different degrees and with different information. This means that every comment made about a Base by one party is interpreted by the other using a different narrative schema than the one from which that comment was produced. That is, when Reader A says something to Reader B about *Nineteen Eighty Four*, Reader B comprehends and interprets Reader A's comment using their own *Nineteen Eighty Four* schema, not Reader A's, and vice versa. The *Fifty Shades* study illustrated the transformative impact different narrative schemas, with different amounts and types of text knowledge, can have on how one reader understands, interprets and responds to an intertextual reference compared to another. In that study, some reviewers found references to *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* to be accurate and helpful, others found the representation of Hardy's novel to jolt disjunctively with their existing narrative schema for that text, leading them to reject the validity of the links (Section 3.9.1). Some perceived an incongruity in the literary quality of the two texts such that contemplating the proposed connections prompted highly emotional reactions ('crap of this standard has no right whatsoever trying to claw its way out of the literary swamp by quoting sections of Tess of the D'Urbervilles'), others felt that the intertextual links were perfectly legitimate ('Ana and Christian are compared to the ruin and redemption of Hardy's Tess of the D'urbervilles [...] that can hold true').

Thus, whenever readers discuss any text, each reader is running their own narrative schema which, whilst nominally unified under the same title, might be very similar or might be vastly different from one another. This creates the constant possibility for different interpretations, misinterpretations, interactive schematic accretion and tuning whenever we engage in booktalk with others. This is, of course, not a phenomenon which is exclusive to narrative schemas, quite the

contrary: the coordination of subjective knowledge schemas is fundamental to much of our daily interactions with other human beings (Eysenck & Keane 1995).

Evidence of these individualised schematic frames of reference between people apparently discussing the same topic can be observed when misinterpretations occur. Consider, for example, the following excerpt from a recent interview with former Plaid Cymru leader, Lord Wigley. Wigley, who is opposed to nuclear weapons, was being interviewed by BBC Parliamentary correspondent Ross Hawkins about his views on the possible boosts to employment if the UK's nuclear facility, Trident, was moved to Wales. The interview coincided with the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz concentration camp:

Lord Wigley: [...] we've been opposed to nuclear weapons all down the years, we can't see any possible justification in having them, nobody in their right minds would use them as the first weapon of strike and if another country is attacking us with nuclear weapons, what satisfaction does it give that we can obliterate as many millions of people in their countries by firing back. The thing is immoral, it's impractical, it's not an effective deterrent against people like ISIS and it is a waste of money.

Hawkins: But it would bring a great deal of employment to an area where employment is a struggle at Milford Haven.

Lord Wigley: Look, this week we have been remembering what happened in Germany before the war, *no doubt there were many jobs provided in Auschwitz and places like that but that didn't justify their existence and neither does nuclear weapons justify having them in Pembrokeshire.*

Hawkins: Are you seriously comparing a Trident base to a Nazi death camp?

(*my emphasis*: Cornock 2015).

The backlash against Wigley for this comment was severe. Many people, from his response Hawkins seemingly among them, found the linking of Trident with Auschwitz repugnant. Wigley was vilified in the press and received condemnation from several officials, including the Scottish Secretary Alistair Carmichael and former leader of the Liberal Democrats (Wigley's own party), Sir Menzies Campbell (BBC News 2015). This anger was not necessarily caused by the specific interrelation that Wigley made, namely that the number of jobs offered cannot justify the existence of a facility. This was his initial point of contact between these two knowledge schemas, and in the course of his apology he stood by it: "the point I was trying to make was that you can't have jobs at any cost, and I reiterate that" (BBC News 2015). The issue that arose here is that Wigley's interrelation prompted others to also juxtapose these two schemas, one for the Trident programme and the other Auschwitz concentration camp, but, where Lord Wigley appears to have initially made a very specific interrelation between these two knowledge schemas, others running the same mental process came to quite different, or at least additional, interrelations. The problem Wigley faced, was threefold:

- 1) the lack of visibility of his point of contact and unclear scope refinement;
- 2) the lack of marking which schemas should be linked; and,
- 3) the potential for spreading activation and alternative interrelations to be made.

Wigley did initially frame his response in relation to 'number of jobs created' specifically, offering a highly visible point of contact as the basis for the link he was making. However he then twice used the co-ordinating conjunction 'and' to link more generalising noun phrases 'Auschwitz *and* places like that [...] *and* neither does nuclear weapons justify having them in Pembrokeshire', inviting broader

schemas than he is personally linking to be juxtaposed by listeners. The co-ordination of Auschwitz, which neither Wigley nor the interviewer had previously mentioned with 'and places like that' invites an interpretation that Wigley is including Trident as a 'place like that' instead of what seems to have been his intended referent 'other concentration camps'. His anaphoric use of 'them' to refer back to the 'many jobs' he is discussing is also unfortunate as the interceding noun phrases create other possible referents, such as the people who work at either place. 'Them' can thus encourage an interpretation that Wigley is suggesting a point of contact between the Nazis who worked in concentration camps ('Auschwitz and places like that') and employees at Trident, thus mapping highly pejorative features onto the latter (it doesn't justify 'having *them* in Pembrokeshire'). The point of contact, though initially clear, loses visibility in the mêlée of possible referents. Finally, the co-occurrence of a number of prototypical schematic features between a concentration camp and a nuclear weapons' facility (war, mass murder) invited other inferences to be drawn from his comment: that those working at Trident could be equated with the Nazis working at Auschwitz. Simply put, the way Wigley's interrelation was realised in discourse meant that many listeners, including the interviewer, did not run a corresponding interrelation but a different one which led perhaps not his comment but certainly his intended point to be widely misconstrued.

This section has highlighted a simple but endemic misconception which is frequently made in the analysis of booktalk: the passive assumption that everyone is working from the same text. The reality is that whenever two or more individuals appear to be discussing a narrative (such as *Animal Farm*), or a narrative grouping (such as 'Gothic novels'), they are actually using the title or genre label as a proxy to coordinate their respective narrative schemas: each reader is working from, and accreting, their own mental archives.

5.5 The Graduate Reading Group

This section will now offer a profile of the 'Graduate Reading Group' (hereafter GRG) and outline how the reading group data was generated, why, and the methodological and ethical considerations involved in this phase of the research. Following this, the chapter proceeds to a comprehensive analysis of the group's booktalk, with a specific focus on their intertextual references.

A book group, book club or reading group as they are variously known is defined by Peplow as 'a collective that meets regularly to discuss a book that all members (should) have read' (2011: 295). The members of the Graduate Reading Group are almost exclusively English graduates who completed degrees at the same Russell Group institution (thus 'the Graduate Reading Group', hereafter GRG) and were aged between 23 and 28 at the time the sessions were recorded. The few members who do not hold degrees in English did study English Literature at A-level. Most of the group in fact met at university on their English course and are friends who meet regularly outside meetings. The members have described their reading group as a satisfying substitute to their university seminars:

[this is] an extension of that format [...] just basically a who can come up, like, we take it in turns to show off whatever clever thing we've thought of (GRG, Session 1 *Holes*: Roger).

It's like mental Top Trumps (GRG, Session 1 *Holes*: Chloe).

In her major survey into reading groups, Hartley identified that 88 percent of responding groups

said more than half their members have had some kind of higher education whether be it at college, in university, in nursing or some other training.

This seems to be the biggest single factor which reading groups have in common

(2001: 33-4).

However she also revealed,

Some people were quite explicit about their desire to read and discuss books as they had at university [...] The nostalgia probably draws on an idealized seminar [...] Others aren't interested in going back to school or college or, as they put it: "we don't want it to feel like studying"; "it's deliberately not like school"

(Hartley 2001: 34).

It is important to note therefore that the GRG represents only one type of book group, and groups with different memberships may discuss texts quite differently. The discussions can thus be best characterised as a reading group constituted of highly-skilled, 'trained' critical readers.

Both transcripts of the GRG discussions can be browsed on 'File B' of the attached USB drive.

5.5.1 GRG: members

The group formed around two years prior to the first recorded session. At the time of writing the GRG has been running for approximately four years. As with most reading groups all members do not attend every meeting, as indeed was the case with the two sessions captured for this research. Thirteen members of the group participated; twelve attended the first session on *Holes* and seven attended the second to discuss *Animal Farm*. All members at the second meeting had also attended the first except one, Adam (see Table 5.1 below).

Table 5.1 , Reading group members present at each session.

<i>Holes</i> reading group meeting	<i>Animal Farm</i> reading group meeting
Ted	Ted
Eve	Eve (left at beginning)
Felicity	Felicity
Lucy	Lucy
Roger	Roger
Peter	Peter
Julian	Julian
Anna	Anna (arrived slightly later)
Chloe	Adam
Hayley	
Ruth	
Michael	

The discussion of *Holes* took place in a park. The group brought food and drink and consumed this prior to and during their discussion (hence such interjections as ‘Hey guys, do you want some more jungle biscuits? There are more!’ (GRG, Session 1 *Holes*: Chloe)). The venue to discuss *Animal Farm* was a small pub, and again snacks and beverages were consumed throughout. Consent was obtained before anyone drank alcohol and members were able to review both transcripts and confirm they were happy for all the discussions to be included in the research.

I became aware of the reading group as a result of being friends with some of its members, Ted in particular. I initially approached Ted when he was discussing his reading group to ask if they might be interested in participating in my research. They responded enthusiastically and agreed to read the same books as the

students in the school classes. For both sessions I asked the group to proceed as they usually would. The group organised dates or locations for the sessions themselves and no time limit was given regarding when the meetings needed to take place. Members were offered the option of recording the session themselves with a provided recorder or for me to attend and record them. They decided they would prefer the latter so I sat in on both meetings. I did not contribute to the discussion unless directly asked a question. Copies of the texts were purchased for all members to thank them for their participation. Members were offered copies and were able to keep the books regardless of whether they attended the session.

5.6 GRG: methods

The reader response data captured at the GRG sessions was in some senses naturally occurring, as the group would have met whether or not they were participating and were not formed for the purpose of research. However, some degree of elicitation was involved, as the GRG read these two texts in particular for the study. Unlike the reviewers' responses in the *Fifty Shades* study, the data here was generated from a group who knew they were being recorded and that the transcripts of those recordings were going to be used in my research; it would have been unethical of me not to disclose this prior to recording and this was therefore always going to be the case (BERA 2011; Robson 2008). After both sessions had been captured the group reported their perception that the recorded sessions had felt, and proceeded, in the same fashion as any of their other sessions with two exceptions. First, all the members who attended had all made sure to read the book prior to the session, which was not always the case, and that they had felt being recorded had motivated them to stay on topic more, as occasional sessions in the past had devolved into general socialising and had not really involved much talking

about the book. The group reported enjoying taking part in the research and jokingly asked if I could record all their sessions in future to help them stay on task.

These data cannot therefore be wholly characterised as capturing naturally occurring reader responses, though the degree of elicitation was as limited as it could be, taking into account the group's preference that I attend their sessions. The most intrusive element was my choosing the texts. Another approach could have been to simply capture booktalk on whatever texts the GRG happened to be reading for two sessions. The fact that the same texts have been the subject of both the reading group and class reader data, however, offers a much stronger basis for contrasting the two sites and it was both more practical and less intrusive, as well as more ethical, to ask the GRG to match the school texts rather than the other way around. The influence of demand characteristics should not have played a factor in the volume, or nature of the intertextual references the group made in these sessions, as they did not know this was a special focus of the research. However, it is nonetheless possible that participation in the research may have meant some references were made that would not have been otherwise, or some narrative interrelations not shared which otherwise would have been as, as the framework generating study showed, readers' revelation of text knowledge and preferences can often be attached to their sense of identity.

The actual data does not seem to bear out this concern, however: references were made to a wide variety of narratives including *Harry Potter*, *Aesop's Fables* and nineties television series *Dawson's Creek*, as well as literature typically considered 'canonical', such as *Jane Eyre* and Shakespeare. This suggests that the group did not restrict themselves, for instance, to what might prototypically be more considered more 'literary texts', nor to a particular medium. In fact, the group's talk is similarly diverse, in terms of narratives referenced, to the *Fifty Shades* reviewers in the

framework generating study. In other words, if participating in the research did change the nature of the group's intertextual references it is not possible to discern what the impact was, nor is there any lean towards a particular type of texts being referenced.

Finally, it is pertinent to disclose that I knew many of the reading group members prior to engaging them in my research. This probably minimised any observer's paradox effect as whilst I was an 'observer' I was not a stranger, and whilst there in a professional capacity, I could as easily have been there in a personal one. In fact once my research had concluded the group asked if I would like to join, 'so you can talk about the book too next time!'

5.6.1 Addressing the observer's paradox

At this juncture it is salient to consider the observer's paradox in relation to the data generated in this research. The observer's paradox describes the phenomenon whereby the knowledge that one is being observed can consciously or subconsciously affect the way people behave and, in particular, the things we do and do not say: 'the presence of the investigator can affect and bias the participants' behaviour' (Dörnyei 2007: 185-6). If the observer's paradox is not sufficiently addressed, the discourse generated when participants know they are being observed can be rendered unusable. That is, 'the quality of the observational data is dependent on the skill with which the researcher conducts the observation' (Dörnyei 2007: 186). The observer's paradox presents a particular problem for linguists seeking to capture naturally occurring discourse when the very act of trying to capture it may change the thing we seek to capture. Recording, as opposed to other observational methods such as taking comprehensive field notes, has the advantage of allowing the retrieval of the 'raw' data (the verbatim record of the actual words exchanged) without being filtered through the subjective lens

of the observer. On the other hand, it also risks stripping much of the nuance and context out of the data and thereby leaving it susceptible to misinterpretation. The audio recorder, for instance, cannot capture body language and non-verbal communications. Any form of data capture risks activating the observer's paradox: having determined that recording was necessary in order to capture the actual discourse taking place in both classroom and reading group, the methodology focused on being the least intrusive whilst still collecting rich and usable data.

There is a variety of approaches linguists can adopt to try to overcome, or at least neutralise, the effects of the observer's paradox. For example, recording participants' for a period before actually using any of the captured data in the hope that the novelty of the recorder's presence wears off and participants acclimatise and return to their usual behaviours (Dörnyei 2007). This was not a step which could practically be taken in the case of the GRG as their meetings were infrequent and any normalising effect would have likely been re-established by the next meeting. There was also the problem of the floating membership of the group which would have meant that those who attended the previous session may not attend the recorded sessions.

Audio-only recording was used for both the GRG and the school data generation; the latter will be addressed directly in Chapter Seven. In both cases I attended all sessions as a silent observer but did not take any notes so as not to make participants needlessly conscious of my presence. This yielded the richest and most coherent record of the two research sites whilst creating the minimal amount of intrusion likely to influence participants' behaviour.

The observer's paradox is not problematic in terms of the validity or authenticity of the data generated in this research as I make no claim to absolute naturalism. That is, I am not suggesting that there is no observer's paradox at play. At the same

time, there is nothing to suggest that the booktalk in either site was substantively altered by my presence and, as discussed above, no indication that the group's intertextual references were significantly affected.

5.7 GRG: ethical considerations and procedures

As the GRG were all adults and the research had very little risk of causing any harm, the ethical considerations were few and the procedures relatively simple. The members knew that the research was looking at booktalk in different contexts, that the transcripts generated from their sessions would be involved in a comparison with reading in the classroom, and also that I was a cognitive linguist. However, they did not know that the research focused on intertextuality specifically. Many group members were familiar with the concept of linguistic research and so appreciated that disclosing which particular aspects of their booktalk I was interested in may create an observer's paradox problem. They were happy, therefore, with this vague description of the research focus on the promise that the specific emphasis would be revealed to them after the sessions have been recorded. They signed participant consent forms to this effect which had been approved by the University of Nottingham and adhered to the BERA (2011) guidelines regarding consent, rights to unprejudiced withdrawal and secure data storage (example forms available at 'File E' on the attached USB drive).

The group then proceeded with their meetings and, once they had concluded their discussions of the second text, *Animal Farm*, I explained my particular interest in narrative interrelation and intertextual reference.

5.8 Reading groups: existing research

Reading groups are constituted of people who choose to spend periods of their leisure time reading and discussing books. A number of studies have investigated

booktalk in reading groups: this section will offer a brief overview of the salient findings before proceeding to consideration of the GRG's booktalk specifically.

O'Halloran (2011) investigates patterns of argumentation in reading groups. O'Halloran's study reveals productive patterns of interaction between reading group members, which enables the collective development of increasingly critical and nuanced interpretations and evaluations of the text. In particular he found, that in reading groups 'joint interpretation is based on the gradual coalescence of interpretative bits' (2011: 192). This presents reading group booktalk as highly collaborative, where a range of individual responses to a narrative are productively brought together to shape richer and more nuanced interpretations for all members. This is in essence the coming together of a group of people all with different narrative schemas for the Base, and different mental archives, tuning and accreting each other's schemas through collaborative discussion.

Peplow (2011) also undertakes highly relevant sociolinguistic investigation into the reading group as a type of discourse environment. Peplow (2011) identifies that reading group members often make claims to expertise on various topics, invoking category entitlements in the same fashion observed by reviewers in the *Fifty Shades* study (see Section 3.13.2). He also finds that members can construct persuasive arguments in attempts to win over other readers to endorse their response to the Base (Peplow 2011). Finally, he also reveals that groups are able to manage divergent analyses and multiple, sometimes contradictory, points of view about a Base (Peplow 2011). Allington (2011), however, identifies that dominant members can direct and frame a group's discussions. This suggests that a preoccupation with how one's booktalk affects one's self-presentation is likely to be exacerbated in a reading group compared to an online context, due to the

relative proximity to other readers as well as the removal of anonymity offered by an online profile, if it is desired.

Existing research thus characterises reading groups as highly collaborative but also competitive booktalk environments, where members explore multiple interpretations and points of view, but nonetheless often 'push' their preferred responses to a text. Members' discussion in a reading group may follow a loosely agreed structure but is largely free to roam; readers are able to discuss whatever aspects and features of the text they like, express their thoughts and opinions and contribute. The research also suggests that the dynamic of each group is highly salient as it clearly plays a role in the nature of the booktalk produced. Nonetheless, the reading group is a relatively unrestricted discourse environment in contrast to other sites of booktalk, such as a school classroom. This is perhaps especially true with regard to the GRG, all of whom were friends outside the group itself and all of whom, given their qualifications, can be assumed to have at least reasonable confidence in their own 'skill' as readers, meaning that this aspect of their identity is likely to be robust. Where, until the end of Key Stage 4 at least, students in an English classroom have never chosen to partake in their school reading experiences, book group members have made the active choice to join and attend their meetings.

The reading group as a site of booktalk is, generally speaking, likely to be subject to far fewer environmental factors than a secondary school classroom which may limit the degree to which personal responses to the text, and specifically intertextual links, are shared and discussed by members. Nonetheless, the reading group context still has the potential to influence what readers say as well as the way in which they say it: members must negotiate and co-construct their booktalk as well as attend to the group's particular dynamic. In the second meeting captured

for this research, for instance, one member (Roger) revealed that he had undertaken some basic corpus analysis of the text the group were reading and had prepared several slides which he proceeded to show the group, much to their amusement, on his phone:

Peter: I just love the fact that you had notes and had slide notes on your phone.

Roger: Well, 'cause it's a really quick book to read, I felt like I hadn't like-,

Felicity: Done enough to prepare! (Laughs) Oh dear.

Roger: Yeah. Well it's kind of cheating the group not to turn up with-

Felicity: (singsong) No, no, no. I think we're all as bad as each other to be honest.

(GRG: Session 2 *Animal Farm*).

The fact that members are reading a book *for* their reading group thus seemingly increases the depth of reflection about it before arriving, not just during the session itself – Roger and Felicity at least feel compelled to put more effort in. Roger's report that he felt he had not dedicated enough time to the group simply by reading the novel due to its short length, and therefore found other activities to fill the time he felt the group deserved is particularly interesting and will be reconsidered in Chapter Eight.

The GRG's intertextual references and booktalk will now be examined in detail.

5.9 Intertextuality in reading group booktalk: associated words and phrases

5.9.1 Method

A combination of corpus and close stylistic analysis revealed several trends in the language used when the GRG made and discussed intertextual references. The corpus analysis was undertaken using the transcript from the GRG's first session, discussing *Holes* by Louis Sachar (1999). The transcript is 20,970 words long. Patterns identified in that transcript were then searched in the second *Animal Farm* session transcript.

To perform the analysis, first all the intertextual references which occurred in the course of the GRG's discussion of *Holes* (Sachar 1999) were identified, following the same procedure used in the framework generating study (see Section 3.3), and used to create a sub-corpus of around 7,500 words. Due to the interactive nature of the discourse, any talk which could be interpreted as being related to an intertextual reference was also included in this sub-corpus. This 'intertextuality sub-corpus' was then analysed with the support of a corpus tool, AntConc (Anthony 2014). The full transcript of the GRG's session was then used as a reference corpus for a keyword analysis of the sub-corpus. This allowed identification of words and clusters that appeared unusually frequently when the group made intertextual references compared to the rest of their booktalk.

All corpus analysis was undertaken using the freeware tool AntConc (Anthony 2014). The use of AntConc has enabled the research to retain the nuance and richness of qualitative analysis when examining large amounts of data. Corpus techniques,

can confirm or reject intuitive assertions [...] provide measured evidence for stylistic analyses and they can even capture textual features that are so diffused across a long text that they might only be felt subliminally or subconsciously

(Stockwell & Whiteley 2014: 2).

AntConc offered an efficient and reliable way of identifying potential patterns or areas which might be of interest. Three corpus tools were employed in this component of the analysis: frequency lists, concordances, and keyword analysis.

Frequency lists

A frequency list 'displays the words occurring in a corpus along with the number of times each word appears' (Bennett 2010: 4). This is a very simple tool which can immediately offer a list of the most frequent words in a dataset. Below is a frequency list of the top 20 words in the GRG Session 1 Holes transcript:

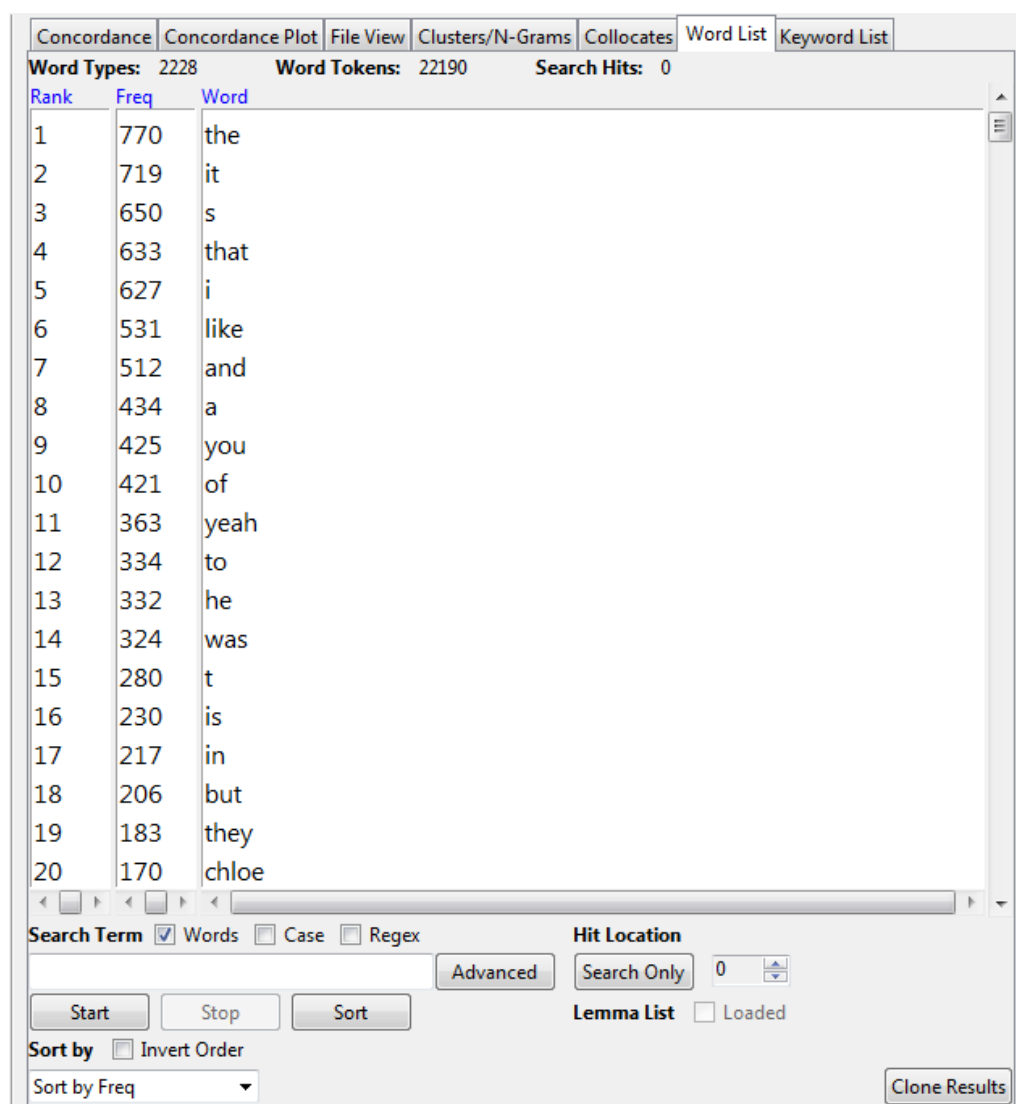


Figure 5.1, Generating a frequency list using AntConc: top 20 most frequent words in GRG, Session 1 *Holes* discussion

The contents of this frequency list will be discussed in further detail below. Frequency lists can also be generated for clusters of multiple words. Frequency lists cannot give an indication as to why a word is especially frequent or whether a high frequency is unusual to that corpus in particular.

Reviewing the most frequent words in the GRG's discussion of Sachar's novel, the first five are unremarkable (see Figure 5.1). Three of these words: 'the' (most frequent, 770 instances), 'it' (second most frequent, 719 instances), and 'I' (fifth most frequent, 627) all feature in the top ten most common words in spoken English (Brookes & Harvey 2016; Coulthard 1993). 'S', following a possessive

apostrophe or an ellipted letter or letters, and 'that' seem similarly unremarkable. The first salient word is the sixth item: 'like'. This will be discussed in further detail below (Section 5.10.3).

Concordances

A concordance enables the analyst to display every instance of a word of interest in their corpus on one screen with a small amount of the surrounding discourse. A concordance list can be organised chronologically (in the order examples appear in the corpus), or it can be sorted alphabetically by words appearing a defined number of spaces to the left or right. This enables easy recognition of patterns of word use. For example, below are the first 20 concordances of the word 'Napoleon' as it appears in Orwell's *Animal Farm*, sorted in Figure 5.2 by the first, second and third word to the right and in Figure 5.3 to the left:

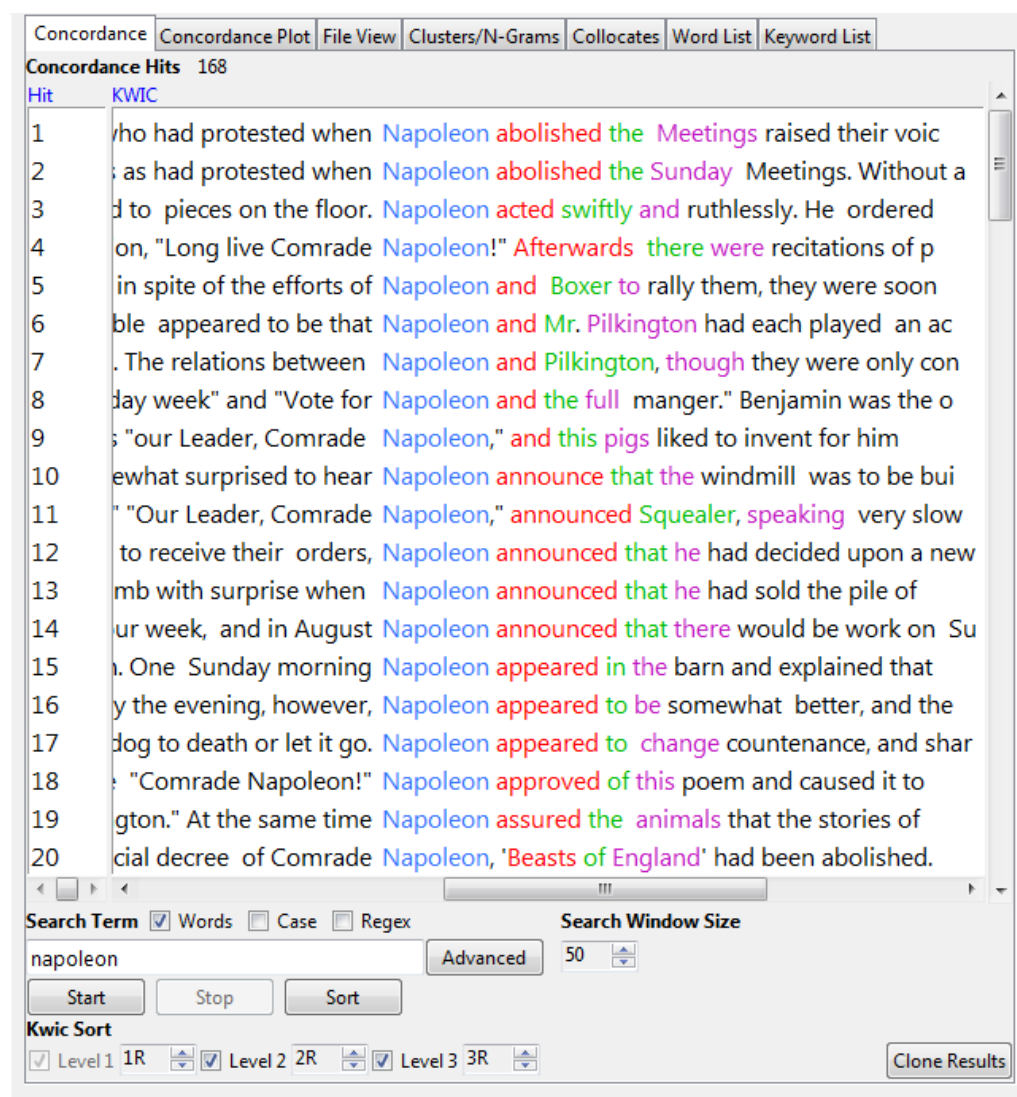


Figure 5.2, Concordance in AntConc: sorted right

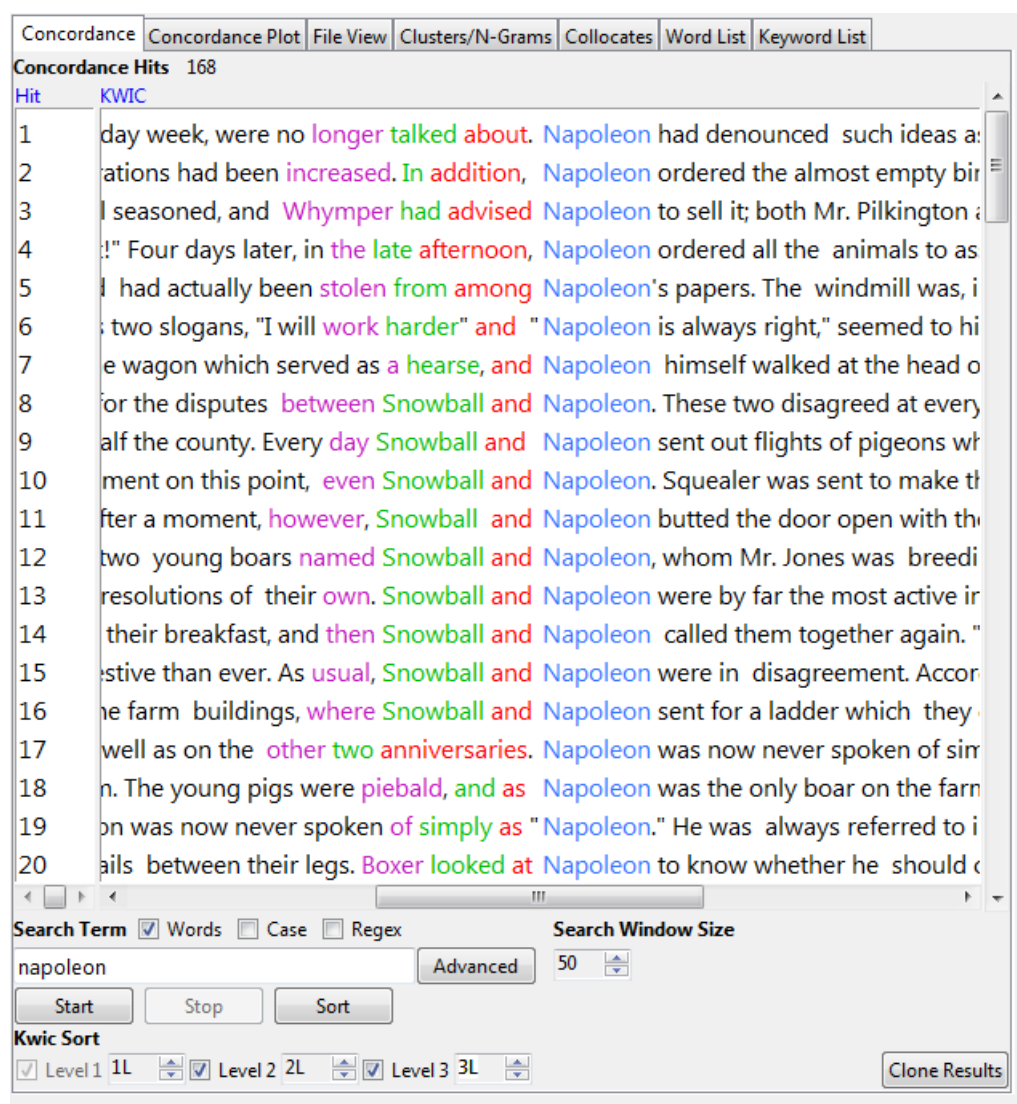


Figure 5.3, Concordance in AntConc, sorted left

Every line of text can also be clicked on, which will take the analyst to the point in the corpus where the word appears so examples can be situated in context. This simple example already reveals the value of concordancing. The first concordance (Figure 5.2), shows that Napoleon is often the active subject of sentences. Not only this, but the verbs he is performing are nearly all actions which suggest he is a character with a lot of power: he is able to 'abolish', 'act', 'announce' and 'assure' (this pattern is reinforced through the rest of the alphabetical concordance). As with all corpus analysis techniques, concordancing cannot explain patterns, only support their identification. It is easy to see how Figure 5.2 evidences and explains

why Napoleon is generally perceived as the most powerful and influential character in *Animal Farm* and, whilst there is no time to explore it here, it is interesting to see that he is the subject of these powerful actions and exerts high levels of control over the other animals long before he actually seizes the leadership. This latter point is perhaps something which could not be easily identified without the use of corpus software.

