The writing or the writer: What is the priority for a teacher of writing in English primary schools?

An investigation into the effect of teacher self-determination on the teaching of writing and the consequential impact on individual voice in the narrative writing of 9 and 10-year old children.

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Abstract

This thesis explores the nature of the relationship between the self-determination of a teacher and the development of competent young writers - specifically in the development of individual writer voice - in English primary schools. The thesis explores the notion that a discourse influenced by high-stakes assessment and by political scrutiny and interference has led to a narrowing of the curriculum and that this has militated against the development of self-determined writers. The notion that teachers high in self-determination can create the conditions for self-determined writers to develop and to find their individual voice in writing is explored. Survey scores for self-perceived autonomy and self-perceived competence were collected for 687 Year 5 children (9-10 years old) and their 27 teachers. Teachers’ scores were later placed into a quadrant of self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy with 4 teachers from the original sample – classified as high or low in self-perceived competence and autonomy - then interviewed to explore the nature of their perceptions and to provide fresh perspectives. Children had also completed a writing sample at the start and end of the school year that was measured for transcription, composition and individual authorial voice. As an analysis of survey scores, alone, had failed to show a relationship between teacher and child self-determination, a second stage of the study generated three research questions to explore the perspectives of teachers and to analyse writing samples for individual voice. Results are discussed in relation to the implication for the support of teachers and children in the specific domain of writing in English primary schools.

Candidate Declaration

I, Joshua Franks, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.
Impact Statement

The ability to express individual voice in writing is held by a small minority of writers. These writers are able to exert social, political and economic influence as a result of their capability to compose with intent, purpose and self-determination. Only by understanding the contexts in which the development of individual writer voice is facilitated or suppressed can one open up the potential for a wider number and demographic of individuals to hold influence. The thesis to follow presents stakeholders in schools with the need to support a teacher’s competence and autonomy in tandem. It argues that otherwise, while two writers may achieve the same ‘level’ or the same ‘score’ in end of year assessment, this may mask the profound difference between the writer that compliantly fills his or her writing with the features required by the assessment criteria and the writer that composes with voice, using features of language with intent, purpose and self-determination. The thesis argues that schools should not follow the flawed logic of a dichotomy between skills and creativity – that instead, the development of the skills required by the current assessment regime, both nationally and internationally, can be facilitated in the context of pedagogy that promotes purpose, creativity and audience. Such an argument implicitly urges schools to focus on the development of teacher competence in the teaching, not just the assessment of, writing.

The thesis to follow presents a theoretical framework with which to explore the learning contexts for young writers, attempting to express voice in writing. It argues that teachers of writing for children making the transition from novice to competent writer must possess both competence and autonomy. The Competence Autonomy Quadrant offers a simple model in which to further explore whether voice can ever develop in the absence of either or both perceived competence and perceived autonomy – on the part of the writer and the teacher. The thesis also explores the enigmatic concept of ‘voice’ in writing. It brings together theoretical perspectives in order to begin an exploration into ways in which voice can be used as a variable by researchers in the field. The thesis does not claim to have presented the world of writing research with the perfect objective measure of ‘voice’. Instead, it argues that the difficulty of doing such should not prevent research and thinking in this domain from progressing. The implications of avoiding this area are profound at a time in which the voices of young learners need to be heard.
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Chapter 1: 
Thesis Introduction

1.1 Motivation for the thesis: My interest in teacher motivation and writer voice in the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools

I am deeply committed to the development of the individual learner and I have become increasingly aware of the role that supporting teachers has in ensuring that this is prioritised. My specific interest in the teaching and learning of writing has grown out of seeing a disparity in the received curriculum of children across London. I began my career as a Class Teacher in 2005 and worked for over a decade within a school that afforded me a great deal of autonomy and trust in my teaching. Only when I began working with other schools in an advisory role did I realise the extent of the restrictions placed on many teachers in the teaching of writing. The rhetoric of teachers in these schools was about the assessment of the writing: levels, the number of linguistic features, the hierarchy of sentence structure and punctuation. Feedback was predominantly focused on transcription and very rarely on the affective nature of the writing. Success was defined as the ability to match the same criteria set out for all children in the class and paid little attention to the individual development of the writer behind the composition. I wanted more than to anecdotally suggest that the autonomy I was afforded had filtered down to the children and that that was why the individuality of the writing produced appeared to contrast with writing I was asked to moderate in schools across the borough. I embarked on the present study to explore the relationship between the motivation of the teacher, that of the child and the impact on writing outcomes. In doing so I developed my own competence with the teaching of writing and began to recognise the power of the interaction between feeling competence and feeling autonomous. I began to understand the contexts in which autonomy may be restricted and the fine line between giving guidance, which is a supportive scaffold for less confident teachers and learners, and prescription, which limits autonomy to the extent that it presents a shackle for such teachers and learners. At this time, I began a role within the school, supporting Newly Qualified Teachers and within Initial Teacher Education, supporting trainee teachers. I was able to see how attitudes towards autonomy evolved as teacher’s confidence and self-perceived competence grew and significantly, the difference this made to
their ability to concentrate on the children that they were teaching rather than the assessment outcomes. I was motivated by the desire not simply to critique current discourse but instead to explore how to support teachers to navigate the tension between what is required and what is desired in the teaching of writing. Writing represents a unique opportunity for a child to develop and express their individual voice. Only by understanding how teachers and teaching effect the development of this voice can we prioritise the development of the writer alongside or above the development of the writing product.

1.2 The relevance of the thesis: Concerns about writing in English primary schools

The content of this paragraph has changed almost annually since I embarked on the thesis in 2012. At that time concern about the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools was felt by teachers, academics and politicians alike. Teachers (of which I was one) were absorbing changes to curricula: the abolution of the National Literacy Strategy (DfEE, 1998) and introduction of the new National Curriculum (DfE, 2013), and changes to the assessment system: the end of externally marking written compositions and the introduction of the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Test (STA, 2012).

In 2012, academics were voicing concern about further changes, following two decades of repeated and profound changes to pedagogy and assessment foci in the teaching of writing. This had been a period in which the emphasis had been placed on exploring the apparent weakness of writing, and the teaching of writing, despite a lack of any evidence to support the notion that standards of writing were in fact ‘weak’ (e.g. Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Fisher, 2006; Moss, 2017; Wyse & Jones, 2001). For politicians in 2012, end of primary school assessment statistics provided evidence for apparent concerns and provided support for reforms. 2011 national end of Key Stage 2 results showed writing trailing reading by 9%. Validity issues surrounding the difficulty in comparing the somewhat arbitrary National Curriculum levels of reading and writing were bypassed (Alexander, 2010). Instead such statistics continued to focus the lens on the quality of the teaching of writing in English primary schools (Fisher, 2012; Gardner, 2012).
Fast forward seven years and those in government might argue that concerns have been addressed. 2019 national end of Key Stage 2 results show writing leading reading by 5% (DfE, 2019). However, as cited above, the comparison is a rather futile one. So to is a comparison of statistics when it comes to writing in English primary schools from 2012-2019. Curricula, policies, and assessment frameworks have fluctuated as much as the results that they have yielded. Thus, it becomes very difficult to validate concern about writing in English primary schools on the basis of national data. In 2019 academics remain profoundly concerned. While research evidence has continued to indicate that children should learn the process of writing, should write for genuine purpose and should be involved in the construction of their own learning and assessment (e.g. Barrs, 2019; Bearne, 2017; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; DfE, 2012; Thomas, 2019), a relentless focus on objectively measurable written outcomes has led to the discourse in primary writing being dominated by the teaching and learning of written correctness and ‘skills’ (e.g. Barrs, 2019; Bearne, 2017; Gardner, 2012; Hardman & Bell, 2019; Ivanic, 2004; Riley & Reedy, 2000) This discourse has continued to reduce success in writing to the application and accuracy of hierarchical transcriptional, linguistic and structural features (Bearne, 2017; Ivanic, 2004). Choices of punctuation and grammar have become less about communicating the intention of the writer (e.g. Kress, 1994) and more about the product satisfying the external criteria (e.g. Barrs, 2019; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Hardman & Bell, 2019). Two decades have now turned into three in which “writing for real purpose and reasons in order to communicate meaning (have been) replaced by an emphasis on textual analysis” and the reduction of the success of children’s writing to the ability to parrot the generic features of text type and the assessment checklist (Wyse & Jones, 2001, p.128). This trend of reductive discourse has remained a constant in the last seven years and remains a concern amongst those that view writing as a communicative and emancipatory tool (e.g. Barrs, 2019; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Fisher, 2006; Moss, 2017; Thomas, 2019).

For teachers, the concern and the pressure remain. Teachers and children are driven to focus on the writing product and the ability to include the features laid out in assessment criterion. In 2019 this shows no signs of easing. While the guidelines have relaxed a little in the last academic year (DfE, 2018), the government guidelines for the assessment of writing in English primary schools in 2017 was
symptomatic of the focus on ‘correctness’ in stating that, for an age related standard to be achieved, “teachers will need to have evidence that a pupil demonstrates attainment of all of the statements within that standard and all the statements in the preceding standard(s).” (STA, 2016, p.5). In practice, while one such statement demanded that children are, “using adverbs, preposition phrases and expanded noun phrases effectively to add detail, qualification and precision,” (STA, 2016, p.4) the pressure to ‘tick the box’ means that the simple inclusion of the linguistic feature may have been prioritised over the ‘effective’ inclusion and the writer’s competence with the meaningful use of the linguistic feature to affect the reader and clarify meaning (e.g. Hardman & Bell, 2019; Myhill, 2010). While the pre-requisite need to develop competence with the transcriptional elements of writing is universally accepted (e.g. Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Kress, 1994; Riley & Reedy, 2000) the current ‘all or nothing’ assessment guidelines mean that an effective, creative and competent writer – one with a strong individual voice and competence with all elements of transcription and composition - may be deemed to be failing if her or his writing doesn’t always include, for example “inverted commas, commas for clarity, and punctuation for parenthesis mostly correctly, and making some correct use of semi-colons, dashes, colons and hyphens.” (STA, 2016, p.4).

So, if this scrutiny and these concerns remain, what should a teacher of writing in English primary schools do?

1. Prioritise the writing and ensure that the product matches all the assessment criteria
2. Prioritise the writer but risk the writer being labelled a failure
3. Match the assessment criteria while prioritising the writer

The present study will argue that feelings of competence and autonomy are the determining factors in how a teacher responds to the current educational climate. It will be argued that only by developing a strong sense of competence and autonomy in the teacher, can one hope to achieve the third outcome.
1.3 The position of the thesis: The impact of current writing discourse on pedagogy, motivation and written outcomes

As suggested above, the increased scrutiny and the resulting drive to improve measurable standards that has impacted on writing pedagogy in schools may well be in danger of masking and even exacerbating the real problem facing teachers and children in the context of writing in primary schools; that of the impact on attitudes caused by a dominance of controlled learning and an inhibiting preoccupation with transcriptional ‘skills’ (and other easily measurable features of text such as taught grammatical devices) (e.g. Alexander, 2010; Barrs, 2019; Bearne, 2017; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Fisher, 2012; Ivanic, 2004; Lambirth, 2017; Wyse & Jones, 2001). As Riley and Reedy (2000) observe, writing requires very high levels of motivation. However, it is now well documented that while children enter primary school as keen writers, a worryingly high proportion of children leave for secondary education reluctant to write (e.g. Barrs & Pigeon, 2002; Boscola, 2009; Cremin & Myhill, 2012). This is particularly evident amongst 9-11 year olds, whom, it is reported, are largely preoccupied by struggles with transcription (e.g. Barrs, 2019; Grainger, Goouch & Lambirth, 2005; Lambirth, 2017).

Running parallel to this trend, teachers’ motivation and attitude towards the teaching of writing have suffered a decline as a growing volume of high-stakes assessment has increased accountability (e.g. Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Gardner, 2012, Moss, 2017). The breadth, relevance and creativity of the writing curriculum at primary school has continued to be squeezed by the “backwash of assessment” (Grainger, Goouch & Lambirth, 2005, p.65), resulting in narrow skills-based targets and the demand for measurable and rapid progress towards these targets (e.g. Alexander 2010; Barrs, 2019; Bearne, 2017; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Ings, 2010; Ivanic 2004; Sainsbury 2009). The study cited above, that of Grainger, Goouch and Lambirth (2005), collated concerns from a number of sources, including government reports and research evidence, about diminishing creativity in the teaching of writing. The authors then analysed teacher questionnaires (n=65) and teachers’ comments on children’s writing samples before setting up a focus group (n=16) and interviewing all teachers (n=65). Teachers reported that they felt sufficiently competent but many commented that the pressures created by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) and Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) inhibited the creativity they
wished to promote (e.g. “we’re not allowed”) and focused too narrowly on grammatical features such as, “adjectives and adverbs” (Grainger, Gooch & Lambirth 2005, p137). The pressures outlined above not only inhibit teacher motivation but also militate against the development of a balanced conceptualisation of writing in which transcriptional and compositional elements sit side by side (Bearne, 2017; Ivanic, 2004) and in which grammatical devices are viewed as tools for clarity in communication rather than as assessment evidence of ‘high level’ writing (e.g. Myhill, Jones & Watson, 2013).

Further, by treating motivation as a unitary measure, treating the symptom - raising levels of child motivation - has been presented as being key to raising the writing attainment of underachieving groups in English primary schools (e.g. Barrs & Cork, 2001). This may be ignoring the root causes, and crucially, the nature of the motivation that is impacting writing development. The thesis will argue that only by exploring and seeking to understand the nature of motivation in the context of the teaching, as well as the learning, of writing in English primary schools, can one expect to positively effect pedagogy and conceptualisations of writing. As Boscolo (2009, p.301) highlights, children’s motivation cannot be viewed in isolation as a teacher’s attitudes are, “more or less implicitly transmitted to students through teaching.” However, as Boscolo (2009, p.310) also explains, “empirical evidence is lacking on how teachers practices on one hand and student writing experiences on the other, interact to produce motivation or demotivation to write.” So while much contemporary research has focused on children’s levels of motivation, teachers’ levels of motivation, teacher competence, children’s attainment or current pedagogical paradigms in writing, the thesis will aim to explore, and measure the impact of, the nature of teacher and child motivation, children’s attainment and the relationship between these factors. Section 1.6 outlines the research questions designed to fulfill this aim.
1.4 The concepts key to the thesis: Self-perceived competence, self-determination and individual writer voice

1.4.1 Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985).

The thesis adopts Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985) as the motivational model from which to explore the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools. Opting to underpin the thesis with SDT recognises that there are alternative models that could have been used to explore writing in English primary schools (e.g. Brophy, 2010; Guthrie, Wigfield, Humenick, Perencevich, Taboada, & Barbosa, 2006).

However, SDT was adopted for two core reasons: First, self-perceptions of autonomy and competence (the two core concepts in SDT) are also presented as key concepts in much qualitative, contemporary research into teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools (e.g. Bearne, 2017; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Ivanic, 2004; Lambirth, 2016). Second, SDT separates intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and differentiates between degrees of extrinsic motivation, depending on perceived autonomy ranging from feeling little to no control (external regulation) through to feeling a strong internal locus of causality (integration) (Ryan & Deci, 2000). It is the concept of extrinsic motivation as a spectrum, rather than as present or absent, that promised to illuminate an exploration of the conditions in which individual writer voice can be developed in young writers. As much of the learning that happens in schools is reliant on extrinsic motivation, the degree of control afforded teachers, and in theory by proxy to young writers in turn, is presented as key to keeping the focus on the writer rather than on the writing product.

1.4.2 Writer competence and individual writer voice: Language as dialogic (Bakhtin, 1981), socially constructed (Vygotsky, 1978) and social semiotic (Kress, 1994).

Competence in writing is a contested concept. One can measure writing competence a number of ways, for example, according to secretarial accuracy, authorial impact or communicative clarity. However, this thesis is underpinned by the notion that the writer, rather than the writing, is the focus of the development of self-perceived competence and of individual voice. As such, competence is framed by the degree to which the voice of the writer is present in the writing. While voice is made reference to across education literature and government documentation, an agreed definition remains absent.
Therefore, it is necessary to make clear how voice is conceptualised within the thesis. The concept of voice adopts the perspective of dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981) in rejecting an adherence to one uniform set of criteria in defining competence. The relationship between writer and reader is emphasised with the effect upon the latter prioritised. The concept of voice also adopts the perspective of social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) in arguing that language must be meaningful, necessary and uniquely communicative. This perspective allows the thesis to scrutinise homogeneity and individuality when exploring voice. Finally, the concept of voice adopts the perspective of language as being social semiotic. Kress (1994) is among those to highlight the potential for grammatical choices to be viewed as indicative of causality. This is particularly apt as a dimension of writer voice as, in the current educational climate in English primary schools, the function of grammar is at risk of being distorted. The introduction of the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Test (STA, 2012) has seen the reduction of the function of grammatical devices in writing to one of simply adhering to assessment criteria.

1.5 The structure of the thesis: The Separation of Stage 1 and 2

As will be illustrated by the division of the research questions in Section 1.6, the thesis will be presented in two stages to reflect the narrative of the study. The purpose of this structure is to take the reader through the evolution of the researcher’s thinking in relation to the core question and hypothesis. The reader will learn about the original study – the evidence basis upon which it was constructed (with a dual focus on the concepts of motivation and the development of a writer,) the rationale for the methodological decisions and the findings in relation to the research questions and core hypothesis – before the first discussion chapter will outline the implications of the findings and the emerging necessity to address further research questions in a second phase of research. The second phase of the study will allow the reader to engage with the key concept of individual writer voice and understand the centrality of the concept within the thesis as a whole. The second stage of data collection and analysis will be framed by a review of the literature in relation to individual writer voice. The final discussion chapter will bring all the findings from the whole thesis together and reflect on the research questions, the core hypothesis and, most crucially, the implications of the thesis in terms of future research and in terms of supporting teachers and children in English primary schools.
1.6 Research Questions and Core Hypothesis

Overarching Research Question

The writing or the writer: What is the priority for a teacher of writing in English primary schools?

Overarching Hypothesis

Teachers high in self-determination will prioritise the writer above the writing product. Those low in self-determination will prioritise the writing product above the writer. High self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy are prerequisites of the capability of prioritising the individual development of the writer.

Addressing the overarching research question and hypothesis required the analysis of teachers' attitudes, children's attitudes and children's written outcomes. This exploration is reflected by the following four further subsidiary research questions, split into Stage 1 and Stage 2, as indicated in the section above:

Stage 1 Research Questions

1a. What is the relationship between the self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and self-determination of the learner in the learning of writing?

1b. What is the relationship between the self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and the written outcomes of the learner?

Stage 2 Research Questions

2a. To what extent do teacher interviews and survey responses triangulate in terms of self-perceived competence and autonomy?

2b. What do teachers' perspectives add to the understanding of the relationship between self-determination and the development of voice in English primary schools?

2c. What effect does the self-determination of the teacher have on the development of individual writer voice?
Chapter 2:
The development of the writer

The thesis covers four broad topic areas: writing development, the teaching of writing in English primary schools, motivation in the teaching and learning of writing, and individual writer voice. Addressing the research questions and scrutinising the core hypothesis will require an appreciation of the interaction between the concepts and theoretical frameworks underpinning all four. However, for clarity and for sufficient attention to be paid to each, the thesis will contain four literature review chapters.