On the other hand, Figure 5.3 shows that Orwell always writes 'Snowball and Napoleon' and scrolling down the list (not included) reveals that there is not a single instance of these names the other way around; of 'Napoleon and Snowball'. This is a good example of concordancing revealing a stylistic pattern which almost certainly would not have been noticed in the course of reading, or at least would have taken a disproportionate amount of effort for an individual to manually check, but it can only give us the what, not the why. Some may interpret this pattern as significant; others may not. This highlights an important point that must be borne in mind with regard to the forthcoming analysis: corpus results are not synonymous with statistics – they require qualitative interpretation. The following analysis thus has two components. First the patterns present in the reading group data are discussed, then I offer my interpretation of those patterns. In doing so, I have held to the central tenet of the stylistic methodology in trying to make those analyses transparent and retrievable (Simpson 2004). However, it has not always been practically possible to present every instance of a pattern, or even most of it: the word 'like', discussed below, appears 531 times in the group's discussion, and it would be neither useful nor practical to include every instance. Equally, there are patterns, in particular relating to highly frequent words, which receive no close attention in the following analysis because they have been judged to be neither relevant nor unusual. A final corpus tool was used in order to help select salient patterns to focus on: keyword analysis.

Keyword analysis

The final corpus tool which has been utilised in this research is keyword analysis. Keywords are similar to frequency lists but can additionally identify which words or phrases are as unusually frequent, or unusually absent, in one dataset compared with another (often known as a 'reference corpus'). Keyword analysis can indicate whether a high frequency result is meaningful or simply mirroring a trend in wider language use, depending on the composition of the reference corpus (Bondi & Scott 2010; Scott & Tribble 2006; Stubbs 2010). In the present research, keyword analysis has been used to identify words and phrases associated with the GRG's intertextual booktalk comparative to the rest of their discussions. That is, the keyword analysis reveals which words appear to be associated with intertextuality specifically. Figure 5.4 below shows the top 25 'keywords' in the GRG's intertextual booktalk during their session on *Holes*:

Concordance	Concordance Plot	File View	Clusters/N-Grams	Collocates	Word List	Keyword List
Types Before Cut: 1265		Types After Cut: 990		Search Hits: 0		
Rank	Freq	Keyness	Keyword			
1	36	8.184	book			
2	177	6.749	of			
3	11	6.379	hector			
4	103	6.140	is			
5	177	5.191	a			
6	255	5.009	s			
7	8	4.639	fable			
8	53	4.533	kind			
9	7	4.060	author			
10	9	3.793	books			
11	206	3.541	like			
12	273	3.521	it			
13	6	3.480	oral			
14	5	2.900	rat			
15	5	2.900	reminded			
16	5	2.900	ron			
17	5	2.900	tradition			
18	89	2.748	in			
19	6	2.743	parents			
20	53	2.735	this			
21	9	2.698	young			
22	14	2.650	always			
23	4	2.320	grint			
24	4	2.320	legend			
25	4	2.320	often			

Search Term ☒ Words ☐ Case ☐ Regex Hit Location

Figure 5.4. Top 25 keywords in GRG, Session 1 *Holes* discussion

Scott explains, 'keywords are those whose frequency is unusually high in comparison with some norm' (1996:53). Elsewhere he expands this definition, 'a keyword may be defined as a word which occurs with unusual frequency in a given text. This does not mean high frequency but unusual frequency, by comparison with a reference corpus of some kind' (Scott 1997:253). The statistical significance of a keyword can be measured using 'keyness', however this is beyond the scope

of this study and the corpora being used (an examined corpus of c7,500 words and a reference corpus of c21,000 words) are too small for this statistical measure to be particularly meaningful. Keyness is also a highly subjective measure; there is no magic number (in contrast with statistical significance) that acts as a threshold to determine whether or not a word is a keyword. Again, this foregrounds corpus software's function as a supporting tool, not an interpretive one: a keyword analysis offers a list of candidate words or phrases which may be key, it requires a human analyst to determine whether or not this is truly the case.

These particular keywords will be considered in detail below in Section 5.11.

5.10 Intertextuality in interactive booktalk: preliminary analysis

5.10.1 Counting references in interactive booktalk

A preliminary analysis of this 20,970 word transcript swiftly revealed that offering definite figures for the number of intertextual references which occur in a given instance of interactive booktalk is highly problematic. In a dialogic context, intertextual references can evolve across turns, one reference can prompt another and members can co-construct intertextual links collaboratively, moving up and down the cline of narrative granularity as they do so. For example,

Hayley: Often the main protagonist of a book though, you, is not your favourite character. Like, think of other books, usually-

Ted: Jane Eyre: total bitch.

Hayley: Well it's kind of like

(Lots of laughter)

Eve: (in a voice) Bit wet, she's a bit wet!

(GRG: Session 1 *Holes*)

Hayley's initial utterance links the Base (Holes, Sachar 1999), to a generic unmarked group of narratives ('other books'). However the scope of her reference is dramatically refined by her highly visible point of narrative contact: other books where 'the main protagonist [...] is not your favourite character'. Ted then runs a corresponding interrelation and offers a specific marked instantiation: 'Jane Eyre, total bitch'. Eve then appears to agree with Ted's evaluation of Jane Eyre. Whether to count this exchange as one, two or three intertextual references is open to interpretation. In order to construct the intertextuality sub-corpus the number of references was unimportant but the most generous selection of the booktalk was preferred. That is, if an additional turn could potentially be interpreted as a continued engagement in intertextual booktalk it was included in the sub-corpus. This was on the basis that including ambiguous material would make it easier to identify if that discourse formed part of a pattern, but would be easy to discount through qualitative examination of the results.

5.10.2 A specific unmarked problem

Intertextual references spanning all four categories of narrative granularity (generic unmarked, generic marked, specific unmarked and specific marked) can be observed in the GRG's booktalk, in both sessions. Analysis revealed, however, that there do not appear to be any words or phrases commonly associated with intertextuality which links a Base to a 'specific unmarked' narrative. In these instances, because the interrelation itself is not explicitly stated, the hallmarks of intertextual references are also absent.

- 1) I was really irritated by the fact his father was an inventor. I was like, oh well **of course he's got bad luck, he's a bloody inventor** [...] He's doomed to failure (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Anna).

- 2) That's what **his little metafictional "dear reader" thing at the end is**
(GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Anna).

Anna's utterance in example one, for instance, is identified here as a specific unmarked intertextual reference because I believe she is referring specifically to Belle's father in Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. This determination is supported when the utterance is resituated in context:

- 3) Anna: I was really irritated by the fact his father was an inventor. I was like, oh well of course he's got bad luck, he's a bloody inventor.
Yeah.

Michael: **It's the same way as Beauty in *Beauty and the Beast*, her dad is like-**

Anna: He's doomed to failure.

(GRG: Session 1 *Holes*).

Michael, like myself, interprets Anna's comment as an unmarked intertextual reference. That is, it prompts him to run a corresponding interrelation and the narrative schema he identifies as the origin is *Beauty and the Beast*. He then produces this as a specific marked reference. The fact that Anna does not refute this link or mark out a different narrative she had interrelated instead does suggest that her comment *is* in fact a specific unmarked reference. Crucially, however, this interpretation may be wrong. Roger, another member of the group, for example interprets Anna's comment as referencing multiple narratives, reflected in the generic unmarked nature of his reformulation:

- 4) Yeah, I know what you mean, there's a thing like-, yeah, yeah, kids' dads **in these books** are *always* struggling inventors

(GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Roger).

Roger's reference suggests that, when he runs an interrelation based on Anna's comment, he generates links to *multiple* narrative schemas as a result.

This example highlights the issue discussed in Section 2.5 when using discourse as a proxy to examine cognition. Neither Michael, nor Roger, nor I, know which narrative interrelation Anna actually made to prompt her initial comment, or even if she made a narrative interrelation at all; perhaps she just dislikes inventors! What is particularly interesting here is the co-occurrence of different types of interrelations made in a spreading activation from a point of narrative contact, not just within the mind of one person, but as a collaborative endeavour within the group.

Thus, whilst the presence of *recognisable features* is a pattern associated with references to specific unmarked narratives, these are unique to the narratives they are taken from, and there is therefore no common lexis which signal their presence. As such, all the words and phrases reported below are associated with references to either generic narrative groupings (both marked and unmarked) as well as specific marked references. This also means that, in its current form, this research can offer no easy way to search large corpora for specific unmarked intertextual references.

Excepting specific unmarked references, however, the analysis successfully identified several words, phrases and syntactic patterns which appear to be associated with intertextual booktalk.

5.10.3 The prevalence of 'like'

As identified above, the first most frequent salient word in the GRG *Holes* discussion was 'like'. In most corpora comprising spoken discourse, with the exception of highly formalised and scripted speech such as some university

lectures, 'like' can be expected to feature as a very common word (Adolphs & Carter 2013: 15-21). This is due to the additional functions 'like' can perform in spoken, compared with written, discourse. Adolphs and Carter discuss the prevalence of 'like' in CANCODE (the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English), a five million word corpus of spoken English collected predominantly in the United Kingdom and Ireland (McCarthy 1998). They explain:

the word *like* is the 23rd most frequent item in the CANCODE corpus and occurs with an overall frequency of 31,743 instances. It is five times more frequent in spoken than in written English. [...] In addition to the traditional grammatical roles of *like* as a preposition, conjunction, common verb and suffix, an analysis of the spoken corpus data illustrates that it often fulfils a function as a discourse marker

(Adolphs & Carter 2013: 16-17).

As the sixth most frequent word in the GRG transcript, occurring 531 times, 'like' is, however, proportionally *much* more prevalent in the group's booktalk, even when compared with everyday spoken discourse. 'Like' also features as a high frequency keyword in relation to the GRG's intertextual booktalk specifically (see Figure 5.4), and this will be considered below. However, given its unusual prevalence in the GRG session as a whole, it is worth pausing to consider why this might be.

The very high frequency of 'like' in a reading group environment can be explained by the fact that booktalk lends itself to several different uses of the word. The first, and perhaps most obvious, is its use in intertextuality, with readers comparing events, themes, characters and topics in a Base with other narratives, both fictional and non-fictional: this is discussed below. Additionally, there are many links members' make to their existing knowledge which are interrelations but not

necessarily narrative interrelations. For instance, 'like that quote, uh, everything will be okay in the end, if it's not okay, it's not the end' (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Hayley). There are also many 'primary endogenous' links involving the word 'like'. A primary endogenous link describes instances where a reader make a connection between elements within the Base itself ('within text connections', Hartman 2004: 360, see Section 2.3). For instance, 'there are little bits that are so childish, like the Warden painting her fingers with rattlesnake venom' (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Alison). Making primary endogenous links are likely to form an aspect of booktalk in most contexts, and therefore increase the prevalence of 'like' in booktalk relative to other spoken discourse.

Examining instances of 'like' in the GRG *Holes* transcript, however, it becomes clear that 'like' also occurs very frequently in instances where members report their original reading experience to the group. That is, 'thought reporting', where individual members report their interpretations, feelings and reactions in the course of their private reading experience back to other members:

was like, 'holes', is that an anagram? I was like Louis? No Julian: Seloh! Hayley: Or Loseh, li Stanley didn't know about that, and I was like, yeah well, we've just been told that like, good with my lefts and rights anyway, I was like, oh, yeah, go left and then, oh okay! Do trying like, to read everything backwards. I was like, 'holes', is that an anagram? I was like Lou like, just like half a paragraph before I was like 'oh my god it's the thing backwards that' when they said that Zeroni was black I was like, wait, when was that?... Yeah, I didn't get ? : What? I didn't get that. Chloe: ...I was like fuck that is really sad. Ted: Well that's h, (sing song) Men-tal. (Laughter) Chloe: I was like, right, I'm going to look for every single holes for onions. Oh yeah. Yeah. Chloe: I was like, that is pretty cool. Julian: I can't believ of Stanley being this big, fat guy I was like thinking, hang on a second, this is really c his mum he pretended he was happy, I was like that's quite sweet. Eve: But yeah that was be in tears' Chloe: Really? What? Hayley: I was like, I'm definitely not in tears, should have pro) Lucy: I felt really bad for him! I was like, your ancestors fricking hate you, (laughter) : I feel like it's because I, I was like right, well there's obviously a reason that w the fact his father was an inventor. I was like, oh well of course he's got bad luck, Ugh. Michael: ... When they were doing it I was like, yeah, it's not nice. (Laughter) Julian: Did right? Yeah, I tried to follow it, I was like ooh, yeah, you do have to take the right! important' and then like ten seconds later I was like (upset) ohhhhhh. Chloe: I read it on the blur the whole Zeroni, I just I (laughing) I was like 'wow', I was! Chloe: Even though you'd seen I don't know which I like' I was like (exasperated despair) ohhhhhh (Laughter) Hayle like, when I looked at the map I was like that's where I'dve gone wrong there. Eve: ged! (Laughter) Ted: (laughs) My left? Or? I was like, yeah, that's definitely not what I had in ' Kate Barlow's boots at one point. I was like ah please! Yeah. Chloe: That annoyed me (Gig . Ted: I preferred a self-contained story, I was like oh you'd rather just cash in a bit. really didn't get it and then I was like 'woah, it's a woman!' Eve: ...emphasis on the told that like, come on! And then I was like oh, no, I read that, you didn't. Yeah. important Eve: Yeah, me too and then I was like nah, actually, read too much into it. Chloe: , like, so every time something was there I was like, KB, Kate Barlow, that's gotta be Kate Barlow , that's the thing, I sat there I was like iks- na-dap' is that a?... Hayley: He threw initially that's what I thought too, I was like well they're just not the developed character : What was pen-dance-key as well? I was like, that's got to be important Eve: Yeah, me : Did you do what I did where I was like, I'm not very good with my lefts and was weird wasn't it. Chloe: And it was like, yeah, you're wondering why you might go to mething: everybody laughs) Oh my God. It was like, as well as going to the white doctor about

Figure 5.5, Concordance of 'I was like' in GRG *Holes* booktalk

This evidences the phenomenon Park describes when he characterises booktalk as a bringing together of 'individuals' literary interpretations as well as their worldviews and interpretive lenses' (2012: 194). In other words, the prevalence of like both evidences and supports existing research into reading groups (see Section 5.8) that sessions involve the bringing together of many interpretations (O'Halloran 2011) and exploring multiple points of view (Peplow 2011).

By contrast, in the transcripts of the Year 7 class who studied *Holes*, 'like' drops to the 33rd most frequent word, and the phrase 'I was like' appears only twice, in spite of the fact that the corpus is nearly six times larger than the one currently under examination. There may be other explanations for this contrast, in particular the conflation of time spent reading and discussing texts in a classroom context. This pronounced distinction does offer an initial indication that the GRG members share their individual reading experiences with the rest of their group with much greater frequency, or at least using different discourse patterns, than the school students. Whether this is borne out by a close examination of the Year 7 lessons, and why this might be, is explored in Chapters Eight and Nine.

5.11 Words and phrases associated with intertextuality in interactive booktalk: keyword analysis

Several of the identified keywords (Figure 5.4) within the intertextuality sub-corpus can, with reference to the actual GRG *Holes* discussion transcript, be simply accounted for and are clearly not linked specifically to intertextual booktalk. Lexical content words such as 'Hector' (the name of a character in *Holes*), 'rat' and 'Grint' (as in Rupert Grint) feature only because these things are discussed in the course of the GRG's intertextual booktalk and either not at all at other points in their discussion (as is the case with Rupert Grint) or proportionally far less than when the group are making intertextual associations (as is the case with 'Hector': note here that Hector's nickname 'Zero' does not appear as a keyword. This is because the group referred to the character's 'real name' in their intertextual booktalk specifically as they were considering whether this could be an unmarked reference to the film *Troy* and Homer's *Iliad*). Other grammatical lexemes appear to crop up as keywords randomly. In other words, they happen to have occurred more often in the parts of the discussion relating to intertextuality but closer

analysis suggests that there is no particular reason for this. Examples of this include: ‘a’, ‘is’ and ‘s’ (as in following a possessive apostrophe or ellipsis).

Other keywords reveal much about the nature of the GRG’s intertextual booktalk in relation to this text specifically, but not the manner in which intertextual references tend to be articulated. Examples of this include: ‘fable’, ‘legend’, and ‘oral’ and ‘tradition’, which are listed separately but in fact occur exclusively as a noun phrase (see Figure 5.6).

Concordance	Concordance Plot	File View	Clusters/N-Grams	Collocates	Word List	Keyword List
Concordance Hits 5						
Hit	KWIC					
1	if it was something about the oral tradition of storytelling; this felt like it was					
2	if you're saying it's oral tradition Ted: Yes, but that's what, that'					
3	: But Ted if you're saying oral tradition and the oral tradition is crucial then,					
4	're saying oral tradition and the oral tradition is crucial then, then you can pass					
5	all about his family history through oral tradition so is reading actually important? Refe					

Figure 5.6, Instances of ‘oral tradition’ in GRG, Session 1 *Holes* discussion

These terms indicate some of the generic narrative groupings to which the GRG assign the Base. This reveals the dominant categorisations the GRG consider, but again are clearly tied to intertextual booktalk of the Base, not intertextual booktalk per se.

Finally, however, the keyword analysis does reveal several words and phrases (discoverable through the concordances of the initial keywords as illustrated in Figure 5.6 above) which, on closer inspection, *do* seem intrinsically linked to the formulation of intertextual references.

5.11.1 The use of categorical assertions: genre/category assignation

Categorical assertions use the copulative construction, ‘x is y’ and present information as un-modalised facts.

Corpus analysis does not identify the 'x is y' construction as a common pattern in the GRG's discussion of *Holes*. However, a more qualitative examination of the intertextuality sub-corpus does show a few instances of intertextual references being presented in the form of categorical assertions. These intertextual categorical assertions in the GRG's booktalk appear when 'y' is non-specific, that is, when a reader is making a link between the Base and either a generic unmarked or generic marked narrative grouping. This makes sense: it is not problematic to assert 'x is y' if x is specific and y is generic, as the former may 'fit into' the latter.

For example, Eve's assertion that '*Holes* is a fable' assigns the specific text (*Holes*) membership to a superordinate genre (fable). In doing so, Eve may co-ordinate x (*Holes*) with other texts in the 'fable category' (y). However, when GRG members instead identify other specific narratives that they feel also fall within their constructed category (which might be expressed as 'x1 and x2 are both members of y') the way in which they express the link changes from categorical assertion to assertion of similarity. *Holes* 'is' a fable (categorical assertion – GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Eve), but *Holes* 'is like' *The Hare and the Tortoise* (assertion of similarity – GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Peter).

This analysis of the GRG's intertextual references suggests that categorical assertions do not generally occur when the narrative 'granules' are the same size, as such a relationship would be ontologically impossible: *Animal Farm* is *Animal Farm*, it cannot also be *Macbeth*. Thus, categorical assertions appear to be associated with generic intertextual references.

Upon completing analysis of the *Holes* GRG session, their *Animal Farm* discussion was then also analysed, looking for categorical assertions specifically, because I hypothesised that the hypertextual nature of Orwell's novel might prompt a distinct pattern of intertextual referencing. In other words, I suspected that

categorical assertions might appear when an allegorical relation between two stories is expressed - such as '*The Lion King is Hamlet*' - which can be anecdotally observed in other instances of booktalk. Given the established hypertextual relationship between *Animal Farm* and the story of the Russian Revolution, I was surprised to find that there are still no examples of categorical assertions linking two specific marked narratives in either of the GRG's sessions.

Instead, the GRG members hedged their discussions of the novel's roots in history because they still perceived disanalogous elements or alternative interpretations. Their intertextual references reflected a more nuanced approach than simply accepting that *Animal Farm* 'is' the story of the Russian Revolution; to them the novel was not only one thing. At times they acknowledged that this reading is possible, for example:

- 1) I mean I know like Orwell was writing it with the idea that they would all map to, these pigs would map to specifically to individuals in Russia but the, (laughing) you can pull them out to individuals in North Korean history, which happened after the book was written. So you're like, oh so Kim Jong Il is this person, and Kim Il Sung is this person and so on and so on, and, uh, it works pretty well. It's like 90% accurate.

(GRG: Session 2 *Animal Farm*, Roger)

Roger's utterance links the Base to two specific marked narratives (Russian and North Korean history respectively). Whilst he demonstrates his knowledge of the objective hypertextual relationship between *Animal Farm* and Russian history - and in fact also acknowledges that such a relationship with North Korean history is ontologically impossible - this does not result in him attributing different

degrees of validity to the two intertextual interpretations. This suggests that Roger sees intertextuality as a reader-driven rather than a text-driven phenomenon.

Like the online reviewers in the *Fifty Shades* study, the GRG also assess, rather than accept, the text-driven intertextual references in *Animal Farm*, and are unafraid of critiquing the proposed intertextual connections they encounter. In some cases the GRG accept the validity of the text-driven references. For instance, in Orwell's novel, Molly is a horse with a particular penchant for ribbons, sugar lumps, and being stroked by her human owners. When the animals revolt and take over the farm she appears initially enthusiastic but swiftly disappears, and is later seen in town pulling the carriage of a new owner. The GRG recognise points of narrative contact between these events in the *Base* and the Russian Revolution narrative:

2) Roger: But, but, Molly the little carthorse.

Julian: The one who gets out, I was thinking about her, yeah!

Female: The old one?

Roger: No, Molly! The one with the ribbons.

Peter: Sexy.

Adam: The sexy horse.

Roger: The sexy horse!

Lucy: Cow. Isn't she a cow?

Ted: Oh! I love the sexy horse.

Unknown: Sexy horse!

Julian: No, 'cause she was fed sugar lumps by her like owner.

Adam: Like the white Russians who were sort of members of the kind of upper classes who were then, they didn't want to be brought into the revolutionary ideal and were kind of forced out into exile.

(Sounds of assent)

Here the group accept a clear intertextual point of narrative contact between the two narratives, but still do not express this as a categorical assertion, which by contrast would have been 'she *is/represents* the white Russians who...'. Stylistically Adam - by using 'like', 'kind of' (twice) and 'sort of' to hedge the intertextual comparison - leaves room to acknowledge disanalogous elements of his interrelation, as well as the possibility for other interpretations. In other words, Adam frames his intertextual link as one possibility rather than a 1:1 assertion that this 'is' what *Animal Farm* 'is about'. As with example one, this demonstrates an equal status being afforded to readers and author in terms of the possible intertextual associations that can be made with the Base.

This is borne out further at points in the discussion where the GRG unpick Orwell's allegory. One aspect of the Base where they determine these clear points of narrative contact with the hypotext become problematic and unstable is regarding the role of religion:

- 3) something that I couldn't quite figure out was like when Moses the raven came back (2) and started talking to people about Sugarcandy Mountain again, which is obviously meant to be religion (1) um, and he's meant to be part of the establishment because the pigs give him beer, it's kind of like the authorities, but I think, if you're doing it as like kind of a, a thorough allegory of the Russian Revolution and the history after that, from what I've gathered there wasn't much in the way of sort of religious sentiment in Soviet Russia, unless, (2) at least like state sanctioned? I don't know.

(GRG: Session 2 *Animal Farm*, Adam).

Here Adam essentially reports a failed attempt at a narrative interrelation. Prompted by his knowledge regarding the novel's status as a hypertext, when he

contemplated the character of Moses and the theme of religion as it appeared in his narrative schema for *Animal Farm*, he sought a correlating feature within his 'Russian revolution' schema with which to make a point of contact. Had he done so this would likely have taken the form of a pure match interrelation. However, he could not identify this feature and instead offers some tenuous possibilities in the course of asking the group whether, in interrelating their own narrative schemas, they had more success. This seems to be productive in terms of prompting discussion and elaboration in the group's intertextual booktalk, far more so than when they make agreed pure match connections, which tend to be acknowledged and then left alone. The GRG make this very point; that if you read *Animal Farm* as a 1:1 allegory, you end up at an analytical dead end, and Adam in particular reflects that by attempting to do this he hindered his own enjoyment:

- 4) Adam: Um, yeah, I kind of, I think I probably tried to read it too much as a, like a one-to-one allegory. Like I was trying to figure out who (2) the mule was, like is he like the liberal proletariat where he's seen it all before and he's completely disillusioned from the democratic process, and the horse, like what's he meant to be? All of this kind of thing which, maybe marred my enjoyment of it slightly, but I still, had a good time.

Felicity: Why'd you read it like that?

Adam: Because I knew it was an allegory (faux offended) alright(!)

(Lots of laughter)

Julian: Everyone's allowed their own opinions Felicity, come on

Felicity: Chill Adam, just you know, enjoy the novel(!)

(GRG: Session 2 *Animal Farm*)

Roger too, suggests that hunting pure match intertextual connections is quite an unsatisfying way in which to read Orwell's novel:

5) Roger: If you're, if you're reading it as like a post-English degree student, you're like (in a voice) 'Ah, bring all my, like, English degree faculties to it! I'll do a, I'll do this interpretation, and that interpret-'; it's obviously about one thing.

Julian: Yep.

Roger: Like, there's not, it's really, really hard to make it about something else, to like, to read something else into it. So, um, (1) yeah; that was difficult.

(GRG: Session 2 *Animal Farm*)

Thus, as the rest of this analysis will reveal, the GRG's lack of categorical assertions regarding the intertextual associations between *Animal Farm* and its hypotext seem to reflect their resistance to claiming that one interpretation of the novel is objectively 'right' and has primacy over any other. Similarly, where this syntactic structure does crop up in their discussion of *Holes* it is only in the course of assigning the Base to a narrative grouping. Instead, the GRG prefer to modalise and hedge the intertextual connections they draw between Bases and other narratives. This seems to support Peplow's (2011) finding that reading group booktalk can incorporate multiple interpretations and points of view.

Further corpus analysis bore out this finding, revealing a pattern of words and phrases which hedge comparisons and identifications of similarity or difference. These will now be examined in turn.

5.11.2 'Like', 'sort of' and 'kind of'

Keyword analysis revealed that 206 of the 531 instances of 'like' in the full transcript appeared in the intertextuality sub-corpus. Even given its high frequency in the transcript as a whole, and relative to everyday spoken English,

'like' was still *unusually* frequent when the group were making and discussing intertextual references. Qualitative examination of the uses of like in the GRG's intertextual booktalk reveals two patterns which likely account for its identification as a keyword: references as simile (Section 3.11.3) and references identifying similarity (Section 3.12).

Many instances of 'like' within the intertextuality sub-corpus still crop up performing other functions such as fillers (in the same sense as 'um' or 'uh') and reporting the experience ('I was like'; 'you were like'). However the word's unusual prevalence in the sub-corpus is not due to these usages, which occur throughout the whole transcript, but can be attributed references which identify an element within the Base which is somehow 'similar to' another narrative.

'Kind' was also identified as a keyword in the intertextuality sub-corpus, appearing 53 times. The concordances reveal that this is exclusively as part of a two word cluster 'kind of', which performs an epistemic hedging function, weakening assertions about the text. 'Kind of' appears 15 times as part of the three word cluster 'kind of like' and ten of these instances function as hedges to intertextual comparisons between narratives:

were, and this as a kind of like extension of that format, like all it
same meaning into it, and kind of like the same metaphors. Chloe: And you read
really strange isn't it? Kind of like, where are we going with this with
its power is that it kind of like, acts on a level for children and
we do, that is just kind of like RUHRH kind of ending, it's, you
, so it's, it's kind of like-, what I really think is the interesting
think that's-, it's kind of like a, it's a, uh, it's
they've created it's kind of like a Lord of the Flies type society
Pullman, where you have this kind of like, you have these double standards of people
stolen from someone then you kind of like, you ruin that natural order Reference 20 -

Figure 5.7, GRG members' weakening assertions of similarity using 'kind of like'

'Kind of' is also used to introduce an element of uncertainty to a categorical assertion. As such, 'kind of' immediately follows 'it is' on ten occasions. Other

examples include 21 instances of 'sort of', which is used in a similar manner to 'kind of'. All three of these terms ('like', 'kind of' and 'sort of') serve to make the speaker's intertextual reference more tentative. The patterns observed in the framework generating study and the existing research into reading groups suggest two complementary accounts for why readers might choose to realise their own narrative interrelations in these hedged formulations in group booktalk.

The first explanation ties closely to the prototypically perceived purpose of a reading group. Whilst some studies (such as Peplow 2011) have shown that readers in book groups do like to compete with other members to establish their own response as the most persuasive, sessions are not generally conceived of as a space in which to impose one's own response as the right or only interpretation of the text (Hartley 1999; O'Halloran 2011; Peplow 2011). Instead, reading groups are spaces where readers discover and reflect on a range of interpretations (Hartley 1999; Park 2012). In this light, it seems natural that readers might prefer to present their narrative interrelations as possible connections or hedged interpretations rather than asserting them as objectively accurate. The tendency to present intertextual associations in a more tentative way – as one possible way of thinking about the Base – reflects O'Halloran's finding that reading group booktalk is a process of 'joint interpretation [...] based on the gradual coalescence of interpretative bits' (2011: 192).

The second explanation for this trend lies in the subjective and personal nature of narrative interrelations and the potentially identity threatening results of sharing them with others in the form of intertextual references. Suggesting the Base is 'kind of like' another narrative, or that a feature 'sort of' has a point of narrative contact with a correlating feature in another protects the reader from ridicule or

outright dismissal if other members of the group reject the validity of the connection made.

In spite of this prevalence of hedged formulations in the course of intertextual booktalk, some other words identified by the corpus analysis demonstrated that the GRG were also willing to present their intertextual references more confidently.

5.11.3 'All' and 'always'

When the GRG members made generic intertextual references, both marked and unmarked, accompanied by a highly visible point of narrative contact, they often employed the terms 'all' or 'always', the latter of which was identified as a keyword by the corpus analysis (see Figure 5.4). Here are a few examples:

All:

- *All* those old stories have barely anything apart from plot (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Ted).
- What I really think is the interesting thing about it is its structure, as in the case in kind of *all* plot-driven things (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Roger).
- I think its power is that it kind of like, acts on a level for children and acts, and acts, as *all* parables do (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Julian).
- That's what *all* those great children's stories do though, you've got to get rid of the parents in the first, like, ten pages, haven't you (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Roger).

All is also used in a variety of other contexts in the discourse surrounding the references, from assertions that '*all* boys love to dig holes' and suggestions the novel was '*all* a massive parable' to claims that a character learnt '*all* about his family history through oral tradition'. However, when it appears as part of the

reference itself, we see the same pattern occurring: ‘all’ this generic category of narratives have this point of contact in common. ‘Plot-driven things’ *all* have an interesting structure, ‘old stories’ *all* ‘have barely anything apart from plot’ and ‘great children’s stories’ *all* get rid of the parents in the first ten pages.

Always:

A similar pattern can be seen with the use of the word *always* which occurs less frequently (but is identified as more ‘key’) in the sub-corpus (14 times compared to 40 for *all*). In seven of those instances ‘always’ is used to assert the generality of a point of narrative contact. For instance:

- There’s *always* the sort of moment in perfect balance where everyone is paired off and everything is resolved and everything comes together and it’s just the way that storyline kind of works (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Alison).
- Orlando Bloom does *always* play massive wet wipes (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Hayley).
- Kids’ dads in these books are *always* struggling inventors (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Roger).
- I’m not sure it should be water-tight because the way myths and legends and family stories happen is that it changes every time it’s told a little bit [...] and it *always*, it doesn’t quite piece together in the way that, yes this is almost just one version of a story, of which there are many. (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Ted).

This seems to indicate a tendency to over-extend interrelations. Readers identify a feature in one or more archived narrative schemas and translate this into a generalised claim about all the texts they might attribute membership to the generic category. This allows the reader to group the specific examples they have in mind. These kind of generalisations could simply be characterised as over-

extensions or sweeping statements, but, could also be indicative of the dynamic schema construction occurring in the minds of the readers who make them, for the pragmatic sense is surely 'all the examples of this narrative type I can currently think of contain this feature'. That is: 'within the schema for this narrative category which I have currently constructed, all the stories I have drawn down from my mental archive fit this pattern, and none contradict it'. Thus, at the point they are made, these assertions are not generalisations, they are accurate reports in reference to the individual's current version of the narrative category.

5.11.4 Same

The word 'same' appears 14 times in the *Holes* intertextuality sub-corpus. It does not feature as a keyword, but was instead identified through qualitative examination as a word falling into the same lexical field as, and often co-occurring with, many which were identified by the corpus analysis, such as 'always' and 'all'. The word occurs when members make pure match intertextual references, such as 'it's the same way as in *Beauty and the Beast* when her dad is like -' (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Michael). In five of those instances 'same' forms part of the four word cluster 'in the same way'. 'In the same way' appears to also be used in the formation of comparisons. For example,

Roger: But, no, no, it's artifice that serves plot, but it's a deviation from kind of the norm that you completely like subliminate instantly, and accept, **in the same way** that when you watch *Superman* or something, you just accept that whatever he can fly, that's fine, that's not the part that you're like woah, he just hit that wall, would the wall like not crumble? And you're like oh, wait, he's Superman so, [group laughter]. Yeah, right? Like in *Superman Returns* where they're like he's powered by the Sun and then he falls to Earth because he's really hurt and they put him in a hospital, with no

natural light [group laughter] 'What the fuck?! This is a glaring plot hole, I'm furious!' [more laughter]. But the part where he's a spaceman powered by like the rocks of his home planet or some shit (laughing) (2) That is fine! That's fine, I've accepted that.

Ted: You've actually made book club more geeky.

(Laughter)

Roger: What I'm trying to say is, what, while you're talking in my language, I can understand this, stop. It's an example that came to mind to show that what you pride in any work of fiction is internal coherence.

(GRG: Session 1 *Holes*)

Roger appears to be compelled by the laughter and faux-mockery of the other group members to elaborate his initially vague pure match 'in the same way that when you watch *Superman* or something' to an extended comparison involving a scope refinement from a small group of narratives 'Superman or something' to a specific marked narrative 'like in *Superman Returns*' with several highly visible points of narrative contact. This then concludes with a reflective assessment which brings together the Base and the two (possibly more) referenced narratives to form the basis of a more general claim: 'it's an example that came to mind to show that what you pride in any work of fiction is internal coherence' (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Roger).

Thus, in the reading group, pure match references that simply assert the presence of an identical feature in the Base and another narrative are probed and elaborated, resulting in extended critical comparison which not only situates the narratives in relation to one another but, in this case, in relation to Roger's wider mental archive.

5.12 Reminding

The word 'reminded' was also highlighted by the keyword analysis. In fact, the verb 'remind' appears six times in the entire transcript and is involved in the production of intertextual references on every occasion. Concordance revealed that the verb always appears as part of a three-word cluster, 'reminded me of', which occurs in five of the references, always with 'it' as the subject of the sentence and always introducing (and therefore preceding) a marked intertextual reference.

Interestingly, the only other instance of the verb in the sub-corpus, which takes the present form 'reminds', is preceded by two past progressives ('when I *was reading* it I *was just thinking*'). This deictically orients it as still reporting the act of 'having been reminded' in the past, just using a slightly different formulation. It too introduces a marked intertextual reference:

- 1) Chloe: It's a fable though, like so when I was reading it I was just thinking this just **reminds me so much of** *Aesop's Fables*, like all of them, you just accept the rules of those...

Unknown: Yeah

Chloe: ...You accept that the fox will, you know, get its comeuppance. Yeah it's that -,

The five other references, all taken from Session 1, which include the cluster 'reminded me of' are reproduced below:

- 2) Hayley: It **reminded me of**, I thought it was really inspired by Rushdie, probably because I'm slightly obsessed with him anyway.
- 3) Hayley: Seriously though, it really **reminded me of** Rushdie because like, when I read Rushdie books they always have, you know like somebody

mentioned Armpit like not really making sense like you can see what Zero's name's come from, where X-Ray's...

Unknown: Yeah

Hayley: ... sometimes they just throwing random things that don't make sense, but the reader's still like 'oo, what does that signify?' And actually the writer's just having fun with you and just wants you suggest enjoy, enjoy like, a plot hole.

Multiple: Yeah.

Unknown: Yeah, not everything has to mean something.

Hayley: it doesn't all has to mean something he's just having a bit of fun with a, with a, with a bit of Armpit and-,

- 4) Chloe: I *loved* that there was that, um, sorry I'm just massively scooting ahead here but, uh, I absolutely love the light subplot running all the time, so like the little parallel. It **reminded me of *Watchmen*** with...

Multiple: Yeah.

Chloe:... what's it called? The-,

Julian: *Black Pearl*.

Chloe: Yeah, the *Black Pearl* story, like, that was my favourite bit of *Watchmen* as a...

Unknown: The pirate.

Unknown: Is it Black Pearl?

Unknown: Yeah, no.

Unknown: It's the Black something, Black something.

Chloe: Yeah, all like with things like that with this parallel storyline and it's, you kept, I kind of kept forgetting that Stanley didn't know about that, and I was like, yeah well, we've just been told that like, come on! And then I was like all, no, I read that, you didn't.

- 5) Peter: Yeah, over, over the top. Um, and it kind of **reminded me of** um, who else was in the class where we ran um, read, Julian Barnes' *History of the World in Ten and a Half Chapters*?

Unknown: Yep.

Peter: And it kind of felt as if there were lots of sort of, you know, reverberations in history how, you know, what, you know in, in the Barnes book it's about how boats keep being significant from like Noah to in the twentieth century being like having a hijacking on a boat and it's about how small things keep on going round in circles and that's why I thought you know, it's quite, you know, for a Young Adult book, having themes that sort of grow throughout I thought was, you know, quite good.

- 6) Julian: It works so well as like, it works so well as an adult, I think adults and kids get both out of it. I think its power is that it kind of like, acts on a level for children and acts and acts, as all parables do. And it **reminded me of** *The Alchemist* in the way of, it's parable but then the way it, the way it connects with children and adults is a bit like *Philip Pullman*, where you have this kind of like, you have these double standards of people where everything means something but maybe kids don't read the same meaning into it, and kind of like the same metaphors.

Chloe: And you read it back when you're older, you're like, oh my god, their worlds are completely connected and the subtle knife can literally just go mental.

Julian: Yeah. Like who said? Yeah. Was it you Lucy? You said you'd read it earlier but then you didn't really understand how you understood it. But you probably understood it on a level but then there are things in this book that I don't think you are, could, maybe get.

Hayley: Or maybe you just understood it in a different way.

The first obvious thing to note about these intertextual links is that they are all quite long. The shortest examples are Chloe's reference to *Aesop's Fables* in Example 1 and Hayley's initial reference to Rushdie in Example 2. Chloe was actually cut off by Hayley's utterance which forms Example 2, her incomplete sentence, 'yeah, it's that-,' gives every indication that she was on the point of elaboration. That Chloe's report of reminding prompts Hayley's, even though the two cite different narratives with quite different points of narrative contact, suggests that intertextual references beget intertextual references or, alternatively, that one reader sharing their narrative interrelations prompts others to remember their own. Hayley's utterance in Example 2 is also short, however it is elaborated in Example 3.

The length of the intertextual references that are described as the result of 'being reminded', as well as the tendency towards highly visible points of narrative contact, suggests that individuals making these links feel the need to explain them to an extent they do not necessarily feel when, for instance, they suggest a text is 'similar to' another. It appears that the assumption of common knowledge is likely to be much lower because the act of reminding is intuitively understood as a personal and subjective mental process. By contrast, Eve connects the Base to *Lord of the Flies*.

7) Eve: Like in *Lord of the Flies*...

Unknown: Yeah.

Unknown: Yeah.

Eve: ...Same thing isn't it.

(GRG: Session 1 *Holes*).

Eve feels no need to explain her assertion that it's the 'same thing' as in *Lord of the Flies*, which almost carries a sense that such a link is obvious to the other

members. Hayley in Example 3 feels she that must justify why *Holes* reminds her of *Rushdie*: she knows that it ‘reminds’ her; she does not assume it ‘reminds’ anyone else.

Across the two GRG sessions, members make several intertextual references which link the Base to other narratives they are currently, or have recently finished reading, or which they have recently thought about. If a reader is a fan of a particular genre or author, and therefore has a set of rich narrative schemas for those stories in their mental archive, they can perceive what others may consider to be quite dissonant narratives as closely related. This is illustrated in Hayley’s references to the work of magical realist author Salman Rushdie in Example 2.

The group find Hayley’s references to Rushdie hilarious (‘You feel *everything* is inspired by Rushdie!’) as she is well-known for linking many of the Bases the group discuss to Salman Rushdie texts, even though those links are often perceived as tenuous by other members. As a self-proclaimed Rushdie fan, however, Hayley is likely to have a mental archive populated with a rich set of narrative schemas for the ‘Rushdie books’ she loves. As a Rushdie enthusiast, Hayley is creating a recency priming effect whenever she reflects on and thinks about these texts, even if it has been a long time since she actually read any of them directly. This is the same phenomenon observed earlier in this chapter (Section 5.4) in Lord Wigley’s ‘Trident is like Auschwitz’ faux-pas. Given that the anniversary of Auschwitz’s liberation had very recently taken place at the time he was interviewed, it is likely this link came to Lord Wigley’s mind due more to the contextual priming than the particular efficacy of the link.

Readers like Hayley, who read many texts by the same author, or in the same genre, or even who have certain texts they are in her words, ‘slightly obsessed with’, may make frequent narrative interrelations between new Bases and their mentally

archived schemas as they read, especially if those archived schemas are very highly accreted. That is, because Hayley often thinks about 'Rushdie books' she engages in a symbiotic process of comparing and identifying both similarities and differences between those books and the new narratives she encounters. For Hayley, this results in a metacognitive awareness that she frequently makes interrelations with her Rushdie schemas ('I thought it was really inspired by Rushdie, probably because I'm slightly obsessed with him anyway'). Being reminded of other narratives the reader particularly enjoys or has recently read is therefore a key feature of personal response to a narrative as it is contingent on the unique nuances of a reader's mental archive.

Another trend, which can be seen above in the shift from Examples 1 to 2 (which happened to occur immediately after one another), is that there is often little or no segue in the conversation when people report being 'reminded of' other narratives. Intertextual reminders, when first reported, often constitute shifts or tangential departures in topic. This may feed back into the idea that all of these examples are presented as reports of narrative interrelations which occurred to individuals *at the point of reading*, rather than arising in the course of the group discussion. Thus, whilst members feel a desire to share the interrelations they made, there is often not a neat conversational point at which to do so. This would also help to account for the longer explanations and visible points of narrative contact, as sense must be derived solely from the speaker's utterance, lacking the co-textual support other references enjoy in the surrounding discourse.

If a group of readers are already discussing a particular aspect of a Base, such as a perceived theme, then when one makes an intertextual reference and does not explicitly identify the point of narrative contact, the others are likely to infer that it is in some way related to the topic currently under discussion. For example, Eve's

reference to *Lord of the Flies* in Example 7, occurs immediately after the group discuss the fact that many of the characters in *Holes* have nicknames which reflect their personalities or identities. This encourages the other members to seek a point of narrative contact to do with character nicknames in *Lord of the Flies*. If this is not immediately obvious, other members of the group query the link until a viable point of narrative contact is provided. Thus, had I not reviewed Eve's reference and recognised that 'Piggy' in Golding's novel has a nickname which refers to his fatness, I would not have made an interrelation. Crucially too, there is no way to be sure that this *is* the point of narrative contact Eve was referring to because it is not visible in the discourse.

With instances of 'reminding', however, the points of narrative contact tend to be clearly articulated: references are almost independent chunks of booktalk. These interrelations could also be more extensively articulated because they have already been 'thought of' and are being recounted, rather than many other interrelations which seem to be produced in the course of the group discussion as it occurs. That is, the reminding took place in the past and is now being shared.

What is particularly interesting about the construction 'x reminded me of y' is that it encodes a lack of agency on the part of the readers making the interrelations. In fact it attributes agency to the Base, or possibly to the act of reading it: '*it* reminded me'. An alternative explanation to this trend is that it is a simple product of the group members reporting their reading experiences, which happened in the past. However, our one instance of the present tense 'reminds' is introduced by two past progressives 'I was thinking when I was reading' and then again shifts agency to the text, continuing, '*this* just reminds me so much of'. This manner of reporting suggests that these interrelations spontaneously occurred to the readers, rather than being a product of their deliberately seeking out these points of contact. On

further examination, the sub-corpus contained several other instances of readers repeating their narrative interrelations as though they had no control over making them. For example

- made me think of (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Alison).
- the film actually slightly skewed my imagination of the book' (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Michael).
- it's an example that came to mind (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Roger).
- I had that in my head reading' (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Anna).

The first two examples follow the 'it reminded me of' pattern, attributing active agency to the point in the Base which prompted their interrelation. In fact, the agency seems to be stated in even stronger terms here: being 'made' to think of another text almost suggests that the interrelation was forced upon the reader, who had no choice at all in the matter. Similarly, the notion that the film 'skewed my imagination' frames the interrelation as something the reader was powerless to resist: they could not 'unskew' it even if they tried.

As with the six instances of 'remind', all four of these phrases introduce specific marked references and nine of these ten collective examples indicate interrelations that seem to have occurred to individuals *at the point of* reading. The exception is 'it's an example that came to mind', made by Roger in the course of his *Superman* references discussed above (Section 5.11.4). This is used as a post-hoc justification of his use of a long intertextual reference which the group seem to initially consider tangential, indicated by lots of laughter and Roger jovially asking to be allowed to continue: 'Shut up', 'let me!'. It appears Roger almost fails Labov's (1972) 'so what?' test here, with the result that he has to protest interruptions in order to hold his turn (see Section 2.7.1). The fact that the group were able to prompt Roger to make visible his points of contact and be more precise and critical

in his reading of the text has fascinating implications for the pedagogical context, and will be explored in more detail in Chapter Eight. 'I had that in my head' is another interesting example which frames the interrelation as an unbidden presence; neither the text nor the reader seem to have prompted its appearance, the interrelated scene is just 'also there'.

There are several other examples in the intertextuality sub-corpus which do not suggest a total lack of agency on the part of the reader, but do still imply that making the interrelation was not an active choice:

- I just kept thinking about (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Hayley).
- it felt as if (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Alison).
- it kind of felt as if there were lots of sort of (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Alison).
- it felt like (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Alison).

Though these constructions still maintain the pattern of reporting the actual reading event, none introduce a specific marked reference, as was the case with the previous examples, but instead link elements of the Base to generic narratives ('it felt like *a parable*'; 'it felt as if *the whole story was a kind of metanarrative*'; 'I just kept thinking about *the Wild West*'). Whilst this study is far too small to make any definitive claims about these correlations, it is certainly worthy of further investigation. This analysis certainly suggests that the act of 'reminding' at least seems to be associated with individual narratives rather than generic groups.

Whilst this section of the analysis has focused on the GRG's discussion of *Holes*, it is salient to highlight that the patterns identified in this session were also present in the *Animal Farm* discussion. For instance:

8) Adam: Blames it all on Snowball. It reminded me, it reminded me quite a lot of *Nineteen Eighty Four* where they said that Oceania has never been at war with East Asia they've always been at war with Eurasia.

Julian: Yeah. They had a lot of that though; you always had to have a common, you always had to have a common enemy.

(GRG: Session 2 *Animal Farm*)

5.13 Generic intertextual links prompt specific marked intertextual links

There appears to be a fractal relationship between intertextual references of differing narrative specificity over multiple turns in interactive booktalk. Namely, generic references often lead to a spreading activation prompting the production of specific marked references, linked by the same point of narrative contact. I use the vaguer term 'links' here because the pattern manifested in two forms. The first is:

A reader makes a generic intertextual reference and then follows up with a specific marked instantiation to exemplify their point.

For example, Felicity described *Holes*:

- 1) it was nice, **it felt like a parable** (GM). It starts setting out this nice situation (PoNC 1) you know, he has a family (PoNC 2) , they're very poor (PoNC 3), and then, terrible things always happen to them (PoNC 4). And then it ends everything works out for the best and everyone is happy (PoNC 5) (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Felicity).

Evolving her point, she then makes a specific marked reference, exemplifying PoNC 5 in particular:

2) it's like that scene at the end of, um, (3) oh, *About a Boy*, (SM) where everyone's actually, everything is worked out fine and everyone's got money and video games. He's got a cool new haircut and everything is all right [...] It kind of felt like that (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Felicity).

All five of Felicity's points of contact can be mapped onto the plot of *About a Boy* as a complete narrative arc. However, in her specific reference she refines the scope to focus in on 'that scene at the end' in particular. This pattern lends weight to the earlier hypothesis that interrelations made at the generic level are, at least in part, composites of multiple specific narratives rather than independent 'genre schemas' (see Section 3.10). What cannot be discerned, however, is whether Felicity's intertextual linking was to a generic 'parable' schema, which led her to think of *About a Boy* specifically, or whether it was this was the particular narrative interrelation she had in mind but first expressed it in more generic terms. Her hesitation in producing the specific reference, as well as the fact that the elaboration deals with her last PoNC (5) points to the former; a process of spreading activation.

This seems to support a mental process discussed above in relation to the use of categorical assertions: interrelations which assign a Base to a superordinate (generic) narrative group can lead to further interrelations with other coordinated narrative schemas within that group, that is, with other narratives perceived as belonging to the same 'category'.

The second pattern in the ordering of the GRG's intertextual talk is:

One group member makes a generic reference, with at least one visible Point of narrative contact. This leads another member to make a specific marked reference with a corresponding point of narrative contact.

There are several instances in the GRG's booktalk which follow this pattern. For example, Julian's reference to an author led Chloe to give an example using a particular work:

3) Julian: the way [*Holes*] connects with adults and children is a bit like *Philip Pullman*, where you have this kind of like, you have these double standards of people where everything means something but maybe kids don't read the same meaning into it, and kind of like the same metaphors.

Chloe: And you read it back when you're older, you're like, oh my God, their worlds are completely connected and **the subtle knife** can literally just go mental.

(GRG: Session 1 *Holes*).

It is not clear in this instance whether Chloe's specific instantiation should properly be considered marked or unmarked. *The Subtle Knife* is the title of Pullman's second novel in the *His Dark Materials* series (Pullman 1997). However Chloe's assignation of agency to 'the subtle knife', suggests a far narrower scope of the reference: Chloe is not referring to the narrative's title but to the eponymous object, the subtle knife, which has the power to cut doors into other worlds and which (unsurprisingly) features heavily in the novel of the same name. This technically makes this a 'specific unmarked' reference using a highly recognisable (surely the *most* recognisable) feature.

A more clear-cut example of this pattern can be witnessed in an exchange between Eve and Ted, which stems from a discussion about whether or not members were surprised to discover that the Warden of Camp Green Lake was a woman. Eve claims that she was not surprised because of 'the emphasis on the fact it's gonna be a guy'. She goes on to make a generic unmarked reference:

- 4) I thought, like, it's almost like um, you know when **a movie** gives you the heads up there's gonna be a twist at the end (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Eve).

The granularity of the narrative grouping is extremely vague; 'a movie' could be 'any' movie. However the highly visible point of narrative contact 'gives you a heads up there's gonna be a twist at the end' dramatically refines the scope of the reference even though Eve's indication about which narrative schemas she personally is interrelating is indiscernible to other group members, and perhaps even to Eve herself. The scope refinement facilitates Ted running a corresponding interrelation, using the point of contact to immediately generate an example from his own mental archive:

- 5) *Black Swan*. (Slow and exaggerated voice) "Are you familiar with the plot of (laughing) *Swan Lake*? If not here it is again!" (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Ted).

The same pattern occurs in response to Hayley's generic unmarked reference 'often the main protagonist of a book, is not your favourite character, like, **think of other books**' (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Hayley): there is no way to discern which 'other books' Hayley is thinking of herself. However, like Eve in Example 4, she produces a highly visible point of contact which serves just as effectively to refine the scope of her (unknown) interrelation such that other members are able to run corresponding interrelations and generate specific references Hayley has not offered. The group then do indeed 'think of other books'. Ted offers:

- 6) Yeah, *Jane Eyre*, what a bitch (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Ted).

Whilst Julian opts for:

- 7) *Harry Potter*: wanker (GRG: Session 1 *Holes*, Julian).

The differing specific instantiations result from the generic nature of Hayley's initial intertextual reference. Both Ted and Julian run the interrelation themselves, using the highly visible point of narrative contact offered by Hayley; they did not need to know which narrative interrelations prompted Hayley to make the reference in the first instance. Individual differences in the references members produced points to the individual differences in their mental archives: both hear the same intertextual reference, and both make corresponding narrative interrelations, just to different narratives schemas from each other and quite possibly from Hayley, though which specific narrative(s) prompted her utterance are hidden behind her generic assertion.

5.14 The contribution of intertextuality to reading

There is a limit on how discerning and critical readers can be when considering the instantiation of a feature, be it a theme, a character, a structure of a plot event, in its isolated occurrence in a single narrative. Intertextuality is a key method of engaging in critical interpretation because it is the mechanism by which readers move beyond discussing a Base in isolation to situating it, and its features, in relation to their wider knowledge. Intertextuality is also a key facet of personal response because it involves situating a Base within the reader's own experiences and own mental archive of other narratives.

A central way in which the GRG discursively develop and refine each other's arguments is by drawing on the unique make up of their own mental archives. The GRG frequently engage in a collaborative process of comparison: an initial intertextual reference is made, similarities are identified and then holes are picked in those proposed correlations; disanalogies are identified. What often happens then is, using this new set of features, a new narrative, a better comparison, is

identified and the process begins again. Earlier examples are not necessarily abandoned but incorporated.

This suggests that a heavily centralised focus on one Base leaves readers relatively ill-equipped to be particularly critical. In essence this leaves only the single incarnation of the feature under discussion available to consider.

5.15 Review

This chapter has offered a comprehensive analysis of the forms and functions of intertextuality in the booktalk of an adult reading group. It has revealed a number of words and phrases which appear to be consistently associated with intertextual booktalk. The analysis has supported the finding from the earlier *Fifty Shades* study that intertextual booktalk is inherently linked to personal response. The unique mental archives each member of the group brought to the meeting was shown to be a valuable resource which enriched their booktalk and enabled them to move beyond examining the Base in isolation. Similarly, the variation in the readers' narratives schemas, for both the Base and the other narratives they referenced, resulted in vibrant discussion characterised by the coming together of a multitude of different interpretations of the texts. This fuelled not only the intertextual booktalk but the discussion as a whole.

The next chapter will now shift focus to the final site of booktalk examined in this thesis: the class reader in secondary school English lessons. Before considering the particular classes captured in the research, Chapter Six will first consider the history of the class reader and the rationales for its inclusion within the English curriculum.

CHAPTER SIX: CLASS READERS: POLICY, PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

6.1 Introduction

Before examining the specific class reader units recorded and analysed for this thesis, this chapter first offers a brief overview of relevant policy and practices in order to contextualise the data. The chapter details the introduction of class readers as a component of school English and reviews the dominant approaches to teaching such units.

6.2 English Education in England and Wales

English as a school subject first emerged in 1904 when, 'the Board of Education Regulations required all elementary and secondary schools to offer courses in English Language and Literature' (Dickenson 2010: 20). From its inception, English has been designated as a school space intended to address multiple, not necessarily symbiotic, areas of teaching and learning. Dickenson highlights a twofold rationale for the subject's introduction. First, there was a perceived need for widespread literacy following 'a realisation that there was a need for a workforce that could read simple instructions and both give and receive information' (Dickenson 2010: 20). Second, there was a parallel emphasis on 'high culture, with the importance of literature as a moralising force being emphasised' (2010: 20).

In other words, both basic literacy, in terms of functional reading and writing skills, as well as whole text reading as a tool to stimulate higher-level thinking, have been dual drivers of English subject pedagogy throughout its existence. Today, 'English' remains a subject compiled of several different topic areas. Peim explains,

contemporary English teaching seems a strangely fragmented subject held together by a combination of individual practices that have become habits and very visible institutionalised regulations

(Peim 1999).

Marshall supports this conceptualisation of English, claiming,

part of the problem with English as a school subject and, so, with identifying its knowledge base, is that it has always been a coverall term for a number of disciplines. These have variously been described as English, language, arts, literacy and communication. Drama and media in some form are often included within an English curriculum

(2008: 8).

The fragmentation both Peim (1999) and Marshall (2008) describe is reflected at many levels, including the organisation of teaching in many secondary schools: some split lessons out into 'English Language' and 'English Literature', others timetable 'English' as a single subject (Marshall 2000; Dickenson 2010). Many schools additionally offer independent topics which would otherwise be housed under the 'English' umbrella, such as 'Media' and 'Drama'. In spite of these various incarnations, all of these school subjects, at secondary school at least, are likely to still be managed by a single 'English Department' (Clarke, Dickenson & Westbrook 2010; Marshall 2008). This means that a substantial number of skills and topic areas fall under the remit of the English teacher, from basic literacy and prescriptive grammar (that is, learning to use language and punctuation 'correctly') to reading fiction (novels, plays and poetry), from developing writing skills across genres (from writing for a purpose, such as 'to persuade', to writing a letter, to creative writing), to interpretation and analysing fiction and non-fiction alike (National Curriculum 1990, 2007, 2014). Dean argues that this

conglomeration of topics and curriculum areas within 'English' has caused many problems, claiming 'the subject named "English" has served for too many different, not always related, areas of consideration' (2003: 9).

The divisive issue, which has arisen many times throughout the subject's history, is the relative importance of the various components which together make up 'English'. Several reports attempting to answer this question have been commissioned over the last hundred years, most notably:

1. 'The Newbolt Report', *The Teaching of English in England* (1921);
2. 'The Bullock Report', *A Language for Life* (1975);
3. 'The Kingman Report', *The Teaching of English Language* (1988); and,
4. 'The Cox Report', *English for Ages 5 to 16* (1989)

These culminated with the introduction of the first National Curriculum in 1990. The National Curriculum secured English's place as a 'core subject', a status it has retained throughout several revisions (1990, 1999, 2007, 2014).

Yet the 'contested nature of the subject', resulting in a number of 'conflicting views and philosophies' regarding what English is and should be for, has also endured (Marshall 2008: 9-10). A lack of resolution, from the Newbolt Report (1921) to the present day, has resulted in a lack of clarity regarding what class readers are for, as well as how the various pedagogic aspirations teachers are tasked with achieving when teaching a class reader should be prioritised. For example, the new National Curriculum's statement regarding reading fiction at Key Stage 3 demonstrates this opacity stating that,

pupils should be taught to develop an *appreciation and love* of reading, *and read increasingly challenging material independently*

(*my emphasis*: DfE 2014: 4).

The coordination of these three objectives offers no indication to practitioners as to the relative importance of each. As a result, trying to identify the perceived purposes of booktalk in the classroom, and where intertextuality might sit within this, is neither a simple nor straightforward task.

The appropriate status of, perceived reasons for and, as a result, pedagogies surrounding the teaching of whole fictional texts within the English curriculum, remains highly contested. Dean has argued that the chaotic and eclectic nature of 'English' as a school subject has been detrimental to the status of reading, with a universal sense that 'reading is a "good thing"' but a tendency towards its neglect in lieu of a focus on literacy skills (2003: 9).

The Cox Report (1989) highlighted the transition from primary to secondary school as a potential flashpoint for the loss of coherence within the subject as a whole, arguing

English can seem at first glance rather different in primary and in secondary schools. Primary teachers normally teach English as part of an integrated curriculum whereas in secondary schools it is more usually taught in time tabled slots by subject specialists

(DES 1989: 57).

This identification by the Cox Report is particularly pertinent to the current research. Age 11, the point at which young people in England and Wales typically transition from primary to secondary school, has been repeatedly identified to be the point at which students' engagement in reading for pleasure begins to decline (Twist et al 2007; Topping et al 2012). Several other factors such as decreased free time, shifts in in-school activities and increased variety of entertainment modes to choose from, evidently play a role in this diminishing engagement in reading for

pleasure (Laurenson et al. 2015). However, it has also been identified that, as students progress into secondary school, reading becomes viewed, by teachers, parents and students themselves, as a 'learnt skill' and encouragement to engage in reading for pleasure, both at home and in the English classroom, is displaced in favour of a focus on literacy skills (Merga 2014).

This research suggests that, as students transition to secondary school perceived purposes of class readers may narrow to a more literacy and assessment-oriented focus, comparative to their experiences of in class reading in primary school. Thus, it seems likely that certain types of booktalk are may be encouraged whilst others may be neglected. This has been shown to be the case with science education, where multiple studies reflect a lack of space for argumentation within school science lessons (Driver et al. 1994; Newton et al. 1999; Osborne 2010). The role of argumentation in the English classroom will be discussed with reference to the data examined in this thesis in Section 9.4. These studies in relation to school science do offer clear support for the notion that lesson and task design can privilege some forms of classroom talk and inhibit others. These findings are particularly interesting to consider in relation to English, as O'Halloran's (2011) study found that argumentation is a central form of booktalk within reading groups. It is salient to consider, therefore, how the shifting emphasis on different types of talk in the English classroom may facilitate or inhibit students' tendency to share their narrative interrelations, and what the consequences for their private and social reading experiences of their class readers might be.

6.2.1 Five models of English

The Cox Report emphasised the necessity for a clear rationale for the subject 'English', and outlined five 'models' which aptly capture the different purposes this eclectic subject can, or could, perform. These five models offer a useful lens

through which to view current dominant approaches to teaching with class readers:

1. A 'personal growth' view focuses on the child: it emphasises the relationship between language and learning in the individual child, and the role of literature in developing children's imaginative and aesthetic lives.
2. A 'cross-curricular' view focuses on the school: it emphasises that all teachers have a responsibility to help children with the language demands of different subjects on the school curriculum.
3. An 'adult needs' view focuses on communication outside the school: it emphasises the responsibility of English teachers to prepare children for the language demands of adult life, including the workplace, in a fast-changing world.
4. A 'cultural heritage' view emphasises the responsibility of schools to lead children to an appreciation of those works of literature that have been widely regarded as amongst the finest in the language.
5. A 'cultural analysis' view emphasises the role of English in helping children towards a critical understanding of the world and cultural environment in which they live. Children should know about the processes by which meanings are conveyed, and about the ways in which print and other media carry values

(DES 1989: 60).

Goodwyn and Findlay report the findings of a questionnaire completed by 79 schools which explored practitioners' views of the relative importance of these five models (1999). They established that the personal growth model is most favoured

by English teachers, followed by cultural analysis (1999: 20-1), and that, 'the overwhelming majority of English teachers is in support of using all five models' (1999: 25). They argue that, 'for the profession the key term is 'Personal' as in Personal Growth and in personal response' (1999: 22) and that 'personal response to literature is another, almost sacred, element for English teachers' (1999: 28). In stark contrast to this, they also found that, 'the National Curriculum is seen as prioritising "cultural heritage" by four-fifths of the profession whereas the teachers themselves now place it as their bottom priority, with only 3 per cent placing it first and 50 per cent placing it last' (1999: 21). Both the cultural analysis and personal growth models suggest teachers prefer a vision of class reader booktalk which marries personal response with students making rich and frequent connections between the texts and their own lives. Both also place a clear emphasis on moving beyond the studied text. In short, both endorse the kind of intertextual booktalk observed in the GRG discussions in the previous chapter, and in the online reviews in Chapter Three. The focus of a cultural heritage model, on the other hand, seems likely to favour teacher talk which transmits knowledge about class readers and preferred responses to them. This suggests that a cultural heritage model of English does not particularly value intertextual booktalk, as personal responses and connections made by individual students would largely fall outside the scope of the perceived purpose of class readers.

Though Goodwyn and Findlay conducted their research sixteen years ago and the curriculum has undergone numerous changes since, this prioritisation of the cultural heritage still dominates the government policy rhetoric regarding English as a discipline and has particular implications for the role of narrative interrelation in the literature classroom.

The recent drafting of the curriculum at Key Stage 4 reflects a continuing emphasis on a cultural heritage model and an increasing tendency to malign popular fiction in favour of literary 'classics' and canonical works. A disproportionate emphasis on cultural heritage conceptualises the value of studying literature as a crude 'cultural capital' transaction, the idea that knowing about these texts will benefit students (Guillory 1994). The February 2013 draft planned to insist upon:

- two plays by Shakespeare
- representative Romantic poetry
- a nineteenth-century novel
- representative poetry of the First World War
- British fiction, poetry or drama since the First World War
- seminal world literature, written in English

(DfE 2013: 4).

After a consultation period, and under pressure from teaching unions and bodies such as the *National Association for the Teaching of English* (NATE) some of the specificity of this draft was ultimately removed (Gibbons 2013). The final version still requires a diet of 'high quality, challenging, classic literature and extended literary non-fiction' (DfE 2014: 18) but has made a few concessions to incorporate a little more flexibility in text choice:

- at least one play by Shakespeare
- works from the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries
- poetry since 1789, including representative Romantic poetry

(DfE 2014: 18).

There is no explicit rationale offered for these particular selections; for why 'representative Romantic poetry' has been included over, for instance, the

Metaphysicals or the Surrealists. By selecting out certain elements of literature for study, especially without an accompanying explanation as to why this has been done, the curriculum projects a notion that, above a threshold, taste is objective; that these areas of literary heritage are self-evidently more worthy of study than others and that benefit and suitability are homogenous across all young people. The cultural heritage view places a huge amount of faith, without evidence, in the notion of the hegemony of text quality, which suggests that some texts are *so* good that if readers are sufficiently educated to appreciate them then their brilliance overrides the usual subjectivities of preference and taste (Green & Brock 2000; Guilliory 1994).

The retracted draft reveals important evidence of the ideological underpinnings of policymakers which has resulted in a curriculum which emphasises exposure to certain, predominantly canonical, texts over individual suitability; without regard to students' mental archives and the knowledge and expertise they therefore bring to class reader units. It also illustrates the stable tensions which persist in English education between policymakers who consistently push a cultural heritage model of the subject and practitioners who then, just as consistently, resist. This suggests a disjunction in the perceived sense of the value of reading fiction with students between those who design curriculums and those who teach them. English teachers see reading fiction as a way to cultivate critical, thoughtful readers, not just of fiction but of all texts, with individual tastes, interpretations and identities: policymakers see reading fiction as performing a cultural capital imparting role where young people are students *of* Literature, not readers. This suggests that practitioners would broadly like to promote intertextual booktalk in school English, but that policymakers may see this as less important and prefer attention be focused on students learning about the class readers specifically, as these have

been chosen following a rationale that they will be more valuable to young people in later life.