2.1 Chapter introduction: the theoretical perspective and the structure of the chapter

This opening literature review chapter will focus on writing development and, more specifically, what it means to be a competent 10-year old writer: the pre-requisite capabilities, skills and experiences and the cognitive models that illustrate the progression from novice to expert writer. Chapter 3 will focus on the learning conditions for this development and Chapter 4 will conclude the literature review for Stage 1 with a focus on the role of motivation in the development of the writer. It is with conscious intent that this first literature chapter is grounded in the concrete example of the writer as it is argued throughout the thesis that it is an understanding of the ‘writer’ that is key to the most accomplished development in writing rather than an understanding of the ‘writing’ as a decontextualised outcome, detached from the individual. The thesis is underpinned by the theoretical perspective that writing is a social act (Vygotsky, 1978), that it culturally framed (Halliday, 1978) and that a writer is necessarily engaged in dialogic communication with a reader and feels that they are in control (Bakhtin, 1981). Implied in this stance is the rejected notion that writing can also be viewed as simply a ‘product’ – one that serves the sole purpose of assessing accuracy and knowledge.
2.2. Pre-requisite capabilities, skills and experiences in the development of the writer

9 and 10-year old children – those in the penultimate year of English primary schools – are the focus of the present study. The rationale for the selection of this sample is outlined in Chapter 5. To understand a writer of this age it is necessary to critically explore what has happened, in the years before, that has led her or him to display their current level of competence. The chapter aims to outline the capabilities, skills and experiences that have underpinned the child’s formative development as a writer. The chapter recognises that competence across a sample of 9 and 10-year old writers will vary widely, both qualitatively and quantitatively, and does not seek to define a ‘typical’ or ‘normal’ writer of this age. Instead, it argues that an understanding of the multiple facets of a child’s early development as a writer allows one to understand a competent writer and indeed all writers, regardless of capability at the age of 9 or 10.

2.2.1 Talk

“Reading and writing float on a sea of talk.”

(Britton, 1983, p.11)

The ability to talk is a critical pre-requisite to being able to write (e.g. Kress, 1994; Riley & Reedy, 1999). Writing does not develop in isolation. It is one of four interacting modes of language that develop from birth and throughout early childhood (e.g. Beard, 2000; Graham & Kelly, 2010; Kress, 1994; Shanahan, 1988). A child of 10 will have developed as a speaker, listener, reader and writer and the fourth of these modes is built on a strong foundation in the preceding three (e.g. Bearne, 2017; Jolliffe, 2014; Riley & Reedy, 1999).

Vygotsky (1962) illustrates the central place of talk in the development of thought and social communication. It is argued that the interaction of thought and language at around 24 months, marks, “The most significant moment in the course of intellectual development.” (Vygotsky, 1978, p.24). As a child interacts in a social environment, developing an awareness of the rules and purposes of spoken language, he or she becomes able to internalise speech, using the structures of talk to organise thoughts (Vygotsky, 1978).
2.2.2 Differences between spoken and written communication: the absence of an immediate audience

"I say, ‘and what about learning your letters, Lola? If you know how to write, you can send cards to people you like.’ Lola says, ‘I like to talk on the telephone, it’s more friendly and straight away.’"

(Child, 2015, pp.10-11)

Talk constitutes the vast majority of an individual’s language use; it always precedes writing and in many cases across the globe, exists without a written equivalent (e.g. Kress, 1994; Shanahan, 2006). While spoken language is ‘acquired’, written language must be taught and learnt and a competent 10-year old writer will have to have developed a strong understanding of the differences between talk and writing. This understanding is likely to be tacit – though for a competent teacher this shouldn’t be the case. Kress (1994) argues that the most significant difference between the language modes is the presence versus the absence of an immediate audience. A child will learn to talk with meaning and purpose in the presence of another individual – they will learn to respond to the verbal and non-verbal cues in order to decide how to adapt their speech. Unlike 4 year-old Lola in the quote above, taken from the children’s picture book ‘I am too absolutely small for school’, a competent writer must have developed an understanding that whilst writing is often an individual act, it is still a communication with an audience – in this case over distance and time (e.g. Beard, 2000). It will be highlighted later in the chapter that this aspect of the development of a writer is closely related to motivation. A child must have a clear sense of an audience to sustain the cognitive effort that is required to write (e.g. Magnifico, 2010).

This cognitive effort can be illustrated, in part, by a summary of further differences between speaking and writing. The sounds, structures, conventions and formation of spoken language must be transposed before written communication can reach competence. A competent 10-year old writer would have to have learned to transpose phonemes into graphemes, utterances into structured sentences, pauses and intonation into punctuation (e.g. Beard, 2000; Kress, 1994; Perera, 1984). While much of this appears to develop implicitly, Shanahan (2006, p.179) synthesises a body of research that shows, “a clear and consistent connection between verbal intelligence and writing.” Further, the conclusion is made that while early oral difficulties may be overcome in later childhood, it is more difficult to militate
against their impact on writing development. However, as Shanahan (2006) recognises, there is a limited body of research looking at the ongoing role of talk in the development of the writer.

2.2.3 The continuing place of talk in the development of the writer

Myhill, Jones & Wilson (2016) also highlight the scarcity of research into the place of talk in the later development of a young writer. To part address this, they conducted an analysis of an experimental intervention involving 10 and 11-year old children in 54 English primary schools looking at the impact of metalinguistic and dialogic talk on children’s writing. They coded the interactions in the classroom to identify either ‘less dialogic metalinguistic talk’ (determined through signifiers such as too much teacher talk) or ‘dialogic metalinguistic talk’ (determined through signifiers such as clear focus and justification of choices). It should be highlighted that the emphasis was placed on the language of the teacher and no analysis of writing outcomes was involved. However, in the context of understanding the development of a competent 10-year old writer, the study does support the notion that metalinguistic and dialogic talk are pre-requisites of the ability to write with deliberate intent from a, “repertoire of choices,” rather than simply in response to, “checklists of what different kinds of writing must contain.” (Myhill, Jones & Wilson, 2016, pp. 40&28) This distinction - between the purpose of writing as adhering to assessment criteria versus writing as a crafted amalgamation of authorial choices - will run throughout the present thesis. That it is highlighted in the development of spoken language is an indication of how core the distinction is in fully understanding writer competence and later, individual writer voice.

2.2.4 Reading

"Writing is not speech written down."

(Barrs & Cork, 2001, p.10)

As the quote above illustrates, writing cannot simply emerge from talk. To develop the ability to ‘encode’ necessitates the complementary ability to ‘decode’ (Riley & Reedy, 2000). In short, a competent 10-year old writer must also be a competent 10-year old reader. The complementary processes of Reading and writing are dependent on similar cognitive capabilities and therefore the development of one mode facilitates the development of the other (e.g. Beard, 2000; Kress, 1994; Perera, 1988). This dual development is shown by correlations in research exploring the impacts of
reading on writing and vice versa (Shanahan, 2006). The dual development prevents an assumption that writing ‘follows’ reading. This is logical: writing development is slower and reading experience is often wider when children enter school (e.g. Barrs & Cork, 2001; Riley & Reedy 2000). However, writing has also been shown to have an impact on reading development (e.g. Graham & Hebert, 2011).

This section of the chapter does not attempt to enter the realm of reading development – it also unapologetically ignores the impact of writing on reading. Instead, it focuses on the role of reading development only in as far as it serves as a pre-requisite for writing competence. However, it is the complementary aspects of reading and writing that will be discussed, specifically: an understanding of the alphabetic code, an understanding of genre and audience and an understanding of authorial voice.

2.2.5 Understanding of the alphabetic code and the rules of print

While many facets of written communication have a spoken equivalent, the development of competence in writing also requires the understanding of a concept that has no equivalent in talk: an understanding of the alphabetic code (e.g. Read, 2009; Beard, 2000). This is not to say that phonological awareness and the relationship between phonemes and graphemes cannot be supported through talk. Rather, the notion of a written symbol representing meaning is without comparison in talk. In this sense, becoming a reader is crucial if a child is going to become a competent writer as the process of encoding allows a child to understand, “the notion that symbols can represent language.” (Read, 2009, p.261) It is this core conceptualisation, rather than the detail of the understanding, (some of which will be discussed in the section 2.2.8) which is crucial here. As Riley and Reedy (2000, p.4) describe, this fundamental recognition is, “exciting and life-changing.” Experience with text as a reader facilitates an understanding: that symbols represent sounds and words; that there are conventions for those symbols that will not match their initial attempts at writing; that letter meanings are independent of case, size, and colour; that letters and combinations of letters correspond with speech sounds; that there are conventions for directionality of text (Beard, 2000; Kress, 1994; Read, 2009; Riley & Reedy 1999; Shanahan, 2006). A competent 10-year old writer has developed these pre-requisite understandings through the interaction of their reading and writing.
2.2.6 Understanding of genre and audience

Section 2.2.12 focuses on composition and includes a section on the place of genre awareness in children’s development of composition. Its placement within the section on composition betrays something of the author’s epistemology regarding how genre is ‘learned’, rather than taught. Its initial place within this section, about reading and partnered with audience, is also indicative of an appreciation that this learned awareness of genre can be ‘caught’ from exposure to text (Riley & Reedy, 2000). As children are exposed to texts of different kinds, their sense of: how language is used within their cultural environment; how their preferences and choices are informed by – and later inform - genre and; how a text has a clearly differentiated purpose and audience is deepened (e.g. Kress, 1994; Wyse & Jones, 2001; Riley & Reedy, 2000; Rose, 2009). It is necessary to be explicit that ‘texts of different kinds’ will include books but will also include labels, signs, lists, captions, notes and advertisements both in print on paper and on screen (e.g. Riley & Reedy 2000). Fundamentally, a competent 10-year old writer will have conceptualised writing as an act with a purpose and audience – served by a specific genre. Being read to, being surrounded by text, experiencing reading and seeing their own writing being read will facilitate this development. More controversial is whether or how the ‘teaching’ of genre facilitates this development. This will be unpicked in Chapter 3.

2.2.7 The continuing place of reading in the development of the writer: Understanding and development of authorial voice

“Young writers need rich text experiences and the opportunity to hear, inhabit and give voice to many texts on their journey as writers.”

(Cremin & Myhill, 2012, p.51)

Engagement with reading is a pre-requisite not simply for developing competence as a novice writer. If a 10-year old child is to use written language to meet his or her needs, to transform his or her knowledge and to craft his or her message, reading remains necessary (Barrs & Cork, 2001; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Riley & Reedy, 2000). The writing of others makes it possible for an individual to find their own voice (Bakhtin, 1981; Cremin & Myhill, 2012). As the quote above indicates, young writers develop from a model of imitation and imagination through to innovation and imagination (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Cremin & Myhill, 2012). The cognitive process by which this
takes place will be illustrated in Section 2.3 but what is clear is that other writers become models for emergent writers - engagement with literature allows children to better construct their own reality (Barrs & Cork, 2001; Bruner, 1986).

Once again this is not a cause and effect relationship. The parallel development of reading and writing continues with one mode facilitating the other. As Barrs & Cork (2001, p.42) observe, children learn, “to ‘read like writers’ and to ‘write like readers’.” This is helpful as it counters the assumption that what children write reflects the reading that they have engaged with (Barrs & Cork, 2001). Barrs and Cork (2001) sought to analyse the parallel development and the impact of engagement with texts by developing an intervention with six Year 5 teachers in different London schools. As well as lesson studies and questionnaires, 6 children across the schools were interviewed and their writing analysed to explore the impact of reading on the writing of 9 and 10-year old children in English primary schools. Two standard texts were used by all the class teachers during the spring and summer term. Amongst other findings, the authors concluded that engagement with reading led to greater confidence with managing narrative – thus developing individual voice. The study serves to support the notion that continued engagement with reading supports the development of authorial voice. However, as the study was exploratory with open research questions, rather than experimental hypotheses, it is unclear whether for variables that may have explained the development observed, other than the engagement with the texts used, were controlled for. Nevertheless, it is the theoretical perspective of the present study that, children who continue to engage with reading develop an understanding of the ‘dialogic imagination’, the interaction between a reader and writer who never meet, yet who construct meaning together (Bakhtin, 1981). This understanding is a pre-requisite for the development of individual voice in a competent 10-year old writer, or indeed a writer of any age.
2.2.8 Transcription

“If novice writers focus attention on the process of getting letters and words on the page, then they do not have sufficient additional resources to focus on high-order and centrally important processes.”

(Christensen, 2009, p.285)

The theoretical position that writing is a social and artistic act must not be considered synonymous with the view that the transcriptional development of a writer is somehow secondary. As the quote above indicates, automaticity of transcription is a core pre-requisite for the development of a competent writer (Collins, 2013; Kelly, 2013; McCutchen, 2006; Smith, 1982; Wyse & Jones, 2001). Thus, only when handwriting, spelling, spacing, paragraphing, capitalisation and punctuation become legible, automatic and no longer add to the cognitive and physical load, can a 10-year old writer focus more fully on composition and the communication with his or her reader. This section about transcription will be followed by one that explores composition. As such, Figure 2.1, taken from Smith (1982, p.20) provides a useful summary of the distinction between transcription and composition and provides a structure for the sub-sections about transcription to follow.

Figure 2.1
Composition and transcription from Smith (1982, p.20)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition (author)</th>
<th>Transcription (secretary)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting ideas</td>
<td>Physical effort of writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting words</td>
<td>Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>Capitalisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paragraphs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2.9 Handwriting (including physical effort of writing and legibility)

“Automaticity in handwriting is an essential prerequisite to the production of high-quality, creative and well-structured written text.”

(Christensen, 2009 p.285)

The National Curriculum (DfE, 2013) emphasises fluency and legibility as the core aims of handwriting in English primary schools. Teaching often focuses on developing motor skills and later honing grip, posture and paper position (Jolliffe, 2014). However, while it appears intuitive that such aspects of handwriting are necessary, the research evidence indicates that it is the cognitive demand –
rather than the physical demand that presents the greatest challenge in the development of writing (e.g. Christensen, 2009; Medwell & Wray, 2007). From the moment a child engages with early writing, (sometimes referred to as ‘mark-making’) the demands on working memory – the ability to recall the shape, orientation and order of letters and words – are significant and as handwriting cannot be sequenced to reduce cognitive load, it is automaticity that is key to liberating children to be able to compose with competence and voice (Berninger & Graham, 1998; Berninger, Weinrub & Graham, 1998; Christensen, 2009; Medwell & Wray, 2007).

Empirical evidence to support the relationship between automaticity and compositional competence focuses on the dependent variables of either the fluency of composition (how fast one can get words on the page) or on the quality of the composition. Although separate studies have shown some variation in the degree to which compositional quality can be explained by handwriting, there is agreement that the mechanics of handwriting (measured using alphabet and copying tasks) have a significant impact on the quality and quantity of composition during the primary years (Christensen & Jones, 2000; Graham, Abbott, Abbott, Whitaker & Pressley, 1997; Jones & Christensen, 1999; Malpique, Pino-Pasternak & Valcan, 2017).

A meta-analysis of 17 similar empirical studies, by Kent and Wansek (2016) supports this finding. It also highlights that handwriting automaticity is a predictor of compositional competence, separate from other factors including age and that therefore, reaching a threshold of automaticity is fundamental. In summary, while competence with writing necessitates the ability to sustain the physical effort of writing, it is the ability to reduce the cognitive load by developing automaticity in handwriting that appears key for a child of 10-years in their development as a competent writer. This section has not considered the question: what is the indirect impact of handwriting - the impact on self-esteem and motivation – on compositional development? This will be addressed in Chapter 4 in relation to studies that indicate that children synonymise handwriting quality with writing quality (e.g. Cremin & Myhill, 2012).
2.2.10 Spelling

A competent 10-year old writer may not spell perfectly but they will have formed an understanding of the phonemic, morphological, semantic and etymological basis required to be a competent speller (Kelly, 2010). In short, it is the depth of understanding that appears key in reducing the cognitive burden presented by converting words and phonemes into graphemes (Kelly, 2010). Stage models of spelling development have been proposed by both Gentry (1982) and Frith (1986). Both models attempt to plot the trajectory of spelling from a stage in which the writer understands that symbols represent sounds and words but doesn’t yet understand that there are conventions for letters and words through to a stage in which the writer can discerningly select strategies and correctly apply these to the word they wish to spell. The stage models provide a useful structure from which to assess and build on children’s spellings in the classroom but it is the constituent understandings that illustrate how a child comes to develop competence.

Phonemic Knowledge

A competent writer needs to understand that there is a correspondence between graphemes and phonemes (Bryant & Nunes, 2009). The English language is made up of approximately 80 graphemes representing 44 phonemes and made up of 26 letters (DfE, 2013). Competence with this relationship is complex. A competent 10-year old writer will be able to determine the consonant phonemes, differentiate between often multiple vowel phoneme possibilities to select the correct one and will be able to recognise increasing numbers of the high, medium then low-frequency words that do not fit this phonetic rule (e.g. I, the, some) Most significantly, they will be able to do all this with near automaticity and with little cognitive burden.

Morphological Knowledge

A competent writer needs to understand that words contain one or more units of meaning and that knowledge of these morphemes allows spellings to be made more automatic (Bryant and Nunes, 2009). Morphological knowledge allows a 10-year old writer to build from a root word (e.g. look-ing), apply conventions of prefixes and suffixes (e.g. dis-appoint-ed) and differentiate between the spellings needed for identical or similar sounds (e.g. blocks and box).
Semantic Knowledge

A competent writer needs to understand that where words may sound the same or very similar – the meaning of the word within a wider context will be key (Medwell & Wray, 2007). There are a large number of homophones in the English language, including heterographs, (e.g. their and there) which are different spellings and meanings but the same sound and homographs, (e.g. desert and desert) which are the same spelling and sound but different meanings. Semantic knowledge is necessary for a competent writer to distinguish between these options.

Etymological Knowledge

It is not necessary for a competent 10-year old writer to be an expert in the etymology of the English language but it does support competence to understand that words in the English language derive from an array of languages and cultural sources. That these provide a convention that support with the selection of a spelling can assist the automaticity of spelling (Kelly, 2013).

2.2.11 Punctuation (including capitalisation)

“Punctuation can seem abstract, arbitrary, imposed, and generally meaningless to young learners.”

(Hall, 2009, p.272)

A competent 10-year old writer will not include punctuation in their writing in response to assessment criteria, under direct instruction from a teacher. Instead, a competent writer will develop an understanding of the conventions of punctuation and capitalisation that is such that they can discerningly craft sentences so that the reader’s interpretation matches that of the compositional intention. In that sense, competence with punctuation allows it to serve composition – rather than interfering with composition. Such an understanding of the conventions of punctuation is reliant on overcoming four obstacles, as outlined by Hall (2009). First, children must develop the ability to inhabit the middle ground between the conventions they are taught, that initially appear fixed and static, and the regular exceptions to the rules that they may see in the writing that they read. A competent writer is able to push the boundaries of accepted conventions without compromising the genre. Second, children must understand that punctuation evolves and that there are increasing ways in which to demarcate a sentence with the same or similar effect. For example, parenthesis can be represented by a pair of hyphens, commas or by the insertion of brackets. Speech may by demarcated by inverted commas,
words after a colon (as for play scripts) or, in some cases, through typographic differences (e.g. font, colour, italics) (Hall 2009). Third, as with the development of an understanding of the alphabetic code, a child must understand that there is, “no carry over,” from spoken language to punctuation (Hall, 2009, p.272). Punctuation is an abstract and arbitrary set of rules. Thus, competence necessitates an appreciation of the impact on the reader, rather than an abstract adherence to the conventions. Fourth, a competent 10-year old writer will have had to develop a conceptualisation that punctuation serves a purpose – to demarcate composition – rather than viewing punctuation itself as a ‘product’. As the chapters that follow will illustrate, the challenge that this presents to a novice writer will vary depending on the discourse of the classroom and the school in which they are learning.

2.2.12 Composition

“Composition is about creating ideas, structuring a piece logically, developing individual voice and being able to write in different forms for a range of purposes and audiences.”

(Collins, 1998, p.100)

It is tempting to leave this section on composition there! The meaning of composition need be no more complicated and as a summary of what a competent 10-year old child needs, it is perfectly satisfactory. However, while the meaning of composition may not be complicated, how each develops is far from transparent. The enigmatic way in which composition develops has been explored in three ways. First, the ways in which writers create, use and adapt ideas have been theorised and presented in cognitive frameworks. Second, the way in which writers structure their composition logically and develop individual voice has been explored through the lens of grammar development. Third, knowledge of genre has been used to explain the ability to write in different forms for a range of purposes and audiences. These aspects of writing development all require significant effort to develop and sustain. Indeed, as will be outlined later, the effort necessary means that a large amount of motivation is necessary.

In summary, a competent 10-year old writer needs to have developed ideas with meaning and purpose, they need to have developed grammar as a means to sculpt and craft their individual voice and they need to have developed an understanding of genre as a means to communicate in a cultural environment with a knowledge of the form that suits the purpose and audience. This is a challenge
enough without considering that the context in schools that may challenge this development. As the next chapter will highlight, the pedagogy and assessment of writing in English primary schools over the last two decades have made the journey to compositional competence for a 10-year old writer a bumpy one.

2.3 Creating and developing ideas: Cognitive models of the development of written composition

“Written production is a complex and composite activity which can only be properly studied if it is broken down into separate components.” (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009, p.24)

A competent 10-year old writer must be able to formulate and modify their ideas according to the intended purpose and audience (Magnifico, 2010). This section argues that the model of Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) provides the most appropriate model of compositional formulation and modification in the development of a writer of this age. A critical analysis of this model requires consideration of alternative models and a clear acknowledgment that one comprehensive model to explain this for a writer of this age, “does not yet exist,” (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009, p.23).

2.3.1 Bereiter & Scardamalia (1987)

Stepping out of the discursive shackles of the academic third person, I could present for the reader, in the lines that follow, what I know about the model of written composition that Bereiter and Scardamalia proposed in 1987. I have read the book in which the model is shared and I have read a decent amount in relation to the model. In short, I have enough content and discourse knowledge to ‘tell’ the reader about the model. If that was the limit of my capabilities as a writer or if I considered that that was what the reader wanted, then that is how I would compose this section of the thesis. However, to describe what I know is not the limit of my capabilities as a writer and I’m judging that the reader is just as capable as me in reading the same source material that I have if they wanted to find out about this model. Thus, what is required is not for me to ‘tell’ but instead to ‘transform’ the knowledge that I have gained. In transforming this knowledge, the intention is to demonstrate my understanding not simply of the model, but of how it is relevant to the present study and to the specific development of a 10-year old writer. I have the capability to move between writing that Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987)
describe as ‘knowledge telling’ and ‘knowledge transforming’. The question is, does this theoretical 10-year old writer?

It is the argument of this thesis that a writer of this age is likely to stand at the cross-roads – or perhaps approaching or past the cross roads – between the capability to write in order to ‘knowledge tell’ and the capability to ‘knowledge transform’. It is the development of the latter that is argued to signify competence with composition as consciousness of creation and modification allows, “a measure of deliberate control.” (Bereiter & Scardamalia 1987, p.xiii).

2.3.2 The Knowledge-Telling model of written composition (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987)

As has been described previously, a competent 10-year old writer will have overcome the significant obstacle presented by transposing spoken communication into the written form. They will understand that in the absence of an immediate conversational partner - one who provides cues for content – it is necessary to sustain the generation of content without this prompt. The knowledge-telling model illustrates that to do this requires sufficient content knowledge. This is the case for a novice writer and remains the case for a mature writer. For example, if asked to write 1000 words about Arsenal Football Club 1994-2004, I would likely find that the word limit was a restriction. On the other hand, if asked to write 1000 words about the life and works of Michael Buble, I’d find that my passing interest drags me to about the 100-word mark. Transfer this rather untidy analogy to a primary classroom and one can see that content knowledge is a significant aspect of the composition of writing and one that requires cognitive effort in the retrieval from long-term memory. Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) are clear that the ‘assignment’ in their model may be an imposed one – typically in a classroom setting in which the topic and text-type are given – or a self-chosen one. This is significant for content knowledge because, as the review of autonomy in learning will indicate later, the ideal balance in this regard is when the imposed task involves elements of choice with the teacher clear that the child possesses sufficient content knowledge. This is because while some autonomy offers the potential for wider content knowledge, free choice may reflect interest in the absence of adequate content knowledge (Hidi & McClaren, 1991).
The second core knowledge in the model of Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) is *discourse knowledge*, or ‘discourse schema’. Knowledge of the genre and the expected form and features is a second core aspect of the composition of writing and one that must be developed for a 10-year old to reach the point of confidently knowledge-telling. In simple terms, what the authors describe as ‘discourse knowledge’ is indeed what is often referred to as ‘genre knowledge’ in schools – that is the structure and features of different text types. However, to translate discourse knowledge to the term genre in this case is misleading. Genre is more than a synonym for ‘text-type’. However, when one applies the knowledge-telling model to the competence of a writer in the primary classroom, simply knowing the ‘what’ and ‘how’ in a writing task is clearly imperative. Olinghouse, Graham and Gillespie (2015) provide empirical support for this model. They examined the written compositions of 50 primary age children across various text types and found that content and discourse knowledge were both significant and independent predictors of writing quality and concluded, as the model proposes, that the best outcomes were achieved when both forms of knowledge were present. Previous studies (e.g. Bereiter, Burtis & Scardamalia, 1988; Langer, 1986), using ‘think aloud’ protocols, also indicate that content generation and attention to discourse are separate cognitive burdens.

Returning to the previous (albeit clunky) analogy to indicate the importance of the combination, my content knowledge about Arsenal Football Club 1994-2004 by itself would serve me perfectly well in the context of a conversation with a similarly knowledgeable person. On the other hand, all the content knowledge in the world wouldn’t help me if I were asked to write on that topic and I lacked any sense of how to write a story or a non-chronological report for example. Both *content knowledge* and *discourse knowledge* are clearly necessary and this is reflected in the model shown in Figure 2.2.
The knowledge-telling model is described as representing the ‘natural’ and ‘efficient’ task of writing – one that flows from an ability to talk and one that, in compositional and memory retrieval terms, demands relatively little cognitive effort (Riley & Reedy, 2000). The model proposes that one’s memory stores are activated when key words or themes are attended to and that tests of appropriateness in relation to content and discourse result in a written composition that is representative of a form that ‘already existed’ in the writer’s mind. However, it is argued in this thesis, that this renders the knowledge-telling model limited in its ability to enlighten the full understanding of competence in a 10-year old writer. After all, if ‘natural’ composition is the retrieval of existing forms, one could argue that this is evident in the earliest forms of writing. Indeed, sufficient content and discourse knowledge must be a prerequisite of the very earliest writing seen in schools – e.g. labels in the nursery or short letters to Santa in Reception.

When considering the competence of a 10-year old writer, the knowledge-telling model and the studies cited above, highlight the need for sufficient content and discourse knowledge and it acts as a reminder of the limits of composition if cognitive effort is still required for transcription. However, for a fuller understanding of the development of compositional competence at the end of primary school, it
may be the contrast when exploring what the knowledge-transforming model that provides the greatest insights.

2.3.3 The Knowledge-Transforming model of written composition (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987)

“Thoughts come into existence through the composing process itself, beginning as inchoate entities (“driblets”) and gradually, by dint of much rethinking and restating, taking the form of fully developed thoughts.”

(Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987, p.10)

Like the previous model, the knowledge-transforming model still illustrates the need for content and discourse knowledge, it still stresses the need for retrieval from memory stores and it still highlights the same stimulus – the writing assignment. The obvious question that this then raises is: why the need for a second model? The present study agrees with the notion of the authors that content and discourse knowledge alone, while explaining some of the variance in compositional outputs, cannot fully explain the difference between the written capabilities of 10-year old writers.

While the knowledge-telling model presents the ‘natural’ process of composition, composition that is knowledge-transforming is presented as ‘problematic’ and requiring of significant cognitive effort (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Galbraith, 2009; McCutchen, 2006; Riley & Reedy, 2000). It is the argument of the present study that this ‘transformational effort’, described in the quote above, is what is required to write with compositional competence and is a prerequisite of writing with authorial voice. The knowledge-transforming model proposes that the challenge for the writer is to be able to operate between the ‘problem space’ for discourse and content. In other words, revisions must continually be made to content in light of reflections on discourse and made to discourse in light of reflections on content.
As the Figure 2.3 indicates, it is the inclusion of the ‘problem space’ for discourse and content knowledge (explained above) that is illustrative of the difference in cognitive effort of a writer who reproduces (or tells) what they already know and one who can utilise writing as a process and a medium with its own potential to craft, impact and ‘transform’ knowledge.

2.3.4 Capabilities indicative of knowledge-transforming

The capability to inhabit this problem space is theorised as the key difference in developing the competence with composition required to write to a high-level, with authorial voice. The obvious question for scrutiny is: what factors determine this capability? The argument of the present thesis is that the knowledge-transforming model usefully highlights three significant factors:

1. The ability to plan effectively
2. The ability to make revisions during the writing process
3. Metacognitive thought in relation to a composition

Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) argue that planning is key if an individual is to be able to spend cognitive energy on transforming their text during composition. They cite their own intervention study that showed that those that plan effectively in advance display greater numbers of reflective thoughts.
(assessed using ‘think aloud’ protocols) and higher quality written texts (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1984). Empirical studies have also supported a relationship between planning time and writing quality (e.g. Kellogg & Roediger, 1988; Kellogg, 1990; McCutchen, 2006). However, in a study by Galbraith, Ford, Walker and Ford (2005), it was highlighted that the quality of the planning, rather than simply the existence of a plan and the time taken, is key. They showed a relationship between planning that targets the introduction of ideas/topics and that considers the rhetorical demands and higher quality texts. This indicates that a 10-year old competent writer is not simply one who plans, but is instead one who plans with a focus on the presentation of their ideas in light of the demands of the discourse and audience (McCutchen, 2006).

Reducing the cognitive load of composing by gaining competence with transcription and by planning effectively in advance are theorised to enable a writer to negotiate what Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) label the ‘problem space’. As described, discursive revisions are made in light of reflections about content and vice versa. ‘Think aloud’ protocols have been adopted by various empirical studies (e.g. Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Kaufer, Hayes & Flower, 1986) to indicate a relationship between the amount of time spent revising during composition and the quality of the output. Oliver (2019) has focused more closely at what effects the time spent revising by looking at the relationship between child interest and motivation and time spent revising. The results indicate that the reductive discourse of writing in English primary schools can inhibit the capacity to revise effectively. Thus, while empirical evidence in relation to children of primary level appears limited (McCutchen, 2006), there appears to be a valid argument that motivation affects cognition – specifically revisions made during the writing process.

Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) explain that inhabiting the problem spaces requires metacognitive thought, although they do not use this term (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009). They state that the capability, “to shape a piece of writing to achieve intended effects and to reorganise one’s knowledge in the process,” is reliant on the process of challenging the knowledge that already exists while writing (Bereiter & Scardamalia 1993, p.157). Metacognition is relevant to the model above as a writer must continually question the knowledge that they have retrieved in light of the way in which is presented and likewise, question the presentation of the knowledge in light of the form it takes on the page and how adequately
it reflects the knowledge. This repeated ‘problem translation’ means that a writer finishes with a composition that represents a new understanding, rather than an existing knowledge. Kaya and Ates (2016) provide empirical support for the influence of metacognitive thought on writing outcomes. In their study 64 nine and ten year-old children were assigned to one of two experimental conditions: 33 were provided with training and support for metacognitive thought during writing while 31 were in a control group. The results showed a significant difference between the groups in terms of the progress made in story writing and in terms of the change in attitudes to writing.

2.3.5 Limitations of Bereiter and Scardamalia’s (1987) models of written composition

It is helpful to adopt the models outlined above as a way of enlightening an understanding of the compositional competence of a 10-year old writer. The knowledge-telling model explains the formulation of ideas. It presupposes that a writer of this age has overcome the barrier of translating speech into writing, has negotiated the lack of a direct conversational partner and has sufficient knowledge of content and discourse to make retrieval from memory straightforward at the point of composition. The knowledge-transforming model explains the modification of ideas. It presupposes the same competences as the previous model and suggests that the capability, “to shape a piece of writing to achieve intended effects and to reorganise one’s knowledge in the process,” is reliant on effective planning, revision and an effective engagement with the metacognitive process of challenging the knowledge that already exists while writing (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993, p.157).

However, adopting the models as a means of enlightening an understanding of the compositional competence of a 10-year old writer requires a clear acknowledgment and critique of the limitations. This isn’t simply a matter of academic rigour. An understanding of the limitations also provides a spotlight on the areas that are in need of further exploration. Any cognitive model is, by definition, an attempt to break down an enigmatic mental process into constituent individual processes, on the basis of self-report and output. From a Gestalten perspective, something is bound to be lost in an attempt to map compositional competence in this way. If one accepts that a full explanation for how an individual composes with competence is unfeasible, then the following aspects, absent in part or in full
in the models proposed by Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) are selected for presentation as they are relevant to the present study:

1. The role of transcriptional development
2. The reliance on a deficit model
3. The learning environment

The knowledge-telling model is presented as cognitively simpler than the knowledge-transforming model. This is presented as representing the difference between a novice and expert writer (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009). However, the reasons why a novice writer may not have the cognitive resources necessary for knowledge-transforming are not reflected in the model. It is left to assumption, and interpretation from the supporting studies, that age is a key variable. However, as the model of Berninger, Cartwright, Yates, Swanson & Abbott, (1994) illustrates, generating text from ideas is only one of the processes operating with young writers (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009). They illustrate that the second and parallel process, transcription, is a significant cognitive burden. This supports the argument made the section about transcription, that competence with transcription is a key variable in the difference between capacity for knowledge-telling and knowledge-transforming.

In the context of understanding the composition of a 10-year old, models of written composition pre-dating the knowledge-telling and knowledge-transforming models, notably the model of Hayes and Flower (1980), were based on, “data yielded by studies of adults." (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009, p.26) Indeed, the models outlined in this section intentionally, “grew out of the effort to make sense of… novices' composing.” (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993, p.164). Therefore, this model would appear to have greater ecological validity in the context of this study than previous models. However, the empirical support cited above is indicative of a model that considers the move from knowledge-telling to knowledge-transforming on a deficit model. In other words, while it is recognised that there is a need to understand children’s composing as distinct from that of an ‘expert’ writer, the fact that this difference is explored by focussing on what a child cannot do that an adult writer can, ignores the potential that a child is composing in a different way rather than simply an impoverished way (Kress, 1994).

Empirical tests, including those cited above, indicate that children think less in the composition process. Children typically start writing sooner after being set a task. Their ‘think aloud’ protocols are
shorter than adults and children’s preparatory notes show less development that those of an adult and are closer to a ‘draft’. While this supports the notion of knowledge-telling – the ‘natural’ retrieval of existing knowledge – it is possible that novice writers think ‘differently’ rather than ‘less’. It is also worth noting that the use of pre-writing notes, as evidence of the validity of the model, appears contradictory to the concession that, “knowledge telling and knowledge transforming refer to mental processes by which texts are composed, not to the texts themselves.” (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987, p.13).

Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) make little acknowledgment of the multitude of factors that may influence maturity in writing and the theoretical shift from knowledge-telling to knowledge-transforming. Variables including school environment, teacher attitudes, pedagogy, assessment and writer agency are not discussed in relation to the model. It is presented as being a transition that may or may not happen with age. The present study is concerned with the factors that facilitate or inhibit development of individual writer voice so while the models provide a useful framework for the cognitive development of composition, they do not assist with providing an empirical base for these potential causal factors.

Further, Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) do not recognise the place of motivation within their model of writing composition. It is the overarching hypothesis of the present study that motivation is a prerequisite of being able to inhabit the ‘problem space’ theorised by the knowledge-transforming model. Empirical evidence for this argument is lacking and so it becomes one of the aims of the present study to highlight the impact that motivation on the capacity to ‘knowledge-transform’ and thus give authorial voice to writing.
2.4 Structuring composition to give it voice: Grammar development

“The function of grammar is to allow (the writer) to express a range of thoughts.”
(Kress, 1994, p. 160)

The position of the present study is that linguistic development should provide a 10-year old writer with the necessary means to craft a composition and give it individual voice. It is argued that grammar is, primarily, acquired (Chomsky, 1965; Kress, 1994) and in agreement with Kress (1994), Halliday (1993) and Myhill (2009), amongst many others, that linguistic choices in writing should be made according to the intended meaning, rather than in response to imposed structures. The position in the present study rejects the current reductionist discourse of grammar teaching in English primary schools in response to the introduction of the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Test in 2013 (STA, 2012) and argues that the view that grammar is a decontextualised set of knowledge may be unhelpful in the compositional development of young writers (Myhill, 2009).

2.4.1 The development of written grammar within the acquisition of language

By the time children arrive at school and are exposed to the rules and conventions of writing, they are already highly experienced in communicating meaning in many modes including, but certainly not exclusively, spoken language (Harpin, 1976; Kress, 1994). The development of written syntax follows the acquisition of spoken syntax, one of the four core areas of language development (Smith, Cowie & Blades 1998). A child will have started to acquire the necessary phonological, semantic, pragmatic and syntactic rules of spoken language from birth and will likely be a competent language user upon entry to school. The acquisition of spoken grammar is argued to be innate. Chomsky (1965) proposed that children have a hypothetical Language Acquisition Device (LAD) that generates hypotheses about language that, when tested, either lead to assimilation with existing grammatical schemas or accommodation of new rules (Chomsky, 1965; Smith, Cowie & Blades, 1998).

The cognitive demand of learning new rules and conventions can cause a regression in the ability of a child to express him/herself in writing, compared with spoken communication (Halliday, 1993; Harpin, 1976; Vygotsky, 1962). Semantic and pragmatic knowledge from spoken language should
support written language but as written previously, transposing phonological knowledge - turning phonemes into graphemes when moving from spoken to written language - is a significant challenge.

So too are the grammatical ‘rules and conventions’ of written language that Kress (1994) refers to. The purpose of this section will be to outline the unique difficulty posed by transposing the grammar of spoken language onto the written form. It will highlight the concept of sentence as the root of the difficulty and focus on how a 10-year old’s understanding of a sentence needs to be closer to that of an expert writer – i.e. it is internally and externally cohesive and addresses the need to communicate with a distance audience – if compositional competence is sufficient to write with authorial voice. The section will not list the syntactic devices that are typically acquired throughout the primary school years, (for a comprehensive breakdown of the trajectory of development of syntactic devices, see Perera, 1984) even if these are used by a young writer to make writing causal. This is because it is the conceptual development of the ‘sentence’, and not the inclusion of linguistic devices, that is argued to represent development of grammar.

2.4.2 The concept of ‘sentence’ (Kress, 1994)

“The distinctive linguistic unit of writing is the sentence, which is not a unit of informal spoken language.”

(Kress, 1994, p.8)

Kress (1994) makes an analogy that learning to write is like learning a second language. It is highlighted that while spoken communication, in the presence of a direct and participatory audience, is formed of utterances which convey meaning and purpose through intonation, written communication is dependent upon the sentence (Halliday, 1993). The sentence must convey the overall meaning, the relative importance of its constituent words, phrases and clauses, the intonation and the tone that would otherwise be open to interpretation in the eyes of a distant audience. This highlights why the development of the concept of sentence is so critical to the competence of a 10-year old writer. Individual voice relies on the writer guiding the reader rather than the reader guiding the writing. As Kress (1994) highlights, competence with the sentence depends upon first, managing the internal structure of the sentence and second, managing the placement of the sentence within the text as a whole.
2.4.3 A ‘child’ concept of sentence

Development of the sentence on paper is marked by the move from speech like utterances to sentences of varying complexity – each matching what is needed for cohesion of the message over the paragraph and text as a whole (Collins & Washtell, 2013; Kress, 1994). However, the focus of the thesis is not the grammar of the writing but the grammar of the writer. The key therefore is the evolving understanding of the sentence. A question that you may hear posed in the primary classroom is, ‘what is a sentence?’ The response to the question posed will likely be something close to, “It starts with a capital letter and ends in a full stop.” This is indicative of the, “misconceived and ill motivated interventions,” in relation to punctuation that do nothing to support the concept of sentence (Kress, 1994, p.71). The concept of sentence is acquired through experimentation and exploration, rather than as a result of direct teaching. Thus, while a competent 10-year old writer will have come to understand, as an expert writer does, the concept that the sentence is a unit of, “complete thought,” (Kress, 1994, p.37), they’re unlikely to respond as such. This knowledge is usually tacit and for most writers remains so.