Educators who advocate for increased attendance to student interest risk accusations of 'dumbing down' the curriculum (Gove 2011, 2013). This charge has been pervasive in the policy rhetoric surrounding education in the last five years and encodes a latent assumption that more 'challenging' texts equates to a more challenging curriculum and, therefore 'better learning', which will emerge as a result. Recent Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, for instance, made a plea for schools to return to 'traditional teaching values', invoking Arnold's 'civilising power of the humanities' argument which was the dominant rationale for class readers first being introduced to the curriculum in 1904. Gove claimed,

The Eminent Victorian, and muscular liberal, Matthew Arnold encapsulated what liberal learning should be. He wanted to introduce young minds to the best that had been thought and written [...] But, over time, that natural and uncomplicated belief has been undermined, over-complicated and all too often twisted out of shape [...] All children have a right to the best. And there is such a thing as the best. Richard Wagner is an artist of sublime genius and his work is incomparably more rewarding - intellectually, sensually and emotionally - than, say, the Arctic Monkeys. Yet it takes effort to prise open the door to his world. That effort is rewarded a thousandfold. The unfulfilled yearning of the Tristan chord, the battle between power and love in the Ring, the sublimity of sacrifice in Parsifal, all these creations of one mind can, today, move and affect the minds of millions with a profundity almost no other work of man can achieve

(Gove 2011).

Here, Gove explicitly acknowledges a hegemony of texts view, maligns formal attention being given to popular culture within the classroom, and unapologetically asserts a cline of quality seemingly based on his own tastes. He argues that, objectively, Richard Wagner is better and more ‘intellectually, sensually and emotionally’ rewarding than the Arctic Monkeys. Yet he offers no evidence whatsoever to support this claim. This is a quintessential illustration of a cultural heritage view and actively neglects the value of the mental archives students bring to their lessons. Using music as his example on this occasion, Gove asserts the view that any person who would argue that the Arctic Monkeys produce better music than, or who expresses a dislike for, Richard Wagner, is wrong. This *wilfully* devalues personal response.

At the same time, reading for pleasure (regardless of text choice) has been shown to be more important to a student’s educational success than their family’s socio-economic status (OECD 2002). It has also been identified as supporting healthy personal, emotional and social development as well as increasing general knowledge (Clark & Rumbold 2006). ‘Readers’ perform better in literacy, reading and mathematics assessments (Sullivan & Brown 2013). Reading fiction has been shown able to make people more open-minded and empathetic, and therefore less likely to maintain close-minded, antisocial beliefs (Djikic, Oatley & Moldoveanu 2013). One recent study has even found that reading *Harry Potter* results in more positive attitudes towards minority groups (Vezzali et al. 2014).

Programmes that specifically target increasing students’ reading for pleasure, such as D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything and Read), or E.R.I.C. (Everyone Reading In Class) however, focus on reading *in addition* to class readers (Dean 2003). Similarly, a recent recommendation that every school in the UK should have a ‘Reading for Pleasure policy’ (Moving English Forward 2012) also farms out strategies for

increasing reading for pleasure to other areas of the curriculum; either the library, whole-school programmes (such as D.E.A.R.) or distinct lessons within English dedicated to reading for enjoyment. This is not to suggest that any of these additional practices are a bad thing, though it is worth noting that the efficacy of silent reading programmes has been highly disputed (Laurenson et al. 2015; Merga 2013). On the other hand, collective efforts towards encouraging students to read for pleasure, at the level of both policy and practice, almost universally involves cultivating reading engagement outside of formal lesson time, whilst ignoring the ways in which we already read fiction with students, in the form of class readers. This suggests that facilitating intertextual booktalk in relation to class readers is particularly important, given that these studied texts are often already structurally isolated from young peoples' other reading.

Since the inception of class readers at the turn of the twentieth century, and especially since the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1990, 'English' has not reflected upon the changing nature of 'the class reader' in terms of the type of reading experience it offers to young people and their teachers. Nonetheless, there has been a creeping intrusion of additional requirements which English is charged with covering either formally by the National Curriculum (1990, 2007, 2011, 2014) or through the de facto pressure of Ofsted which compels schools' adherence to various guidance and recommendations laid out in documents such as the *National Literacy Strategy* (NLS) (1999), *Assessment for Learning Strategy* (AfLS) (2008), and *Framework for Secondary English* (2008) (Goodwyn 2002b; Goodwyn & Fuller 2011). These requirements include, for example, every lesson needing to include explicit learning objectives or the need for teachers to be able to tangibly demonstrate that their students have made 'progress' each lesson. Coupled with this, there has been a continuous swelling of the skills English teachers are tasked with imparting, from the acquisition of literary and linguistic

terminology to defined speaking, listening, reading and writing 'skills' (Goodwyn 2002b; Goodwyn & Fuller 2011; Marshall 2008).

Combining this with the continuing emphasis on cultural heritage as the primary purpose of the class reader, it seems reasonable to suggest that the class reader is likely to be moving further and further away from resembling the kinds of reading experiences young people engage in outside the classroom. However, the classroom reading experience itself has largely been passed over with a passive assumption from policymakers that studying a class reader is still fundamentally 'reading', regardless of how it is done.

As a result, there no longer seems to be a cogent rationale, if one ever existed, for what the purpose class readers is supposed to be. The remainder of this thesis will illustrate that the class reader – as a literary text - does not necessarily remain impervious to the piling on of other focuses, aims, tasks and objectives.

Dominant approaches to reading fiction in secondary school English now arguably use texts as vehicles to teach other (inferentially more important) skills and achieve other (inferentially more important) aims and objectives (Brown 2014; Vogt Vincent 2015). Class readers are often primarily used to facilitate and provide materials for other tasks rather than being viewed as a book to be read, thought about, responded to and enjoyed. Reading fiction as a class rarely seems to be viewed as a justifiable exercise in its own right (Cremin et al 2008; Kruger 2014; Rosen 2015).

This is clearly not a culture which has arisen from the profession itself. Goodwyn's (2002a) study revealed that, over a twenty year period, around 80% of trainee English teachers consistently self-identified as lovers of reading and Goodwyn and Findlay's research, as discussed above, found that students' personal responses to

texts was described in a manner ‘almost sacred’ by a majority of English teachers (1999). The devalued status of the actual reading of the text in class reader units also sits discordantly with current policies relating to reading for pleasure and even aspects of the National Curriculum itself.

6.2.2 Text choice

‘It is not that young people are not interested in literacy, it is that they are not interested in the literacy that we are giving them’ (Duncan-Andrade 2015).

In class reader units individual readers will almost never have personally chosen the text they are reading and discussing. Even for teachers, choice will often be limited by the books their department has available (Dymoke 2009: 46). Class size can also be a relevant factor, with larger classes sometimes unable to study a certain text due to an insufficient number of copies owned by the department. Many English departments also have established text choices: the same is typically true for reading groups (Hartley 2001). However, in spite of this convergent lack of individual control over which texts are read, there is nonetheless a crucial difference: reading group members consent to relinquishing this control whereas students, certainly at Key Stage 3, do not have this available as a meaningful choice. That is, excepting extreme acts such as truancy or refusal to participate, students must read the chosen class reader.

There is a strong emphasis at primary school level on the fundamental importance of getting ‘the right book to the right child at the right time’ (Collins & Safford 2008) and a secondary teacher with a strong knowledge of their students’ experiences and interests will be in an excellent position to select a class reader which best fits the class. However, this emphasis on the importance of good text choice often seems to get lost at secondary level: by Key Stage 4 choices become

externally limited by examination boards; financially driven decisions may mean that teachers do not choose a class reader based on which text they think would best suit the class, or even what they think the class would enjoy, but based on what is available in the store cupboard; many schools have a low turnover of class readers either because of cost or because departments feel they have well developed schemes of work and resources for particular texts.

The fact that teachers are rarely able to freely choose class readers weakens the need for a knowledge of texts outside the curriculum: it neglects the teacher's mental archive by rendering it tangential. Cremin and her colleagues surveyed 1200 primary school teachers and found that, in spite of three-quarters of the sample answering positively that they had made time for their own independent reading within the last month, 52% were unable to name six 'good' children's authors they could recommend to their students (Cremin et al 2008: 453-4). The same question in relation to children's poets fared even worse with only 10% of teachers able to offer six names and 22% not able to name one at all (ibid). This suggests that being a reader and being a teacher of class readers are distinct identities which do not necessarily overlap.

Cremin and her fellow investigators pointed to an 'overdependence on a relatively narrow range of very well-known writers' as a possible cause of this lack of professional knowledge outside the texts enshrined in curriculum documentation (Cremin et al 2008: 456). This study points to the fact that a mental archive reflecting a strong knowledge of texts suited to the age group you are teaching is not really valued at a structural level, with the result that engaging in the development and maintenance of such knowledge is seen as an additional rather than fundamental professional investment for teachers. Primary school teachers are not, however, subject specialists, and one would therefore expect secondary

school English teachers to fare far better if asked the same questions. Nonetheless, an ‘overdependence on a relatively narrow range of authors’ is also clearly reflected at secondary school, not least by the presence of a stable core of GCSE and A Level texts some of which have been offered by examining boards (on and off) for decades. A discussion in one of the class reader units introduced in the next chapter neatly illustrates this:

Female student: I was just wondering, how often do they change the GCSE texts?

Miss B: Ummm, well *Of Mice and Men* I did as a GCSE text, and it's still a GCSE text. [...] So, not ever so often. (4) Cheery(!) Right!

(Year 9, Transcript 16: 35:00).

The result for English teachers is likely to be the distinct composition of the narrative schemas for the books they read and the books they teach. The latter, especially if the same schemes of work are taught year on year, are likely to be accreted heavily with knowledge of, and preferred responses to, the lesson tasks. What is likely to decay are the aspects of the schema which are neglected; those elements which do not serve the lesson tasks.

The framework generating study revealed that one star reviewers, who did not like *Fifty Shades of Grey* at all, actually wrote *more* in their reviews than those who rated it five stars. This introduces an interesting new dimension to the consideration of text choice in English. Policy level mandates that students should be taught to ‘love and appreciate’ reading is often naturally translated to the idea that they should ‘love and appreciate’ every class reader or somehow this reflects poorly on their taste or their teacher’s inability to make them see how brilliant the book is: this is certainly the view expressed by Michael Gove in his speech above (Gove 2011).

However, the *Fifty Shades* study reported in Chapter Three suggests that legitimising students' evaluation, positive and negative, of a class reader would be not necessarily problematise compelling them to continue to read, interpret and respond to the text. This is supported by Hartley's enquiry into what constitutes a 'good choice' of text for a reading group. Her respondents' main reason for considering a book as an 'unsuccessful choice' was a homogeneity of evaluations. She explains,

177 titles were listed as going badly, the usual reason given being that general agreement in liking/disliking had left the group nothing to discuss

(Hartley 2001: 64).

Whilst reading group booktalk places a more central importance on evaluation than the school context, Hartley's finding is still highly relevant, namely that the ability to put forward competing personal responses as to the quality of a text is a catalyst for lively and fruitful discussion. This suggests that Gove's vision for the universal appreciation of studied literary greats would in fact impoverish class reader booktalk if it was realised: when all readers agree a book is fantastic it shuts down discussion.

6.2.3 Attending to students as readers: the value of personal response

As a subject, English has several direct correlates with activities that students engage in in their daily lives outside of formal education, in this case experiences of stories more generally and specifically of reading fiction. This makes the questions of perceived relevance to those activities especially acute to English, in relation to other aspects of the curriculum. Reading stories is something many student do frequently engage in as an out-of-school activity, especially when they

enter secondary school at age 11 (this is born out in the contemporary context by Topping et al. 2014 which surveys children's text choices, and is established as a consistent pattern by similar results found in Coles & Hall 1999 and Whitehead et al. 1977). The class reader thus offers a basis for comparison not available to many other school subjects or activities.

The most compelling research in this area is the work of Duncan-Andrade, who strongly advocates for what he terms 'teaching the whole student' (2010). In addition to being a researcher, Duncan-Andrade also works as an English teacher in East Oakland, California, servicing his own community which has serious problems with poverty and violence. He has also founded the *Roses in Concrete: Steps to College* programme which, following the core values he advocates, has experienced unprecedented levels of success in a community which otherwise has an abysmal record of school completion and progression to college.

Duncan-Andrade's position is that unless teachers engage student interest by relating school learning to students' lives, feelings, interests and experiences, the academic curriculum cannot be effectively delivered, and therefore neither the students nor the texts studied in the classroom, canonical or otherwise, are being served (2010). At the same time he argues, in direct contrast to Michael Gove (2011) that the route to engaging interest and incorporating personal response is not by compromising academic rigour, claiming: 'it's a false binary [...] you are not socially just if you are not giving kids an academically rigorous curriculum' (Duncan-Andrade 2010). In short, he argues for the effective integration of those narratives students choose to engage with as well as canonical texts, but with parity granted to both. This research similarly advocates for legitimisation and respectful attendance to students as the individual readers they are outside the English classroom, with their own tastes and preferences, interests, passions and,

crucially, expertise. Duncan-Andrade (2010) argues for the fundamental necessity of this attendance in a keynote address at Harvard when he discusses his role as an English teacher in relation to his students' interests in the rap artist and poet Tupac Shakur:

[My students are] more influenced by 'Pac, than any textbook we've ever produced. Any lesson we've ever designed. So feel how you want about Tupac, I'm critical of him as well [...] But what I know for a *fact* is that from my youth to the youth I work with today, 'Pac has been incredibly influential and as educators it is our *job* to understand: what are the things that are influencing our young people's world view? To understand those in a profound way rather than to continue to dismiss youth culture as a phase [...] what does it mean for us as educators to begin to be *that* compelling to our young people? [...] the reality is that until our message is as deeply compelling as their message, at least on the surface appears to be to our young people, we don't have a shot in hell.

Tupac grew up and lived in East Oakland, where Duncan-Andrade lives and teaches: this example is therefore clearly context-sensitive: he demonstrates awareness of the narratives that engage his students, and respects but also challenges those texts. In other words, his intertextual booktalk creates an environment of criticality towards all narratives, not just those being formally studied. His comments here reflect an approach to class readers and classroom booktalk more generally which focuses on drawing intertextual connections and holistically developing students' mental archives, welcoming their expertise and knowledge, and creating space for their personal responses within the classroom. Duncan-Andrade's research has clarified and developed my view on engaging students as readers, not just learners, in the English classroom: it is not a desirable

bolt-on, it is fundamental to a strong academically rigorous, socially just curriculum.

Beyond engagement, Gerrig and Rapp, drawing on the work of Gilbert (1991), offer a strong pedagogic rationale for an increased emphasis on personal response in class reader units, and specifically for facilitating students' frequent interrelations between Bases and their own mental archives:

the process of comprehension automatically leads to acceptance – readers can only achieve disbelief through effort, after they initially accept information as true [...] when topics have *personal relevance* to readers, they are more likely to think critically (e.g. to retrieve counterarguments from memory) about statements concerning those topics

(Gerrig & Rapp 2004: 268).

Gove's proposed focus on cultural heritage (Gove 2011, 2013a, 2013b) is arguably the most likely to disrupt students' view of English as a study related to their other reading experiences. If the curriculum is designed to privilege the cultural heritage model of English, as Goodwyn and Findlay (1999) find, then this suggests that the subject is not really designed to teach transferable critical reading skills but focuses on students accruing knowledge about 'quality' literature. Either a personal growth or a cultural analysis model of English would lend itself particularly well to framing intertextual booktalk as being highly desirable. A cultural heritage model, on the other hand, could actually see discussion of narratives other than 'those works of literature that have been widely regarded as amongst the finest in language', as distracting and even irrelevant.

This is especially pertinent when considered in light of two studies into reading histories. Lyons and Taksa (1992) undertook the *Australian Readers Remember*

project which asked 60 participants to discuss memorable reading experiences throughout their lives, mapping a 'literary history' of Australia. At a seminar in 2014 Lyons, the principal investigator, reflected on the project and its findings. When asked why there was no mention of the texts interviewees had encountered at school Lyons explained that there was no discussion of such texts in the oral histories the project had collected. The only exception was some participants deriding their experience of reading Shakespeare at school and bemoaning having to study it at all (Lyons 2014).

Another study (Goodwyn 2002a) systematically reviewed the reading histories of 240 trainee English teachers collected over a 15 year period (1989 – 2002) and found complementary results. These histories were created by the participants as an ungraded component of their PGCE course: around 80% self-identified as 'lovers' of reading. Whilst, as Goodwyn freely acknowledges, the data is methodologically problematic, the fact that these histories were written as a PGCE assignment would be expected to increase the likelihood of the trainee teachers reminiscing about their own experiences of reading at school, not reduce it. Goodwyn finds the opposite, namely a strong pattern that,

the books they read at school were either very dull or they cannot recall them at all [...] School was not inspiring them to read [...] This period seems relatively hard to recall as a reader

(2002a: 72).

At the same time Goodwyn finds that between the ages of 14 to 18 these same readers encountered at least one transformative, life-changing reading experience outside of the texts they studied. He explains:

For most of these readers there is at least one vividly powerful memory of reading a text whose effect is so great that things are changed [...] The experience is recalled and described as transforming. The depth and intensity of the encounter are remarkable still [...] I do not think the analogy is love exactly and it is not the metaphor they choose. The experience is also more profoundly disturbing and uncomfortable. The intellectual dimension is often the most significant: the text demands that they think again, that they change, even that they must try to effect change in the world

(Goodwyn 2002a: 73).

Both of these studies characterise the class reader experience as at best unremarkable and at worst unpleasant. Goodwyn's findings are especially salient to this thesis as they suggest that even the readers who choose English teaching as a career were not particularly affected by their own school reading experiences. Notably the transformative reading experiences the participants did report were not just about a book they really enjoyed but a book that they engaged with intellectually. This throws into relief the superficial distinction between studying literature and reading for pleasure, which can frame the former as necessarily sacrificing some of the enjoyment and authenticity of a private reading experience in exchange for significant pedagogical gains. The latter, in contrast, is typically thought of as 'simply reading for the sake of reading' with a total absence of learning objectives or prescribed analytical aims (Laurenson et al. 2015: 8, following Cremin et al. 2008).

Outside the classroom, narrative experiences do not tend have externally mandated requirements as to what the reader must do with that text; there are not usually tasks to complete. This is not universally true: as the previous chapter revealed, reading group members can also feel compelled to prepare for the

session and many view attendance as a matter of duty or obligation (Section 5.8.1). Book group reading is nonetheless still characterised as reading for pleasure. Regardless of this minor issue with the definition, Goodwyn's findings require the reading for study/reading for pleasure distinction to be reassessed, posing an interesting question: if the rationale for sacrificing enjoyment and pleasure in the class reader experience is that it is a necessary displacement to facilitate learning then why are readers reporting that their most intellectually significant reading experiences took place *outside* the English classroom?

6.2.4 Approaches to teaching a class reader

In a class reader unit in England, typically, the teacher tells the class which book they will be reading. Over a period of typically six to eight weeks, the class incrementally read the text, usually involving some reading aloud, and complete various tasks planned to relate to, or inspired by, the content of each lesson's reading (DfES 2007). When the class have completed reading the text some lessons may be given over to tasks reflecting on the text (Dymoke 2009). The class may also watch the film adaptation within this period (if one exists and time permits). Students will usually then prepare for some form of assessment. After the completion of the assessment they will then move on to the next six to eight-week topic. This overview does not of course represent the way *every* class reader is taught in England, but it captures the prototypical overall approach within the English curriculum.

Students at Key Stage 3 in England are often not able to take copies of the class reader home. This is for a range of reasons: the cost of replacing lost copies; the problems that arise if students forget to bring their copies to class; to stop students reading ahead to protect the shared experience of reading together. The consequence of this is that all of the actual reading of a given class reader must

then take place within the lesson itself. Students' interactions with the text can therefore be highly regulated: they cannot choose when to start or stop, or continue if they are really immersed and enjoying the text, or stop if they are not in the mood or bored, and in theory the teacher can stage the reading in episodes.

Many schools, including the one featured in this research, tend to plan lessons following a four-part design, with a starter and a plenary bookending episodic tasks within the main body of the lesson. This approach was strongly advocated for in the Department for Education's (2004, Unit 1: 4) *Pedagogy and Practice* series (see Figure 6.1) and was reinforced through Ofsted inspections.

Episode	Commentary
Starter activity	Starters are lively, engaging starts to lessons. They are the place to establish early teaching points or to position the 'little and often' objectives by revisiting and practising skills or consolidating knowledge. They also allow you to quickly establish any gaps in knowledge. They are often short (e.g. 5 minutes).
Introduction	All lessons need introductions where objectives and expectations are shared. Here the scene is set and the lesson located in the context of previous and future learning. Pupils should be helped to see the 'big picture'. Introductions are short, but be sure to allow enough time. They are often distinct from the starter activity; they sometimes precede the starter but often follow. You need to explain objectives and expected outcomes briefly at the beginning of each subsequent episode.
New learning or introduction of task	New learning is introduced by teacher input. This will draw on a range of strategies or techniques to engage pupils: it may be a demonstration or a discussion or use modelling to teach a new procedure. The length of the input should relate to the age and maturity of the pupils. In a lesson concerned with developing a concept, the initial input may be very brief and confined to a description of the task. When introducing tasks, make clear the expected outcomes and suggest timings. There may be a series of inputs during the lesson, each followed by a period of development.
Development	Pupils need opportunities to use new knowledge, understanding or skills. They will learn by applying new ideas or trying to generate their own understanding from data sets. Once again, the tasks undertaken by pupils will be determined by the range of techniques known to the teacher and related to the nature of the learning objective. For example, a sorting or pattern-finding activity may well help pupils develop an understanding of a generalisation such as a spelling rule. Once again, the length of the activity should be related to pupils' age and maturity. More challenging pupils often benefit from shorter and more varied episodes.
Plenaries	It is here that learning is reviewed and there is an opportunity to reflect on the learning process itself. Thinking about where this new learning can be applied or about what aspects of the learning process really helped pupils move their understanding forward can help develop pupils' thinking skills. These periods may be short (5 to 10 minutes, for instance). There may be a series of shorter plenaries throughout the lesson.

Figure 6.1, Traditional four part lesson plan (DfES 2004)

In (2007) the DfES released an exemplar plan for a unit of work studying *Holes* which breaks down lessons using this four part structure. There is little mention within the unit guide as to when the actual reading of *Holes* should take place, focusing instead on tasks related to the reading. There are however notes such as

N.B. The class need to have read C[hapters] 5-12 before this activity. This could be done in class (e.g. by the teacher/in guided reading groups), set for homework or partially narrated by the teacher, depending upon the class.)

(DfES 2007: Stage 2, Lesson 5: 6).

There is also reference to reading the text being set as homework, which is obviously not possible in schools where students are not allowed to keep copies of the text for the duration of the unit. In lesson 8 of the exemplar unit plan, small groups are set one specific chapter from chapters 15 to 20 to read and prepare a presentation on the lesson's key question 'How does Sachar use dialogue [in your chapter]?' (Stage 2, Lesson 8: 9). The suggested homework is then:

Class read C15-20 pp.69-91 in preparation for the next lesson. They should focus upon dialogue as they read. (N.B. Reading this section in class might be preferable or more practical in some contexts.)

(DfES 2007: Stage 2, Lesson 8: 9).

The fragmentation of the reading experience and especially how it is prioritised relative to other lesson tasks within this unit of work will be explored in further detail in Chapter Seven. In the exemplar plan, however, the status of the text is not emphasised at any point, and students reading the whole text is framed as not necessary. Suggestions that it might be appropriate to 'partially narrate' for certain (inferentially lower ability) groups instead of reading the text is also proposed. When students do read the text for themselves they are given a predetermined focus whilst doing so.

6.2.5 Researching students and teachers as readers

There is very little existing research examining student and teacher booktalk in the classroom context, and virtually none in relation to class readers specifically (a notable exception is Maybin 2013, though this looks at booktalk in relation to short stories rather than novels). There is, however a wealth of research exploring young people as readers outside the classroom (including in other school spaces) as well

as their attitudes towards studying fiction. That research shows students clearly dissociate their experiences of formally studying texts from reading experiences they choose to engage in outside the classroom, typically viewing them as distinct, unrelated practices (Erikson Barajas & Aronsson 2009; Fialho, Zyngier & Miall 2011; Nash 2007; Nightingale 2011; Richards-Kamal 2008).

6.3 Review

This chapter has offered a broad overview of the class reader both in terms of its history and the different schools of thought regarding its perceived purpose. The next chapter will now focus specifically on the two class reader units captured in this research.

CHAPTER SEVEN: RESEARCHING CLASS READER

BOOKTALK: DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

7.1 Introduction

This chapter now offers a comprehensive overview of the research undertaken in an English secondary school which generated the final dataset discussed in this thesis. Where Chapter Six discussed the nature of the class reader experience in England's schools, and the type of booktalk it was therefore likely to produce theoretically, this chapter introduces the real data gathered in this research in order to explore class reader booktalk in practice. Chapters Eight and Nine explore the role of intertextuality in the examined classrooms directly, this chapter will first outline how and why the data were collected, and the particular school context in which this research took place.

7.2 The School: Ambershore

NB: 'Ambershore' is a pseudonym. The following statistics are not exact. This is to protect the school and participants' anonymity as precise figures would make the school easily traceable.

Both sets of classroom recordings were generated at Ambershore. Ambershore is a very large secondary school with over one thousand students, and is based in the Midlands in England. In 2012, over 80% of students obtained an English GCSE at A*-C. The proportion of students on free school meals (FSM) is more than 10% below the national average (26.7%). The proportion of students with special educational needs (SEN) or a disability is also much lower than the national average of 8.1%. There is an average number of students from ethnic minorities at the school and a below average number with English as an additional language (EAL). Ambershore moved from being a maintained school to a converter academy

in 2011. At the time the research was undertaken Ofsted rated the school as 'Good'. However, Ambershore was subject to an inspection the week after fieldwork was concluded. As a result of this inspection the school's rating was improved to 'Outstanding'.

7.2.1 Reading at Ambershore

There is a strong culture encouraging reading at Ambershore. All members of the English department have friendly and relatively informal profile pages on the school website, each giving a brief biography about how and why they became an English teacher. Many of these biographies cite being an avid reader as a key reason why they pursued a career in English teaching. Each profile also includes a second section underneath the first listing each teacher's 'favourite reads'. Nearly all of the teachers have a mixture of YA and adult fiction on their lists of favourite texts.

The fact that canonical literature is mentioned, including Shakespeare, Brontë, Dickens and Austen, alongside popular contemporary fiction as well as YA fiction encodes a parity between texts regardless of age or literary 'status'. Reading canonical and classic literature is presented as something enjoyable, rather than as reverential appreciation for 'works of literature that have been widely regarded as amongst the finest in the language' (DES 1989: 60). Ambershore thus attends to a cultural heritage model of English without engaging in 'book shaming' or making impositions on personal taste: the profiles present a view that says 'we like these texts', not 'you should all like these texts'. In fact the teachers' profiles also include a few references to genres or authors the teachers do not like, actively presenting literary taste as something which is subjective. The notion of not enjoying a particular book is presented as perfectly acceptable and not threatening to a

healthy reading identity. Personal responses to texts also abound throughout the staff profiles.

Through their profiles the teachers also model 'enthusiastic reader' identities for students and their parents alike. This firmly situates the department as rejecting a pure 'cultural heritage' model of English where only canonical literature is privileged (DES 1989: 60).

Ambershore's staff profiles place emphasis on both the 'personal growth' and 'cultural analysis' models of English (and of reading specifically) the former of which attributes central importance to 'the role of literature in developing children's imaginative and aesthetic lives' and the latter emphasises the role of 'helping children towards a critical understanding of the world and cultural environment in which they live' (DES 1989: 60). Several of the teachers' biographies describe the profound effect reading for pleasure had on them as children and young people themselves. This presents reading as having had a fundamental and positive impact on the teachers' lives, tangibly demonstrating the potential for personal growth offered by 'English' and by reading for pleasure specifically.

The school also promoted reading in other ways. Throughout my time at the school posters were up around the school with the title 'Ambershore Reads' all of which had photographs of students holding up a book they were currently reading. The school also runs a weekly book club and Year 7 classes had one English lesson every fortnight which was a dedicated 'library lesson'.

7.2.2 English at Ambershore

Ambershore sets students by ability in English from Year 9 onwards. All Year 7 and Year 8 classes are mixed ability.

Ambershore closely followed the government's intended usage of the 'Assessing Pupil Progress' grids which grade student work using 'levels', using them to adhere to the *Assessment for Learning Strategy* guidance that 'learning objectives [are made] explicit' and are 'shared with pupils' (2008).

Students were acutely aware of these levels. This is frequently captured in the lesson transcripts, with pupils having extended conversations amongst themselves comparing their levels in and across subjects with their peers. The students were required to keep a record of their level scores for each assessment they completed in English and write out personal targets for improvement. They were also asked to peer mark each other's work and assign it a level themselves.

As such, there was a clear holistic promotion of reading throughout the school but also an explicit focus on skill acquisition and progress measured throughout the class reader units themselves.

7.3 Why Key Stage 3?

The two classes recorded for this project both fall within Key Stage 3 which encompasses Years 7, 8 and 9, meaning that students will typically be between the ages 11 and 14. At the inception of this research I had intended to focus on Key Stage 4, the 14 to 16 age group. However several discussions with teachers and informal lesson observations undertaken prior to recording at Ambershore convinced me that Key Stage 3 was better suited to this study.

First, GCSE English is a high-stakes assessment; making sure students achieve at least a C is absolutely crucial, not only for securing students' progression to the next stage of their education, but also for schools, whose league table placement, Ofsted ranking and often finances, are largely dependent on how many of its charges pass this threshold. Unsurprisingly, this breeds a reluctance in many

schools to let anything potentially jeopardise or disrupt Key Stage 4. I was also concerned that running untested interventions at this crucial point in students' education would be unethical.

A second factor was timing. This research commenced in September 2011 at the point the then Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, announced plans for a complete overhaul of the GCSE qualifications. Given the ambiguity and uncertainty regarding what shape these reforms would take, it seemed judicious to avoid undertaking a three year project which might be made largely obsolete by, or shortly after, its completion.

Finally there was the appeal of the relative freedom of the Key Stage 3 classroom, especially since the end of Year 9 SATs were abolished in 2008 (Goodwyn 2012). Without the national end of stage testing, the reading and discussions that went on in the classroom were likely to bear a much closer resemblance to the booktalk that occurs outside the study context. Key Stage 4 is often heavily regulated in terms of what teachers have to cover, exacerbated by the then modular nature of the assessments. This system meant that Year 10 and 11 students were nearly always working on formally assessed components of their GCSE throughout the two years of Key Stage 4. This would have meant that the scope for any intervention would be minimal, even if individual teachers were enthusiastic and willing. This view was supported by teachers I spoke to during several informal visits to schools and bears out the findings of a highly convincing qualitative metasynthesis of 49 studies which suggests that high-stakes tests, such as GCSE,

encourage curricular alignment to the tests themselves [and] tends to take the form of curricular content narrowing to tested subjects to the detriment or exclusion of non-tested subjects

(Au 2007: 263).

For these reasons Key Stage 3 offered the best site for this research.

7.4 Capturing the ‘class reader’ experience: methods

As was the case with the GRG, it proved impractical to familiarise participants with the recorder prior to formal recording commencing. This was due to the limited period between obtaining permission from the school to undertake the research and the start of the sessions. In fact, the very first lesson of the *Holes* unit could not be captured because, by the time all ethical agreements and clearances from Ambershore’s English department were in place, the unit had (just) already begun.

In addition to audio recording and silently observing all lessons, copies of all teacher PowerPoints and other resources were downloaded or photographed along with students’ written work for every lesson. In the case of the Year 9s this work was tracked by student, resulting in a portfolio of work and the assessment for every student in the class (excepting three missing final assessments).

An ethnographic approach would not have been suitable. Field notes, no matter how comprehensive, would have been too approximate and inevitably filtered through subjective interpretation of the lessons, without the ability to provide an accurate record for others to assess the validity of those interpretations. I neither wanted to be reliant on such impressions in the course of analysis, nor to make others rely on those impressions in my findings. Similarly, because linguistics is at the heart of all stylistic research, precision is key. To make claims about the effects of a teacher’s or a student’s discourse, to analyse it at all, the gist, sense or impression of what someone said simply will not suffice.

This is not to suggest, however, that the complexities and nuances of an environment such as a classroom can ever be accurately recorded in their entirety. The transcripts generated for this thesis cannot, for example, show body language

or intonation. The latter can in fact be captured by more comprehensive methods of transcription however this would have been so time consuming as to dramatically limit the number of lessons examined. The non-verbal communication is also lost; the transcripts cannot convey how it felt to be in these lessons.

7.5 Ethical considerations and procedures

Ambershore was recruited through one of my supervisors who knew the Head of the English Department, Mr J. I visited Mr J at Ambershore and explained that I was interested in the nature of the classroom reading experience and with how it contrasted with other types of reading experience. Intertextuality was not specifically mentioned (due to observer's paradox issues discussed in Section 5.6.1).

I told Mr J that I was interested in recording a class studying *Holes* by Louis Sachar; he told me that two Year 7 classes were scheduled to start studying the text the following week. One of the classes was being taught by Mrs K who was happy to take part in the study. I later returned to Ambershore to ask if I could also record a 'top set' Year 9 group. Mr J this time suggested I contact Miss B via email. I emailed her explaining the research in the same terms as had been used with all other participants and outlining what participation would involve. Like Mrs K, Miss B expressed enthusiasm and interest in the research and happily agreed to take part.

I spoke to Mr J and both teachers at length regarding issues of the consent of both themselves and their students. Mrs K and Miss B both signed participant consent forms. Those forms had been reviewed and agreed by the University of Nottingham's School of Education Ethics Committee. In line with BERA and university guidelines the forms explained that participation was not required, that participants were free to withdraw both from the research and their consent as a

whole without prejudice (BERA 2011). As capturing a complete class reader unit is very labour intensive and the data can potentially contribute to a wealth of other studies which could advance the understanding of reading fiction in school, the scope of the requested use of the transcripts asked for full exploration, to which all parties agreed. Once the transcripts had been generated and I had more concrete ideas about the research I wanted to pursue I visited Mrs K, Miss B and Mr J again so that they could agree to, or withdraw, their consent better informed about what future research would involve: all restated their consent to full use of the transcripts (example forms available at 'File E' on the attached USB drive).

With regard to the students, Mr J spoke to the school managers and told me that the school obtains full *in loco parentis* consent for all students every year to record them using either audio or video equipment. He said that there was therefore no need, from the point of view of the school, to obtain active consent from either the students or their parents.

This posed an ethical challenge: the data would be more naturalised if I did not have to highlight to the students that they were being recorded yet, even though legally I had full consent from the school and teachers, I was concerned about whether it was ethical to record students without fully informing them about the research and giving them the opportunity to say that they did not want to participate. I discussed these misgivings with Mr J as well as my supervisors. Mr J explained that the school often video records the students for various events such as lesson tasks, sports' days and shows as well as for trainee and newly qualified teachers to be able to reflect on their own teaching practices. He said that the students and their parents were aware that this happens and had already consented to this and to the fact that they would not always know when and where such recording would take place. From the department and the school's point of

view there was no risk of harm posed to the students by my recording their classes, no drastic changes would be made to the education they received and any minor alterations would only be made with the consent of their teacher. Mr J's view was that the proposed research did not extend beyond the scope of the consent already held by the school. Ultimately this course of action was agreed by both school and university and I did not therefore seek formal written consent from the students, though slightly different courses of action were taken with each year group.

Regarding the Year 7s both Mr J and Mrs K judged that, given their age (nearly all were 11 as it was early in the school year) the students were unlikely to appreciate what the research was about. We resolved to simply tell them that I was from the university and was researching their class. No attempt was made to hide the recorder, which was my iPhone, and whenever a student asked what I was doing I was completely honest and explained that I was recording Mrs K and their class. By halfway through the study all of the students knew they were being recorded and none expressed any form of objection.

There were two occasions which did merit further consent from the students themselves. The first occasion was when I took five students who had read the text before out of their normal lesson for two sessions which were somewhere between a focus group and having their own reading group. The group were told that their views were especially interesting because they had read *Holes* before. They were all asked if they were happy to participate. It was explained that they could go back to their regular class if they preferred and they would not be in any trouble. The boys were all happy to consent to participate. Students were asked whether it was alright to record them and whether they would like to be in charge of the recorder. They were extremely happy with this course of action and shared responsibility for the recorder.

The second occasion occurred after the class had finished reading *Holes*. Mrs K and myself devised a task where the students formed their own mini reading groups and discussed the text using a series of questions on a worksheet as a guide. Each group were given a recorder and were told that did not need to have one if they did not want it or could simply turn it off. Boys from the earlier 'reading group' were appointed as 'King Lizards' of the small groups (there are lizards in the novel) and were tasked with explaining about the recorder to the other students. We also circulated the groups both whilst they were giving these explanations to make sure everyone understood, as well as during the task to check everyone was still happy with being recorded. In the event all groups were happy and the recorders remained on.

The question of student consent was revisited with Mr J and Miss B when I returned to Ambershore to record the Year 9 class. We all felt that, because the students were slightly older, it was important to tell them that they were being recorded and give them the opportunity to object, as well as to ask any questions they might have. Unfortunately, Miss B forgot to do this for both of the first two classes and so it was not until the beginning of the third lesson that the students were actively informed that they were being recorded (though some had already spotted the recorder and all had noted that I was present observing their class). Again, legally this was not an issue as the school had consent and had granted me the right to record. However, from an ethical perspective it merited further consideration. I contemplated deleting the first two Year 9 recordings but ultimately decided not to do so because, when the students were informed, they were happy to be recorded, giving their consent retrospectively. In addition, as discussed above, the first Year 7 lesson had been missed from the first set of transcripts. On reflection, I judged that the importance of accurately capturing a complete class reader experience better served the ethical integrity of the research

than would have been achieved by omitting the first two recordings. Again, this was discussed extensively with, and approved by, my lead supervisor.

About halfway through recording one student, Daniel, who was seated very near the recorder, decided it made him uncomfortable: I asked if he would be happy for me to move the recorder to another place in the classroom where it would only pick up his voice if he was answering questions in whole group discussions. He was happy with this and so the recorder was simply moved to the other side of the room. The section of transcript I suspected had caused Daniel's initial discomfort has also been omitted from the final transcripts. As with the Year 7s, Miss B and I devised a lesson task involving putting the students into reading groups and giving them some topics to discuss and questions to complete. Again the students took charge of the recorders themselves. Daniel's group were not given a recorder.

7.6 Transcript set one: Year 7 reading *Holes*

Year 7 teacher: Mrs K

Class reader: *Holes* (Sachar 1999)

The first set of transcripts was generated from recordings made between March and June 2013 with Mrs K reading *Holes* with a mixed ability Year 7 group. Mrs K had joined the school in September 2012, had over 10 years' experience and had worked in four schools prior to Ambershore. Mrs K had taught *Holes* several times before but the unit of work she followed was Ambershore's. She did not choose the class reader herself but was very happy to teach it as she liked it and thought it was a good book that students nearly always enjoyed. Mrs K left Ambershore to take on a new role at another school at the end of the academic year.

7.6.1 Overview

There were 29 students in the Year 7 class which, like all Year 7 and 8 classes at Ambershore, was mixed ability. The class were also a form group and had many of their lessons together across several subjects. The class were known in the school as being exceptionally pleasant, polite and friendly. This was Mrs K's view and reflects my experience of observing their lessons. The students generally seemed to enjoy the classes and nearly all reported that they liked *Holes* itself. There were a few complaints from boys that nobody died and there were no explosions at the end, a trend interestingly mirrored in comments from the men in the GRG, but otherwise evaluations were overwhelmingly positive.

There were very few behaviour problems in the class excepting with one student, Albus. Albus had already been moved from another form group for disruptive behaviour, and because he felt other students did not like and were bullying him. Albus' reports were taken seriously by the school but ultimately it was determined that in most cases other students were reacting negatively to unpleasant behaviour instigated by Albus himself. His attendance was poor and deteriorated throughout the unit. Near the end of the unit Albus was diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum. As a result of further incidents the school decided it would be best for Albus and the other students if he moved to a Pupil Referral Unit better equipped to meet his needs.

Students were not allowed to take copies of *Holes* away from the lessons. There were enough texts for nearly all students to have their own copy in class though sometimes a few students had to share between two.

7.6.2 Scheme of Work

A scheme of work refers to a school's medium term planning, that is, a document outlining a unit of work, such as studying a class reader (DfCSF 2008). The original

scheme of work for the recorded Year 7 unit had been designed by a previous member of the English department at Ambershore: Mrs K did not design the plan but generally adhered quite closely to it. As discussed earlier in this chapter, all lessons at Ambershore loosely followed a four part lesson plan with a starter, introduction, development and plenary.

As the unit progressed Mrs K changed some of the lesson tasks and, around halfway through, felt she had fallen behind with the reading. Two lessons (12 and 13) were given over to reading the novel. The unit lasted 24 lessons and took place over seven school weeks. Mrs K did a large amount of the reading of the text herself. Student readers always volunteered rather than being selected.

Prior to reading *Holes* the class had studied a mystery poem called *Charlotte Dymond*. After reading *Holes* they moved onto a four week unit on 'Shakespeare's Ghosts'.

7.6.3 Assessment

The assessment for the Year 7 class reader was writing a book review. All assessments were photographed and reviewed but have not been closely analysed.

7.6.4 Rationale for recording

Holes is a very popular text at Key Stage 3. As a result there is a wealth of associated teaching resources and materials, including the exemplar unit of work plan released by the DfES and discussed in the previous chapter (2007, Section 6.1.4). This makes it possible to assert the typicality of the recorded unit relative to other schemes of work in other schools around the country. The unit design Ambershore followed is endorsed as an approach by the Department for Education.

7.7 Transcript set two: Year 9 reading *Animal Farm*

Year 9 teacher: Miss B

Class reader: *Animal Farm* (Orwell 1945)

The second set of transcripts was generated from classes recorded in the following school year between October 2013 and January 2014 with a different teacher, Miss B, reading *Animal Farm* with a 'top set' Year 9 group. Like Mrs K, Miss B had only recently joined the school, in September 2013, when her lessons were recorded. Miss B had been teaching for five years. She had taught *Animal Farm* once before as a GCSE (Key Stage 4) text but never with a Year 9 group. Miss B has an MA in Education and had undertaken some of her own research with her classes before; she was interested in the research and enthusiastic about participating.

I have remained in touch with Mrs K, Miss B and Mr J and have shared my analysis and findings with them. All have offered insightful and useful reflections about the project and remain interested in both my research and education research more generally. Both Mrs K and Miss B have been provided with copies of their own set of transcripts.

7.7.1 Overview

The Year 9 class were one of two 'top sets' at Ambershore. There were 34 students in the class which is slightly more than Ambershore's general limit of 32. The increase was due to a particularly high ability year group and Mr J, the department head, did not want to place students he felt should be in a 'top set' in a slightly lower ability set due to a lack of space. The class were much more lively and talkative than the Year 7 group and Miss B commented several times that they were one of the rowdiest she had ever taught. This did not mean that the class were badly behaved but did mean they had to be repeatedly reminded to stop talking

and probably took longer than many classes to settle down and be quiet after group discussions.

Miss B did choose the class reader, though only from the choice of *Lord of the Flies* (Golding 1954) or *Animal Farm* (Orwell 1945). She had originally intended to teach *Lord of the Flies* but changed her mind at the last minute and switched to *Animal Farm* instead. She explained that she thought Golding's novel the better book and that it was her favourite of the two. However, she decided to choose *Animal Farm* on the grounds that she had taught it previously whereas she had never taught *Lord of the Flies* and she thought the class would get a lot out of the Orwell text.

Students were not allowed to take copies of the text away from the lessons. There were enough copies for students to share one between two.

7.7.2 Scheme of Work

Like Mrs K, Miss B also inherited most of her scheme of work from a pre-existing set of departmental resources. Like Mrs K, though to a greater extent, she adapted these materials as she went. There was no overview document of the unit with all the lessons outlined as Mrs K had had but there was a wealth of departmental materials including PowerPoints for every lesson, often with multiple versions to choose from. Miss B tended to pick a departmental PowerPoint and adapt, extend and personalise it.

The unit lasted 23 lessons and took place over eight school weeks. Miss B usually started the reading herself and tended to read a page or two before passing onto the students. The first student either volunteered or was selected by Miss B and after a minimum of a paragraph chose another student to 'pass on' to.

In nearly every lesson in this unit the actual reading of the text formed one (often quite small) component, typically taking around ten to fifteen minutes of the fifty-five minute lesson.

The unit was introduced to the students as ‘The Novel Unit’. A slip of paper was distributed to them and an identical electronic version of this information was then displayed on the PowerPoint at some point (often the beginning) during most lessons (Figure 7.1 below).

The Novel Unit- What are we doing?

<u>Learning Objective:</u> RAF 5- To explain and comment on writers’ use of language RAF 7- To relate texts to their social, cultural and historical traditions.	<u>Lesson Outcomes:</u> <u>Level 8-</u> - Respond to the overall effect of the text - Understanding and critical evaluation of the writer’s purposes and how these are articulated throughout the text. Sustain a critical analysis/evaluation of the text - Show an appreciation of how it relates to context and explores the meanings produced from it. <u>Level 7-</u> - Develop precise, perceptive analysis of how language is used, - Appreciation of how the writer’s language choices contribute to the overall effect on the reader - Some analysis of how different meanings and interpretations of a text relate to the contexts in which it was written or read.
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Figure 7.1, Year 9 *Animal Farm*: Introduction to the unit

This document clearly characterises the text as an object of study. Words such as ‘enjoyment’, ‘engagement’ and really any reference to personal responses from the students are absent. Instead, the unit’s ‘outcomes’ and ‘objectives’ are all heavily focused on the mechanics of how the text functions, how it was put together and how it affects its readership.

Figure 7.1 was shown at some point in almost every lesson. There were also numerous points throughout the unit when the lexis of assessment was more prominent, most notably when the students were tasked with writing ‘PEE

paragraphs' and in preparation for their final assessment. PEE is a common acronym in school English, standing for 'Point, Example, Explanation'; it is used as a scaffold to try to improve students' analysis of the texts they study and especially to link their points to the text and offer evidence, in the form of quoted material, to support their arguments (Wright 2008; Clarke, Dickenson & Westbrook 2010).

7.7.3 Assessment

The Year 9 students' final essays are analysed in Chapter Nine. The context and content of the assessment therefore merits describing in closer detail. The assessment set at the end of this unit was for the students to write an essay titled: 'Explore how Orwell portrays the theme of x in *Animal Farm*.' Students were allowed to pick their own theme for examination.

To support her students in meeting these criteria in their final essays, Miss B distributed Ambershore's assessment guide which both relists these criteria and includes a checklist for the students to use (Figure 7.2):

Checklist:	
1. Introduction-	Explain what <i>Animal Farm</i> is about considering: • Themes • Orwell's purpose • Use of allegory • Context of when it was written and Russian history
2. Where is the theme introduced?	• Focus on an extract to explain how the theme is presented • Use a range of quotes • Analyse language features • Developed explanations making more than one suggestion of the effect based on a range of language features • Explain Orwell's purpose- what's he trying to make the reader think? • How does it link to context
3. Developed?	• Focus on one or two more extracts to explain how the theme is developed doing all of the above.
4. Overall message?	• What is the overall effect on the reader? • How effective is the overall message of the text?

Figure 7.2, Year 9 *Animal Farm*: final assessment checklist

The students were told that they needed to meet the criteria listed in the level specifications, using the PEE paragraph format, which is alternatively stated in section 2 of their checklist. At other points within the scheme of work the term 'PEE paragraphs' is used directly and Miss B also uses this term multiple times when talking the class through what they need to do in the lessons leading up to their assessment. When asked to anonymously reflect on the unit, 11 students cited 'PEE paragraphs' as the 'thing they didn't like'.

Key terms from the level descriptions of the relevant 'Reading Assessment Focuses' (DfE 2008) criteria are incorporated into the checklist, such as 'overall effect' and 'analyse language features'. Some are modified to apply specifically to *Animal Farm*: 'writer's purpose' becomes 'Orwell's purpose', 'context in which it

was written or read' becomes 'context of when it was written and Russian history'. There is also some reframing and explanation of the terms, for instance 'overall effect' appears under the alternative heading 'overall message' and has the additional explanation 'How effective is the overall message of the text?' Similarly, 'explain Orwell's effect' is elaborated with the question 'what is he trying to make the reader think?'

7.7.4 Rationale for recording

The decision to capture another class reader unit was taken after the Year 7 lessons had been recorded and fully transcribed. Preliminary analysis had revealed that there were very few instances of students making intertextual references in the first set of transcripts. I hypothesised that this might be because they were so young and quite early in their reading careers; perhaps they had less material in their mental archives to forge intertextual connections with. Year 9 is the final stage of Key Stage 3 and it seemed that a high ability group would be the most likely to engage in independent critical interpretations and personal response, which analysis of both the *Fifty Shades* and GRG data suggested was closely related to the production of intertextual references.

Copies of both sets of transcripts are available to browse at 'File C' on the attached USB drive.

7.8 Class reader booktalk: data overview

Due to constraints on both time and resources, five classes from the *Animal Farm* unit were not ultimately transcribed: two around the middle of the unit and three nearer the end. The recordings have been reviewed multiple times; there is nothing within them which contradicts any of the following analysis.

Corpus software has been used to support targeted searches for particular words and phrases, and in some cases the number of times these terms appear has been included. It is important to note, therefore, that these figures accurately report the number of times a certain word or phrase appears in the 320,000 corpus of classroom transcripts, which include the complete Year 7 class reader unit (excepting the very first lesson) and most of the *Animal Farm* unit, but not the two units in their entirety. The addition of the five missing transcripts would add further examples supporting the analyses and would neither undermine nor contradict any findings.

All of the Year 7 recordings were transcribed by myself. The Year 9 classes, on the other hand, are a combination of my own transcription and professional transcription, predominantly the latter. All of the recordings and transcripts which were outsourced were reviewed. I am confident regarding their accuracy, however they are transcribed to a lower level of detail with fillers and false starts often being omitted. This does not present a methodological problem as this is not a quantitative corpus study and no statistical claims are being made regarding the prevalence or absence of such features in the two sites of booktalk nor between the two units. Fillers and false starts play no grammatical or lexical role within an utterance and are often therefore omitted (such as '*kind of, kind of, um, the thing is*'; '*like, um, well it's*'). Therefore, none of the omissions by the professional transcribers are problematic.

7.9 Review

Table 7.1, Class reader transcripts: overview

	Class Reader Transcripts: Set 1	Class Reader Transcripts: Set 2
Year Group	7	9
Age of students	11-12 years old	13-14 years old
Teacher	Mrs K	Miss B
Class reader	<i>Holes</i> (Sachar 1999)	<i>Animal Farm</i> (Orwell 1945)
Length of class reader	c.47,000 words	c.30,000 words
Setting?	No setting: mixed ability	Set by ability: top set
No. of students	29	34
No. of students who had read the text before	5	3
Size of corpus	200,413 words	120,831 words
Period collected	March 2013 – June 2013	October 2013 – January 2014
Transcriber	All transcribed by researcher	Combination of researcher and professional transcribers
Complete set of recordings?	Yes, except first lesson (unit started by the time permission to record was obtained)	Yes, except lesson reading the final five pages of the text (cancelled lesson was reinstated at the last moment)
Did researcher observe all lessons?	Yes, except two lessons: teacher was given a recorder	Yes, except two lessons: teacher was given a recorder
Were all recorded lessons transcribed?	Yes	No

CHAPTER EIGHT: CLASS READERS: INTERTEXTUALITY, TIME AND PRIORITISATION

8.1 Introduction

This chapter first reports the form and scope of the intertextuality found in the class reader booktalk. It then considers the nature of the classroom reading experience, and the type of booktalk it is therefore likely to produce, relative to the reading group context. It explores why initial intertextual references in the school English lessons rarely evolve into extended intertextual booktalk. In particular it considers the teachers' conceptualisations of time, the idea of the 'planned lesson' and how the activities within a lesson are prioritised. Finally, reflecting on this analysis, a preliminary assessment is offered as to why intertextuality may be flourishing in the GRG discussions but be virtually absent from the school lessons.

8.2 Intertextuality in class reader booktalk: method

In order to analyse the intertextuality in booktalk in the class reader transcripts, the same approach was adopted as with the reading group and book review data. That is, the transcripts were read multiple times and references were identified using definition of an intertextual reference as has been utilised throughout this research ('any articulated, examinable product of a narrative interrelation: the textual trace of the cognitive act of making a link between one narrative and at least one other', Section 2.5). One complete lesson transcript was then given to the same colleague who performed the inter-rater agreement check in the preliminary analysis (which resulted in 96% agreement, see Section 3.3.1) and she was asked to identify instances of intertextuality. In addition to the established definition we both also used the list of words and phrases associated with intertextuality that was generated in the reading group analysis reported in Chapter Five.

Appearances of these words prompted additional consideration of whether any intertextual reference was present. We then compared notes and found ourselves otherwise in agreement with two exceptions:

- There was some slight disparity regarding the boundaries of where intertextual references began and ended. If, for instance, one person makes an intertextual reference and another says 'yes', there may have been disagreement as to whether the yes was part of the intertextual booktalk or not.
- There were two instances where one or other of us perceived a specific unmarked reference where the other did not. After discussion the possibility of such a reference being present was agreed upon.

As discussed in Chapter Five, concretely defining the boundaries of individual intertextual references in interactive booktalk, and how references with multiple contributors should be counted, is problematic and beyond the scope of the current research to resolve (Section 5.10.2). Perception of specific unmarked references has been identified throughout this thesis as highly subjective as their presence can often not be concretely confirmed or denied. As such, the uniformity with which myself and my colleague identified the same points in the transcript offers a strong indication that the method used to identify intertextual references was dependable (Chi 1997: 23).

It was necessary to adapt the method of analysis due to the much larger size of the dataset being examined. Whereas the book review dataset was around 64,000 words and the reading group dataset approximately 36,000 words, the class reader transcripts exceeds 320,000 words, meaning a full close reading could only be undertaken twice. As such, corpus searches for words and phrases often associated with intertextuality in booktalk, identified in the analysis of the GRG

dataset (such as 'same', 'like' and 'kind of', see Section 5.11), were used to support the qualitative analysis. A close analysis of particular lessons (reported in Chapter Nine) was also performed and then compared with other lessons to check that these examples were broadly representative of the classroom booktalk and dynamics across the units.

8.3 Intertextuality in class reader booktalk: overview

Intertextuality is notable in the class reader units by the virtual absence of any extended intertextual booktalk. When intertextuality does arise it tends to take the form of short references by individuals, usually pure matches, similes or metaphors, and these do not tend to evolve into extended discussion. Neither do they tend to be extended into critical consideration of points of similarity and difference; there is little intertextuality for comparison. In other words, the class reader is rarely meaningfully situated in relation to other narratives. The one significant exception to this, which is considered comprehensively in Chapter Nine, is discussion of the unmarked text-driven references linking *Animal Farm* to its hypotext, the historical narrative of 'the Russian Revolution'. However, as an objective instance of hypertextuality, this intertextual relationship will be shown to be one which students learn rather than dynamically construct through personal response. Otherwise, there are few instances of intertextuality in students and teacher booktalk. Below are reported the most salient findings regarding the distinctions between intertextual booktalk in the class reader units and in the GRG discussions. The latter half of the chapter will then explore why these distinctions may exist.

8.3.1 Reminding and the class reader

There are only three instances of the phrase 'reminded me' in the class reader transcripts, and none lead to an intertextual reference. There are 21 instances of

'remind', but only eight of these are within the course of booktalk. The rest are either related to classroom or task management. These eight instances are congregated around three small sections of discourse and six are teacher interrogatives. In these cases it is clear that Miss B or Mrs K have something specific in mind, that is, there is a right answer, a thing the students *should* 'be reminded of'. Here is an illustrative example taken from the Year 9 unit:

Female student (reading the text): "The animals reassured him on this point immediately, and no more was said about the pigs sleeping in the farmhouse beds. And when, some days afterwards, it was announced that from now on the pigs would get up an hour later in the mornings than the other animals, no complaint was made about that either."

Miss B: Thank you, right, pause there. So, what's significant in this one? Why are pigs moving into the farmhouse, and what's happening, what are they doing to the commandments and things? What's going on?

Female student: They've kind of started tampering with everything so they can kind of get round it.

Miss B: Yes, so they are literally amending the Commandments to suit them and they've moved into the farmhouse. So can we write a response please a response to that question...

Male student: Ugh!

Miss B: ...the significance of the pigs moving into the farmhouse is what? What is likely to be the next step? Why is it significant? What are they changing?

Male student: They wear clothes.

Miss B: What's happening to animalism at this point? I realise I've just developed that question by adding three more questions to it (2) You can just answer the one on the board. The significance of the pigs moving into

the farmhouse. What reason do they tell the other animals? And where have we seen this before? **What does that little bit remind you of?**

Oliver: When Hitler stole the bed from Churchill.

(Laughter)

Miss B: I think I must have missed that in my history lessons. **What bit from Animal Farm does it remind us of?**

Female student: When, when the pigs got more apples.

Miss B: Yes, the milk and the apples. So when he took them, they were told exactly the same thing, weren't they? They need them because they're brainworkers and pigs need to have apples and milk. [...]

Daniel (to Oliver): Is it only the pigs that move?

Oliver (in response): Yeah.

(Year 9, Transcript 11: 39:00).

This excerpt captures a pattern of teacher-led discourse which appears repeatedly throughout both sets of class transcripts. Questions appear to ask students to do their own interpretive work but the scope of the question refines relevant text information to the point that there may only be one viable answer. This is a pattern identified by several other studies of classroom discourse (Barnes 1976; Dillon 1982; Edwards & Mercer 1987; Osborne 2010). If a teacher asks 'what does that little bit remind you of' it indicates to students that it *should* be reminding them of something. As Edwards and Mercer explain, 'most of the teacher's questions are ones to which everyone supposes that the teacher knows the answer' (1987: 46).

Miss B's question thus involves significant scope refinement, limiting the element of the Base which should form the point of narrative contact, thereby making the range of possible interrelations Miss B is requesting very narrow. Indeed, when Miss B refines her question to add 'what bit *from Animal Farm* does this remind

you of?’ she explicitly reformulates the scope of the ‘reminding’ into a request for a primary endogenous link rather than a link to a separate narrative schema (Hartman 1995: 360). The episode above demonstrates students’ awareness that there is a limited scope of ‘acceptable reminders’. Oliver jokingly fabricates a faux-historical dummy narrative: ‘when Hitler stole the bed from Churchill’, demonstrating an awareness that he is being asked to make an intertextual connection between the Base and another narrative, but not knowing which he should look to for a point of narrative contact. In fact, Miss B is prompting the students to make a link with another mini-narrative within *Animal Farm* – ‘the story of the milk and apples – not a different text.

Instances of reminding in these class reader units, unlike in the GRG, are not associated with intertextual booktalk. If students are being ‘reminded of’ other narratives in their mental archives in either of these class reader units – if they are making intertextual connections with other narratives in their mental archives – they are not articulating them. There appears to be little room within class reader booktalk for spontaneous unplanned discussion, which analysis of the GRG talk shows sharing ‘reminders’ falls squarely within. The space for spontaneous, unplanned discussion within class reader booktalk thus appears to be a highly salient consideration, and will be explored comprehensively throughout the rest of this chapter.

8.3.2 Pure match intertextuality in class reader booktalk

As discussed above, where intertextual booktalk does arise in these two class reader units, it is often in the form of pure match intertextuality, where a point of narrative contact is made between the Base and another text but the feature is framed as being identical in both (see Section 3.12.2). A representative example of this can be observed in the Year 7 unit. One student, Molly, makes an intertextual

reference linking the Base to a specific marked narrative, the film *Hairspray*, when the class are discussing the fact that a black character in *Holes* is referred to as a 'negro':

Mrs K: Yeah. It's what they used to call, 'negro' is another word for black so and yeah so.

Unknown student: It's Spanish.

Molly: Have you seen *Hairspray*?

Mrs K: I was going to say, it actually means black, doesn't it. Um, what's that?

Molly: Um, on *Hairspray* they say 'Negro Day'.

Mrs K: Do they (laughs) do they?!

Multiple students: Yeah.

Mrs K: Right, yeah, negro just means black in Spanish, that's it isn't it, so, and in those days that's what they would say. They either call, they said, well you saw in the video it said 'coloured only' or 'coloureds not, coloured not allowed' but also 'negro'. So, he's a negro. He's, he's black and not allowed to do many things, but he is allowed to trade in onions, he's obviously a very clever man. Um, but he's not allowed to get an education, but he certainly loves poetry and of course she, that's what they bond over isn't it. And she's fallen in love and there's not much that they can do. Right.

Multiple students (in response to the characters falling in love): Ooo!

Mrs K: Next one. (Mimicking the students) Ooo! Right, Hannah, off you go: chapter 26.

(Hannah continues reading the novel).

(Year 7, Transcript 9: 31:00)

Molly's link between the Base and the film *Hairspray* is a pure match, a simple recognition of an identical feature, in this case the use of the word 'negro', both in the Base and *Hairspray*. Her point of narrative contact is highly visible and therefore does not lead to any request for expansion or clarification, as opposed to if she had said 'it's like in *Hairspray*', for example.

Mrs K does pause to explain the meaning of the word 'negro' and its history outside the Base, however she indicates this as her intention, using the past tense, before engaging with Molly's reference ('I was going to say'). This suggests Mrs K would have elaborated on the word's meaning regardless of the intertextuality which arose.

As a pure match, Molly's reference is passed over as an observation of a point of narrative contact rather than acting as a catalyst for further discussion. This latter scenario could have been the case, however her intertextual reference is tangential to the current focus of the lesson, which is ensuring students have comprehended the section of *Holes* which has just been read and then moving on to continue reading. This is reflected in Mrs K's use of the two discourse markers 'right' and 'so' signalling the current topic discussion (of the word 'negro') is complete and refining the scope of the discussion back to the character in the Base: 'So, he's a negro'.

Interestingly, as the class draws to a close 25 minutes later, Molly can be heard asking her friend, 'Alice, have you watched *Hairspray*?' (Year 9, Transcript 9: 56:00), suggesting a continuing desire to discuss the film which she has not forgotten in the intervening 25 minutes since she made her intertextual link.

8.3.3 Intertextual references as simile and metaphor in class reader booktalk

Instances of intertextuality as simile or metaphor similarly tend to take the form of tangential interjections in the class reader units, and rarely lead to more substantive booktalk. For example, in the *Animal Farm* unit, intertextual references to the book (or possibly its film adaptation) *Babe the Pig* arise on two occasions, both instigated by Miss B. The first occasion is within the first quarter of the first lesson of the unit. Students had been asked to find out three facts about George Orwell, the novel's author, and Miss B was just finishing a mind map on the board comprising facts the class had discovered:

Miss B: That is a very good selection of facts. Thank you so much. Hopefully then you've got some sort of insight into what kind of a text we're going to be studying. **It is sort of *Babe the Pig*, with politics thrown in.**

(Student laughter)

Miss B: Ahem.

Unknown student: Yay!

Miss B: **With slightly uglier pigs perhaps.** All of these then are images from *Animal Farm*, or from to do with them.

(Year 9, Transcript 1: 14:00)

Miss B's reference takes the form of a metaphor which is initially presented as a hedged categorical assertion ('it is sort of'). This is immediately followed up with two tunings ('with politics thrown in'; 'with slightly uglier pigs'), arguably disanalogies, which should prompt listeners to differentiate their *Babe the Pig* schema from their *Animal Farm* schema by adding in or adjusting these features. This is not explored any further however as Miss B, like Mrs K in the previous example, curtails the discussion by shifting the class' attention onto a new task;

making predictions about the text based on several images of *Animal Farm* book covers ('all of *these* then are images of *Animal Farm*').

The second occasion *Babe the Pig* is mentioned is as the fifth lesson draws to a close:

Miss B: We are flying through *Animal Farm*. We will be able to afford some time to go back and look at scenes and characters in a bit more detail. We may one day get to watch *Animal Farm*.

Male student 1: Oh yes!

Male student 2: Do we have to read it then Miss?

Male student 3: I *only/don't* care about the film

Miss B: I will collect, it is like *Babe the Pig*, only with more-.

Kelly: Oh I love *Babe*. I loved *Babe* when I was little.

Male student 4: Only with more fighting.

Miss B: There is nothing "Babe" about *Animal Farm*.

Kelly: It's not 'cause of *Babe* that guy dies.

Miss B: Alright then, exercise books in the box. *Animal Farms* in the box. *Animal Farms* in here.

(Year 9, Transcript 5: 55:00)

On this occasion Miss B initially presents the intertextual link as a simile ('it is like') and indicates that she is about to identify a disanalogous feature ('only with more') but does not do so, either because her attention is distracted or because she is thinking about it (this cannot be discerned from the audio recordings). Miss B's initial reference prompts a series of responses. Male student 4 engages in the intertextual booktalk by offering a candidate disanalogy to complete Miss B's reference: 'only with more fighting'. Kelly is prompted to focus her attention on her *Babe* schema reporting first her evaluation of it 'I love *Babe*' and then

reminiscing about her earlier personal responses to the text 'I loved *Babe* when I was little'. At this point Kelly appears to have reoriented her focus from *Animal Farm* to *Babe* as a new Base, that is, she is discussing another text rather than making any intertextual links.

Miss B then revises her initial reference saying, 'there is nothing "Babe" about *Animal Farm*'. This reforms her intertextual reference into a negative categorical assertion which can be interpreted in one of two ways, though which is intended is unclear because the points of narrative contact have become completely invisible. Either Miss B reformulates her position to say that the two narratives have nothing in common; that they cannot really be compared at all. Or, as Miss B uses 'nothing Babe' in an adjectival sense, she could instead be arguing that the essence of the two narratives are dichotomous. That is, she is not denying superficial pure match similarities such as 'both novels have pigs as characters' but rather claiming that, on a more nuanced assessment, the two stories are highly disanalogous.

Kelly then potentially challenges Miss B, declaring 'it's not 'cause of Babe that guy dies.' This is difficult to state this definitively however as the specific referent of 'it' is unclear and Kelly's utterance can thus be parsed in two distinct ways:

- a) As a statement of text knowledge: [it] (subject) [is] (copulative verb) [not because of Babe that guy dies] (subject complement); or,
- b) As a new intertextual reference: [it] (subject) [is] (copulative verb) [not], (subject complement followed by a subordinate clause) [because of Babe, that guy dies] (subordinate clause presenting a new point of contact between *Babe* and *Animal Farm*).

In interpretation A, Kelly is still solely discussing *Babe*, which continues to be the Base of her booktalk, perhaps in a discussion with another student whose voice may not have been captured by the recorder. In interpretation B, however, Kelly challenges Miss B's assertion of dissimilarity and offers a point of narrative contact which she perceives constitutes something "Babe" about *Animal Farm*, or perhaps something "Animal Farm" about *Babe*.

This second exchange hints at the potential contribution of intertextuality to engagement and criticality in class reader booktalk. Kelly positions herself as an expert on *Babe* and offers some of her knowledge of that text, either in self-directed booktalk on that text or as a challenge to Miss B's interpretation. However, at this point the lesson is drawing to a close and, as in the first two examples, Miss B curtails the discussion to focus on a new task, in this instance gathering in all the exercise books and copies of *Animal Farm*.

Again, the discussion shows the potential for the intertextual references to evolve into extended intertextual booktalk of the kind frequently identified in the GRG transcripts, where similarities and differences between two narratives are identified and the Base is gradually situated in relation to another narrative. However, again, the discussion is closed down in order to move on to another topic, task or activity.

Reviewing the class reader transcripts, this was revealed to be a commonly occurring pattern, not only with regard to intertextual booktalk, but also with other instances of students and teachers offering personal responses, or knowledge related, to the Base: when booktalk that was not directly related to the tasks planned for the lesson arose spontaneously the superficially tangential discussion was generally curtailed. Unlike in the GRG booktalk, where individuals' intertextual references were variously engaged with, challenged, elaborated and

co-constructed, in the class reader lessons this rarely occurred: references did occasionally arise but did not flourish.