When a young writer begins to organise individual words together, they will give, “prominence to the line” (Kress, 1994, p.73). A line of writing is typically understood as the vehicle or motivation for individual topics, ordered chronologically, with little or no cohesion between. That children will often punctuate a line with a capital letter and full stop rather than a sentence may provide evidence of this prominence, though it may also owe something to the tendency of reading scheme books to present one simple sentence per line. Kress (1994) is clear that children’s concepts of writing are ‘different’ rather than impoverished versions of adult or expert writing. Support for this notion is that the ‘line’ that precedes the ‘sentence’ typically contains a variety of syntax (Kress, 1994; Perera, 1984). It is argued that what drives the concept of sentence towards that of an adult writer is ‘text’ rather than syntax. In other words, compositional competence in a 10-year old writer will owe more to an understanding of the sentence within the text as a whole and variety of sentence structure than to an increased knowledge of syntax and sentence length.
2.4.4 An ‘adult’ concept of sentence

More complex textual structure and greater variety of sentence structure rather than ‘more complex’ syntax and ‘longer’ sentences are indicative of writing which is closer to an adult concept of sentence but once again, it is the writer and not the writing that is key (Hudson, 2009). The argument of this thesis therefore, is that a competent writer uses syntax, without hierarchy, to serve their purpose to communicate. This argument is supported by Hudson (2009) in a synthesis of empirical studies (e.g. Andrews, 2005; Hunt, 1965) that indicate that maturity in writing is synonymous with variety and not simply length of t-units (a measure of sections of meaning that doesn’t involve punctuation as an extraneous variable). Studies such as Andrews (2005), looking at the effects of sentence combining, also support the theory of Kress (1994) that with increased competence the paragraph can replace the sentence as the vehicle of the topic. On the way to this understanding, children will adopt the structures of the writing that they read and will attempt to accommodate this within their own developing use of sentences (Barrs & Cork, 2002; Kress, 1994). This means that there is likely to be a phase in which complex textual structures are used without ‘correct’ demarcation. The argument again, is that correct demarcation and understanding of grammar to serve composition are complimentary but distinct. Kress (1994, p.94) argues that the mark of an adult writer, or a 10-year old who has developed competence with grammar, is one who’s understanding of the use of a paragraph is such that it, “frees the sentence from paragraph-like functions, thereby permitting the development of the sentence as a linguistic unit with structural, textual and semantic features in its own right.”

2.4.5 Grammar and causality

The position of the present study is that a competent 10-year old writer is not one who possesses an “explicit knowledge of grammar,” in the absence of an implicit understanding (DfE 2013, p.75). As Myhill, Jones and Watson (2013) illustrate, the position doesn’t ignore that explicit meta-language has validity for developing a language for analysis of writing. However, as explored in Chapter 8, competence relates to the fundamental capability to make discerning and conscious linguistic choices in order to compose for a specific purpose and audience. This causality will be argued as being a prerequisite in order for a writer to give ‘voice’ to a piece of writing.
2.4.6 Writing for a range of purposes and audiences: Awareness of genre

The term ‘genre’ has strong connotations within the study of the teaching of writing in English primary schools within the last two decades. Pedagogy during the years of the National Literacy Strategy (DfEE, 1998) and later the Primary National Strategies (DfES, 2006) was underpinned by an interpretation of ‘genre theory’ and its emphasis on the need for a text to ‘adhere’ to particular forms (e.g. Riley & Reedy, 2000; Wyse & Jones, 2001). The chapter to follow will explore the influence of this interpretation on the competence and autonomy of teachers of writing in English primary schools. Similarly, if one were to ask a competent 10-year old writer what is meant by genre this pedagogical influence may result in an answer synonymous with text-type (e.g. narrative or non-chronological report) and may include mention of the constituent features of this text type.

However, the present study makes a clear separation between genre understood in this narrow way, and a ‘true’ understanding of genre that is indicative of a competent 10-year old writer. Yes, genre does represent a restriction for communicating based on, “appropriate and accepted modes” (Kress, 1994, p.124), but more so, competence in writing means understanding that, “purpose is the major influence on the structure of a text,” and that the structure is determined by the culture within which the writing takes place and by the register – the appropriate choice of subject matter, medium and formality of language (Riley & Reedy, 2000, p.21). This understanding is likely to be implicit as it is learned through engagement with reading and writing, rather than through a response to direct teaching (Kress, 1994). However, a writer with this understanding will possess the armoury to write for a range or purposes and audiences, aware of the limitations of the conventions but, crucially, aware of how these structures can serve the writing and, where flexibility exists, how this can be exploited to compose for maximum intended effect.
2.5 Chapter conclusion

This opening literature chapter has outlined the prerequisite understandings that a 10-year old writer needs to have developed in order to display the competence required to write with purpose and with individual voice. Two fundamental variables influence first, the potential for a writer to develop these prerequisite understandings and second, to utilise this competence to write with individual voice. These two variables are a) the learning environment, specifically the teaching of writing and b) motivation, specifically how competent and autonomous the writer feels. These variables will be the topics of the two literature review chapters to follow.
Chapter 3:
Developing writers as a teacher in English primary schools

3.1 Chapter introduction: the theoretical perspective and the structure of the chapter

There are many factors that will influence the development of a young writer, including the competence of the teacher in front of them. However, while the present thesis will explore the notion of what it means to be competent in this chapter, being actually competent and believing oneself to have competence, whilst related, are not the same thing. By definition, being competent means teaching well and that is clearly a desirable goal for teachers and a worthy topic of study. However, the focus in this thesis is on the relationship between motivation and writing and from this angle, self-perceived competence is the variable under scrutiny. Discussions will clearly relate to notions of competence that are shared in discussions about self-perceived and observer-perceived competence but this thesis explores the place of self-perceived competence, and its relationship with self-perceived autonomy, in the development of young writers with individual voice.

3.1.1 Teacher self-perceived competence: a multi-faceted and contested concept

The thesis argues that to support the development of a 10-year old writer requires high levels of self-perceived competence in the teaching of writing. The previous chapter illustrates that to be a competent 10-year old writer is hard work. The development is complex and multi-faceted. It is an argument of the present thesis that language pedagogy in English primary schools, specifically what constitutes competence and influences self-perceptions in the teaching of writing, is equally complex, contested and multi-faceted. In this chapter, three perspectives: socio-cultural, cognitive and political, are presented to provide the lens through which facets of writing pedagogy, that recent and relevant syntheses and meta-analyses (e.g. Beard, Myhill, Riley & Nystrand, 2009; DfE, 2012; Dombey, 2013; MacArthur, Graham & Fitzgerald, 2016) have indicated are effective for children’s writing development, are analysed. The separation of perspectives is designed to show the reader that competence is a contested notion. However, as the chapter will illustrate, the notion of what competent teaching looks like does not neatly separate according to perspective and likewise, the perspective of
an individual does not fit neatly into one category. One must caution against the creation of false
dichotomies and divisions as this undermines the support that research from multiple perspectives can
provide for teachers in classrooms.

3.1.2 Enabling Teacher competence: a balance of competence and autonomy-support

While the thesis will argue that the development of writers with individual voice requires a
teacher with a high self-perception of autonomy, it recognises that the concept of autonomy is
problematic. Autonomy in the teaching of writing is not always desirable and the task of this chapter will
be to explore the uneasy relationship between the teaching of writing in England and the autonomy of
teachers over the last three decades. It is necessary to state very clearly that autonomy and free choice
are not synonymous. As will be highlighted in Chapter 4, providing free choice can be very unsupportive
for both teachers and children. Providing autonomy describes the careful handover of control through
the provision of options and the clarity of purpose (e.g. Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2000).

3.2 Teacher competence in the teaching of writing in English primary
schools: a matter of perspective

“The teaching of literacy is shaped not only by the curriculum as designated by policy makers
and the institution in which it is located, but also by the individual’s understanding of what
literacy and learning involves and how they act to achieve their goals.”

(Fisher, 2012, p.299)

The teaching of writing is a topic of relevance and concern for those that work in schools,
those who learn in schools, those whose children learn in schools and those who have an interest in the
impact of what children learn in school (Fisher, 2012) - in other words, most people in society. These
stakeholders are likely to share the same aim: the development of successful writers. However, what
successful writers and writing looks like will vary, depending on the perspective of the individual (Fisher,
2012; Graham, Harris & Chambers, 2016; Ivanic & Clark, 1997).

Further, the perspective of the individual may be tacit – influencing discourse without
awareness - or explicitly recognised, understood and accounted for (Nguyen Kwok, Ganding, Hull & Birr
Moje, 2016). The perspective of the individual is also influenced by the perspective of the group (e.g. school or political party) to which she or he belongs. This influence may be exerted to a large or a small extent (e.g. Fisher, 2012; Ivanic, 2004). The present thesis identifies, exemplifies and analyses three perspectives of competence in the teaching of writing: socio-cultural, cognitive and political. In isolating these three perspectives, the thesis recognises first, that a multitude of further perspectives may influence one’s conceptualisation of competence (e.g. historical, psycho-linguistic, critical literacy, second-language, economic, technological) and second, that an individual’s conceptualisation is unlikely to fit neatly and exclusively into one perspective.

3.2.1 Competent teaching: a socio-cultural perspective

“Signs and words serve children first and foremost as a means of social contact with other people.”

(Vygotsky, 1978, p.28)

Competent teaching of writing, from a socio-cultural perspective, provides children with an understanding of the reason and the means to communicate (Vygotsky, 1978). The constituent elements of writing development, itemised in the last chapter, serve the ultimate aim of making the meaning of the writer clear to those that will read their composition (Cremin & Myhill, 2012). The perspective emphasises the need for competent teachers to understand the cultural, as well as academic, history of the individual (Ivanic & Clark, 1997). Competent teaching is seen as reliant on constantly evolving assessment, with the teacher aware of how and when children should be supported by the teacher and/or by their peers and with an awareness of when the control should be handed over to the writer (Fisher, 2006).
3.2.2 Competent teaching: a cognitive perspective

“Written composition depends on the functional cost of each of these components (planning, formulation, revision, and execution) and on whether or not an individual has sufficient attentional and memory capacity at a given time to both manage and coordinate the functioning of each component.”

(Alamargot & Fayol, 2009, p.24)

Competent teaching of writing, from a cognitive perspective, provides a child with the most effective strategies she or he needs to be able to self-regulate during the iterative process of composing a text (MacArthur, 2016). The evaluation of competence may be informed by effect size from studies that isolate particular instructional practices. The effectiveness of these practices may be quantified using intervention studies in which variables are controlled (Graham, Harris & Chambers, 2016). Just as cognitive models are used to illustrate the problem-solving nature of composition: the constraints placed on working memory in the planning, formulation, revision and execution of ideas, competent teaching is assessed according to how effectively a teacher enables a child to overcome those constraints (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009).

3.2.3 Competent teaching: a political perspective – written skills represent ‘powerful knowledge’

“If we are to deliver a fairer, more socially mobile society, we must secure the highest standards of academic achievement for all young people, and especially those from the least advantaged backgrounds… precisely if someone does not have parents who can put in a word for them in a difficult job market, they need the assurance of rigorous qualifications and, if at all possible, core academic qualifications.”

(Gibb, 2015)

The current dominant political perspective concerning the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools is influenced by the concept of ‘powerful knowledge’ (e.g. Muller & Young, 2019). This concept gives primacy to the development of a set of core competencies, independent of common sense, independent of individual contexts and in need of being taught, that should be shared by all children in school (White, 2018). This concept is less contested in the context of the division of the curriculum into separate subjects with their own curriculum aims but more contested when it comes to the specific aims stated within each subject and the relative importance placed on these aims (White,
In the context of writing, broadly speaking, knowledge of grammar and transcriptional accuracy may be considered as ‘powerful knowledge’ in the current educational climate.

The political perspective exemplified and summarised in Table 3.1 focuses on this concept that social mobility is reliant on all learners developing competence with spelling, punctuation and grammar knowledge (e.g. Beck, 2013). The relationship between ‘powerful knowledge’ and social mobility is a contested one (e.g. Reiss, Guile & Lambert, 2018) and this reinforces the idea that the political perspective should be understood to be fragile. A ‘political perspective’ is shaped by the dominant discourse of writing and learning to write at any given time in history (e.g. Ivanic, 2004; Moss, 2017). The dominant discourse manifests in the shape of policy, curriculum and assessment documentation (Ivanic, 2004).

Of the three perspectives selected for scrutiny, the political perspective is perhaps the most fluctuating. While the socio-cultural and cognitive perspectives evolve on the basis of emerging theory and research and remain stable across different education systems, the political perspective may change dramatically from one year to the next, one parliament to the next and one educational system to the next (Bearne, 2017; Moss, 2017). To exemplify how the political perspective can change, before 2010, policy and curriculum was argued to have been heavily influenced by genre theory (Wyse & Jones, 2001) and the interpretation of genre theory that competence in the teaching of writing was synonymous with ensuring that children retained a memory for the structure and features of different text types (e.g. Riley & Reedy, 2000).

### 3.3 Teacher competence in the teaching of writing in English primary schools: what does effective teaching look like?

Syntheses of research focused on writing in English Primary schools (e.g. DfE, 2012; Dombey, 2013; MacArthur, Graham & Fitzgerald, 2016) provide details of facets of pedagogy that are argued to represent competence in the teaching of writing. Those that are more cognitive in their approach cite effect sizes in highlighting the benefits of instructional practices such as: the explicit teaching of writing strategies, clear goal setting, a focus on purpose and motivation and peer collaboration and
assessment (Graham, Harris & Chambers, 2016). Those who are more socio-cultural in their perspective look at the quality of teaching, writing and the feedback of teachers and children in highlighting the benefits of instructional practices such as: modelling, sharing and developing the process of writing, providing authentic purposes and audiences, the use of talk and experimentation, invention and play with language and teacher engagement with writing (Dombey, 2013). In listing these facets, the present thesis is clear about two things.

First, the instructional recommendations cited cannot be adopted as representing teacher competence without critical analysis of the limitations. As an example, the present thesis shares the theoretical perspective that when teachers share their thinking during composition, children better understand the writing process (e.g. Cremin & Myhill, 2012). However, studies focusing on teachers authentically sharing their thinking during the process of writing suggest that teachers that do so are significantly in the minority. Fisher (2002) observed just one lesson involving a teacher talking through ideas while composing during a total of 170 hours of observations. As a possible explanation, Grainger (2005) discovered that 80% of 65 teachers interviewed were apprehensive about their own writing and about writing in front of others. The implication in relation to the present thesis is that it may be difficult to support children in composing with confidence and individuality if teachers feel less than confident to do so. Instead of seeing an individual writer compose in front of them, children may instead see a generic pre-written model of writing – one that is produced in order to adhere to the assessment criteria (e.g. Gardner, 2012; Grainger, 2005; Ings, 2009).

Second, the instructional recommendations cited should not be assumed as being advocated only by those with one perspective. Those with a socio-cultural perspective would share the promotion of many instructional practices advocated by those with a cognitive perspective and vice versa, even if the emphases were different. As Table 3.1 illustrates, the same pedagogical practice can be viewed from multiple perspectives, all contributing to the notion of what teacher competence looks like in the teaching of writing in English primary school. As a further illustration, in the next sections the implications of the different perspectives on competent teaching in 2019-20 are unpacked in the teaching of spelling, handwriting, punctuation and grammar.
Table 3.1

Perspectives of key classroom practices that promote development in writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spelling, handwriting and punctuation is explicitly and systematically taught</th>
<th>Socio-cultural</th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Political</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competence with technical aspects serves the production of meaningful texts. Competence supports the crafting and design of a precise message from writer to reader.</td>
<td>Automaticity with technical aspects reduces the cognitive burden of writing and free capacity for the formulation, revision and execution of ideas in the composing process.</td>
<td>Accuracy with technical aspects of writing provides 'powerful' social capital and is necessary for access to the workplace. Accuracy is synonymous with success in externally marked assessments in England.</td>
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</table>

| The language and function of grammar is taught | The implicit development of grammar through reading and writing is key. A written composition can be analysed for linguistic choices consciously or subconsciously made by an author. | Grammar instruction is categorised according to how explicit or implicit terminology is and according to whether pedagogy is focused on grammatical knowledge or the application of the knowledge. | The National Curriculum (DfE, 2013) and the Spelling, Punctuation and Spelling Test (STA, 2012) have given prominence to a 'knowledge' of grammatical terminology |

3.3.1 Spelling, handwriting and punctuation is explicitly and systematically taught

“Writing is bound by conventions but it is the task of the teacher to enable the child to learn these conventions without losing the awareness of how writing can be used by the writer for their own purposes.”

(Fisher, 2006, p.196)

The quote above reflects a socio-cultural perspective concerning the competent teaching of spelling, punctuation and handwriting. Within this perspective, technical skills are subordinate to meaning but support the production of meaningful texts (Cremin & Myhill, 2012). Teachers will provide children with a sense that these transcriptional competencies come with rules but that these rules are not static and can be experimented and played with (Dombey, 2013). Within this perspective, teacher competence involves the teaching of spelling, punctuation and handwriting in which the writer is viewed as a designer, rather than as a scribe. For example, O’Sullivan (2000) tracked 31 case study children (reducing to 12) from Reception to Year 3 and analysed regular writing samples and writing
conferences. It was concluded that successful outcomes for spelling were consistent with contextualised, enthusiastic and meaningful teaching of spelling. Punctuation should also be purposeful and is shown to provide nuance for the writer in communicating with her or his reader (e.g. Cremin & Myhill, 2012). The socio-cultural perspective recognises that a threshold level of competence with handwriting and spelling is required for a writer to be able to compose with self-expression (Kress, 1994).

The cognitive perspective highlights the same argument that compositional expertise is based on a foundation of competence with transcriptional accuracy and fluency (e.g. Alamargot & Fayol, 2009). This perspective emphasises that cognitive attention is taken away from composition while transcription is still developing and with a degree of automaticity in spelling, punctuation and handwriting, comes the release of cognitive capacity to write for meaning (Graham, Harris & Chambers, 2016). Relationships have been reported between transcriptional fluency and accuracy and compositional volume and quality (e.g. Medwell & Wray, 2007). The implication is that competent teaching ensures regular teaching and assessment of these aspects, particularly amongst younger children, with recognition of the demands placed on a child by asking her or him to compose creatively and show accurate transcription simultaneously (Bearne & Reedy, 2018).

The introduction of Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) for 10 and 11-year old children in English primary schools in 1994 saw the measurement and subsequent publication of levels of writing (Wyse & Jones, 2001). By the time the National Literacy Strategy (DfEE, 1998) was introduced, the pressure to isolate and improve the constituent features of writing had grown (Alexander, 2010). The separation of transcriptional competencies in the teaching framework of the NLS (DfEE, 1998), and in the categories of statutory assessment ever since, has contributed to what Ivanic (2004) describes as the ‘skills discourse’ of writing and learning to write. The current political perspective concerning competence has become dominated by the ‘skills discourse’ (Alexander, 2010; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Fisher, 2006; Gardner, 2012; Moss, 2017). At the heart of the skills discourse is a belief that good writing is synonymous with transcriptional correctness, that, “what counts as good writing is determined by the correctness of the letter, word, sentence, and text formation.” (Ivanic, 2004, p.227). The explicit teaching of skills is advocated. This teaching may be decontextualised and taught as discrete from
English lessons (Bearne, 2017). The more-easily-measurable nature of transcriptional elements (phonics, punctuation, spelling, handwriting) has led to an accusation that those with a skills-based perspective view competent teaching as that which targets transcription in an attempt to drive up levels rapidly (e.g. Alexander, 2010; Barrs and Pigeon, 1993; Boscolo, 2009; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Ivanic, 2004).

The present thesis argues that a balanced, meaningful curriculum will have a positive impact on the development of young writers, even within an educational climate in which discourse is not balanced (e.g. Andrews, 2008; Cremin & Baker, 2010; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Gardner, 2012; Ings, 2009). While the over emphasis of the teaching of transcriptional skills can militate against the development of a balanced conceptualisation of writing in which transcriptional and compositional elements sit side by side (e.g. Ivanic, 2004; Myhill & Fisher, 2010), those from all perspectives highlight the importance of the explicit and systematic teaching of spelling, handwriting and punctuation. It is clear that the successful development of writing necessitates competence with transcriptional skills (e.g. Kress, 1994). As such, the apparent tension between perspectives represents a false divide (Ivanic, 2004). It is a key argument of the present thesis that the criticism of the perspective that the explicit and systematic teaching of spelling, punctuation and handwriting somehow limits children’s individual expression, or that a focus on meaning making leads to a lack of academic rigour, betrays the ability of a competent teacher of writing to marry reconcile and balance all three perspectives to the advantage of the young writer (e.g. Andrews, 2008; Ings, 2009; Cremin & Baker, 2010; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Gardner, 2012; Kress, 1994; Louden et al, 2005).

3.3.2 The language and function of grammar is taught

“Professional development…must take account of pedagogical principles, rather than focusing too superficially on either the grammar or the teaching materials which exemplify them.”

(Myhill et al., 2013, p.103)

What constitutes the competent teaching of grammar is perhaps the question of most contention in the context of the teaching of writing in English primary schools within the last decade (Bearne & Reedy, 2018; Myhill et al., 2013; Myhill, Jones & Watson, 2013; Wyse & Torgerson, 2017).
The introduction of the Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling Test (STA, 2013) and the corresponding heightened focus within the National Curriculum (DfE, 2013) has yielded changes to the structure of writing lessons, the lexicon of teachers and children, and the very notion of success in writing development (Beare & Reedy, 2018; Moss, 2017). Myhill et al. (2013, p.103), perhaps diplomatically, explain that policy changes – most notably the introduction of the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Test (STA, 2012) and the resultant focus on the meta-language of grammar - have stemmed from, “fundamental epistemological disagreements about the value of knowledge about grammar.” These disagreements highlight a difference in perspective when it comes to the competent teaching of grammar in English primary schools.

At the heart of the socio-cultural perspective is the belief that an understanding of grammar provides a child with the necessary tools to make the choices required to sculpt their written composition for its intended effect and purpose (Halliday, 1993; Kress, 1994). With this belief comes a lesser preoccupation (but not a neglect of the benefits) with mastering the meta-language of word classes and syntactical devices within writing (Warrington, Younger & Bearne, 2006). Myhill, Jones, Watson and Lines (2013) conducted a randomized control trial that saw children taught grammar in different ways. They found that those children taught using contextualised examples of the meta-language introduced and engaged in a discussion of the impact of grammatical choices showed more progress than control groups. Those with a socio-cultural perspective see the analysis of grammatical choices as a top-down analysis, with those often implicit choices providing an insight into the individual style and expression of an author when considered in the context of the whole text (Kress, 1994). This is in apparent contrast to those who may advocate a bottom-up approach to composition in which composition is informed by the explicit teaching of grammatical terms and concepts (DfE, 2013).

From a cognitive perspective, models such as that of Hudson (2016) have been used to evaluate the benefits or costs of grammar instruction for both knowledge about grammar and application of grammar knowledge. It is argued that this evaluation can avoid a dichotomy between those that argue that grammar instruction does not improve writing (e.g. Andrews, 2005) and those that argue that it does. Cognitive models that separate knowledge of terminology from the application of
understood grammatical concepts, allow the conclusion that in certain contexts and with particular pedagogical practices, grammar instruction can support writing development (e.g. Myhill et al, 2013).

The introduction of the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar test (STA, 2012) and the inclusion of grammar appendices in the national curriculum (DfE, 2013) reflect the current political perspective that a knowledge of grammar, specifically a fluency with meta-language, as well as competence with the application of implicit knowledge, represents ‘powerful knowledge’ for young writers in English primary schools. As stated, this perspective has been the catalyst for a strong reaction from those that point to an apparent absence of evidence showing any relationship between formal teaching of grammar and writing development (e.g. Andrews et al., 2006; Hillocks, 1986). The accusation from these quarters is that the political perspective overplays the presentation of grammar as a synonym of language fluency and even moral credibility (e.g. Moss, 2017; Myhill et al., 2013).

The present thesis is clear in its argument that a dichotomy should be avoided when discussing teacher self-perceptions of competence in relation to grammar. Grammar should be taught in the context of purposeful, audience focused composition (e.g. Myhill et al., 2013; Wyse & Torgerson, 2017), but subject knowledge is a prerequisite in order for a teacher to introduce grammar in context (e.g. Myhill, Jones & Watson, 2013). The synthesis of these two, the pedagogy and the subject knowledge, is the important thing, if the teaching of grammar is going to be at least neutral, ideally beneficial, but certainly not detrimental to the development of the individual writer in English primary schools (e.g. Hardman & Bell, 2019; Myhill, Jones & Watson, 2013; Wyse & Torgerson, 2017).

Support for this position comes from the aforementioned intervention study conducted by Myhill et al. (2013) involving 32 Year 8 classes (12-13-year olds). The teachers of the classes in the experimental group taught the same writing units as those in the control group. Importantly, grammar was not the focus of the writing units – unlike in previous studies looking at the impact of grammar. Instead, grammar was highlighted within the context of the overall teaching of writing. The authors reported a significant difference in the progress made in writing scores, as measured by the criteria for, “the national writing test for KS3,” (Myhill et al., 2013, p.104), which combined scores for transcription and composition with the experimental group showing greater progress. Myhill et al. (2013) are careful
to highlight that subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge are prerequisites of teaching that brings about the improvements cited.

My primary teaching experience included teaching Year 6 (10-11-year old children in the final year of primary school) between 2011 and 2013. This means that the writers in my first Year 6 class - prior to the introduction of the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Test (STA, 2012) - did not have to display any knowledge of grammatical terminology, while those in my second Year 6 class, just 12 months later following the introduction of the new test, were expected to be sufficiently fluent in the meta-language of grammar that they were able to pick out subordinate clauses from a list of sentences, identify the correct use of the semi-colon and transform a sentence from the active to the passive voice. These examples are illustrative of the demands of the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar Test (STA, 2012). They are cited in order to highlight that the interpretation of what constitutes subject knowledge changed very suddenly in English primary schools. During the same period, I was in charge of coordinating the teaching of English in the school and witnessed, first hand, experienced and highly competent teachers of writing claim that they had little or no subject knowledge for grammar. Fast forward a few years and I have worked with four cohorts of trainee teachers who almost unanimously claim the same, that their subject knowledge of grammar is poor.

What these experienced and trainee teachers who I have worked with have in common with my first cohort of Year 6 children is that they were unfamiliar with the meta-language of grammar. But what they did have was strong implicit subject knowledge for grammar and the way in which language can be crafted. Myhill, Jones and Watson (2013) distinguish between these forms of knowledge to present subject knowledge in grammar teaching as both grammatical content knowledge – a conscious knowledge of syntax and the function of words and word classes within a sentence and metalinguistic content knowledge – having an understanding of the uses of language and the impact of linguistic choices on the reader.
3.4 Enabling teacher self-perceived competence in the teaching of writing in English primary schools

The present thesis argues that the development of young writers capable of expressing individual voice is enhanced by having teachers who perceive themselves as competence, allow their pupils autonomy in the writing process and are themselves given the autonomy necessary to do this effectively. However, enabling the optimum quality and quantity of competence and autonomy-support for teachers is complex. As the sections to follow will highlight, while providing autonomy appears to be supportive and desirable, in the absence of the necessary competence, or perceived competence, autonomy can be unsupportive and undesirable. Thus, autonomy is a problematic concept. While the section to follow will begin by outlining some of the ways in which competence in the teaching of writing can be developed, when it moves onto a discussion of autonomy, it becomes clear that policy and curricula can be viewed as supportive and restrictive simultaneously. The degree of self-perceived teacher competence mediates the extent to which a teacher is likely to feel that autonomy is supportive in their teaching of writing. This highlights the necessity for the thesis to be clear in stating that both self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy together are the prerequisite of teaching that enables the development of individual writer voice. Consequently, developing self-perceived competence may be undermined by restricting autonomy while increasing self-perceived autonomy may be undermined by failing to sufficiently support competence. Balance is key and it is a core aim of the thesis to explore what this balance looks like, what it requires and what it results in.

3.4.1 Enabling teacher competence in the teaching of writing in English primary schools:

Developing subject knowledge

The present thesis focuses on the writer as well as the writing and thus takes the position that subject knowledge requires an understanding of how children develop as writers: the prerequisite competencies, as well as confidence with the concepts at the route of the objectives set out by the National Curriculum, (DfE, 2013) and by assessment documents (e.g. STA, 2017). This is no easy task as a primary school teacher is not necessarily an English subject specialist. During their Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and throughout their Continuing Professional Development (CPD), a primary school
In this context, primary teachers may conceptualise subject knowledge according to the objectives set out by the National Curriculum (DfE, 2013) and by assessment documents (e.g. STA, 2017) (e.g. Bearne & Reedy, 2018; Grainger, 2005; Twiselton, 2006). However, while mastery of these objectives and assessment criteria may be viewed as representing competence from a political perspective, the present thesis agrees with the Dombey (2013) in arguing that it is necessary for teachers to understand the place of all the prerequisite competencies presented in Chapter 2 as well (e.g. Dombey, 2013; Kress, 1994; Riley & Reedy, 2000).

3.4.2 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Teachers as writers (Ings, 2010; Grainger, 2005)

Professional development does not just have to improve teacher competence; it must also develop teacher confidence regarding their competence. The past experiences of primary school teachers in their own engagement with writing will vary greatly. It is notable then that professional development in which teachers engaged in their own writing, at their own level and around their own interests resulted in marked improvements in understanding and enjoyment for both teachers and the children in their classes, particularly in the development of creativity and individual voice (Grainger, 2005; Ings, 2009). In the study of Ings (2009) 18 lead literacy teachers were engaged in training sessions, three times per term for a period of 15 months and teachers then disseminated this to fellow teachers in their schools. In a second strand, headteachers in two clusters of schools were involved in a project to develop the whole-school approach to writing with a focus on the development of teachers and children as ‘writers’. The author of the study cites a number of positive outcomes for teachers (e.g. a deeper understanding of the writing process and a critical, flexible, innovative and personalised...
approach to the teaching of writing) and children (e.g. greater enjoyment, deeper understanding, higher standards of writing and greater engagement).

The study of Grainger (2005) spanned eight months with 14 teachers attending regular sessions in which they took part in their writing workshops to develop their own writing. Grainger (2005 p.86) concludes of the teachers, that, “many moved from being mere instructors in the classroom to informed facilitators and fellow writers and as they did so their understanding of the art of writing developed.” The studies of Ings (2009) and Grainger (2005) give an indication that developing teacher competence can impact the priorities of a teacher and that the development of a writer can become the focus rather than simply the writing if a teacher feels that they themselves are a writer. The small sample size, the broad nature of the conclusions and the lack of specific data concerning children’s writing outputs in both studies limit the extent to which one could convincingly argue for a relationship between teacher engagement with writing and the development of individual writer voice. However, as Grainger, Goouch and Lambirth, (2003, p.138) highlight, where previously, “the creative and authentic voice of the child was not being heard or developed in their schools,” significant differences were observed as a result of developing teacher competence in this way.

Such a summary raises a key question: what factors make the difference between a teacher able to display competence in the teaching of writing and those unable to display the competence required to develop individual writers? It is with intent that the distinction has not been drawn between competent and incompetent. Instead the key is whether a teacher is able and enabled to feel competent and display the necessary competence. Thus the remainder of the chapter considers the extraneous influence of self-perceived autonomy and autonomy restriction. As stated earlier, it is argued throughout the present study that both self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy together are the prerequisite of teaching that enables the development of individual writer voice.
3.4.3 Enabling teacher competence in the teaching of writing in English primary schools: Autonomy as a teacher of writing in English primary schools

As highlighted previously, the competent development of writers is not simply a matter of a teacher being able to teach competently and feeling competent. It is also a matter of a teacher being enabled to teach competently. The core hypothesis of the present study is that a teacher of 10-year old writers must have sufficient self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy in order to prioritise writers. However, as Alexander and Mayall (2010) highlight, teachers in English primary schools have had their autonomy in the teaching of writing increasingly restricted over the last two decades. For the purposes of the present study, autonomy in the teaching of writing will be defined as: the freedom to plan and adapt planning; to teach and adapt teaching, without restriction or interference other than from the statutory objectives of the National Curriculum. In light of this definition, it is important to highlight that in the absence of sufficient self-perceived competence, autonomy is not necessarily positive or desired. Further, as stated earlier and expanded in Chapter 4, autonomy and free choice are not synonymous. The argument that underpins this chapter is that restrictions on autonomy, while supportive of teachers with a lower self-perception of competence, place unnecessary restrictions on those teachers with higher levels of self-perceived competence. This section of the chapter will explore policy interventions of the last two decades that have yielded this reported restriction of autonomy.

3.4.4 National Literacy Strategy Framework for Teaching (NLS) (DfEE, 1998) and The Primary National Strategy (PNS) (DfES, 2006)

“For more than a decade teachers effectively lost control of pedagogy.”

Alexander & Mayall (2010, p.28)

The quote above is in reference to the impact of the National Literacy Strategy (DfEE, 1998) and later the Primary National Strategy (DfES, 2006). This section will explore the implementation of the framework that standardised pedagogy for English teaching across England for 13 years (e.g. Moss, 2017). It should be highlighted that the teaching of writing in English primary schools had been the
subject of significant, regular and on-going change before 1997 and certainly since the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988 (e.g. Alexander & Mayall, 2010; Beard and Burrell, 2010a; Wyse and Jones, 2001). Indeed, Wyse and Jones, (2001) highlight that Political concern with attainment levels of writing amongst children in state schooling in England is far from a recent phenomenon and is evident in policies and interventions tracing back to the 19th Century after the introduction of compulsory education for primary age children in the Elementary Education Act of 1870. However, the introduction of the NLS, PNS and the corresponding assessment target setting in English primary schools is viewed by many as having been the most significant reform to writing pedagogy (e.g. Alexander & Mayall, 2010; Moss, 2004; Twiselton, 2007; Wyse, 2003).

This section will consider the context in which the NLS and was introduced, it will outline the nature of the pedagogy that emerged as a result of centralised directives about the teaching of writing and it will look at how debates around the validity and success of the NLS and PNS can be framed by looking at underlying perspectives about how writing should be taught. Most significantly, the section will conclude by considering whether the NLS and PNS should be viewed as having been a scaffold for teachers of writing in English primary schools or as a means by which control has been exerted centrally and autonomy unnecessarily restricted. The present study will be underpinned by the conclusion that the extent to which the NLS and PNS was (and continues to be) either a scaffold or a shackle is mediated by a teacher’s self-perception of competence.

The introduction of the NLS in 1998 resulted from a government white paper, entitled ‘Excellence in Schools’ (DfEE, 1997), following findings from a task force set up by the then secretary of state for education, David Blunkett, during his time as shadow secretary of state. It is important to emphasise that any political party returning to power after 18 years in opposition, as this government were, are unlikely to take a gradual or modest approach to educational reform. However, the urgency and breadth of the reform for this government, one whose most memorable campaign slogan was, “education, education, education”, was significant (Moss, 2004). This was a government whose intentions were clear: the measurable improvement of educational standards (Moss, 2017). The implementation of The National Literacy Strategy: Framework for Teaching (DfEE, 1998) had an immediate and significant impact on teaching, learning, curriculum design and assessment in writing, as
well as in reading, speaking and listening (Moss, 2004; 2017). In-service training was centralised with all schools provided with, “national guidelines and training for all primary teachers on best practice in the teaching of literacy.” (DfEE, 1997 p.5). Schools and teachers were presented with a curriculum for English that was heavily prescriptive, both in terms of the objectives to be taught, the pedagogical methods to be employed and the assessment to be carried out (Fisher, 2012; Moss, 2004). Though non-statutory, the parallel target, “of 80% of 11 year olds achieving the standards of literacy expected for their age by 2002,” (DfEE, 1997, p.6), meant that schools and teachers were unlikely to divert from the directive.

3.4.5 Teaching using the NLS: Uniformity and the birth of the ‘literacy hour’

“The Literacy Hour is structured to ensure that all the key aspects in the Framework are covered.”

(DfEE, 1998, p.10)

The introduction of the NLS brought unprecedented uniformity to primary classrooms throughout England. Delivery of lessons was not simply standardised in terms of content but also in terms of pedagogy (Moss, 2017; Wyse & Jones, 2001). The NLS introduced new terms to the lexicon of a primary school teacher. The literacy hour was introduced, representing a radical prescription on the timings of English teaching (Wyse & Jones, 2001).
As Figure 3.2 shows, within the hour, teachers were expected to cover four discrete foci and manage transitions from whole class to group or independent work and back again. *Shared Reading, Shared Writing, Guided Reading and Guided Writing* represented models of pedagogy that all teachers were expected to adopt within the literacy hour. ‘Shared Writing’ involved modeling writing with all the children, while ‘Guided Writing’ involved the targeted support of a group of children around a particular objective. The implementation of these objectives was heavily prescriptive. The NLS outlined the required objectives by term and under the headings, *Word Level Work, Sentence Level Work* and *Text Level Work*. These objectives were to be shared with the children at the start of every lesson. The NLS did not break down the term’s teaching into text types but with the introduction of the Primary National Strategy (DfES, 2006) came a greater level of prescription.

The targets set by the government in 1997 had proved unobtainable, particularly in writing, with the government admitting that, “national test results show progress is not being sustained across
the board,” (DfES, 2006 p.2) and once again the curriculum was updated in 2006 with the introduction of the Renewed Primary Strategy (DfES, 2006). While the changes focused most prominently on the teaching of early reading and the incorporation of ICT, the most notable change for the writing curriculum was that exemplification saw ‘units’ of writing laid out by genre with the objectives, timings and resources suggested for each (DfES, 2006). Though planning became arguably more straightforward, one could hardly argue that prescription had been reduced. The increasing focus on the features of text type, symptomatic of the teaching of writing in English primary schools at this time and arguably ever since, ignited a debate about the underlying principles of writing pedagogy (Moss, 2017).

3.4.6 Debates about the NLS: The Process Approach v Genre Theory

Section 3.2 illustrated that the political perspective of competence in the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools can and has changed over time. During the thirty years preceding the coalition government of 2010, the dominant political perspective was influenced by the process approach and, later, by Genre Theory. The process approach to writing was introduced to English primary schools in the 1980s and was influenced by the work of Graves (1983). The approach placed the child at the center of the writing process with the teacher acting as model and facilitator rather than instructor (Wyse, 1998). The child was regarded as a ‘writer’ whose initial ideas would form the basis from which the writing would evolve. Choice was a key concept of the approach. The teacher’s role was one of guidance and support, through the use of conferencing, as the child adapted their composition through a succession of drafts (Graves, 1983; Wyse, 1998). Advocates of the process approach point to the necessity for children to view themselves as writers and to develop by the practice of writing extended compositions for a clear, self-determined purpose. Critics of the approach argue that it biases those learners with access to literature outside of school and lacks the rigour required to ensure that basic standards of transcriptional competence are achieved (Wyse & Jones, 1997; 2001).