Having established how intertextual booktalk tended to manifest in the class reader units, and in particular because this manifestation was very different to the GRG booktalk, further qualitative investigation to explore *why* these differences appeared was undertaken. In other words, attention shifted to Research Questions 4 and 5 posed by this thesis: what factors appear to facilitate intertextual booktalk? and what factors appear to inhibit intertextual booktalk? Had there been no evidence of students making or responding to intertextual references at all then differences in the background knowledge of individual readers could have been foregrounded as a possible reason for the relative absence of intertextual booktalk in the class reader lessons, however, this was not the case. This is not to ignore the clear differences between English graduates and school students: the former are almost certain to have richer and more diverse mental archives and be more accomplished at making connections and noticing distinctions between narratives. But, the students *were* clearly able to make intertextual connections, suggesting that factors within the two discourse environments played a role in why intertextual booktalk flourished in the GRG discussions but was virtually absent in the Ambershore class reader units.

Further qualitative examination of the class reader transcripts suggested that the observed pattern – where intertextual references were acknowledged but not particularly engaged with – was not due to a lack of interest from teachers and students in these intertextual connections (and other spontaneously arising discussions), but rather due to a sense that the class needed to move on in order to get through all of the activities planned for the day's lesson. This can be observed in the examples above where discourse markers indicating the teacher's intent to

change topic come quickly after intertextual links are made (either by students or by themselves). Observing this prevalence of such discourse markers led to the development of a hypothesis that the existence of predetermined lesson plans as well as the teachers' concerns about time were potentially a highly salient factor in the absence of intertextual booktalk in the Ambershore lessons.

In order to investigate this more systematically, the discussion and treatment of time was contrastively analysed in the class reader and GRG datasets. To do this, the word 'time' was searched for in both datasets using AntConc and all references to time were then qualitatively examined with the aid of the resulting concordances. Literature searches regarding the role of time in both reading groups and school classrooms were also undertaken. The findings of this analysis are reported in the remainder of this chapter.

8.4 Time and reading groups

In reading groups time pressures tend not to be a particular issue. Often whole evenings are dedicated to a meeting and the booktalk is generally given as long as the group feel they have more to say about the book. Hartley's survey found that many groups discussed the existence of time pressures in other aspects of their lives and comparatively viewed their reading group as 'freeing up space in a crowded life' (2001: 126). Participants said for example that their group offered:

- A valid excuse for actually sitting down and reading
- We love "having to read" – so don't feel guilty
- Allows me a legitimate few hours away from my kids'

(Hartley 2001: 126).

Participants viewed group membership as a kind of duty in itself which gave them the space and justification to sit down, take some time to themselves, and read.

Having already made their commitment to reading and attending the group, members do not seem to feel a sense of time pressure whilst at the group itself. This does mean, however, that focusing on the meeting misses out those members who could not 'find time' to read the book and therefore did not attend.

For the GRG members, as with Hartley's respondents, there was no sense of time pressure. When the discussion began to peter out in both sessions some members did start to leave. Crucially, however, there were no comments expressing a view that booktalk was being curtailed, rather that the group had already designated sufficient time to their meeting. Interestingly too, members at the GRG who did indicate they had run out of time and had to leave, did not do so immediately. At the *Animal Farm* meeting, Julian even sat back down when the discussion revived:

Julian: I mean, **I was gonna go home but another three hours seems fine.** Uh- (1)

(More laughter)

(GRG: Session 2 *Animal Farm*)

Whilst Julian is clearly joking here, he did in fact stay for another 20 minutes.

Members of a reading group, who are in control of their time, may simply supply more to their discussion if need be either by extending the meeting or deciding an additional session is warranted. An example of this was captured in Hartley's survey. She explained,

James Joyce is responsible for the slowest group we have come across: the London university (Charles Peake) Seminar for Research into James Joyce's *Ulysses* [...] has read five chapters in fourteen years. They get through a

couple of pages an evening, reading aloud two or three sentences at a time, then pausing to discuss them

(Hartley 2001: 50).

Whilst this is an extreme example it highlights that there is nothing to stop reading groups spending as much time as they collectively desire on a text: English teachers, by contrast, could never spend so long covering so little of a text. This lack of concern about time is reflected in both GRG transcripts. Time is used in idiomatic phrases such as 'all of the time', 'at the same time' and 'the whole time', however there are only three instances when time is discussed in relation to the session itself. These are first two juxtaposing references suggesting that members go round the group and each give their initial reactions to the book because that was an effective format 'last time' and one request for a text (*The Hunger Games*) to be the text the group read 'next time'.

8.5 Time and class readers

In the Ambershore lessons the conceptualisation of time is starkly different. Time is discussed almost exclusively by the teachers, rather than the students. Both teachers discuss time using two main conceptual metaphors, offering a clear rationale as to why intertextual booktalk struggles to flourish in the class reader context.

8.5.1 Conceptual metaphor theory

Conceptual metaphor theory (CMT), first described by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), asserts that metaphor is not merely a feature of language but a matter of thought which is central to our conceptual system and the way in which we make sense of ourselves and the world we live in

(Jeffries and McIntyre 2010: 138).

That is, humans understand and discuss abstract concepts, such as ‘time’, ‘love’, ‘life’ and ‘death’ with reference to their knowledge of more concrete objects. Far from being an ornamental poetic device, metaphor is at the heart of everyday thinking and almost constantly manifests in language, especially in the discussion of abstract concepts. Metaphors are not random, but are underpinned by broader conceptual metaphors, for instance GOOD IS UP, BAD IS DOWN or LIFE IS A JOURNEY (Kövecses 2002; Lakoff & Johnson 1980, 1999). CMT’s denotation system places all conceptual metaphors in capital letters because,

the use of small capital letters indicates that a particular wording does not occur in language as such, but it underlies conceptually all the metaphorical expressions listed underneath it

(Kövecses 2002: 4).

Conceptual metaphors manifest at the sentence-level in discourse. CMT posits that these metaphors, even when novel, are not random but can be traced back to broader conceptual metaphors derived from our embodied understanding of the world which first developed as infants. Johnson and Lakoff explain,

meaning comes, not just from “internal” structures of the organism (the “subject”), nor solely from “external” inputs (the “objects”), but rather from recurring patterns of engagement between organism and environment [...] we first acquire the bodily and spatial understanding of concepts and later understand their metaphorical extensions in abstract concepts

(2002: 248, 253-4).

CMT refers to the more abstract concept as a ‘TARGET DOMAIN’ and a more concrete concept as the ‘SOURCE DOMAIN’, from which information is drawn and ‘mapped’ onto the TARGET. Simpson explains,

the target domain is the topic or concept that you want to describe through the metaphor while the source domain refers to the concept that you draw upon in order to create the metaphorical construction'

(2004: 41).

For example, in the conceptual metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY people 'map' features from the more concrete 'source' (JOURNEY) to the more abstract 'target' (LIFE). Typical mappings born out of the underpinning conceptualisation of LIFE AS A JOURNEY include:

Table 8.1, Common metaphorical mappings for LIFE AS A JOURNEY

Metaphorical mapping	Example
Events as spatially situated (future ahead, past behind)	'That's all behind me now, the future looks bright'
Choices as paths or roads	'I was at a cross roads'; 'I needed a change in direction'; 'she took the wrong path'
Challenges as obstacles	'I'm stuck in a rut'; 'I feel like I'm wading through treacle'
Passage of time as physical movement	'It's like going two steps forward, one step back'; 'I just need to find a way forward, I want to move on.'
Life stages as journey stages (beginning, middle, end)	'He has his whole life ahead of him'; 'I'm at the end of the road'

This conceptual metaphor is discussed by Kövecses (2010). Conceptual metaphor analysis is particularly useful because it can reveal how people frame and perceive the world around them without being actively aware of doing so. Lakoff and Johnson explain,

conscious thought is the tip of an enormous iceberg. It is the rule of thumb amongst cognitive scientists that unconscious thought is 95 percent of all thought – and that may be a serious underestimate. Moreover, the 95 percent [...] shapes and structures all conscious thought

(1999: 13).

Identifying the dominant conceptual metaphors a person uses can offer insights into the underlying conceptions that govern how they make sense of themselves and the world around them, in a way that could not necessarily be established by asking them (Lakoff 2004). Conceptual metaphors are also impervious to the influences of demand characteristics, which come into play as soon as a person knows they are being observed or asked a question for the purposes of research (Robson 2008). This is especially likely to occur when questions may be perceived as ‘face threatening’ (Brown & Levinson 1972). That is,

even in situations where participants are told there are no right or wrong answers [...] participants are likely to feel that certain responses show themselves in a better light than others

(Robson 2008: 95).

Good time management is often perceived as a fundamental skill of the teaching professional (Turvey & Lloyd 2014), making an examination of the conceptual metaphors used to discuss time in the English classroom an especially effective approach.

8.5.2 Conceptualisations of time

Much research has been undertaken in cognitive linguistics regarding conceptual metaphors used to describe time (Evans 2006, 2013; Grady 1997; Gibbs & Matlock 2008; Lakoff 1990; Mischler 2013; Radden 1997; Shinohara 1999).

Two conceptual metaphors for time dominate in the class reader transcripts. The first is TIME IS A RESOURCE.

8.5.3 TIME IS A RESOURCE

Many of the teachers' discussions of time in the Ambershore lessons engage the conceptual metaphor TIME IS A RESOURCE. Mappings include: it can be assigned to various tasks; it is exhaustible; it should be used wisely; it can be controlled and it can be possessed.

Time is discussed by both Mrs K and Miss B as a resource that is a valuable commodity; which can 'spent', 'wasted' and 'saved'. Mrs K, for example, describes the time taken up by different necessary class activities in this way,

For us, teaching a novel is, yeah, it's so much different to doing well like other topics **because so much of it is spent reading the novel** in the class. Whilst obviously if we were doing a poem or-, but um, yeah we have to, it's the only chance to-, it's quite a long novel as well isn't it? I keep on panicking thinking, how are we gonna get through it?! I just get really worried. [...] I look at it and think 'oh my gosh!' we're only-, (1) yeah. It's quite hard

(Mrs K, Year 7, Transcript 3: 6:00).

When students are off-task, Miss B refers to their actions as costing her time which she is not willing to 'spend': 'Is it **worth** me **wasting** my time now boys?' (Miss B, Year 9, Transcript 19: 6:00); 'stop **wasting** my time' (Miss B, Year 9, Transcript 16: 13:00).

Similarly, some activities are described as not worthy of some, or any, time. Miss B, for example, when putting the film of *Animal Farm* on skips through the trailers and other bits of the film which are not relevant to the day's lesson, saying jokingly

‘get rid of trailers today, my cinema **doesn’t have time** for [that]’ (Miss B, Year 9, Transcript 3: 25:00). Conversely, some activities are presented as worthy of more of this resource. This can be seen when Miss B tells her group ‘we will be able to **afford some time** to go back and look at scenes and characters in a bit more detail’ (Miss B, Year 9, Transcript 5: 54:00).

This conceptualisation puts a huge onus of responsibility and pressure on the teachers: a fact which also manifests in their discourse. Both teachers situate themselves as the ‘owners’ or ‘controllers’ of class time, typically realised through their ditransitive use of the verb ‘giving’. Here they, the teacher, are always the active subjects performing the verb phrase (the act of ‘giving’) of the direct object (the time) to the students, who benefit from the giving but as recipients of their teacher’s actions (realised in the discourse by their status as indirect objects of the action). For example:

- **I gave you** a bit of extra time (Mrs K, Year 7, Transcript 20: 40:00);
- **I will give you** some time to finish up writing it on the newspaper sheets (Miss B, Year 9, Transcript 7: 43:00);
- Monday **I will give you** some time to finish these off and we’ll get on with some more reading (Miss B, Year 9, Transcript 7: 51:00).

There are several other instances which similarly cast the teachers as the agents in control of time such as ‘no more questions. **You’ve had more than time** to sort things out’ (Miss B, Year 9, Transcript 24: 2:00). The patterns of agency presented here offer an interesting way to think about the teachers and their students as readers, especially relative to book group members. The RESOURCE metaphor reveals each teacher’s sense of responsibility to assign class time effectively. When time becomes limited this results in the prioritisation of the tasks and activities judged, often probably unconsciously, to be the most valuable or important.

Of the two teachers, Mrs K was significantly more concerned about time than Miss B. The remainder of this section therefore considers the treatment of time in the *Holes* transcripts as a case study. Here is an example of Mrs K describing time as an insufficient resource:

Never enough time. When we read novels there's **never enough** time to get anything done. It's frustrating (Mrs K, Year 7, Transcript 1: 63:00).

Mrs K used the phrase 'never enough time' on three occasions. As early as the end of lesson two she told me: '**Never enough** time. That means that **we'll overrun** tomorrow-, this is what always happens when we're doing a novel' (Lesson 2, 63:00). Mrs K's conceptualisation of time here is very revealing. By saying there is 'never enough' she frames time as a resource she needs but of which there is an insufficient supply and she identifies this as an issue which relates specifically to class reader units. She also positions herself as powerless to secure more time; the class will 'overrun' and they will be 'behind' schedule. Both teachers, but especially Mrs K, make several references throughout their respective units to being concerned about 'getting through' the text, 'being behind' and 'running out' of time.

we're gonna have to rewind a bit aren't we, 'cause we **run out of time** on Friday. That was the, um, sorry. We have to, um, (5). Right that. *** 60:30 T: That's unfortunate. Right, uh, we've **run out of time**, what I need to do. Shhh. Very quickly is a question. I know we've come about would it? Yeah. Right, I'm sorry, we've **run out of time** we did start late as well didn't we so we're gonna have to start from the back, I can't cope with that. Right. We've **run out of time** again. What I'm going to ask you to do is you've got obviously you make sure, I'm going to set you homework, we've **run out of time** for that as well, I'll set it on Monday. Make sure your name is on the book. [Inaudible whole class talking 0:24:59 - 0:25:25] Teacher: Come on we're **running out of time**. You're doing really well. [Inaudible whole class talking 0:25:25 - 0:25:50] T: Well didn't we so we're gonna have to start, try and **start dead on time** tomorrow and we'll get through, um, get through our work. Finish the sentence that you're on now we're, we're a **bit short on time** but we're going to do what we can. That's it this group, finishing things are actually going quite well. Now, because we're **short on time**, what I'm going to say to you, with your partner, for five minutes is name? T: Yeah. But like I said Susan, we, 'cause we're **short on time**, just do 'Stanley' instead of the 'Yelnats' as well. 'Kay? Come on everyone else has putting quotes in but because we're **short on time**, do you want to have a go at those questions on the board?

Figure 8.1, Concordance showing conceptualisations of TIME AS A RESOURCE

Another example of Mrs K's concerns about time begins to suggest where the conceptualisation of time as an insufficient resource may arise from as well as the consequences of this for the class reader unit:

Carl: Um, and there are, 50 chapters.

Mrs K: Are there 50?!

Carl: Yep. I've seen it.

Mrs K: How are we going to read all of it?!

Carl: Yeah, good luck.

Mrs K: Ohhh. I always forget how long it is. Oh no! We're gonna be old, we're gonna be reading it all year! [...] Oh. Dear. This has been a short half term uh, we're going to have to go into next, and also the, I mean, **we were carrying over ballads**, we were doing ballads for the first two weeks of this half term so, **we were already behind** and now we're, yeah, we're gonna be, **we're gonna have to miss some chapters out, I think. But I hate doing that** because, especially with this book because, it kind of doesn't make sense

(Year 7, Transcript 3: 57:00).

Here, Mrs K's view of time as an insufficient resource can be seen manifesting in a sensation of feeling forced ('we're gonna *have to*') by some unnamed external pressure into taking decisions she 'hates' and would not willingly make in order to complete the unit within the limited time available. For her to still consider missing out chapters, though reluctant to do so, demonstrates not only a desire to 'save' time, but also an evaluation that there are activities, other than actually reading the text, on which her class' time may be 'better spent'. However, this example shows that an intersecting conceptualisation also arises: TIME IS A PASSING MOTION.

8.5.4 TIME IS A PASSING MOTION

TIME IS A PASSING MOTION conceptualises time as not only finite but as something which either moves past the conceptualiser (Moving Time) or which

the conceptualiser moves in relation to (Moving Ego) (Evans 2006; Fleischman 1982; Grady 1997; Lakoff 1990; Lakoff & Johnson 1980, 1999; Radden 1997; Shinohara 1999; Smart 1949). These two formulations of the metaphor are discussed by Evans (2006) who explains that if the metaphor manifests as Moving Time then the conceptualiser sees themselves as static and time as the moving entity ('we're late, we've fallen behind'), whereas in the alternative realisation, Moving Ego, time is described as static with the conceptualiser moving in relation to it ('it's coming up to lunchtime'). In the Year 7 transcripts TIME IS A PASSING MOTION nearly always manifests as Moving Time. This suggests Mrs K perceives herself and her students as passive agents with no ability to stop the passing of time, and therefore feels a pressure to 'keep up'.

The sense of insufficient time places Mrs K into the role of assigning relative values to different tasks within the class reader unit, both at the level of the whole scheme of work and the individual lesson. In lessons 12 and 13 she 'gives' the task time over to reading *Holes* itself. In lesson 14, however, she realises her prediction from lesson 3 and determines that 1,188 words of chapter 44 can be skipped in order to 'save' time: time is moving ahead of where she thinks the group should be 'up to' in the novel so they need to 'catch up'. When one student tells her that she has got the page (that they are up to) wrong, Mrs K explains to the students:

Mrs K: No, I've **fast forwarded** a little bit. Basically chapter 44. We're onto chapter 44.

(disappointed) Oh.

Mrs K: And basically I'm, just **to speed things up**, the whole of chapter 44 is basically Stanley and Zero digging and digging and digging. If you remember they're, what are they digging for?

Frank (shouting): The treasure chest!

Mrs K: Yeah! Thank you Frank! They're digging for the treasure chest aren't they. [...] Basically, this whole chapter is describing them digging and digging and **I thought we could afford to lose a few pages**, 'cause basically, if you can imagine, they are digging, they are getting sweaty, they are getting thirsty and hungry. And they're digging and digging and digging, so **I thought we could afford to miss that bit out**. [...] Right! So! '*Once again*'! So they've basically, they've found a box underground. They've actually found the treasure that everybody has been looking for and the boys have worked it out. So, uh, '*Once again he tried pulling it out...*'

(Year 7, Transcript 13: 14:00).

Both TIME IS A PASSING MOTION and TIME AS RESOURCE manifest in this example as Mrs K assigns different values to sections of the class reader in order to resolve her sense of being behind. Earlier sections must have time given to them because without them the story 'kind of doesn't make sense'. Here, however, Mrs K has assigned a lower value to this part of chapter 44 and judged it not to be worth taking up the limited supply of time the class have left available. The section is presented as describing a single repetitive act; all the characters are doing is 'digging and digging and digging'. The section is therefore not perceived to be advancing or contributing to the plot. The class can therefore 'afford' to 'lose' and 'miss' that section to 'speed things up', that is, to 'regain' some time.

In the lessons the sense of time as both moving past the class and simultaneously depleting creates a sometimes overwhelming sense of 'time pressure', where the class must 'keep up' or risk being 'behind' or worse 'running out' of time. Here time becomes a resource which diminishes regardless of whether or not it is actively assigned. Time is described by both teachers as a resource which will soon be exhausted.

These conceptualisations are not unique to Mrs K and Miss B. A similar example is reported by Turvey and Lloyd (2014). Reflecting on a lesson which took place during his teacher-training year Lloyd recounts:

It's 12.40 on a Monday and I'm in the staffroom, staring at my lunch, thinking 'how did we end up talking about Anders Breivik in a lesson with Year 9 on Great Expectations?' I had been side-tracked, lost my focus on the learning objectives, forgot about pace; I was a bad teacher

(Turvey & Lloyd 2014: 81).

An additional dimension to TIME IS A RESOURCE is introduced here: the conceptualisation of 'good time management' as being linked to a positive professional identity. In this conceptualisation, being bad at keeping up with time by 'getting side-tracked' (another realisation of Moving Time) means that you are not just bad at time management but a 'bad teacher' per se. Lloyd continues, recounting how this 'side tracking' occurred. First everything was going well, he asks a question with a preferred response in mind. A student offers it:

We've arrived at 'the right answer'! Pleased with this outcome, I can now summarise [...] With the lesson objective achieved, **I can move on**. I had defined the parameters of the discussion and guided it to a pre-conceived conclusion with most of the students in tow

(Turvey & Lloyd 2014: 82).

Then, it happens:

An unpredictable element is about to 'disrupt' my tidy approach: there is a hand up. **I am o.k. for time so I allow the contribution** [...] The class comes alive, a forest of hands [...] Suddenly I realise that we are entering an immensely complex moral maze and, feeling guilty about how far we've

departed from the script, I politely acknowledge the scope of the question before shutting the discussion down. I have accommodated a pupil's point of view without really hearing it. **We move on** to a different part of the book

(Turvey & Lloyd 2014: 82).

Lloyd's account contains the same two conceptual metaphors as are observed in the class reader units. In this case, time is initially considered to be a resource in sufficient supply ('I am o.k. for time so I allow the contribution'). As a result, spontaneous intertextual booktalk – situating the Base (*Great Expectations*) in relation to the non-fictional narrative of Anders Breivik's terrorist attack in Norway - is allowed to develop. The enthusiasm of the class quickly becomes conceptualised as a negative rather than a positive however, because it risks the discussion taking up more of the Lloyd's precious resource than he had intended to allocate, and passing time threatens to overtake him: 'feeling guilty', he curtails the discussion so he can 'move on' rather than 'fall behind' as a result of his 'departure from the script'. This mirrors the pattern observed in the Ambershore units: Lloyd had not planned for booktalk developing from this intertextual association because he could not have predicted that this reference would arise. Thus, whilst interested in the discussion and retrospectively wishing he had allowed it to continue, he instead shuts down the booktalk and instead allocates time to the pre-planned tasks.

The idea of the lesson as a 'script' is particularly revealing. A lesson plan here can be thought of as the Ego's plan to keep pace with Moving Time. The resource is finite and precious and has therefore been allocated carefully so time is used most effectively as it moves because, of course, it will deplete whether or not it is allocated. When an unplanned element of booktalk such as an intertextual

reference spontaneously arises, therefore, it must compete with the planned activities in order to 'earn' the right to flourish.

Learning objectives are determined prior to lessons taking place and the planned tasks are designed in order to meet those specific objectives (Clarke, Dickinson & Westbrook 2010). The potential for negative effects of this model can be seen in Turvey and Lloyd's account. Lloyd sacrificed a discussion which his professional judgement told him was pedagogically valuable, an act he goes on to describe regretting, in order to adhere to a predetermined plan. In this way, spontaneous, unpredictable elements struggle to be accommodated within school lessons which pre-allocate all available time. When they arise the unanticipated elements are disadvantaged relative to the planned activities because, whilst both could be perceived as more valuable and thus win the time resource, the latter have been preconceived to cohere with the day's objectives. This introduces a necessity for the prioritisation of different activities in the classroom; if one element takes up more time than it was originally allocated then something else must be sacrificed or the teacher will not keep pace with Moving Time, fall behind and feel like a 'bad teacher'. Prioritisation is therefore likely to yield two results:

- 1) Spontaneous, unpredicted and unplanned activities or discussions are likely to be discouraged or curtailed quickly so Moving Time can be kept up with;
- 2) The tasks which were originally allocated time are placed in competition and the teacher will 'take' time from whatever they perceive to be the least valuable activity to give it to either the unplanned activity or to extend the resource allocated to activities judged more valuable 'uses of time' than their competitors.

This analysis offers a clear rationale as to why intertextual booktalk does not flourish in either of the Ambershore class reader units: intertextual references, as has been shown throughout this research, are highly unpredictable. Thus intertextuality, the individual knowledge and expertise that students bring to the classroom, and personal responses that do not correlate with dominant interpretations of a text, all fall into the category of spontaneous, unpredictable booktalk. The tendency to plan class reader units and lessons, as was done at Ambershore, means that these kinds of booktalk are constantly having to compete with planned talk and activities, and typically losing out.

As planned and unplanned elements arise in a class reader lesson, all of which must be swiftly allocated time according to the teacher's momentary decision about which are the most valuable, the actual reading of the text is also placed into direct competition with all these other tasks and potential discussions. This again contrasts with the reading group setting because, as members have (or should have) completed reading the text prior to attending the group (Peplow 2011), there is never a necessity to prioritise either reading or booktalk because they have distinct time allocations which do not overlap. What is clear from both sets of class transcripts is that, when placed into competition with other tasks, the reading experience itself does not always triumph, no more so do spontaneously arising contributions. This offers a convincing explanation as to why occasional intertextual references arise in class reader lessons but do not evolve into extended intertextual booktalk.

8.6 Units of time: a comparison

8.6.1 Reading and reading groups

In the context of a reading group time is clearly divided into two discrete chunks: time to read the text and time when the reading group meeting takes place. Simply examining the session itself skips the time pressured aspect of the activity because members who do not 'find time' to read the entire book often do not attend the session. If they do, the time pressure is still removed because the time to read the text has already 'run out' and the session represents a new unit of time. If members consistently cannot find time to read the books it is probably the case that they simply stop attending altogether.

For a reading group member, then, the reading itself must also compete with other tasks. These are life tasks: work, family, friends and other commitments. People who successfully remain members of reading groups are those who enjoy the activity enough to prioritise the reading of the text, with the session itself a reward for doing so. Stockwell explains,

readers commonly talk of their involvement in a literary text as an investment, where the currency of the investment is figured as time, emotional attachment, intellectual effort, or even actual cash

(2009a: 94).

A reading group member has already made the more substantial time investment, in reading the text, before they arrive at the meeting. Once there, TIME AS A RESOURCE ceases to be a manifesting conceptualisation because it has been openly allocated to the session in general and not to various activities within it. The booktalk – regardless of what form it takes – thus has no real competitor which it must be prioritised over, nor are there planned areas of discussion which

spontaneous contributions would have to compete against. This is why sessions are relaxed and all manner of booktalk, including intertextual, is free to flourish. In this discourse environment personal responses, including intertextual links to one's mental archive, are able to manifest and thrive.

8.6.2 Reading and school English

In the school context, by contrast, time is divided into units in a number of hierarchical layers. Key Stages are units. Academic years are units. So are terms, then schemes of work, then individual lessons. At all stages, schools and teachers are subject to substantial external pressures, and time must be carefully allocated in order for everything required to be achieved. Prioritisation can hierarchically impact all of these levels by placing increased pressure through the number of areas to be covered, all of which 'need time'. This can result in re-allocation down the chain of time units, with the valuable resource being stolen from the unit above to meet the needs of the unit below, or vice versa.

At Ambershore, for example, Miss B's class studied *Animal Farm*, traditionally a Key Stage 4 text. This denotes a prioritisation of Key Stage 4 over Key Stage 3, as time structurally intended for the latter is given over to preparation for the former, encoding a concern that the two year resource of time at Key Stage 4 will be insufficient for achieving the demands it requires. At a recent PGCE workshop trainee teachers shared experiences of leaving class readers incomplete because of a need to move on to the next scheme of work. This again reveals a conceptualisation of time in English as finite. The reading of the entire text lost out to other curriculum areas which were prioritised: consciously or unconsciously judged to 'need' the time more than reading the text did. Mrs K's conceptualisations of time reveal the impact of this domino effect at the level of the

individual lesson: activities are placed in constant competition with one another and some lose out.

If students cannot take the books away and perform the reading outside of class then all the reading is shifted back into lesson time creating an increased burden on an already limited resource. This is how the situation arises where a teacher such as Mrs K says:

we're going to have to miss some chapters out I think, but I hate doing that
(Year 7, Transcript 13: 14:00).

Teachers are thus given the impossible task of serving two competing identities: 'the reader' and 'the teacher'. No teacher can be blamed for choosing the latter. The result, however, is a shifting of roles within the class reader unit; from expert readers guiding and nurturing other readers to teachers teaching students.

Decisions to leave the reading of the text or unplanned discussions in order to concentrate on pre-planned lesson tasks are completely understandable through this lens. Progress cannot be demonstrated by reading the text alone, it is the tasks which demonstrate the 'learning' taking place. There is nothing inherently wrong with policies which insist students make 'progress'. However, a relentless demand for that progress to be constantly demonstrated means that decisions about what to prioritise and what to abandon become less likely to be taken based on a teacher's professional expert judgement about what is pedagogically best for their students and more likely to concede to externally mandated pressures.

Some things take, and need, time: intertextual booktalk is one of them.

Mrs K's decision to remove all tasks for nearly three whole lessons to focus solely on reading speaks to her perception of, and commitment to, the class reader itself as highly valuable. Her decision to skip some sections anyway illustrates the power

external mandates can have on a teacher's decisions about where the focus of a lesson must lie; about what class readers are really for.

8.6.3 Finding time

One possible resolution for school reading, if a teacher wished to facilitate intertextual and other kinds of spontaneous booktalk, could be to emulate the reading group scenario by taking reading and task completion out of direct competition with one another. Rather than organising every lesson to contain 'some tasks' and 'some reading', schemes of work could be chunked up differently so that reading and associated tasks have discrete designated spaces. This analysis suggests that lesson planning could better accommodate the paired dual identities operating within the classroom, allowing reader identities to dominate when reading and 'teacher' and 'student' identities to manifest when studying.

Finally this research, and complementary research into reading groups, finds that personal response and critical interpretation naturally flourish when time is not allocated to specific tasks (Allington 2009, 2012; Hall 2009; O'Halloran 2011). This also suggests that dedicating some lessons solely to reading would allow all pedagogically valuable aspects of booktalk to flourish alongside the completion of formal tasks. In this scenario teachers would be able to judge the relative value of different aspects of the arising booktalk using their expert judgement as a 'reader', without having to worry about the requirements which must be met by the 'teacher'. At the same time, it would remove the weighting towards prioritising planned tasks over reading and unpredicted booktalk because teachers would not feel that they must demonstrate tangible progress every lesson; these pressures can be shifted into lessons dedicated to task completion instead. Currently a product of the eroded space for 'just reading' and engaging in unstructured booktalk is a diminished opportunity for personal responses, including the

intertextual connections made by individual readers, to be shared and explored. Alongside this, the opportunity to situate the Base in relation to one's mental archive is also lost. As a result, the class reader discussions analysed here rarely extended beyond consideration of the text itself unless required to do so by a task. In these instances, the nature of the intertextual connections are predetermined making the process more one of learning links than recognising them.

The absence of students' (and teachers') making intertextual links in the Ambershore class reader units can thus be attributed to the fact that intertextuality is one of the spontaneous and unpredictable aspects of booktalk which are likely to be curtailed as soon as it threatens the pace of the lesson as it was originally conceived. This means that the class reader booktalk rarely moves beyond the Base, in spite of this being a central tenet of the personal growth and cultural analysis models of English teachers are known to prefer (DES 1989; Goodwyn & Findlay 1999). Texts are discussed in isolation and, as a result, features can be presented as though the instantiation in the Base is the only viable manifestation of that feature. For example, in the Year 9 unit the class repeatedly discuss the fact that 'power corrupts'. Several students then go onto discuss the fact (not idea) that power corrupts in their written work and final essays because, in *Animal Farm*, it does. Because the booktalk is confined to *Animal Farm*, this particular presentation of power is accreted and never challenged through the consideration of alternatives.

By reorganising time, however, the pressures which currently operate throughout class reader units could be compartmentalised leaving some lessons free to spend time on organically evolving booktalk which would facilitate pedagogically valuable aspects of booktalk such as personal response, collaborative interpretation and argumentation to flourish.

8.7 Review

This chapter has offered an overview of the forms and functions of intertextual booktalk in two class reader units. It has revealed that references are sometimes made but rarely evolve into meaningful extended discussion. In particular, an absence of intertextual references that contrast similarities or differences between a Base and other narratives has been identified, in spite of this function appearing to offer much pedagogic potential (see Sections 3.12 and 5.14).

The inherently unpredictable nature of personal response, and intertextuality as a key facet of this, has been posited as the probable cause for this absence. The tendency to pre-allocate time in class reader lessons to a series of planned tasks and discussions has been shown to exacerbate this by restricting opportunities for spontaneous booktalk to flourish. Pressures on teachers to 'manage time' most effectively, and in particular the need to demonstrate that students are making tangible progress in accordance with lesson plans and objectives which are necessarily determined before teachers have a chance to gauge the personal responses of their students to the class reader has been highlighted as a key factor in why intertextual booktalk struggles to develop in English lessons.

CHAPTER NINE: AUTHENTIC OR MANUFACTURED READINGS AND THE STATUS OF THE READING EXPERIENCE

9.1 Introduction

This penultimate chapter first further explores the structural differences in the reading experiences of school students and their teachers, and members of a reading group, and its consequences for the booktalk that takes place in these two contexts.

First, the chapter steps back and contrastively considers when and where reading and booktalk take place in classrooms and reading groups. The consequences of heavily fragmenting both reading and booktalk within a class reader unit are explored. The chapter then goes on to consider the typical reading experience an English teacher will have in relation to a class reader, and how this may differ from the students they teach. This discussion considers the different points at which narrative schema accretion takes place in reading group sessions and class reader units respectively. It explores the implications of an imbalance of text knowledge between teacher and students over the course of a class reader, considering the influence of a teacher's sense of prioritisation and time pressure as discussed in the previous chapter. The analysis conceptualises teachers as re-readers of the studied text with richly accreted narrative schemas guiding students who, by contrast, are likely to be first time readers of the text, incrementally accreting their narrative schemas as the unit progresses. The likely impact on class reader booktalk is considered, and these propositions are then explored via two further close analyses of the Ambershore data.

The first analysis takes an overview of the Year 9 final assessments from the Ambershore *Animal Farm* unit in order to explore both the style and content of

these essays. The second gives detailed consideration to a representative lesson from the Year 7 *Holes* unit in order to explore how booktalk unfolds and develops over the course of an individual lesson. Finally, the chapter draws these three discussions together in order to extrapolate and reflect on the booktalk environment created in these units more broadly.