While the process approach is viewed by some as a reaction to the preceding emphasis on ‘skills’ and the writing product (e.g. Badger & White, 2000), genre theory is viewed as representing a return to these emphases as Genre theory advocates the explicit teaching of writing using standardised structures (Wyse & Jones, 2001). Within this approach, teachers provide exemplars of texts and
highlight the features that define the genre. The intention is that children are then able to replicate the
groups as a scaffold for their development as writers. Advocates of the approach argue that all
children are equally supported and that models provide a minimum standard for transcriptional skills
and compositional structures. Critics of the approach lament the absence of the ‘writer’ in the process of
writing. They point to an overemphasis on the writing product and a skewed focus on ‘correctness’ of
transcription and structure (e.g. Ivanic, 2004).

3.4.7 The NLS as a scaffold for less competent teachers of writing

Together with a teacher’s own attitudes towards the relative merits of genre theory and the
process approach, levels self-perceived competence are likely to have influenced (and still influence)
the degree to which the NLS was viewed as being supportive or restrictive in the teaching of writing.
Those that argue that the NLS and PNS were a supportive scaffold for less confident teachers highlight
the standardised nature of the teaching of writing as a positive (e.g. Beard, 2003). Uniformity meant that
children throughout England had more or less the same curriculum and that teachers were provided
with nationwide opportunities for in-service training (Moss, 2004). The confidence and competence of
teachers is argued to have been further enhanced by the easy availability of multiple teaching resources
that accompanied the frameworks for teaching. Investment in teaching resources such as CD ROMs,
posters, exemplar texts and annotated books meant that teachers has no shortage of lesson content
(Moss, 2004). Such structures are argued to have been particularly supportive for new teachers with the
objectives changing the focus from task completion towards learning (Twiselton, 2007). In summary,
the teaching of text features that dominated the teaching of writing, particularly among less experienced
and less confident teachers, were viewed as a scaffold for their teaching (e.g. Cremin & Myhill, 2012;

3.4.8 The NLS as a shackle for more competent teachers of writing

The counter argument is that for a confident teacher of writing, one with a high self-perception
of competence, the NLS and PNS were heavily prescriptive, both in terms of the objectives to be taught
and the pedagogical methods to be employed (Fisher, 2012). The pedagogical strategies themselves
are argued to have led to the formulaic and product orientated teaching of writing (Fisher, 2012;
Such teaching methods have since been condemned as ‘empty’, ‘formulaic’, ‘worthless’ and ‘destructive’ (e.g. Fisher, 2002; Fisher, 2010; Wyse and Jones, 2001). Moss (2004) highlights that teachers still retained autonomy over pace and sequencing but within the structures of the literacy hour, this was only to a limited extent. The argument around whether the NLS was supportive or restrictive is a concrete example of the balance at the heart of the present thesis. With increasing levels of self-perceived competence comes an increasing desire to exercise autonomy. However, as will be highlighted in the chapters to come, it is possible that autonomy for a teacher is something of a prerequisite in the development of self-perceived competence.

3.4.9 The removal and legacy of the NLS: A competence vacuum?

“The consequence for teachers was that a whole way of working familiar from the Strategies would be dismantled around them with nothing very obvious put in its place.”

(Moss, 2017, p.2017)

Three years after the publication of the updated Renewed Primary Strategy (DfES 2006), ‘The Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum’ (The Rose Review) was published (Rose, 2009) with its core aims to, “reduce prescription,” (Rose, 2009, p.9) and change the focus of learning from skills to processes. At the same time as the Rose Review was in progress, Robin Alexander led the Cambridge Primary Review (CPR; Alexander & Mayall, 2010). The CPR agreed with the aim of the Rose Review to reduce prescription. In relation to writing, the CPR criticised the narrow skills-based focus of the NLS, stating that it had, “undermined rather than enhanced teacher professionalism.” (Moss, 2010, p.147). The review called for a greater balance of transcription and composition, arguing that the curriculum was too concerned with the teaching of knowledge at the expense of “meaning making and enjoyment.” (Moss, 2010, p.147)

The Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government took control in 2010 and made immediate wholesale changes to the writing curriculum and the assessment regime for writing at Key Stage 2 (Moss, 2010). One could point to the recommendations of the Rose Review and CPR as reasons for the change in emphasis towards greater autonomy. However, the warnings represented by the outgoing government’s exposure to political scrutiny, caused by the close alignment of pedagogical
policy and target setting, may be a more likely explanation for an apparent trust in the capability of teachers to plan and teach writing in English primary schools (Moss, 2017). Whatever the real reason, the Renewed Primary Framework was condemned to the past to the extent that even online resources were archived or removed completely. As the quote at the start of this section highlights, no structures were introduced to replace the strategies.

For some teachers, whose self-perception of competence was independent of the NLS and PNS, the return of teaching informed directly by the National Curriculum would have represented an opportunity for potential autonomy. However, the argument of the present study is that for a large proportion of teachers, as well as supporting the confidence, the approach of the NLS and PNS will have formed the conceptualisation of what it means to be a competent teacher of writing. It will have represented both their subject knowledge and their pedagogical knowledge. In this sense the removal of the strategies will have left teachers with a particular view of what it means to teach writing and an absence of support in order to teach writing in that way. In this context, the increasing reliance on commercially produced, prescriptive schemes for the teaching of writing with an absence of research to back up their approaches, represents a worrying trend for teachers of writing in English primary schools. The present study argues that in the absence of sufficient self-perceived competence and competence-support, assessment frameworks have replaced the NLS and PNS in representing the structure from which writing is taught.

3.4.10 The assessment of writing since 2010: High-stakes assessment militates against the autonomy offered by a less prescriptive curriculum

Self-perceptions of competence in the teaching of writing have reportedly suffered a continuing decline in recent years despite curriculum change that was presented as providing greater levels of autonomy (e.g. Cremin and Myhill, 2012; Gardner, 2012). Evidently, the nature of high-stakes assessment in English primary schools has had the effect of militating against the potential benefits of a recent less prescriptive curriculum (e.g. Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Gardner, 2012). It is argued that the breadth, relevance and creativity of the writing curriculum at primary school continues to be squeezed by the “backwash of assessment” (Grainger, Goouch and Lambirth, 2005, p.65) resulting in a prevalence of narrow skills-based targets and a demand for measurable and rapid progress towards
these targets (Alexander & Mayall, 2010; Barr, 2019; Bearne, 2017; Cremin & Myhill 2012; Ivanic 2004). Crucially, for the core arguments of the present thesis however, strong self-perceived competence may equip teachers with the necessary confidence to feel autonomous and avoid what Bearne (2017, p.74) refers to as the, “tyranny of the technical,” in providing a balanced development of transcription and composition and thus have a positive impact on the development of young writers, even within the current educational context. (e.g. Andrews, 2008; Cremin & Baker, 2010; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Gardner, 2012; Ings, 2009).

3.4.11 Introduction of the Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) Test for Key Stage 2 (STA, 2013)

Soon after they came to power in 2010, the rhetoric of the coalition government had indicated that the writing curriculum would become more balanced and that schools would be given more autonomy (Bew, 2011; Moss, 2010). Certainly, at first sight at least, the Independent Review of Key Stage 2 Testing, Assessment and Accountability (Bew Report) (Bew, 2011) appeared to support this view by suggesting that testing of writing shouldn’t “come at the expense of promoting creativity (and that) writing composition should be subject only to summative teacher assessment (in order to) avoid…over-rehearsal and reduced focus on productive learning.” (Bew, 2011, p.4).

However, arguably the report’s most significant legacy in terms of writing in primary schools was the introduction of a new test for Key Stage 2: The Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) test (STA, 2012). The report reflected that there are some elements of writing that are less open to subjective assessment and despite warning that tests should be “rigorous and as valid and reliable as possible” (Bew, 2011, p.4), the new close procedure, context-free test was introduced within two years. This was despite condemnation from those who pointed to the lack of any evidence to support its introduction (e.g. Myhill, Jones & Watson, 2013). There is on-going concern that the context-free teaching of grammar has become and will continue to become more prevalent (Moss, 2017). Grammar teaching within the current educational climate of English primary schools serves as a neat example of the impact that teacher self-determination has on the learning outcomes of children. Central to the argument of the present thesis, self-perceived competence in the teaching of writing can allow a teacher to confidently integrate the more explicit micro analysis and terminology of grammar into their effective
pedagogy for writing development (Myhill, Jones & Watson, 2013). However, as indicated in Section 3.2 in relation to grammar, with insufficient self-perceptions of competence, the expectations of the new assessment framework, for children’s recall of linguistic features and associated vocabulary, can restrict breadth and lead to pedagogy in which teachers are ‘teaching to the test’ (e.g. Bearne, 2017).

This thesis argues that as a large proportion of current primary school teachers did not receive an education that made explicit reference to grammatical terminology (Jones, Myhill & Bailey, 2013), while these teachers may themselves be able to match terminology to existing concepts, without sufficient competence (both perceived and actual), the danger of being led by the assessment is that children are being asked to retain abstract terminology before the concept is concrete. Concerns about the quality of grammar teaching also present the potential for a spike in the use of prescriptive published schemes for teaching writing (Gardner, 2014; 2018). Ironically, in response to concerns about teacher competence, the vacuum left by the removal of the NLS may not led to greater autonomy. Instead, it may be that teaching post-NLS may have become more prescriptive with the use of commercially published schemes increasing despite being less rooted in research and evidence than the NLS was.

3.4.12 Teacher assessment frameworks for writing at the end of key stage 2 since 2012

The removal of the external writing test for Key Stage 2 in 2012 had promised to promote autonomy in the teaching of writing. In theory, teachers were less restricted by having to narrow the curriculum towards the revision of text features. Instead, teachers were typically left to gather portfolios of writing over time that would be assessed and moderated within school and Local Education Authority. The portfolios needed to cover a range of text types but could be linked to class topics and be meaningful. Crucially, reading, talk, planning, drafting and editing were all permitted in the composition of the writing product. However, this promise of greater trust and autonomy, indicated by the reliance on teacher assessment in writing, would soon be undermined by two significant interventions. First, the introduction of the SPAG Test (STA, 2012.) As described above, the test has squeezed the writing curriculum. The demand for the recognition of decontextualised linguistic devices had marginalised the focus on the application of competent syntax and sentence structure within written composition – especially when teachers have low self-perceived autonomy and competence. Second, continuous
changes to the assessment framework for writing have further restricted the autonomy of teachers by placing restrictive demands on the constituent features of children’s writing.

Between 2012 and 2016, many teachers and schools were still using assessment frameworks linked to the PNS, primarily because guidance hadn’t been forthcoming about any assessment that should replace these. The assessment framework, ‘Assessing Pupil Progress’ (APP; DfCS, 2009) was used widely. Using APP, the assessment of writing covered eight assessment foci (AFs) covering compositional elements such as “varying sentences for clarity, purpose and effect,” (AF5) and transcriptional elements such as, “use correct spelling” (AF8). For each of the foci, teachers would use the exemplar statements and the guidance to, “make a best-fit judgement,” (DfCS, 2009). However, in 2016 this best-fit approach was changed.

The introduction of the ‘Interim Assessment Guidelines’ (STA, 2016, p.3) introduced three standards (below, expected and exceeding) by which an assessment of writing should be based. The new framework couldn’t be said to demand more in the way of assessment foci. There were just nine short criteria for determining that a child is working at the ‘expected standard’. However, the specificity of the criteria (e.g. using a range of cohesive devices*, including adverbials, within and across sentences and paragraphs; using adverbs, preposition phrases and expanded noun phrases effectively to add detail, qualification and precision; using a wide range of clause structures, sometimes varying their position within the sentence) and the consistency of their inclusion marked a significant shift – one that placed enormous pressure on teachers and children and threatened perceptions of autonomy in the absence of significantly high self-perceptions of competence (STA, 2016, p.4). Crucially, the best-fit model was replaced with the expectation that, “teachers will need to have evidence that a pupil demonstrates attainment of all of the statements within that standard and all the statements in the preceding standard(s).” Any recognition that, “pupils will not always consistently demonstrate the skill required,” was limited to only three of the nine criteria; those that contained the words, ‘most’ or ‘some,’ when indicating the frequency within writing samples required. Otherwise, children were expected to demonstrate the nine features in all samples of writing. It would be hard to argue that one shouldn’t have high expectations of children’s writing and this thesis certainly won’t try. It is within the argument
presented in relation to individual voice, later in the thesis, that “using adverbs, preposition phrases and expanded noun phrases effectively to add detail, qualification and precision,” as the framework requires, constitutes competent writing. However, the Interim Framework (STA, 2016, p.3) stated that it, “(did) not include full coverage of the content of the national curriculum and (instead) focuses on key aspects for assessment.” And while it also stated that, “pupils achieving the different standards within this interim framework will be able to demonstrate a broader range of skills than those being assessed,” the argument of the present thesis is that rhetoric and policy like this marginalises this ‘broader range of skills’ and leads teachers and children to conceptualise competencies such as, “using a range of cohesive devices*, including adverbials, within and across sentences and paragraphs,” not as means for communicating an individual voice but instead as a means to achieve a required grade.

The introduction of the updated framework (STA, 2017) has been marked by a potentially significant shift in rhetoric that provides some hope that the weight of the pressure created by such assessment may be lifting from teachers and children when it comes to writing in English primary schools. The first section of the new framework begins by stating that, “The ‘Primary assessment in England’ public consultation, which closed in June 2017, heard strong support for the proposal to move to a more flexible approach to the assessment of English writing, and to do this quickly” (STA, 2017, p.1). The framework still retains nine statements that are used to judge whether children at the end of primary school have reached the required standard. However, while a best-fit approach has not returned, the framework does recommend teacher discretion and, “a more flexible approach,” when giving a summative judgement (STA, 2017, p.1). Further, the detail of the nine statements has changed with, “a greater emphasis on composition, while statements relating to the more ‘technical’ aspects of English writing (grammar, punctuation and spelling) are less prescriptive” (STA, 2017, p.1). While it would be naïve to suggest that such change to assessment frameworks and rhetoric will result in teachers feeling suddenly more autonomous and able to prioritise the writers in their classes, the section to follow does highlight that government rhetoric has a powerful impact on discourses of writing and learning to write. As such, one must take note of this subtle shift in language. However, as Chapter 8 will highlight, while writing continues to be assessed in the manner outlined above, there is a great
risk that children’s capabilities will not be fully captured. This, in turn, will risk limiting the life chances of young people growing up in a culture in which the level of writing is so often the key to holding influence and having one’s voice heard (e.g. Bearne, 2017; Clark & Ivanic, 2007).

3.5 Chapter conclusion

As stated at the start of the chapter, the self-perception of competence is the focus of the present thesis and not the perception of an observer. It is important to reiterate this as this chapter has discussed perspectives of competence that may influence both a self-perception and the perception of an observer. The opening literature review chapter outlined what it means to be a competent 10-year old writer. The chapter concluded by highlighting two significant variables that influence the potential for a child to develop the prerequisites required to be a writer with authorial voice. This chapter has explored the first of these variables – the learning environment - and specifically, the necessity for a teacher to feel competent in the teaching of writing. The chapter has concluded by illustrating the confounding impact of self-perceived teacher autonomy on whether confident teachers are enabled to develop writers. The argument made is that a teacher requires sufficient self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy to be able to prioritise the writer over the writing product. The chapter to follow will explore a second significant factor influencing the potential for a child to develop the prerequisites required to be a writer with authorial voice – motivation. The presentation of the role of motivation will be underpinned by a theory that recognises the dual influence of self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy. Thus, an argument will be made that if motivation is defined by these concepts, it is only in the presence of a teacher with sufficient self-perceived competence and autonomy – as described in this chapter – that young writers will have the potential to bring competence and autonomy (or motivation) to their writing.
Chapter 4: Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci and Ryan, 1985) and autonomy and competence in the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools

4.1 Chapter introduction: the structure of the chapter and the conceptual frameworks

This is the final literature review chapter of this stage of the thesis. As such, its purpose is not simply to present, explore and critique the place of motivation, specifically Self-Determination, within the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools. The chapter must also act as conduit between the concepts covered in the previous two chapters and the methodology to be outlined in the chapter to follow. As a result of reading the thesis to this point, the reader will have a sense that developing as a writer is complex and requires the motivation that comes with self-perceptions of competence and autonomy-support. The reader will also have a sense that developing perceptions of competence and autonomy in the context of the effective teaching of writers in English primary schools is similarly complex and also requires motivation on the part of the teacher. The chapter to follow will outline how teacher and child motivation will be measured and how these measures will be related to writing outcomes. Conceptualisations of motivation are plentiful and the measures of motivation similarly so. Therefore, justification is required for the choice of conceptual model for motivation adopted in the present thesis and the instruments used to measure motivation in relation to this model. This chapter presents the former and the next presents the latter.
As Figure 4.1 illustrates, there are currently no empirical studies involving Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985) in the specific context of the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools. The argument running through the chapter will be that the present study must place itself in the intersection of the Venn diagram because it is argued that SDT provides the most appropriate model for motivation in the context of the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools. This is because contemporary work in this context (examples shown above) highlights self-perceptions of autonomy and self-perceptions of competence as key elements for the effective teaching and learning of writing without providing a shared underpinning conceptual model. To synthesise findings from these studies with those from studies involving SDT will be the aim of the chapter in order to provide the justification for the methodology, to be outlined in Chapter 5, that isolates self-perceived autonomy, self-perceived competence and writing outcomes in English primary schools (as the studies on the right of the diagram have) but also measures these variables empirically (as the studies on the left of the diagram do).

One necessary clarification at this stage of the chapter is that self-determination relies on self-perceptions. Thus, while the motivational model of SDT relies on measures of self-perceived competence and autonomy, the contemporary research, cited in this and previous chapters, also makes
reference to the themes of autonomy and competence from a more objective viewpoint. The thesis is clear about this distinction between autonomy and self-perceived autonomy and, especially, between competence and self-perceived competence. The methodology in both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the present study seeks to measure self-perceived levels and this will be important to highlight in the discussion of the findings in relation to competence and autonomy.

The question that this chapter will attempt to answer is: what is the current theoretical and empirical basis for the assumption that the relationship between teacher self-determination and child self-determination is key? As illustrated above, the chapter will acknowledge that while the theoretical framework of SDT is consistent with the issues outlined in Chapters 2 and 3, there are issues of validity in transferring the existing empirical evidence for the impact of SDT into the specific context of the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools, not least the difference between self-perceived measures and externally measured constructs such as teacher autonomy and teacher competence. Likewise, the chapter will acknowledge that while contemporary studies involving the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools that focus on the relationship between the attitudes of teachers and the children do exist, the empirical support for the conclusions drawn is limited. Thus, the chapter will conclude by attempting to convince the reader of the unique potential of the present study to marry the empirical findings from the quantitative world of SDT and the detail in relation to the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools from the qualitative world in order to address the overarching hypothesis that: High self-perceptions of competence and autonomy are prerequisites of the capability of prioritising the individual development of the writer.
To do this, the chapter will begin by presenting and exploring the theoretical framework of Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985). This exploration will be enlightened by a synthesis of SDT and research in the specific context of writing in English primary schools. The exploration will conclude that in the context of the present study, SDT supports the notions that:

1. Intrinsic motivation is distinct from extrinsic motivation and describes the optimum condition in which authentic learning takes place and in which voice can emerge.
2. Although learning in a school classroom will involve adhering to external controls, the internalisation of extrinsic values is still possible if the need for self-determination (support of competence and autonomy) is met.
3. Internalisation is the result of a successful negotiation between an individual and their environment. In the context of a primary classroom, careful negotiation of control over writing tasks can facilitate the development of individual voice.

The chapter will move onto presenting a critical analysis of studies that are relevant to the research questions. A synthesis of findings from the field of SDT and findings from the field of qualitative work in English primary schools will be analysed first in relation to Research Question 1a: What is the relationship between the self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and self-determination of the learner in the learning of writing? and then in relation to Research Question 1b: What is the relationship between the self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and the written outcomes of the learner?

The chapter will conclude by returning to the unique place of the present study in being able to synthesise the approaches outlined in order to deepen the understanding of how teacher and child self-determination interacts, how this interaction may allow the writer to be prioritised over the writing outcome and how this in turn may impact the quality of children’s written outcomes.
4.2 Self-Determination Theory

“The need for autonomy (or self-determination) encompasses people’s strivings to be agentic… and to have a voice.”

(Deci & Ryan, 1991, p.243)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985) argues that intrinsic motivation is based on supporting the innate need to feel competence and autonomy. The principle argument of this thesis is that when a teacher of writing has their need to feel competent and autonomous supported - they have a voice, as the quote above suggests - they will provide the contexts for learning in which children’s need to feel autonomous and competent are also met. Put simply, if teachers have a voice, they prioritise the writer and the children will have a voice. Consequently, voice will be expressed through the writing. To provide an underpinning for this argument, this chapter will argue that SDT is most appropriate for addressing the key questions presented by this thesis for two main reasons: first, SDT makes a distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and argues that rather than being a unitary measure, the type of motivation rather than an amount is key (e.g. Ryan & Deci, 2000). Second, SDT recognises that learning in an educational setting is often controlled, to a varying extent, extrinsically. The theory provides a conceptual continuum between extrinsic motivation that is perceived as controlled and extrinsic motivation that is perceived as self-determined (e.g. Deci & Ryan, 1985; Deci & Ryan, 1991).

4.2.1 SDT: Intrinsic motivation as distinct from extrinsic motivation

This thesis proposes that the semantics of the notion of a ‘lack of motivation’ in the teaching and learning of writing (e.g. Barrs & Pigeon 2002; Cremin & Myhill 2012) is somewhat misleading. Historically, a unitary measure of motivation has been sought that can quantify the degree of motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). An individual may be said to have ‘insufficient or sufficient motivation’ or ‘high or low motivation.’ However, teachers’ plans and children’s writing books across the country would provide evidence that teachers and children in English primary schools are sufficiently motivated, or driven, to participate in writing lessons on a near daily basis. Therefore, crucially, the thesis will argue, in line with the concept of SDT, that it is not the amount of motivation but rather the nature of the motivation that is
critical in terms of the impact on writers and writing. It will be argued that intrinsic motivation differs from extrinsic motivation and that extrinsic motivation varies depending upon the degree to which the values of a learning activity are internalised by the learner. Ryan and Weinstein (2009, p.225) explain that self-determination theory, in an educational setting, is, “primarily concerned with promoting students’ interest in learning” and developing intrinsic motivation. However, they explain that the current high-stakes assessment regimes in the US and in England promote the tendency to employ extrinsic motivation – through regimented feedback and regular test scores – that results in narrowing of the curriculum, shallow learning and amotivation on the part of both children and teachers.

This thesis defines intrinsic motivation according to its conceptualisation within SDT. However, it recognises that the term is contested. Deci and Ryan (1985) argue that the existence of intrinsic motivation is neither illustrative of behaviours being entirely drive based (Drive Theories; e.g. Harlow & Pratt, 1953) nor an indication that motivation arises from when one controls their environment (e.g. White, 1963). Instead, intrinsic motivation occurs when an individual feels self-determined – that is they perceive they have choices within their environment but combined with necessary support of their feelings of competence. This will mean that an individual may wish to operate independently but crucially, at times this may mean recognising the need to relinquish control, to a greater or lesser extent, to a more competent other. This distinction between autonomy and free choice has been shown to be important in the development of the writer (e.g. Albin, Benton & Khramtsova 1996; Hidi,1990; Hidi & Anderson, 1992). It is necessary to distinguish self-determination or autonomy from free choice – they are not synonymous. While self-determination (specifically, perceived autonomy) has been highlighted as key in establishing the optimum classroom context for developing motivation (e.g. Bruning & Horn, 2000; Cremin & Myhill, 2012), free choice, particularly amongst children of primary age, has been shown to have a detrimental effect on motivation and attainment in the absence of the necessary subject and content knowledge (e.g. Albin, Benton & Khramtsova 1996; Hidi & McLaren, 1990; Hidi & Anderson, 1992; Tadic, 2019).
4.2.2. Validation of the distinction between autonomy and free-choice

“Choice is good but relevance is excellent.”

(Assor, Kaplan and Roth, 2002, p.261)

A number of studies have provided support for the notion that autonomy and free choice are not synonymous and that choice is only desirable when the need for competence support is satisfied. Hidi and McLaren (1990) hypothesised that interest would correlate with a greater volume and quality of writing outcome. They gave 60 Grade Six children in a suburban US school a writing task. Children were either assigned to a high or low interest group. The results did not support the hypothesis and in fact, children in the low interest group performed better. Hidi (1990) and Hidi and McLaren (1991) concluded that it was the teacher scaffold or previous learning, common to both groups, that was most crucial. They reasoned that while high interest had yielded better quality ideas, at the point of written composition, attentional factors had confounded the results. This appears to suggest that sufficient content knowledge, when allied with teacher scaffold is capable of superseding interest in importance when it comes to writing performance.

Albin, Benton and Khramstsova (1996) also discovered that writing quality correlated more strongly with supporting competence (content knowledge) than it did with supporting choice (interest). When US undergraduate Psychology students were asked to write about soccer and baseball, interest in the latter correlated with quality but interest in the former did not. For both soccer and baseball, content knowledge did correlate with writing quality. The conclusion drawn was that giving the choice to write about a topic of interest is not the key to writing maturity. Instead, sufficient subject content knowledge is the key prerequisite. It is necessary to exercise caution in generalising from the conclusions of this study. The participants were undergraduate students with a higher base of competence than primary school children. Further, as acknowledged by the authors, while the students were described as volunteers, participation in contemporary research is a requirement for credits on a Psychology degree. However, in line with the concept of SDT, in both the aforementioned studies, the crucial aspect in predicting success with writing in this study was not free choice, but the satisfaction of the need to self-perceive both competence and autonomy – i.e. choice was only desirable when the need for competence support was satisfied.
While the notion that free choice is secondary to necessary content knowledge is supported by the work of Assor, Kaplan and Roth (2002), the authors found that being provided with choice was less important to children than being given work that related to their intrinsic goals and interests. ‘Fostering relevance’ was more crucial than ‘providing choice’, though they were both found to be important in measuring autonomy enhancement. Assor, Kaplan and Roth (2002) surveyed 862 Israeli school children to determine whether children can differentiate between teacher behaviours that are autonomy-supportive and those that are autonomy suppressive. Crucially, the authors conclude that at times, children may view teachers as being better placed to match the work set to their intrinsic goals and interests – to be able to foster relevance. In relation to writing in English primary schools, this study is limited in that it was based solely on questionnaire data, without any follow up writing or academic measures. As a result, the study cannot lend support regarding the impact of self-determination, as oppose to free choice – on the writing outcome of children in English primary schools. However, the findings are aligned with those from studies involving children in English primary schools, that show that authenticity and relevance in writing tasks equate to positive outcomes in terms of motivation and writing development (e.g. Cremin & Myhill, 2012). The present study will aim to build on this body of research to explore and measure the impact of teacher and child self-determination on writing outcomes, specifically the way in which the composition displays individual writer voice.

4.2.3 Intrinsic Motivation, social constructivism and The Zone of Proximal Development

"Writing should be meaningful for children, that an intrinsic need should be aroused in them and that writing should be incorporated into a task that is necessary and relevant for life. Only then can we be certain that it will develop not as a matter of hand and finger habits but as a really new and complex form of speech (voice)."

(Vygotsky, 1978, p.105)

Within an educational context, this choice about whether to follow an interest and work independently or to relinquish or share control with a more competent other – and simultaneously, the capability of a teacher to foster relevance where interest may have been lower - draws parallels with the social constructivist approach of Vygotsky (1978.) Vygotsky (1978) argues that what a child is able to accomplish in collaboration with others is more of an indication of their developmental capabilities than assessment of what they produce independently. Further, intrinsic motivation is central to the concept of
the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD; Vygotsky, 1978) and mirrors what Deci and Ryan (1985) call ‘optimal challenge’. When a child is working within their ZPD they are facing the ‘optimal challenge’ – that is the learning is neither too easy nor too difficult to satisfy their need to feel competent and autonomous. The thesis will return to the work of Vygotsky (1962; 1978) in Chapter 8 when the concept of individual writer voice is introduced. However, the quote above illustrates the centrality of the concept of intrinsic motivation to those of writing development and individual voice and the relationship between all three.

This thesis argues that when a teacher has sufficiently high levels of self-perceived autonomy and self-perceived competence, they are able to provide a context, such as that described above, for the learners in their class. As a result, these children will develop this ‘new and complex form of speech.’ The thesis will argue that within the context of teaching 9 and 10-year olds in English primary schools, the key for a teacher is to be able to foster relevance by negotiating the space between the intrinsic wishes of the children and the developmental requirements, as set out by the National Curriculum (DfE, 2013). Organismic Integration Theory, (OIT; Deci and Ryan, 1985), a sub-theory of SDT, provides a conceptual model in which to consider and measure how successfully teachers are able to negotiate this space.

4.2.4 SDT: Self-determination as the result of the internalisation of extrinsic values

“Children are intrinsically motivated to learn.”

(Deci and Ryan, 1985, p.11)

This thesis argues that while children are intrinsically motivated to learn, matching the received curriculum to what it is that they are motivated to learn is not so straightforward (e.g. Ryan & Weinstein, 2009). Research (highlighted in Chapter 2) in the context of writing supports this, as it is now well documented that while children enter primary school as keen writers, a worryingly high proportion of children leave for secondary education reluctant to write (e.g. Barrs & Pigeon 2002; Boscolo 2009; Cremin & Myhill 2012). This is particularly evident amongst 9 to 11-year olds, whom, it is reported, are largely preoccupied by satisfying extrinsic criterion, often in relation to transcription (Grainger, Goouch &
While it has been shown that teachers have the potential to catalyse this form of motivation, (Ryan & Deci, 2000) the demands and expectations of the English primary school classroom mean that there is a risk that beyond the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS; Nursery and Reception) and throughout the primary age range as extrinsic pressures increase, intrinsic motivation may diminish (e.g. Ryan & Weinstein). This is borne out by interview responses from children in a study by Grainger, Goouch & Lambirth, (2003). The authors surveyed 390 English primary school children and the questionnaire began with the question, “When your teacher says ‘Now we are going to do some writing’, what goes through your head?” They found that enthusiasm towards writing diminished as children moved from EYFS to Year 4. Self-perceptions of competence and autonomy also suffered a decline during this period. Indeed, Grainger, Goouch & Lambirth, (2003, p.10) found that, “In Years 5/6, 74 per cent of the pupils, quite unprompted, raised the issue of autonomy in some form.” Significantly however, the responses of children in Year 5 and Year 6 also became more refined and the authors report that children in these age groups were able to differentiate between those writing tasks that did motivate them and the contexts in which they were reluctant to write. This indicates that the children’s degree of self-determination varies and that it is insufficient to conclude that extrinsic motivation always militates against the satisfaction of the need for autonomy. The key finding is that while 10-year old writers may typically feel that they lack autonomy; may feel that the locus of control is external and may feel a reluctance to write, this is not inevitable. Despite the weight of the assessment regime (as outlined in Chapter 3) teachers with the necessary self-perceptions of competence and autonomy retain the potential to allow children to identify with the learning. The extent to which they inspire children to do so can be conceptualised using Organismic Integration Theory (OIT; Deci & Ryan, 1985).

4.2.5 Organismic Integration Theory, (OIT; Deci & Ryan, 1985)

Extrinsic motivation describes when an individual acts with the purpose of satisfying an external agent (Vallerand and Bissonnette, 1992). Organismic Integration Theory, (OIT; Deci and Ryan, 1985), a sub-theory of SDT, challenges the ‘false’ dichotomy between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and conceptualises extrinsic motivation as spanning a spectrum. OIT argues that extrinsic motivation can vary greatly and can range from passive external motivation, in which an individual complies for

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reward, with little perceived choice (perhaps the 74% of writers cited in the study of Grainger, Goouch & Lambirth, 2003, above), to active extrinsic motivation, in which the child can internalise the learning and integrate it within their own existing values (e.g. Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 2001). The process by which an individual adopts the attitudes or beliefs of an extrinsic agent in order, “to be more competently self-determining in the social world, even though the goals of the specific behaviours are extrinsic,” is referred to as *internalisation*. (Deci & Ryan, 1985 p.131) The taxonomy of human motivation (see figure 4.2; Deci & Ryan, 2000) more formally separates extrinsic motivation, according to the degree of internalisation, into four sub-categories: *External regulation* – working for reward or to avoid punishment; *Introjection* – working to satisfy a perceived external expectation and thus avoid feelings of guilt; *Identification* – when an individual recognises the value of the learning in reaching a personal goal; *Integration* – when the value of the learning becomes synonymous with an individual’s own values.

Figure 4.2

*A taxonomy of human motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p.61)*
4.2.6 Limitations of the taxonomy of human motivation

The concept of internalisation implies that while a child writing in a classroom, or a teacher teaching writing, may be satisfying an external agent - this needn't compromise their own feelings of self-determination (e.g. Deci & Ryan, 2000; Stipek, 1988; Vallerand & Blais, 1989). This thesis will argue for the validity of the notion that extrinsic motivation isn't a unitary measure and that internalisation is variable. However, while the thesis supports the validity of the notion that extrinsic motivation isn't a unitary measure, it will argue that the theoretical categories presented by OIT and the taxonomy of human motivation are unhelpful in measuring teachers’ and children’s motivation in writing in English primary schools. Support for this position comes from a recent study involving primary age children in Canada. Guay, Ratelle, Roy & Litalien (2010) surveyed 425 children aged from 6-10 and found that scores for extrinsic identified motivation (higher for self-determination) correlated with scores for intrinsic motivation in reading, writing and maths. However, albeit less strongly, the scores for controlled external regulation (low for self-determination) also correlated with scores for intrinsic motivation. Indeed, in writing, the difference between scores for extrinsic identified motivation and controlled external regulation were not statistically significant. Further, Guay et al. (2010) did not include integrated extrinsic motivation as they argued that the sense of self, necessary to integrate the values of another, doesn’t develop until adolescence. The thesis makes a strong argument that while SDT provides the theoretical foundation from which to explain the impact of competence and autonomy on the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools, the ecological validity of the internalisation process is more important than the construct validity of the taxonomy of human motivation.
4.2.7 SDT: Internalisation and the expression of authentic voice

“When an action is endorsed by its ‘author,’ the experience is that of integrity and cohesion – the experience of being true to one’s self. Authenticity is thus self-determination.”

(Deci & Ryan, 1991, p.277)

Vygotsky (1978) proposes that learning is socially constructed; the result of conversations, collaborations, compromise and cognitive reorganisation. Bakhtin (1981) argues that the meaning of language is constructed in a dialogue between speaker and listener, between reader and writer. Deci and Ryan (1991) present motivation as being the result of an organismic ‘dialectical struggle’ in which an individual interacts and negotiates with their environment in an attempt to integrate values within their own, “capacities and interests.” (Deci & Ryan, 1991, p.239). The thesis will argue that, in reference to the quote above, that ‘authenticity’ and ‘voice’ may be treated as synonymous; that the result of an interaction with an environment which is autonomy-supportive and competence supportive is self-determination and the internalising of extrinsic values leading to the capability to express one’s individual voice. Deci and Ryan (1991) point out that motivation does not occur in a vacuum and that promoting learning depends on careful negotiation of the struggle between the wishes of the teacher and the learner. Contemporary studies within English primary schools show that when teachers don’t concede enough control, writing lacks creativity and individuality; becomes formulaic and homogenous (e.g. Fisher, 2006; Ings, 2010). This supports the notion that when the teacher retains too much control, internalisation doesn’t occur and the voice does not, “emanate from the author.” (Deci and Ryan, 1991, p.257).

4.2.8 What influences the degree of internalisation?

So far in the chapter it has been highlighted that teachers are capable of allowing a writer freedom, without free choice; of supporting competence without over-controlling; of fostering relevance by providing authenticity. However, what are the pedagogical means by which a teacher of 10-year old writers does this? What can a teacher do to influence the degree to which an extrinsically determined writing task can be internalised? One way of providing autonomy and fostering relevance is to provide autonomy over the audience of the writing.
As it was highlighted in Chapter 2, to develop as a writer, an individual necessarily needs to understand that he or she is communicating with a passive, removed and at times unknown audience (Kress, 1994). The opportunity for a writer in primary school to consider and control, to some extent, his or her audience becomes key both developmentally and motivationally (e.g. Brophy, 1999; Bruning & Horn, 2000; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Grainger et al, 2005; Magnifico, 2010). Autonomy over audience is important as, within a context in which the teacher is the sole audience, authenticity declines and children feel passive, as they perceive writing simply as a product produced for the teacher (Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Magnifico, 2010). In contrast, it is argued that allowing children the opportunity to exercise autonomy over the audience, or even simply providing an audience that the children can consider, can be highly motivating and allows children to develop an authentic conceptualisation of the purpose of writing (e.g. Bruning & Horn, 2000; Fisher, 2012; Magnifico, 2010).

The Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED) (2002) agree that children in primary schools underperform when they have, “little notion of themselves as writers,” because audience, “has been determined externally rather than internally.” (OfSTED, 2002, p.146). Given this stance, it is ironic perhaps, that increasing accountability (reinforced by OFSTED) has been blamed for the narrowing of the writing curriculum in English Primary Schools and reducing authenticity (e.g Gardner, 2012; Grainger, 2005; Ivanic, 2004).

The evidence cited appears to suggest that allowing children the opportunity to exercise autonomy over the audience or providing an audience that the children have the opportunity to actively consider, is both motivating and developmentally necessary. A limitation of the work cited above is the lack of an empirical base. As such, while studies that focus on the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools lend theoretical support to the concept of internalisation, the aim of the present study will be to look at what impact this has on the compositional outcomes for 10-year old writers.
4.2.9 Summary of the notions, in relation to SDT, supported by the present study

To summarise in relation to SDT, this thesis supports the notions that:

1. Intrinsic motivation is distinct from extrinsic motivation and describes the optimum condition in which authentic learning takes place and in which voice can emerge.

2. Although learning in a school classroom will involve adhering to external controls, the internalisation of extrinsic values is still possible if the need for self-determination (support of competence and autonomy) is met.

3. Internalisation is the result of a successful negotiation between an individual and their environment. In the context of a primary classroom, careful negotiation of control over writing tasks can facilitate the development of individual voice.

The theoretical support for the use of SDT has been presented. However, it will be highlighted that a significant limitation has been the absence of empirical evidence about the impact on writing outcomes. As such, robust support for the arguments above and of the rationale for using SDT to underpin the thesis requires a critical analysis of empirical evidence yielded from research into SDT in a learning environment. This will be presented through the lens of the research questions of the present study. As the studies cited will indicate, the body of research adopting SDT has rarely explored the attitudes behind the survey responses; has very rarely focused specifically on writing and has rarely originated from England. As a result, to adopt SDT to theoretically underpin this thesis takes some defending. There are numerous alternative models of motivation and the topic of motivation in educational settings is enormous and multi-faceted (Guthrie et al. 2006). By adopting Self-Determination Theory as a theoretical framework with which to explore motivation in the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools, it is clearly necessary to give less attention to alternative theories of motivation. However, in doing so it is important to recognise that:

1. While self-perceived autonomy as a mediator of extrinsic motivation is central to SDT, the concept of autonomy itself is not exclusive to SDT.