It is proposed that booktalk in the classroom very often has a predetermined aim, and that this places constraints on the kinds of booktalk which tend to be perceived as more valuable and relevant within the classroom context. Building on the discussions in the previous chapter, which highlighted that intertextual booktalk tends to be spontaneous and unpredictable, this chapter offers an account of the classroom reading experience, the type of booktalk it produced in the two examined units, and why this appears to be the case. In particular, it addresses the reasons for the relative absence of intertextual booktalk in the English classroom and, conversely, why it seems free to flourish in the GRG sessions.

9.2 Authentic and manufactured readings

In a recent article a colleague and myself characterised ‘authentic’ and ‘manufactured’ reading, arguing,

[Authentic reading] is born out of an individual’s own process of unmediated interpretation [to] have space to interpret the text, to experience it for [yourself]. If interpretation is imposed [...] the resultant reading is likely not to be authentic, but manufactured. Manufactured readings are learnt, not made; they occur when readers are denied the space to engage in their own process of interpretation

(Giovannelli & Mason 2015: 42).

These terms offer a way of describing different reading experiences in relation to one another, by situating them as extreme ends on a cline. An entirely authentic reading is likely impossible, as any knowledge of a text accreted before or during reading a text can potentially impose interpretation and thereby manufacture a person's response. This is evident in the *Fifty Shades* reviews discussed in Chapter Three, which include such comments as:

- **like many others** I found myself intensely irritated by the repetitive prose (Amazon, 3 star review);
- **like other reviewers**, I found there was a lack of maturity in the prose (Amazon, 3 star review);
- **as many other readers have noted**, the writing is appallingly poor and, if you removed the sex bits, would resemble a love struck teenager's diary (Amazon, 1 star review).

These reviewers are clearly aware of other readers' responses to *Fifty Shades* and those, for example, who had 'heard' that the writing was poor or repetitive will then have read the novel determining whether or not they agree. That is, they will tune their own reading of the text in relation to the knowledge they have already accreted. This knowledge could manufacture responses by predisposing readers to view James' style as bad when they may not have come to that interpretation independently. Any text knowledge accreted prior to reading a narrative for oneself may therefore manufacture a reader's response. As Hall points out, 'reading by definition is always schooled to some degree. There can be no innocent unschooled reading' (2009: 336). At the other end of the spectrum, an entirely manufactured reading is also unlikely: this would mean a reader had accreted knowledge about a text without forming any personal response to, or interpretation of that knowledge whatsoever, though Bayard (2008) does identify

that readers are perfectly capable of talking at length about texts they have never read.

Nonetheless a reading experience can be situated as being prototypically more authentic or manufactured than another. Authentic reading will result in a narrative schema which, initially at least, was predominantly accreted from the individual's own actual reading and interpretation of a narrative. Manufactured reading, on the other hand, will result in a narrative schema which is predominantly accreted with discourse *about* the text rather than from the individual's own reading experience.

A narrative schema constituted of a manufactured reading is in essence a series of learnt facts about a narrative rather than a dynamic interpretation. It is therefore likely to act as a poor resource for a reader engaging in intertextual booktalk. As intertextuality is a process which involves identification and interaction with an individual's mental archive, it is unlikely that a manufactured response will have been situated in relation to other narratives known by the reader. In other words, as intertextuality is closely related to personal response, it is unlikely to feature in the production of a manufactured reading, excepting intertextual links which are learnt, not made, by the reader.

Reading groups and English classrooms are self-evidently not homogenous contexts and can exist on various points on this cline, with both environments capable of producing either authentic or manufactured outputs. However, there are fundamental characteristics of both which do, to some extent, predispose them as to the types of narrative schemas these two reading experiences are liable to produce.

9.3 Narrative schema accretion and booktalk

In a reading group, members will already have experienced an initial phase of narrative schema accretion before engaging in booktalk with the rest of the group by first reading the novel as an individual endeavour. This means, broadly speaking, reading group members should come to the discussion with narrative schemas already predominantly accreted from their own reading of the Base: a mental version of the text which captures and reflects their personal response. That is, reading group members read first and discuss second:

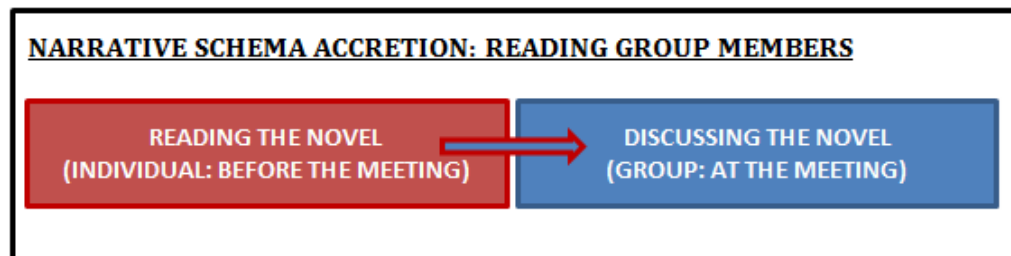


Figure 9.1, Phases of narrative schema accretion in reading group members (blue: discussion about the text, red: reading the text)

Members will then arrive at their meeting and engage in booktalk with other readers. These discussions can be conceptualised as the articulation and sharing of elements of individual narrative schemas with one another. This will result in a second phase of accretion which will likely catalyse significant tuning of, and disruption to, each member's Base schema.

In the class reader context manufactured reading is more likely to occur than is the case with other types of reading experience because there are more opportunities for a student to accrete their narrative schema with information they have obtained from external sources, rather than from their own reading of the text. Where reading group members have the chance to read and generate a personal response to a Base before being compelled to discuss it, in class reader units reading and booktalk often occur in the same space. Thus a typical student

experience of a class reader involves a fragmented route through the text interspersed with booktalk, often focusing on predetermined topics (see Figure 9.2).

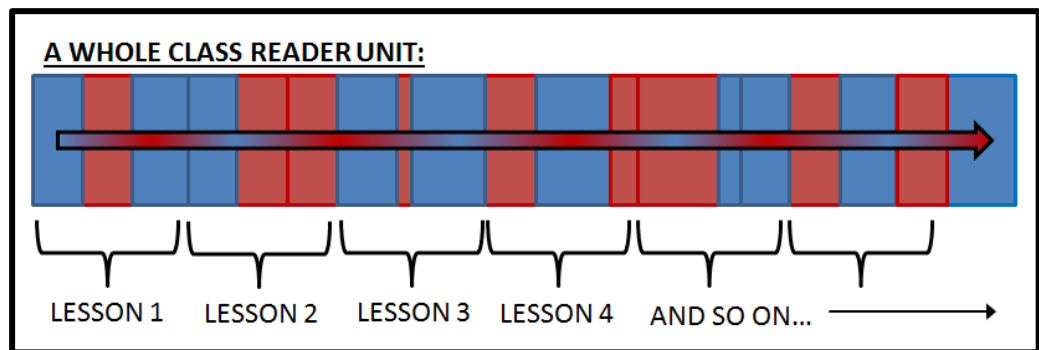


Figure 9.2, Phases of narrative schema accretion in class reader units (blue: discussion about the text, red: reading the text)

The same is not the case for teachers, however, who will almost certainly have read the text at least once before beginning the unit. Their reading experience will instead involve a number of phases of schema accretion, described in Figure 9.3 below:

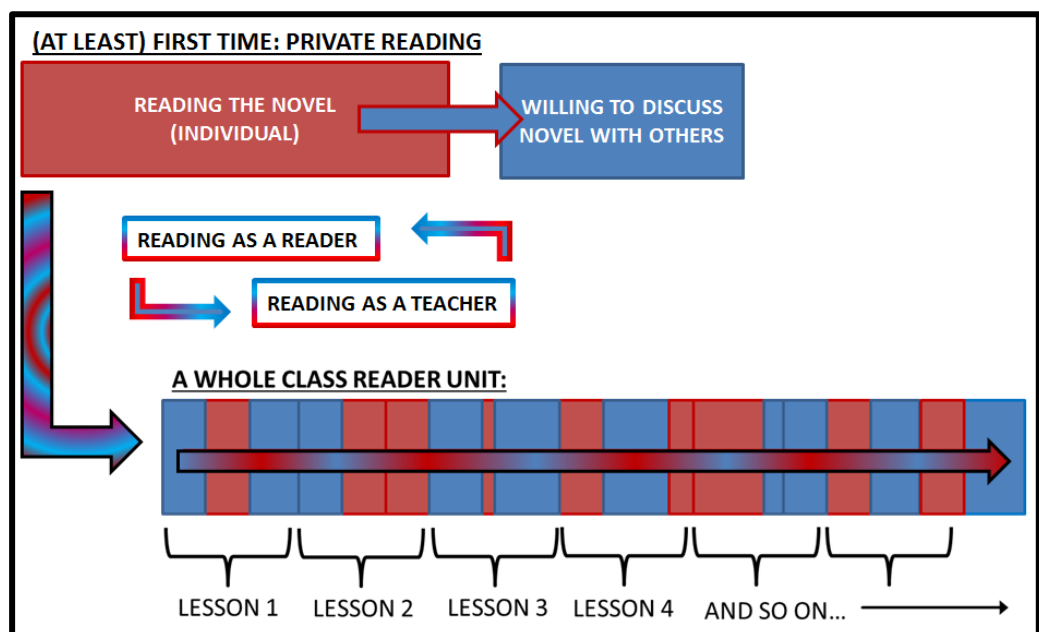


Figure 9.3, A teacher's class reader experience (blue: discussion about the text, red: reading the text)

This means that teachers are always discussing the Base within a class reader unit with reference to a rich narrative schema that includes the full arc of the story. In other words, teachers have a complete, likely authentic, experience of the Base before they begin to teach it. This mirrors the experiences of members of a reading group or university students, who all read the book first and discuss and actively engage in critical interpretation second.

Students on the other hand are, or are typically assumed to be, first time readers of the texts they study. This means that, in contrast to their teachers, they are accreting knowledge as they go and, until they reach the end of the Base, any tasks they complete, questions they answer or booktalk they engage in, are working from a narrative schema which does not include a complete version of the text.

This creates a disjunction of text knowledge in the English classroom where re-readers guide first time readers through a text. This disjunction is difficult to manage: when readers in the course of everyday talk begin discussing a text and realise that one person has not finished it yet, they will often either curtail that conversation or carefully regulate anything else they say so as to prevent spoiling the text for the other person. This is because it is difficult to discuss a text up to chapter 25 when you have read to chapter 50: in doing so, the reader is trying to compartmentalise accreted aspects of their own narrative schema in order to talk as though chapters 1 through 25 are also their only frame of reference, even though they may not remember where chapter 25 ends and 26 begins. This is a challenging thing to do as readers, yet this is what English teachers must do throughout a class reader unit.

9.4 The impact of fragmented reading on booktalk

In both units captured for this research, lessons typically adopted the following structure:

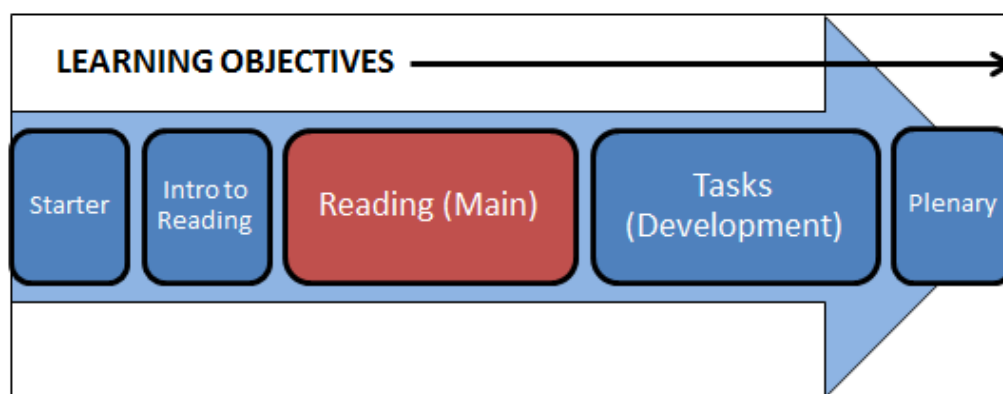


Figure 9.4, Typical lesson plan progression in Ambershore class reader units

The fragmented series of ‘four part lessons’ (broadly following the traditional four part lesson design reported in Figure 6.1 at Section 6.1.4) via which the Ambershore classes incrementally progressed through the Base is a model which consistently exposes students to a re-reader who may often discuss, or allude to, sections of the Base which they have not yet read. This inevitably positions teachers as the ‘expert’ on the text, not only because they are identified as a more skilled reader, but also because they are known to have mental access to the full story. Crucially too, all of these stages of the lesson, and the learning objectives they are designed to meet, are pre-planned. In other words, the teacher has no opportunity to gauge students’ preferred booktalk topics: these are largely decided in advance.

This reading environment can be helpfully deconstructed through the lens of a study Newton (1990) performed examining the psychology of pattern recognition. Newton split her participants into ‘tappers’, who were asked to think of a popular song and tap it out on a table, and ‘listeners’, a number of whom were then asked to listen to the tapping and try to identify the song. In Newton’s study, the tappers predicted that the listeners would recognise the song they were tapping around 50% of the time. In reality, the listeners only succeeded in identifying the tapped tune 3% of the time. In other words, the tappers were hugely overconfident that

the pattern would be identified by the listeners. Recounting this study Turner explains:

once you have the song in your head, you hear it when you tap the rhythm, and you project that knowledge to [...] the listener, or at least, project it more insistently and more often than is warranted. It is very hard to imagine that other minds are not hearing what you are hearing from the sound of one hand tapping

(Turner 2014: 50).

The teachers in the Ambershore class reader units frequently exhibit this same belief that the students will be able to predict or infer plot events, or that they will be able to successfully engage in meaningful booktalk about topics their own narrative schemas cannot realistically facilitate. That is, it is as difficult for a reader who has read a book all the way through to conceptualise that another reader will not be able to anticipate the narrative arc, in the same way that the tappers believed the listeners would be able to perceive a tune they could hear clearly in their own minds. Simply put, you can only be a first time reader once. Reviewing the transcripts, this seemed most likely to occur in the early section of lessons, before the day's reading had taken place, see Figure 9.5 below:

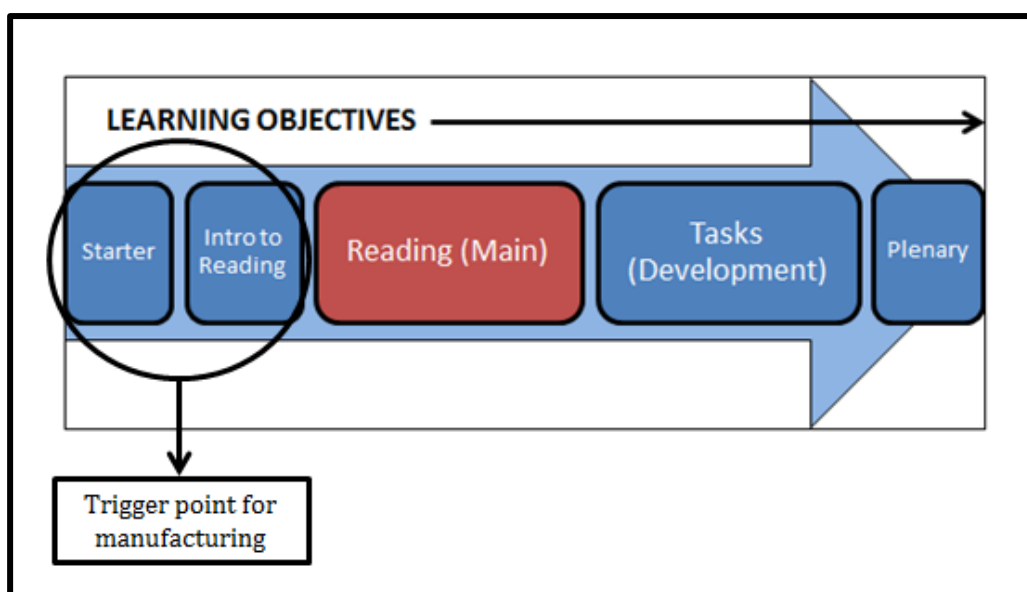


Figure 9.5, Identified trigger point for 'manufacturing' within a four part lesson design

Closer examination of teachers' booktalk at this stage of the lessons revealed that it is often characterised by use of the future tense. Lesson 4 of the Year 9 unit, for instance, offers an illustrative example. Miss B asks the class who Mr Jones, the farmer who runs Animal Farm, could represent allegorically. One student correctly guesses Tsar Nicholas. Miss B responds,

If you remember Tsar Nicholas was in charge of Russia before the revolution, before Marx's idea, before Lenin, he was the one that was overthrown. He was affected by the revolution. So we know that now what Major's ideas are, **you can probably predict what's going to happen in chapter two, so we'll see Mr Jones has been overthrown.** The rebellion at Manor Farm taking place

(Miss B, Year 9, Transcript 4: 32:00).

The class at this point have only read as far as the end of chapter one. Thus according to the narrative schemas of the majority of readers in the room, no rebellion has yet occurred. That is, the allegorical connection between the character in the Base, Mr Jones, and the character in the historical narrative, Tsar

Nicholas, involves a point of narrative contact with a feature in the Base the students have not yet accreted. As a result, Miss B finds herself revealing the forthcoming plot in order to complete her introduction to the day's reading: 'we will see Mr Jones has been overthrown'. She also exhibits Turner's (1990) overconfidence of pattern recognition in saying 'you can probably predict what's going to happen in chapter two'. Framed in cognitive terms this behaviour is entirely natural: Miss B has prepared and thought about the day's lesson and the reading she is about to do with the class; this means that these aspects of her *Animal Farm* schema will be figured at the forefront of her attention. The lesson plan, which then requires her to talk to the students about that reading before it takes place, makes it almost inevitable that she will draw on that knowledge, and then that students will accrete this information from her words, not their reading. This arguably discourages students from drawing on their own background knowledge, including that of other texts, in order to make sense of and interpret the class reader because an interpretation is provided for them by someone they are predisposed to view as an authority. Giovanelli and Mason found that, when a student's interpretation differs or is contradicted by an interpretation presented by their teacher, 'this made them reluctant to discuss their own readings because these did not tally with what they perceived to be the authorised reading of the text' (2015: 48).

Reflecting upon the impact Miss B's introduction is likely to have had, therefore, on the ensuing booktalk, it is clear that a preferred interpretation - that *Animal Farm* is a hypertextual allegory of the Russian Revolution - is foregrounded. To compound this, students have not yet reached the section of text Miss B is discussing, meaning that they are not realistically equipped to disagree, or offer a different interpretation. By contrast, the GRG explored a range of possible interpretations of *Animal Farm* (Section 5.11.1). As their teacher, Miss B is also

naturally positioned as the expert in the room, and it seems uncontroversial to suggest that students are therefore primed to accept and accrete this information to their narrative schemas without reflection or challenge. It is interesting to consider what may have happened if, for instance, the class had first read about the overthrow of the farm and then begun with a more open and general discussion. Giovanelli and Mason's study explored the impact of giving students information about historically grounded interpretations of a text before or after they read and initially interpret it for themselves. They found that, if students were given contextual historical information or details of preferred responses *after* they had the opportunity for authentic interpretations they, 'seem[ed] happy to integrate this knowledge, enriching but not overriding their own personal response' (2015: 53). However, if they first accreted a manufactured response – if they learnt an interpretation before forming their own – they found it difficult to conceive of other possible interpretations.

Exploring the fragmented path students take through class readers and the impact this can have on the classroom booktalk raises another interesting consideration: the role of teachers' questions. Teachers' questions, even more so than their lesson introductions, are typically generated based on their pre-existing knowledge of the content of reading which is about to occur. Examples of this are littered throughout both sets of class reader transcripts. One such illustrative example of this occurs when the Year 9 group have finished chapter one, near the end of lesson 3, Miss B asks 'what is Old Major's dream and is this foreshadowing anything that's going to happen in the text?' (Year 9, Transcript 3: 56:00). It is impossible for first time readers to answer this question. Furthermore, the fact that students are aware that the question is being asked by someone who has read the text all the way through encourages them to infer that the dream does indeed 'foreshadow [some]thing that's going to happen'. To authentically recognise foreshadowing, a reader must

do it retrospectively. That is, even if a reader suspects foreshadowing, this cannot be confirmed until the point in the text that the earlier part was foreshadowing is reached. The risk of this is that teachers talk about the text in order to support and facilitate the booktalk, and students simply accrete this knowledge: they learn interpretations. As such, reference to the mental archive and drawing on one's background knowledge is less necessary for classroom readers than those in other contexts whose first private reading experience is more likely to be a self-reliant endeavour. This offers a strong account of why intertextual booktalk may struggle to flourish in the class reader units: fragmented routes through the text reduce the scope, and necessity, for personal response which arises naturally in the course of private reading. Reading group members on the other hand, as well as English teachers themselves, will always have had the opportunity for private reading before engaging in booktalk: this partitioning preserves the space for personal response, and drawing intertextual connections as a part of that process.

This highlights the difficult position English teachers are in as re-readers teaching first time readers. In essence they are tasked with managing upwards of twenty readers' accrual of authentic narrative schemas, in a context which is structurally resistant to allowing this to happen. The next section will therefore consider how a known imbalance of text knowledge between teacher and students can influence class reader booktalk. In particular, it will consider the impact on argumentation in the classroom.

9.5 Argumentation and booktalk

Argumentation is defined by van Eemeren and Grootendorst as,

a verbal, social, and rational activity aimed at convincing a reasonable critic of the acceptability of a standpoint by putting forward a constellation of

propositions justifying or refuting the proposition expressed in the standpoint

(2004: 1).

The ways in which humans construct arguments and engage in argumentation has been of interest to many fields of academia from philosophy and linguistics to education and business studies (Coffin & O'Halloran 2009; O'Halloran 2011; Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969; Toulmin 1958; Walton 2006; Weinberger & Fischer 2006; van Eemeren and Grootendorst 2004).

Reading groups have been a fruitful site for the exploration of how people dynamically formulate, present and evolve their own thinking in relation to a particular text and the themes, characters and events it contains. As O'Halloran points out:

investigating argumentation in reading groups offers an opportunity for obtaining insight into how people debate with one another in self-organized, informal circumstances [...] there are very few cultural phenomena with such salience where people congregate voluntarily to engage in informal debate on equal footing

(2011: 172-3).

An understanding of how readers typically engage in argumentation in the context of a reading group also offers a valuable comparison with the manner and style of argumentation in the class reader context where the 'equal footing' O'Halloran describes is removed; when teachers and students collaboratively engage in booktalk.

The benefits of argumentation in the classroom have been explored extensively in the context of science education (Driver et al. 1994; Newton et al. 1999; Osborne 2010):

Talking offers an opportunity for conjecture, argument and challenge. In talking, learners will articulate reasons for supporting particular conceptual understandings and attempt to justify their views. Others will challenge, express doubts and present alternatives, so that a clearer conceptual understanding will emerge. In such a manner, knowledge is co-constructed by the group as the group interaction enables the emergence of an understanding whose whole is more than the sum of the individual contributions

(Newton et al. 1999: 554).

Where Newton and colleagues discuss argumentation in relation to the teaching of scientific concepts, the same principle clearly applies to discussing a text, either in an English classroom or in a reading group. The desire for argumentation is in fact a driving factor in many readers' decisions to join a reading group in the first place.

Hartley explains,

the second vital element to good reading-group talk [is] the range of opinion. The majority of groups identify this as a key ingredient [...] "Heated arguments" are recalled fondly, the hotter the better. Respondents seem to enjoy the fireworks: "I have to contradict or I explode"

(Hartley 2001: 79).

Argumentation is thus commonly acknowledged as pedagogically valuable as a form of collaborative learning. It is a process 'often linked to complex problem solving whereby learners construct and balance arguments and counter arguments to find resolutions' (O'Halloran 2011: 179, see also Weinberger & Fischer 2006). Opportunities for students to engage in argumentation are therefore vital in order to facilitate their critical engagement with the text.

O'Halloran (2011) examined the argumentation patterns of ten reading groups across a range of contexts, with a variety of ages and genders, in a variety of areas in the UK, with a view to being able to generalise his findings. This he did successfully by identifying similar patterns of argumentation which seemed to occur in diverse contexts with diverse groups using a mixed methods approach which drew on both qualitative analysis as well as corpus analysis (the same approach used to analyse the data generated in the present research). O'Halloran's findings are highly salient to the current project. He used three categories of discursive argumentation to code his transcripts:

Table 9.1, The three components of argumentation (taken from O'Halloran 2011: 181)

Discussion Code	Description
Claim	A challengeable proposition about the novel
Challenge	Where a speaker challenges a previous claim
Co-construction	Where claims from different speakers build on each other

O'Halloran identifies that 'challenges' are associated with reporting personal responses to the text, explaining that challenges are made 'in the main from a 1st-person singular and past tense perspective, and commonly with the collocation "I thought"' (2011: 187). This correlates with the prevalence of 'like' used by GRG members when reporting their reactions and responses to a Base at the time of reading, using the three-word cluster 'I was like' (Figure 5.1, Section 5.10.3). O'Halloran also highlights challenges as catalysts for co-construction, explaining, 'there is significant evidence [...] that challenging *precedes* co-construction' (2011: 190). Thus, argumentation can be anticipated to result from booktalk environments where a range of authentic interpretations are brought together and offered up to a group for consideration.

Manufactured reading, by contrast, is characterised by the imposition of interpretation (Giovanelli & Mason 2015). If all readers involved in an episode of booktalk have been exposed to the same manufacturing, one would anticipate a substantive reduction in the variety of responses to the Base as result because, in essence, everyone has learnt the same interpretation. This will be exacerbated if most of the booktalk participants have not read the whole text for themselves.

One member of the GRG had studied *Animal Farm* as a class reader as a young person and reported having had just such an experience. He explained,

When I did [*Animal Farm*] in school at Year 9 [...] you didn't really get any benefit from it because like, the teacher would just be like, just write-, [...] "Snowball is Trotsky. Just write that on the paper and you'll be fine". And then you were like, okay great but, but I-, and like loads of, like half the class, you'll be like oh uh, who's Trotsky? What's Stalin? "It doesn't matter; just write it down." And you'll get the marks. And you'll be fine. [...] And then like, so we literally just learnt by rote to write entire paragraphs like "in *Animal Farm* you will find that this pig is this and this animal represents this, and therefore Orwell is clever" and you could just learn all those words off by heart with no knowledge of what they actually meant

(GRG: Session 2 *Animal Farm*, Roger).

The fragmented route through a class reader, with personal response surrounded by endemic risk of manufacturing, jeopardises the heterogeneity of interpretations within class reader booktalk. This problematises Park's definition of communal reading as an environment in which 'a reader is likely to encounter multiple or conflicting perspectives' because this will only be the case if 'individuals' literary interpretations' have been authentically accreted rather than learned,

manufactured responses (Park 2012: 194). This means that the key benefit of group reading is potentially not being realised in the class reader context.

The next section will illustrate the results of manufactured interpretation in the Year 9 unit, catalysed by an externally prescribed assessment focus which privileged knowledge of *Animal Farm's* origins as a hypertext of the Russian Revolution over students' developing authentic responses. As a result, a widespread homogenisation of their interpretations of the novel can be observed in their final assessments.

9.6 *Animal Farm* and the Russian Revolution: a hierarchy of intertextual reference

Animal Farm is commonly acknowledged to be an allegory of events in Russia's recent history at the time it was written in 1945. In spite of this hypotext being well known in the booktalk surrounding Orwell's novel, the allegory is only ever realised in the form of (predominantly specific) unmarked references within the text itself. That is, it is perfectly possible to read *Animal Farm* without making a single interrelation with the story of the Russian Revolution. In an authentic reading, therefore, only readers who identified recognisable features from the historical narrative within the Base would perceive the allegorical relationship.

Various referred to as either 'the Russian Revolution' (26 instances) or 'context' (77 instances), the Year 9 unit placed a strong emphasis on students learning about *Animal Farm's* allegorical relationship with Russian history. This manifested, for example, in a whole lesson (Lesson 2) being dedicated to learning about the 'Russian context' when, at that time, the students were less than halfway through Chapter 1. The students were also repeatedly alerted to the allegorical associations

throughout the unit, even being given the following 'crib sheet of connections' in Figure 9.6 below:

1	Mr. Jones	Tsar Nicholas II
2	Old Major	Marx / Lenin
3	Napoleon	Stalin
4	Snowball	Trotsky
5	Boxer	Committed & Dutiful Worker
6	Clover	Voice of sympathy / paternal
7	Benjamin	Intellectual cynic / pessimist
8	Moses	Religion
9	Squealer	Stalin's propaganda machine (Pravda)
10	Mollie	Vanity / Selfishness
11	The Sheep	Stalin's slogan-chanting masses
12	The Dogs	The Secret Police
13	The Chickens	The Kulaks (peasants)
14	Pilkington of Foxwood	Britain (Churchill)
15	Frederick of Pinchfield	Germany (Hitler)
16	Animalism	Communism
17	The Rebellion	The February Rebellion 1917
18	The Battle of the Cowshed	The October Revolution 1917
19	The Windmill	Industrialisation
20	The Battle of the Windmill	Germany's invasion of Russia 1941
21	Sugarcandy Mountain	Heaven
22	The Humans (in general)	Owners / Exploitative Capitalists
23	The Animals (in general)	Exploited workers
24	Flag with hoof & horn	Russian Flag (hammer & sickle)
25	Napoleon's Pig Committee	The Politburo
26	The Farmhouse	The Kremlin
27	'Beasts of England'	Spanish Revolutionary Song
28	'Comrade Napoleon'	'Hymn to J. V. Stalin'

Although various episodes are taken from the actual history of the Russian Revolution, they are dealt with schematically and their chronological order is changed.' George Orwell.

Figure 9.6, Year 9, *Animal Farm*: crib sheet of allegorical connections to Russian history given to students

The term 'context' occurs within five words of a form of the verb 'link' more than 40 times over the course of the unit. Thus it is reasonable to say that the hypertextual relationship between the Base and the story of the Russian Revolution is presented to the students not as *an* intertextual connection but *the* intertextual connection which characterises Orwell's novel.

The primary reason for this was not a preference of Miss B's but because the unit was expressly targeting the development of two specific 'Reading Assessment Focuses' (RAFs):

- RAF 5: To explain and comment on writers' use of language
- RAF 7: To relate texts to their social, cultural and historical traditions

The latter, RAF 7, privileges links to the Russian hypotext over any other perceived connections to other narratives. This situates intertextual connections which are objectively 'true' as the only kind that have value in terms of the connections rewarded by the assessment criteria. In other words, it frames 'context' as something related only to a text's production (by the author) and not to a text's reception (by a reader): the scope of RAF 7 explicitly prizes knowledge of the text as an allegory over alternative interpretations. In other words, it actively promotes manufacturing over facilitating authentic response, and text-driven intertextual references over reader-driven ones. In fact, reader-driven intertextual associations are completely maligned by RAF 7: the use of 'their' in the phrasing of RAF 7 giving clear primacy to 'social, cultural and historical traditions' proximal to a text's production rather than reception.

When considered in this light, especially with regard to teachers' perceptions that a key part of a 'good teacher' identity is the ability to manage class time most usefully and effectively (Turvey & Lloyd 2014), it seems starkly obvious why intertextual associations proffered by students do not tend to develop into extended intertextual booktalk in the Year 9 unit: they are not valuable within the mandated paradigm of the learning objectives and assessment. As a result, Miss B repeatedly presented the allegory as the preferred, if not sole, interpretation of the Base. A representative example of this can be observed when the class were about to read the second half of Chapter 1. Miss B prefaced the day's reading,

So we're going to look at what is [Old Major's] main point, what is he suggesting, and how he goes about doing this – this is a persuasive speech he's giving to the other animals. *Remember, this is all an allegory. Satirical. Not meant to be just an animal talking to a lot of other animals.*

(Miss B, Year 9, Transcript 3: 16:00).

The intertextual references here are all expressed as categorical assertions, first positively asserting the hypertextuality ('this *is* all an allegory'), with the use of 'all' extending the assertion to the entire novel, not just the present section. Second, Miss B also categorically negates alternative interpretations ('not meant to be just an animal talking to a lot of other animals'). The use of 'just' additionally positions other non-allegorical interpretations as being less valuable. This is clearly reflected in the version of *Animal Farm* the Year 9 students accrete to their schemas for the text: when asked to state 'one thing they had learnt' from the unit, 19 of the students, more than half the class, gave a response referencing the Russian history narrative, such as:

One thing you have learnt?

- Russian Revolution (2 instances)
- A lot about the Russian Revolution
- About the Russian Revolution (6 instances)
- When the Russian Revolution was
- Communism = bad
- The connection between Animal Farm and the Russian revolution
- I learnt about the whole Lenin and Stalin thing

The students' final essays are also characterised by clear and pervasive understanding of the Russian Revolution and how its events are allegorised in

Animal Farm. Many students assert that *Animal Farm* is solely about the Russian Revolution without particular consideration of the novel as a story in its own right. In fact, in their final essays, 25 students (of 30 examined essays) make some statement about the 'purpose' of *Animal Farm* being to either describe or inform readers about the Russian Revolution.

In spite of the fact that the students chose to focus their final essays on more than ten different themes between them, and in spite of having over 30,000 words of *Animal Farm* to choose from, a relatively small number of quotations from the novel also receive a disproportionate amount of attention. For example,

- 15 students discussed the word 'comrade';
- 14 students discussed Napoleon's dogs, of which four analysed the term 'blood curdling growls' specifically;
- 11 students included a point concerning the pigs taking the milk and apples for themselves;
- Nine students discussed a quote concerning the threat of Jones coming back to the farm, using either or both of the following quotations, which are repeated on multiple occasions in the novel: 'Jones would come back!' and 'Surely none of you wants to see Jones come back?';
- Six students discussed the specific quote "surely comrades, you do not think we pigs are doing this in the spirit of selfishness and privilege?"; and,
- Five students discussed the phrase 'the animals following at a respectful distance'.

In addition, of the 30 students whose final assessments were examined in this research, only 16 points made within those essays collectively were made by only one student and could not be traced back to previous discussions within the unit.

This is not to say that the students did not respond personally to *Animal Farm*, only that very little evidence of personal response can be found in their assessments.

A final consequence of the hypertextuality being privileged in the Year 9 unit was that it led to the occlusion of other intertextual connections which could potentially have been made between the Base and other narratives, of the kind frequently observed in the GRG discussions (Section 5.11.1). One student, Oliver, for example, makes an intertextual link to a different historical narrative than the hypotext, namely Nazi Germany, in his final assessment.

Squealer can also be compared to, or represents, Goebbels. Goebbels was minister of propaganda in Germany. **This would seem inconsistent with Orwell's satire**, never the less **it was supposed to metaphor characters in Russia.**

(Year 9, Oliver's assessment)

Oliver is unclear about whether he is trying to make a pure match or identify a similarity between Squealer and Goebbels. He then appears to become confused, saying 'this would seem inconsistent with Orwell's satire'. Oliver has learnt that *Animal Farm* is a hypertext. This, to Oliver, is a static relationship which occludes the possibility of dynamic interpretations that would involve parallels being drawn between the Base and other narratives than the story of the Russian Revolution: 'it was *supposed to* metaphor characters in Russia'. This is in spite of the fact that Oliver has identified that the Base has a feature in common with another narrative in his mental archive. Thus the privileging of the hypotext appears to have inhibited Oliver's perception of the validity of his interrelations to other narratives.

RAF 7 encourages the manufacturing of students' narrative schemas by creating the impression that the purpose of the class reader is to accrete a learnt, preferred

response, thus pressuring teachers to privilege forms of booktalk geared to achieve this over others. Further, when time constraints pit talk or tasks aligned with RAF 7 against other discussions, this emphasis primes teachers to choose the former, regardless of how pedagogically valuable they, as experts, perceive those other discussions to be; precisely the pattern described by Turvey and Lloyd's study (2014) and observed in the Ambershore lessons.

Both the Year 9 unit and the GRG acknowledge and discuss the novel's allegorical links with Russian history extensively, however there is an interesting distinction. The GRG acknowledge the hypotext and then explore several alternative intertextual links with other narratives, including non-fictional narratives such as the history of North Korea, the rise of New Labour and fictional narratives such as *Lord of the Flies*. The class reader unit, however, focuses on the novel's links with Russian history to the virtual exclusion of other potential intertextual connections. There are a few passing references, such as the links Miss B draws between the Base and *Babe the Pig* (see Section 8.3.3), however Russian history is the only interrelated narrative which receives extended attention.

When students are assessed on their knowledge of a class reader rather than their skills of authentic interpretation they are actively encouraged to learn and repeat responses rather than develop their own. These manufactured responses are not developed through a gradual accretion of text knowledge and a reflective consideration of one's personal response: it is therefore unsurprising that students do not appear to link or situate the Base in relation to other narratives in their own mental archives as a result.

This analysis raises questions about the practice of dividing up the English curriculum to focus on different critical reading skills through different units because this creates an instability in the presentation to students of what

constitutes a good critical reading identity: where one facet of response is highly prized when they study one class reader, it may not be rewarded (in terms of assessment scores) in another. In the Year 9 class, 'context' is heavily emphasised throughout, not because this is either Miss B's interpretation of the Base or her preference regarding how to teach it, but because RAF 7 is one of the two focuses of the unit. If RAF 3 had been chosen by Ambershore instead, the primacy given to the novel's allegorical representations would likely not have occurred.

9.7 Narrative schema accretion in a class reader lesson: a final case study.

This final section of the chapter will offer a case study of a lesson taken from the midpoint of the *Holes* unit in order to explore how the imbalance of text knowledge between teacher and students, and the attendance to predetermined learning objectives, unfolds over the course of a single lesson. The analysis will focus on the booktalk before the day's reading took place (Phases 1-5 in Table 9.2). It will explore and problematise the traditional 'four part' plan as a design for lessons within a class reader unit. The analysis will explore three areas: the problem of potential plot spoilers, ordering and emphasis on various activities within the lesson plan, and students' abilities to engage in productive booktalk based on their text knowledge at the point they are asked to discuss a topic. The analysis will then reflect on how the fragmentation of reading in the class reader context is likely to affect the production of intertextual booktalk.

This lesson has been chosen because it follows the prototypical four part structure used in most of the lessons analysed in this research, and because the patterns of fragmented reading and booktalk also mimic that of the majority of the other lessons. For these reasons, this analysis can be extrapolated as broadly

representative of the patterns of unfolding booktalk characteristic within both of the recorded units.

9.7.1 Year 7, Lesson 9: Discrimination in *Holes*: a brief overview

This was the plan for Lesson 9 on Ambershore's original scheme of work:

	Learning Objectives	Starter	Main	Development	Plenary
10	To explore different attitudes To analyse Sachar's style	Opinions on statement about equality. Racism in America – context video clip	Read Chapter 25 and 26	Different viewpoints on events	Why do you think Sachar wrote the facts of the events in such a straightforward way without any adjectives? Why does Sachar directly address the reader? Whom did God punish?

Figure 9.7, Ambershore's original lesson plan for Year 7, Lesson 9: Discrimination in *Holes*

This lesson focused on chapters 25 and 26 of *Holes*. These two chapters flashback to one hundred and ten years before the main plot (with the boys digging holes at Camp Green Lake). The flashback is set in the town of Green Lake, on the same site as the camp in the present day. It tells the story of 'Sam the Onion Man', a black onion seller, and his brief and tragic love affair with the town's white schoolteacher Miss Katherine Barlow, who goes on to become the outlaw whose buried treasure the boys in the present are unwittingly digging for. Below is the closing excerpt of the section of *Holes* the class read in this lesson. By the end of the second chapter, at least two students can be heard crying quietly on the audio recording.

“They’re destroying the schoolhouse,” [Katherine] said, gasping for breath. “They’ll burn it to the ground if someone doesn’t stop them!”
 “Just calm your pretty self down a second,” the sheriff said in a slow drawl. “And tell me what you’re talking about.” [...]

“You’re sure pretty”, the sheriff said.
 Miss Katherine stared at him in horror.
 “Kiss me,” said the sheriff.
 She slapped him across the face.
 He laughed. “You kissed the onion picker. Why won’t you kiss me.” [...]

“I’ll make you a deal. One sweet kiss and I won’t hang your boyfriend. I’ll just run him out of town.” [...]

She ran down to the lakefront, where Sam was hitching Mary Lou [his donkey] to the onion cart.
 “Thank God, I found you,” she sighed, hugging him. “We’ve got to get out of here. Now!”
 “What--”
 “Someone must have seen us kissing yesterday,” she said. “They set fire to the schoolhouse. The sheriff said he’s going to hang you!”
 Sam hesitated a moment, as if he couldn’t quite believe it. He didn’t want to believe it. “C’m on Mary Lou.”
 “We have to leave Mary Lou behind,” said Katherine. [...]

They were a little more than halfway across the lake when Miss Katherine heard the loud roar of the engine. Then she saw the ugly black smoke.

These are the facts:

The Walker boat smashed into Sam’s boat. Sam was shot and killed in the water. Katherine Barlow was rescued against her wishes. When they returned to the shore, she saw Mary Lou’s body lying on the ground. The donkey had been shot in the head. That all happened one hundred and ten years ago. Since then, not one drop of rain has fallen on Green Lake.

You make the decision: Whom did God punish?

Three days after Sam’s death, Miss Katherine shot the sheriff while he was sitting in his chair drinking a cup of coffee. Then she carefully applied a fresh coat of red lipstick and gave him the kiss he had asked for. For the next twenty years Kissin’ Kate Barlow was one of the most feared outlaws in all the West.

(Sachar 1999: 113-15)

An overview of the lesson is displayed below (Table 9.2):

Table 9.2, Overview of lesson activities in Year 7, Lesson 9: Discrimination in *Holes*

	Lesson Phase (time on transcript)	Lesson activities	Time (min)
1	Starter (Part 1) (10:00 – 11:00)	Class discuss the quotation: “Equality may perhaps be a right but no power on earth can ever turn it into a fact.”	1
2	Starter (Part 1 discussion) (11:00 – 13:00)	Students are asked ‘can you think of any examples of discrimination in <i>Holes</i> ?’	2
3	Starter (Part 2) (13:00 – 16:00)	Mrs K introduces, and the class watch, a short video about Jim Crow laws and racial discrimination in America.	3
4	Starter (Part 2 discussion) (16:00 – 19:00)	Mrs K leads discussion about the information in the video (e.g. Ku Klux Klan) and links back to the text: ‘If you were black and lived in a town like Green Lake a hundred years ago’.	3
5	Introduction to Main (19:00 – 22:00)	Mrs K recaps previous lesson’s reading and introduces today’s reading. Copies of <i>Holes</i> handed out and volunteer readers recruited.	3
6	Main (Part 1) Reading Chapter 25 (22:00 – 29:00)	Mrs K and some student volunteers read chapter 25, pausing once for discussion (approximately 1 min)	7
7	Main (Part 2) Discussion (29:00 – 31:00)	Chapter 25 closes with a woman, Hattie, seeing Sam and Kate kissing. The woman says ‘God will punish you’. Mrs K asks the students why she would have said this. One student, Ron, asks about the meaning of the word ‘negro’ prompting a discussion described in Section 8.3.2. Reading continues.	2
8	Main (Part 3) Reading Chapter 26 (31:00 – 35:30)	A student volunteer, Hannah, reads all of chapter 26. There are no pauses for discussion.	4.5

9	Main (Part 4) Discussion (35:30 – 38:30)	Mrs K leads the class to reflect on why Kate became an outlaw and the class discuss both racial and gender discrimination in chapters 25 and 26.	3
10	Development: Task (Part 1) Organisation (38:30 – 42:00)	The PowerPoint slide below (Figure 9.8) is displayed. Students are put into pairs and assigned a character.	3.5
11	Development: Task (Part 2) Pair Discussion (42:00-46:00)		4
12	Development: Task (Part 3) Drama Activity (46:00 – 52:00)	Mrs K brings the class back together and selects students to pretend to be their group's character. Students are then asked questions 'in character'.	6
13	Development Task (Part 4) Writing Activity (52:00 – 58:30)	Students are asked to write a paragraph from their character's perspective.	6.5
14	Plenary (58:30 – 1:00:30)	Mrs K asks the class: 'Hattie was the first one to say "God will punish you", but ultimately, who did God punish?'	2

From your character's point of view:

- What happened
- Why it happened
- Opinion of Kate Barlow/Onion Sam
- What they think will happen to the town and people of Camp Green Lake

Kate Barlow

Hattie Parker

Doc Hawthorn

Trout Walker

THE SHERIFF

The mother of one of the children in the school

This Figure 9.8, PowerPoint slide for Lesson 9 development tasks

Table 9.3, Total time spent on each lesson phase, Year 7, Lesson 9: Discrimination in *Holes*

Lesson Phase	Total Time Spent (minutes)
Settling the class, register, discussing homework	7
Introductory tasks and introduction to reading (Starters)	11
Reading and discussing text (Main)	16.5
Lesson tasks (Development)	20
Plenary	2

9.7.2 Talking about discrimination in *Holes*

The lesson theme, discrimination, was clearly selected because of knowledge of the reading the students were *about* to do. Mrs K introduced the theme of the day's lesson and asked the group to consider a quotation displayed on the PowerPoint:

Mrs K: What we're looking at today is, we are going to read some more about the story of um, Green Lake. Remember yesterday we started finding out about Kate Barlow and her, her role in the, in the, in the stories a hundred and ten years ago. So we're going to look at different attitudes today and we're going to look at the style of the author, especially in the next couple of chapters. Um, we've got a statement [on the PowerPoint]; we're talking about equality. "Equality may perhaps be a right but no power on earth can ever turn it into a fact." Now that's a really powerful statement there. Can anyone work out what it, what does it mean? Colin?

Colin: Well, it means, that ev-, it would, it would be nice for everyone to be equal but in real life it's just never going to happen.

(Year 7, Transcript 9: 10:00)

Colin is able to answer Mrs K's question by drawing on his broader schematic knowledge about equality. As shown below, Mrs K then links the quotation, building on Colin's answer, to *Holes* specifically. James was one of five students in Mrs K's class who has read *Holes* before. He had not been in the previous lesson:

Mrs K: Good. Yes, so it says there, it might be a right, we all have a right to be equal and not to be discriminated against but it says, yeah, nobody can make that, unfortunately nobody can actually make that happen. It's one of the unfortunate things in life isn't it. Can anyone see any examples already in *Holes* maybe where, um, there is discrimination? Where, although there should be equality, there, there isn't? James?

James: Is it, have we got to the bit where Sam gets shot?

Unknown (possibly Mrs K): Uhhh!

Mrs K: Not yet (laughs). But that would be a great example James. Poor James.

Multiple students: Who gets shot?

Mrs K: Nobody! Nobody gets shot. Do they James? Not for a while anyway. Right. Well you all know there's lots of guns, it's not that, you know, let's be clear on this.

Student: Who gets shot?

(Year 7, Transcript 9, 11:00).

At the point this exchange takes place, the class have read to the end of chapter 24. Sam is a character who is introduced in chapter 25 and murdered at the end of chapter 26.

Following this exchange, Mrs K opens the question up to the rest of the class. Other students who, unlike James, do not yet have schematic knowledge of chapters 25 and 26, are able to generate other examples of discrimination in *Holes* based on

their knowledge of chapters 1 to 24. One student suggests, for instance, that Stanley is initially made fun of for being fat. James' answer, however, is arguably the best one. It is the answer that most people who have read *Holes* all the way through would be likely to give: Mrs K is right, 'it would be a great example'. The reason it cannot be used in this discussion is because the introduction of the theme for the lesson is out of sequence with the theme being raised in the novel. At the same time, however, the theme has been chosen *because* of its appearance as a theme in the novel.

The lesson is clearly designed with a view to encouraging the students to situate the particular event in *Holes*, a black man being killed for kissing a white woman, within a broader discussion about equality: to move beyond the Base. This is demonstrated by the inclusion of the 'Jim Crow' video, which offers the students a non-fictional historical narrative with which points of contact can be made, thus introducing the potential to accrete their schemas for both. Yet all this takes place *before* the students read about Sam being shot: in their version of *Holes* Sam does not yet exist.

There is no intention to reveal Sam's death before it happens, illustrated by Mrs K's attempts to stop the rest of the class from hearing James' spoiler. Yet the question would not have been asked at all if the teacher who planned the lesson (a previous member of the department, not Mrs K) had not known what was about to happen. That is, if the teacher who designed the task had only read as far as the students, they would never have asked this question at this point, because the major act of discrimination in *Holes* has not happened yet, just like the example above where Miss B asked whether Old Major's death in *Animal Farm* might be foreshadowing something. In both cases, the lesson plan structurally realises the imbalance of text knowledge between teacher and students.

The result of this ordering of task and actual reading is twofold. First, the initial discussion of equality and discrimination is limited. Whilst its purpose is clearly to encourage students to make intertextual connections between the events in *Holes* and a wider historical narrative of black oppression in the United States, the booktalk can neither engage nor develop students' responses to the events in the Base which (unknown to most of the students) has prompted the discussion. As a result, a potentially rich discussion is left without the most relevant text knowledge available for the students to draw on. This is not to suggest that discrimination against Stanley for his weight is not valid contribution, it is, but it is clear that the lesson focus has been chosen because of Sam's death, not Stanley's fatness.

In Phases 1 to 5 of the lesson, discrimination in '*Holes* chapters 1 to 24' is discussed for 11 minutes: no example of gender discrimination is raised. Racial discrimination is discussed briefly, prompted by the Jim Crow video. This cannot be linked to *Holes* yet, so Mrs K shifts again into the future tense to assure students of the discussion's relevance saying 'this issue **is going to be** covered in the next part of *Holes* that **we're going to** read' (Year 7, Transcript 9: 17:00). Refining the scope of the discussion from a broader consideration of equality and discrimination (in the starter) to racial discrimination specifically (through watching the Jim Crow video) gives many opportunities for students to infer what might be about to happen when a black character then appears in the day's reading. It also means that, after the class do read chapters 25 and 26, the broad discussion of equality and discrimination is already perceived to have taken place, and the remainder of the lesson then narrows the topic of the booktalk even further, to the specific instantiations of discrimination in *Holes*. The lesson thus creates the impression that the events in *Holes* are being intertextually linked to a wider historical narrative, but this never explicitly takes place.

Of the time spent discussing discrimination in this lesson, only three minutes take place when students are able to access a narrative schema which includes Sam's death. Attention is then directed to lesson tasks which require students to consider the plot events from the point of view of an assigned character. This narrows students' attentional focus to the text knowledge relevant to their particular character, encouraging neglected knowledge to immediately decay from their narrative schemas. This knowledge may be accreted afresh when the students listen to their peers pretending to be other characters in the drama activity (Phase 12). However, the students have had very little unmediated time to develop any authentic interpretation of Sam and Kate's story. As a result, when they are then presented with their teacher and peers' interpretations they are far more likely to tune their knowledge to, or simply accrete, those interpretations of the events. In this way, opportunities for intertextual booktalk, or any booktalk relating to these two chapters which falls outside of the scope of the predetermined tasks, are greatly diminished. If such talk did arise it would then be placed into competition with 'on-task' talk and Mrs K would have to decide which was the more valuable.

The class reader approach thus creates an inversion of the reading group context. In a reading group, members read the text then bring their authentic narrative schema to the group: the booktalk cultivates and enriches that schema. In class reader lessons, the four part model of planning impoverishes discussions which take place before the day's reading due to a dearth of text knowledge on the part of the students, which in turn pre-empts their authentic responses to the text. In this lesson it also created the impression that discrimination and inequality in *Holes* was situated within its wider context when in fact the general discussion is never explicitly linked to the events in *Holes* at all. It also creates a flashpoint for the unintended manufacturing of students' responses.

This analysis raises serious questions about the efficacy of the four part lesson plan in relation to class reader units. It is a model which demands *something* to take place before the reading itself. The analysis has highlighted, however, that this can clearly lead to the revelation of plot points before they occur but also risks constraining students' authentic engagement with the text and, in doing so, restricting personal interpretation and response. The Year 7 unit clearly wishes to facilitate students making connections between the Base and other narratives but is structured in such a way as to inhibit this actually taking place.

CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Introduction

The final chapter of this thesis will reflect on its findings and consider the implications of the research reported.

10.2 Narrative interrelation: a cognitive account of intertextuality

This thesis has presented the narrative interrelation framework as a cognitive account of intertextuality. A review of research in the field of intertextuality (Sections 2.3-2.4) identified that no existing account could support the analysis of intertextuality *as it manifests in discourse*: the framework fills this theoretical gap. Informed by a comprehensive analysis of intertextuality in reader booktalk, the narrative interrelation framework contributes a tool to the stylistics toolkit which is novel, fit-for-purpose and able to be practically applied.

From its inception, this research has parsed intertextuality into two components: mental process (narrative interrelation) and articulated product (intertextual reference). This has facilitated the exploration of aspects of intertextuality thought previously unexaminable, specifically as a subjective but central aspect of individual reading experiences.

The framework builds on, and extends, a significant body of research exploring reading and mind, in particular schema theory, and thus contributes to our ability to describe intertextual processes in a cognitively grounded way. The successful application of the framework has been illustrated in two different interactive sites of booktalk (Chapters Five, Eight and Nine). It can be used for the analysis of literary texts and booktalk alike (Section 3.9). As such this thesis also makes a

contribution to the understanding of the sociology, and cognition, of reading and discussing narratives in a group.

10.3 Intertextual booktalk: reflecting on the research questions

10.3.1 Research question 1

The first research question posed by this thesis (Section 1.3) was:

1) What forms does intertextual referencing take in texts and booktalk?

In terms of medium, it has been demonstrated that intertextual references can incorporate links not only to written texts, but also to films, television programmes, plays, oral narratives, graphic novels and comics, factual and fictional narratives, and memories.

It has been shown that references can be loosely divided into two categories in terms of their origins: ‘text-driven’ references and ‘reader-driven’ references. The former group appear in texts, and readers encounter them. What happens next is dependent on a range of factors including whether the reader has knowledge of the referenced narrative (a narrative schema), how richly accreted that schema is and with what information, and which other narratives they have available in their memory (their mental archive). Readers have been shown to variously engage with or ignore, accept or challenge, extend or invalidate the text-driven references they encounter (for example Section 3.9.2 and Section 5.11.1).

The research has shown that intertextual references can also be ‘marked’ or ‘unmarked’. If references are ‘unmarked’ - if their presence is not explicitly flagged - then some readers pass by without realising they have encountered an intertextual reference at all (for example Section 3.9.1 and Section 9.6). This type

of 'specific unmarked' reference has been repeatedly shown to problematise any neat system of identification and categorisation of intertextuality (see Sections 4.10.3 and 5.10.2) as it is often not possible to definitively state whether a text-driven reference is truly present, or whether a 'reader-driven' reference is being made instead.

Reader-driven references are those intertextual associations which readers make of their own volition, without prompting by a reference within Base. Often the notion that an author made such a link themselves is ontologically impossible: George Orwell was demonstrably not writing *Animal Farm* about the recent history of North Korea, for instance (see Section 5.11.1). The recognition of reader-driven references as a form of intertextuality is a particular contribution of this thesis, as much of intertextuality research to date has been highly text and author centric, such as Genette (1979, 1981, 1987) and Riffaterre (1984, 1990).

It has been shown that intertextual references can link a Base to a group of narratives as well as individual ones (in this framework's terminology, references can be 'generic' as well as 'specific': see Sections 4.9 and 4.10). Sometimes the narratives that such groupings contain can be broadly agreed upon ('generic marked' references) - 'horror novels' or 'novels by Stephen King', for example - at other times references can take a 'generic unmarked' form, where which narratives were interrelated is impossible to discern from the reference, such as 'the kind of books I like to read'.

Finally, the research revealed that the actual link, or links, made between narratives - in the framework's terms the 'point of narrative contact' - is not always apparent within an intertextual reference, in fact it can range from 'highly visible' to completely 'invisible' (Section 4.7). In other words, this research found

that intertextual references can vary in form with regard to whether or not the association being made manifests in discourse.

10.3.2 Research question 2

The second question posed in this thesis was:

2) What functions can intertextual referencing perform in texts and booktalk?

Again, this research revealed a wide range of functions that intertextual references can perform in both texts and booktalk.

Intertextual referencing nearly always involves some form of comparing narratives, either through the identification of similarities or points of departure. These comparisons can range from trivial to complex. Intertextual referencing can also involve the co-opting of features in one narrative for use in another, to explain, interpret, critique, challenge, or simply play with, the rules or content of the world created in a Base.

Intertextual booktalk can be used to categorise narratives in relation to one another, by theme, content, perceived literariness and many more. In all cases, then, intertextual referencing is a way of permeating boundaries between narratives, of moving beyond a Base in thinking or actual discourse, and thus of situating new narrative experiences within our mental archives. The interrelation of new narratives with old ones can prompt reinterpretation of archived narratives: intertextuality offers the opportunity to see narratives differently, to add to, diminish, or simply change our story histories.

Which of these functions readers are able to perform in the course of booktalk, and to what extent, is highly dependent on the characteristics of the discourse environment in which those discussions take place. This will therefore be elaborated below (Section 10.3.4)

10.3.3 Research question 3

The third research question posed by this thesis was:

- 3) How do people make and understand intertextual references?

This thesis first identified a gap in the existing research in the field of intertextuality studies, meaning that this question could not be answered by reference to that body of work (Section 2.3). It demonstrated that existing work focused either on philosophical debates surrounding the nature of intertextuality itself or else on text-centric exposition regarding the kinds of references an ideal reader would recognise, following the ‘intended interpretation’ of a given text by a given author (Section 2.4).

This thesis has adopted a cognitive poetic approach to this research question and, based on the analysis of a host of intertextual references generated by real readers in a variety of contexts, has offered the narrative interrelation framework (presented in Chapter Four) as a cognitively grounded account of how people make and understand intertextual references via the interaction of the discourse they encounter and their background schematic knowledge of narratives accrued over a lifetime.

10.3.4 Research questions 4 and 5

The final two questions posed by this thesis were:

- 4) What features of a discourse environment appear to facilitate intertextual referencing?
- 5) What features of a discourse environment appear to inhibit intertextual referencing?

As these questions are closely related it seems appropriate to address them together.

As has been made clear from the inception of this thesis (Section 1.3.1), it is not possible, nor has it ever been the intent of this research, to make generalised claims about the presence or absence of intertextual booktalk in particular discourse environments per se. That is, whilst the data generated and analysed in this research found a wealth of intertextual booktalk in the GRG discussions and a virtual absence of such talk in the Ambershore class reader units, it does not therefore follow that intertextual booktalk is facilitated in reading groups and inhibited in school English lessons. Instead, this research has examined the features of these two specific sites and reflected on why this disparity appears to have manifested.

Intertextual associations, particularly reader-driven references, appear to be largely unpredictable, because they are highly subjective and form a part of a reader's personal response. That is, readers read and discuss texts and, due to the unique make up of their own mental archive, will make different narrative interrelations involving different points of contact with different narrative schemas. When an intertextual reference arises in the course of booktalk, this can prompt listeners to run their own narrative interrelations and assess the efficacy of that reference. This can cause a 'spreading activation' (Section 4.8) which prompts the recognition of different points of contact with the same and, or, different narrative schemas. Some readers might expand on the associations of others, or disagree, or offer alternatives and so on. This is all a spontaneous and unpredictable path of developing booktalk, what O'Halloran refers to as 'the gradual coalescence of interpretative bits' (2011: 192) and Park calls a bringing together of 'individuals' literary interpretations as well as their worldviews and

interpretive lenses' (2012: 194). If a discourse environment can accommodate this naturally evolving type of talk, then intertextuality has the opportunity to flourish. If, for any reason, a discourse environment cannot accommodate unplanned or unpredicted topics of booktalk, then this appears to inhibit intertextual booktalk, as references are passed over to keep discussions 'on-task', whatever that task may be.

It does therefore seem uncontroversial to conclude that the prototypical design of class reader units in England - where lessons follow a four-part structure, reading of the text is heavily fragmented, and tasks tend to be determined prior to students' responses to the day's reading being known to the teacher - does incorporate features which appear to inhibit intertextual booktalk. Equally, booktalk environments such as reading groups, which typically tend to organise their talk in an open and unplanned fashion, appear to facilitate intertextual discussions. This research would suggest, however, that class reader units incorporating space for open and spontaneous student talk would likely facilitate intertextual booktalk, and reading groups that follow a predetermined set of closed tasks and questions would likely inhibit it.

The degree of scope for naturally evolving booktalk, where individual responses are shared and engaged with, thus appears to be the determining factor as to whether or not intertextuality is able to manifest in any discourse environment. The key exception to this, as observed in the *Animal Farm* data, is booktalk where text-driven references form a central facet of the Base, as the intertextuality itself is likely to form the basis of predetermined tasks or topics for discussion.

Intertextual booktalk will not, of course, always arise in discourse environments where the talk is open and unplanned: other factors relating to readers themselves have also been identified as centrally relevant. Notably, an individual's sense of

their own identity as a reader, and how they wish to present that identity to others, has repeatedly arisen as a determining factor. Readers who wish to appear clever or cultured may shy away from sharing interrelations which reveal their knowledge of what they perceive – or perhaps believe others may perceive – as low brow or ‘trashy’ narratives. Readers who dislike distinctions being made between canonical and popular fiction may go out of their way to voice intertextual connections between them. Readers may not articulate interrelations they make with their own memories and experiences because they feel it is inappropriate in a given context, or share these associations to lay claim to their own expertise. In summary, readers’ sense of identity and the ways in which they choose – consciously and unconsciously – to present themselves to others when engaging in booktalk is hugely subjective but also highly salient.

Finally, the range and nature of the narratives in a reader’s mental archive is demonstrably relevant in determining the kind, and amount, of narrative interrelations they make, and therefore the intertextual references it is possible for them to share. It seems reasonable to speculate that the members of the GRG – nearly all English graduates, and all 22 or older – through a combination of age, exposure, and education, will almost certainly have had richer, more developed mental archives than the school students at Ambershore. This means that the former are likely to have made, or at least had the opportunity to make, more narrative interrelations. The more a person reads, or indeed engages with narratives through any medium, the bigger their mental archive is likely to become. The school students captured in this research are still relatively early in their reading careers, and this is also likely to have contributed to the relative lack of intertextual associations they made. Nonetheless, these students repeatedly showed themselves *capable* of making such associations: the nature and prevalence of intertextual booktalk in the course of a given discussion is thus

demonstrably influenced by *both* the discourse environment and the readers within it.

10.4 Discussion: a cognitive account of intertextuality and its application to the study of literature

This thesis has characterised the nature of intertextual booktalk, offered an account of the cognitive processes which underpin it, and explored the factors which influence whether or not narrative interrelations are shared. It has identified that, for a combination of reasons, intertextual references made in the Ambershore classrooms rarely flourished into extended intertextual booktalk, and pointed to the prototypical design of class reader units as a key reason for this. This final section of the thesis thus reflects on whether this absence should be considered an issue for the study of fiction in England's secondary schools, as well as how it could be addressed.

First, is it 'a problem' that the dominant approach to class reader units appears to inhibit intertextual booktalk? Secondary school education is a highly nuanced and complex landscape and it is hugely rare that one approach to any aspect of education will be right, or wrong, for all teachers, or all students, or schools in all contexts, or any school at all times. The answer to this question is therefore necessarily: it depends. It depends on what a school, department, or teacher wants that class reader unit to 'be for'.

Regimented routes through a class reader, with time nearly always actively pre-allocated to specific tasks, often with pre-planned outcomes, risk positioning teachers to tell students, chapter by chapter, what a book means, diminishing opportunities for students to share personal responses and their narrative interrelations as a facet of those responses. If a 'cultural heritage' model of English

(DES 1989: 60) is favoured, where a key purpose of studying fiction is to help students to accrue cultural capital – in Michael Gove and the latest National Curriculum's terms to 'introduce young minds to the best that has been thought and written' (Gove 2011) – then the absence of intertextual booktalk poses little to no problem at all. Here the emphasis is on 'teacher as expert' and the key function of a class reader unit is for the students to accrete their narrative schemas with rich knowledge of the particular text: intertextual booktalk has little pedagogical value within this paradigm, and may in fact be viewed as a distraction.

If, however, a class reader unit is intended to follow a 'personal growth' or 'cultural analysis' approach to English (DES 1989: 60), where the emphasis is conversely on developing students as individual readers with personal responses to and interpretations of the texts they study, then this research does call into question the efficacy of the currently favoured unit design. In particular, the comprehensive planning of most or all lessons within class reader units, the pre-allocation of all available classroom time and the fragmentation of actual reading, means that students are received into a booktalk environment which is often unable to accommodate their responses if they have not been anticipated by their teacher. These approaches prize, and seek to develop, students as individuals with their own interests, expertises and narrative histories: here an absence of intertextual booktalk suggests a disjunction between the aims and achievements of the approach. This research suggests that making time and space for reading in the classroom, and all the unpredictable booktalk that comes with it, would foster students making intertextual connections by serving both the personal growth and cultural analysis models of English teachers are known to prefer (Goodwyn & Findlay 1999).

This research has revealed a disjunction between the aspirations practitioners in English education have for the class reader and the type of reading experience a traditionally designed unit appears to actually provide. In spite of an enduring commitment from the English teaching profession to supporting and facilitating personal response, there appears to be little space for articulating these responses and making personal connections in class reader booktalk. The relative absence of intertextuality in the English classroom is both caused by, and reflects, the lack of opportunity for students to authentically read and respond to the texts they study. This appears to be caused, in the main, by a heavily centralised focus on the class reader itself and the well-intentioned construction of a predetermined route through the text.

The vast majority of English teachers self-identify as lovers of reading (Goodwyn 2002a) and this facet of their professional skillset is highly prized by the teaching profession and the society it both serves and cultivates. Yet, much of the current approaches to class readers seek to circumvent or minimise the time spent on students' authentic narrative schema accretion. The result can be that teachers naturally compensate by telling their students about the text. Students, in turn, accrete enough information from their teacher's discourse to facilitate task completion, creating the illusion of authentic response when, in fact, they have often not read enough of the text to meaningfully form their own interpretations. Ironically, the current approach probably means that teachers spend as much time artificially manufacturing students' interpretations as it would take to read the text.

At the same time, several investigations into resistance to, or dissatisfaction with, reading literary texts in the classroom report that students perceive classroom reading as an activity which is more concerned with them learning responses to a

text than sharing their own (Duncan-Andrade 2010; Graff 1992; Maybin 2013; Nash 2007; Nightingale 2011; Snapper 2014). Nash found that students attributed a loss of reading enjoyment to a pressure to ‘find “hidden meaning” – or to accept the hidden meanings that teachers offer’ (2007: 78), mirroring an earlier finding by Graff (1992). The evidence of manufacturing identified in this research (Chapter Nine) offers a rationale as to why students perceive the practice of studying texts in this way: unit aims can be more focused on students learning interpretations of their class readers, which they may not personally recognise, than offering their own responses. This would certainly indicate that unit designs which do not facilitate intertextual booktalk are potentially problematic.

An enduring strand of policy rhetoric regarding the purpose of studying texts with young people repeatedly reasserts a desire to nurture strong, engaged, critical and independent readers (Dickenson 2010, Goodwyn 2012; Marshall 2000, 2006; National Curriculum 1990, 2014). The same position has been consistently advocated for by English teachers (Dean 2002; Goodwyn & Findlay 1999). If this is indeed a key purpose of the class reader then this research suggests it would be best served by enabling young people and their teachers to enact their identities as readers within the classroom. This suggests the need for a fundamental rethink and reflection on what class readers should be for and what a teacher’s role in these units should be: presently teachers are being positioned as experts on the particular texts they read with their students when, in fact, they are primarily expert readers whose task might be better conceived as guiding first time readers through their own discovery of the text.

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