Within Attribution Theory (e.g. Weiner, 1985), it is presented that if children view outcomes as internally driven, stable and controllable, they will feel strong control beliefs (Schunk and Zimmerman, 2006). In Goal Orientation Theory (e.g. Pintrich, 2000; Dweck, 1999) goal orientation is said to result in greater feelings of control while in Social Cognitive Theory (e.g. Bandura 1986) self-efficacy is presented as mediating feelings autonomy. In both these
theories, perceptions of autonomy are presented as the outcome rather than the mediator though it could be argued that this is cyclical (Schunk and Zimmerman, 2006).

2. An exploration into motivation in the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools could justifiably involve exploring models other than SDT (e.g. Goal Orientation, Attributions or Self-efficacy).

Motivational concepts such as Goal Orientation have been used more widely than SDT in studies involving reading and writing (e.g. Guthrie et al. 2006) and are more contemporary in English primary school discourse than SDT (e.g. Dweck, 1999).

However, as stated, the core validation for using SDT to underpin the present thesis comes from the growing body of contemporary research and literature - not from the specific field of motivation, but instead from educational research related to the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools - that highlights self-perceptions of both autonomy and competence as key factors for success or failure (e.g. Barrs & Pigeon, 2002; Boscola 2009; Cremin & Myhill, 2012). As such, the critical analysis to follow will be framed by the research questions and will involve a synthesis of such studies of those from the field of motivation, specifically Self-Determination Theory.

4.3 The impact of self-determination on teaching and learning

SDT was introduced in 1985 and was built upon a synthesis of previous research on the topic of motivation, spanning decades and many theoretical paradigms (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The decades since SDT was introduced have yielded a large and growing body of evidence to support the theoretical framework (e.g. Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). Studies have emerged from across many countries, addressing many topics (e.g. business, relationships, sport, learning) and dealing with individuals of all ages. Even research based purely in the classroom has spanned the globe, the curriculum and the age range from pre-school to university. As such, the relative brevity in number, of the studies outlined below, must be acknowledged. However, the research cited has been deliberately chosen so that the critical analysis will be framed by the findings that relate to the research questions of this thesis.
4.3.1 SDT: analysis of the findings in relation to Research Question 1: What is the relationship between self-determination of the teacher and self-determination of the learner in the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools?

Boscolo (2009, p. 301) explains that children’s motivation cannot be viewed in isolation as a teacher’s attitudes are, “more or less implicitly transmitted to students through teaching.” However, while theoretical support for this notion exists in the field of motivation (e.g. Deci & Ryan, 1985) and in other fields including social constructivism (e.g. Vygotsky, 1978) child development (e.g. McCormick & Murphy, 2008) and psychodynamic theory (e.g. Salzberger-Wittenberg, Williams & Osborne, 1999), “empirical evidence is lacking on how teachers’ practices on one hand and student writing experiences on the other, interact to produce motivation or demotivation to write.” (Boscolo, 2009, p. 310).

The thesis recognises that the empirical evidence is scarce in relation to writing, and scarcer still in relation to writing in English primary schools – a significant motivator for undertaking this line of enquiry. However, scarce and non-existent are very different. This section first considers research studies that have looked at the relationship between the self-determination of the teacher and that of the learner albeit not in the specific domain of writing or in this country. The section then concludes by considering research not in the field of SDT, but carried out over the last decade in English primary schools, that does look at the relationship between the attitudes of teachers of writing and the motivation of the writers in their classrooms. A synthesis of the findings of these studies aims to provide a strong rationale for the place of the present study in answering the research question above.

4.3.1.1 SDT research: The relationship between teacher self-determination and learner self-determination

Roth et al (2007) attempted to establish a link between teacher self-determination and learner self-determination, though not in the specific domain of writing. In their study, 1225 children and 132 teachers in Israeli elementary schools were given SDT questionnaires over the course of one school year. The study established a correlation between teacher and child autonomous motivation (their self-perceptions of autonomy). This does support the hypothesis that self-determined teachers are more likely to have self-determined learners in their class, compared with those who feel less autonomous.
However, the design was exclusively quantitative and findings were inferred from survey responses alone. There was also no exploration of measurable, objective outcomes relating to academic performance. Further, the correlation between teachers’ autonomous motivation for teaching and students’ autonomous motivation for learning (.22) was matched by the correlation between teachers’ autonomous motivation for teaching and students’ perceptions of autonomy-supportive teaching. (.22) Thus, while a correlation is established, a causal link is difficult to argue. It could be that children are self-determined because the teacher is. Equally, it may be that the autonomy-support offered is most crucial, independent of the self-determination of the teacher. The authors of the study controlled for this variable and still discovered statistical significance. However, the stronger correlation between students’ autonomous motivation for learning and students’ perceptions of autonomy-supportive teaching (.35) highlights that questions remain about the most significant variables in determining children’s perceptions of autonomy.

Despite the limitations described, this thesis shares the hypothesis of Roth et al (2007) that teacher self-determination relates to children’s self-determination. However, it will be a later aim of the present study to explore how this happens (through teacher interviews) and to explore the impact on learning (through analyses of writing samples.)

4.3.1.2 SDT research: The relationship between teachers’ autonomy and competence and teachers’ autonomy and competence support

“Just as children need autonomy-oriented classrooms to be intrinsically motivated and to perceive themselves as competent, teachers need an autonomy oriented context within which to benefit.” (Such circumstances for the teacher,) “Should, in turn, filter down to the students.”

(Deci, Nezlek and Sheinman 1981, p.649).

The word ‘should’ (rather than ‘does’), in the quote above, reflects the lack of empirical evidence to support the common sense notion that a motivated teacher will yield motivated learners. Korthagen and Evelein (2016) attempted to address this when they reported correlations between teachers’ need fulfillment (self-perceptions of autonomy and competence) and positive teaching behaviours. 36 Dutch student teachers completed self-reports for need fulfillment and teacher behaviour
over a 14-week period. Children’s scores for teacher behaviour were also collected. The findings support the hypothesis that self-determination filters down from teachers to learners.

However there are significant limitations with the study in relation to the research questions in this study. First, while 92 child reports were completed, there is no mention of the total number of children surveyed about teacher behaviours. Second, scores for teacher autonomy did not correlate with children’s scores for positive teaching behaviour. Third, as the authors highlight, student teachers may have adapted their practice as a result of completing the survey, rather than because of their perceptions of autonomy and competence. Finally, the study relies entirely on quantitative, self-perception scores. There is no follow up to explore what it means for teachers and children to feel autonomous and competent or what the teaching behaviours actually look like. The impact on learning outputs is also absent.

The present study will look at children’s perceptions of autonomy and competence, not simply their perceptions of the teachers’ teaching behaviours. Further, the present study will look at what any relationship between the self-determination of the teacher and the learner means for the writing that takes place in the classroom.

4.3.1.3 SDT research: The relationship between pressures placed on teachers’ autonomy and teachers’ attitudes towards autonomy and competence support

Pelletier, Seguin-Levesque and Legault (2002) looked at how ‘pressures from above’ such as the need to conform to the schools’ or colleagues’ methods of teaching impacted perceptions of autonomy and competence and, in turn, how these teaching orientations towards autonomy and competence support. 254 Canadian teachers across grades 1-12 were surveyed and significant negative correlations were found between perceptions of constraints at work and teacher self-determination. Significant positive correlations were found between teacher self-determination and teachers’ self-perceived autonomy-support. The study, as well as a similar one involving English secondary PE teachers, (Taylor, Ntoumanis & Standage, 2008) provides support for the notion that the these pressures (as explored in depth in the previous chapter) act as the antecedents of levels of teacher self-determination in the domain of writing in English primary school.
However, the study is limited by the reliance on self-perceived quantitative scores for all the concepts explored and the absence of child measures. It is also interesting to note that the mean number of years service of the teachers surveyed was 18 years, which appears to be unusually high. The authors suggest that, “important steps could be added to demonstrate the validity of our model, namely, whether it can predict both teachers’ actual behaviours toward students and students’ motivation.” (Pelletier, Seguin-Levesque and Legault, 2002, p.194).

The present study aims to address these gaps by surveying children, by following up teacher surveys with interviews and by exploring children’s written work.

4.3.2. Qualitative studies directly involving writing in English primary schools: analysis of the findings in relation to Research Question1: What is the relationship between self-determination of the teacher and self-determination of the learner in the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools?

4.3.2.1 The relationship between teachers as writers and children as writers in English primary schools

As highlighted previously, research specifically underpinned by SDT has not, to date, focused on the specific context of the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools. Very few studies of any kind have looked at the relationship between teacher and child in this area. However, a significant and growing body of research, spanning more than a decade, has begun to explore the relationship between teachers’ conceptions of themselves as ‘writers’, rather than simply teachers of writing, and children’s resulting attitudes to writing and their self-image as writers (e.g. Cremin, 2006; Cremin & Baker, 2010; Cremin & Baker, 2014; Cremin & Oliver, 2017; Grainger, Gouch & Lambirth, 2002; Grainger, Gouch & Lambirth, 2003; Grainger, 2005). The catalyst for such research is a hypothesis shared with the present thesis that attitudes will filter from the teacher down to the 10-year old writer and that by better understanding the attitudes of the teacher, one can better serve young writers.

4.3.2.2 The self-determination of children and teachers as writers in English primary schools

In a study cited previously in relation to children’s diminishing perceptions of autonomy as they develop as writers in English primary schools, Grainger, Gouch and Lambirth (2003) established
support for the argument that children in English primary schools too often see themselves as simply, “playing the game called writing.” (Grainger, Gouche and Lambirth, 2003, p.10) rather than as authors with a voice. Using a survey of 390 children across the primary age range (5-11), follow up interviews with 10% of those surveyed and 110 writing samples, the authors concluded that while motivation appeared to vary widely between year groups and between individuals within year groups, the sense of being a writer was somewhat absent. They cite the pressures of the high-stakes assessment regime and the resulting squeeze on the curriculum and the narrow focus on transcriptional skills (as outlined in the previous chapter) as reasons for children’s loss of voice.

While the authors concluded that as teachers became more conscious of these attitudes, they were more inclined to develop creative approaches and give space for autonomy, it is evident that these teachers themselves would have been both influenced by the discourse in relation to the teaching and learning of writing and influencers of the children’s attitudes. The study was exploratory by design and served to highlight first, the issue of children’s diminishing sense of themselves as writers and second, the notion that children’s attitudes do not occur in isolation. It is also notable that the theme of child autonomy is drawn from the responses of the teachers, rather than being a score of self-perceived autonomy.

Grainger (2005) instigated a two-year project entitled, ‘Teachers as Writers: Learning Together’ in order to explore the impact of developing teachers’ identities as writers on their pedagogical practices and attitudes to writers within their classes. The study involved working with teachers writing at their own level to foster a greater understanding of the challenges encountered by the children in classrooms. In setting the context, Grainger (2005) summarises the negative impact of the increased pressure of high-stakes assessment on the teaching of writing. It is pointed out that teachers have increasingly become formulaic builders of children’s writing skills rather than architects of children’s writing development. Using questionnaires, interviews and focus groups, the study raised the issue that many teachers do not themselves write, at least not for the same purposes that we ask children to, and it is argued that this is akin to being taught a musical instrument by someone who doesn’t play. Teachers in the study were given regular opportunities for free choice as well as structured tasks.
The responses of the teachers displayed a fear of writing in public and a reluctance to write spontaneously in front of the class. The issue of self-perceived autonomy and choice was consistently raised throughout the project. The author reflects that this was replicated in the responses of 7-11 year olds in the aforementioned ‘We’re Writers’ project (Grainger et al 2003). This lends support to the notion that teacher self-determination is reflected by the self-determination of the children in the context of writing. The outcomes discussed by Grainger (2005) include teachers’ greater willingness to provide autonomy to children, to write alongside the children and to pay greater attention to composition rather than allow a dominance of transcriptional skills. Again, the themes of competence and autonomy were drawn from the responses of the teachers and children, rather than being a score of self-perceived autonomy. The obvious limitation of the study is that there is no evidence that these attitudinal changes impacted pedagogy, children’s attitudes or children’s outcomes.

Follow up work in the area (e.g. Cremin & Baker, 2010; Cremin & Oliver 2017) has continued to support the theoretical notion for a relationship between the self-determination of teachers of writing and the self-determination of the young writers in their classes. However, as Cremin and Oliver (2017, p.269) concede, “the evidence base in relation to teachers as writers is not strong, particularly with regard to the impact of teachers’ writing on student outcomes.”

The present study will aim to build on the work cited above by attempting to establish a relationship between teacher self-determination and children’s outcomes. It recognises the strength of the work conducted in this area, in presenting the strong relationship, shared attitudes and shared pressures felt by teachers and children in this domain. Such work lends theoretical support to the hypotheses of the present study and the aim in the present study will be to underpin this support with empirical findings related to children’s writing.

4.3.3 SDT: analysis of the findings in relation to Research Question2: What is the relationship between self-determination of the teacher and the written outcomes of the learner in the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools?

There is no existing empirical evidence that specifically explores the relationship between the self-determination of a teacher and the written outcomes of the children in his or her class. Indeed, as has been highlighted, there has been a reliance of self-report scores, rather than an exploration of
academic outcomes, to determine competence in any domain. For the purposes of providing a justification for making the hypothesis that teacher self-determination will affect children’s written outcomes, this chapter will continue by presenting research that indicates that academic performance is enhanced when a teacher is autonomy-supportive. In the research cited above, self-determination is presented as a prerequisite for autonomy-supportive pedagogy. Thus, autonomy-support may be viewed as a proxy measure of the impact of teacher self-determination on academic outcomes.

4.3.3.1 Greater autonomy-support correlates with higher levels of perceived competence and positive academic learning attitudes

Deci et al. (1981) surveyed 889 American upper elementary age children and their teachers in the USA and found that children’s perceptions of autonomy-support (that is the autonomy that they received from their teacher) correlated with their perceived competence and motivation. Teachers completed vignette-based surveys to determine orientations towards autonomy-support or control and children completed likert scale surveys. Significant correlations between teacher and child were reported for intrinsic orientation (prefers challenge; curiosity; mastery attempts) and for perceived competence (general self-worth; cognitive). It should be noted that the items related to general learning and were not domain specific and that there were subscales that did not correlate. The study also supported the notion of a relationship between self-determination and positive academic learning attitudes (e.g. curiosity, perseverance, self-confidence). Grolnick et al. (1991) supported this notion by establishing a correlation between parental autonomy-support and perceived competence (measured by children and their teachers) in a US based study, involving 456 primary equivalent age children, their teachers and their parents. Standage and Gillison (2007) showed a similar outcome when they surveyed 300 UK secondary pupils in relation to PE and found that autonomy correlated with self-esteem, effort and persistence.

However, in all these studies, no measures of actual academic performance were taken and only that of Standage and Gillison (2007) was specific to one domain (PE and not writing.) Further, teachers’ responses to the surveys were not followed up with interviews. The present study takes
survey data and further explores academic outcomes by analysing writing samples and explores teacher behaviours and attitudes through interviews.

**4.3.3.2 Greater autonomy-support correlates with enhanced learning.**

Grolnick, Ryan & Sherman (1987) did collect learning outcome data when they used a combination of questionnaires and academic tests to conclude that children in autonomy-supportive classrooms perform better on rote-learning tasks, show greater interest and develop deeper conceptual learning, when compared with children in controlling classroom environments. Such a finding appears to offer robust support for the hypothesis that teacher self-determination will impact children’s performance in writing. However, this is a rare example of experimentally manipulating autonomy and measuring attainment related outcomes.

Further, the participants, 91 upper elementary age children in New York, were taken out of their normal classroom environment and were placed in either a controlled or autonomy-supportive experimental condition. As such, ecological validity could be questioned as the tasks, and indeed the conditions, would have differed from those familiar to the participants. Other outcomes related to greater autonomy-support include: greater engagement (e.g. Skinner et al., 1990), and higher interest and enjoyment (Black & Deci, 2000). These two studies both involved post-compulsory aged students.
4.4 Chapter conclusion

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 have presented the rationale for a focus on self-determination in the specific context of the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools. Current and on-going concerns in this context focus on the teaching of writing, the motivation of young writers and on the quality and nature of the written compositions they produce. The following chapter will outline how the present study aimed to explore the interaction of these three variables.

4.4.1 Stage 1 Research Questions

The Stage 1 Research Questions were posed with the intention of helping to address the core question:

**The writing or the writer: What is the priority for a teacher of writing in English primary schools?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1a. What is the relationship between the self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and self-determination of the learner in the learning of writing?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1b. What is the relationship between self-determination of the teacher and the written outcomes of the learner in the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5:  
Stage 1 Methodology

5.1 Chapter introduction and the structure of the chapter

The data collection and analysis of the present study was split into two stages. The outcomes of Stage 1 of the study directly informed the methodology of Stage 2 and the research questions presented at the end of the previous chapter. For clarity, the following chapters will follow the chronology of the data collection and analysis. This chapter will present the methodology for Stage 1 while the chapter to follow will present the results of Stage 1. Chapter 9 will then outline the methodology for Stage 2 before the results are presented in Chapter 10. Perhaps the most obvious rationale for structuring the thesis in this way is that the methodology of Stage 2 includes the selection of a sample based on the results of Stage 1. Thus, to have put the methodology chapters together would have been very confusing. Chapter 11, the concluding chapter of the thesis, will critically analyse and discuss the results of Stage 2 and will conclude with a synthesis of the implications of all of the findings from both Stage 1 and Stage 2. This first methodology chapter will begin with a description of the timeline of the data collection and of the sample. The measures will then be explained, analysed and rationalised before the chapter concludes with an outline of the procedure.

The purpose of Table 5.1 is to orientate the reader. It provides a reference point for the remainder of the chapter. It shows that the writing task was completed and scored at two time-points – allowing an analysis of the change over time. It also shows that while an analysis of the change in children’s perceptions of autonomy and competence over the course of the year had been planned, the questionnaire data from Time-Point One could not be used due to the lack of reliability. As such, the methodology reflects the aim of analysing the relationship between teacher and child self-perceptions from Time-Point Two and the change over time in writing outputs.
**Table 5.1**

*Timeline of data collection*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time-Point One</strong>&lt;br&gt;Week beginning 11th November 2013</td>
<td>Child Questionnaire *</td>
<td>Self-perceived autonomy&lt;br&gt;Self-perceived competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child Writing Task</td>
<td>Compositional effect&lt;br&gt;Transcriptional fluency&lt;br&gt;Transcriptional accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time-Point Two</strong>&lt;br&gt;Week beginning 16th June 2014</td>
<td>Child Questionnaire</td>
<td>Self-perceived autonomy&lt;br&gt;Self-perceived competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child Writing Task</td>
<td>Compositional effect&lt;br&gt;Transcriptional fluency&lt;br&gt;Transcriptional accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher Questionnaire</td>
<td>Self-perceived autonomy&lt;br&gt;Self-perceived autonomy-support&lt;br&gt;Self-perceived competence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Data collected from the child questionnaire in Time-Point One was not analysed due to the reliability of the measure for autonomy (See Table 5.3).

**5.2 Sample / Participants**

687 children (aged 9-10) and 27 teachers from 22 schools participated in Stage 1 of the study (see Section 5.3.5 for a detailed breakdown of sample size per measure).

**5.2.1 Children**

Children within the sample were not selected nor deselected for any reason other than their year group and whether or not consent had been given by the child, his/her parents, the teacher and Headteacher. All the children were 9 or 10-years-old and in Year 5 at the time of participating. Within the English schools system, Year 5 is the penultimate year of primary school. The rationale for selecting children in Year 5 is that they are the eldest in the primary age range with the exception of Year 6. It was important to select older children in the primary age range due to the reported contrast in motivation between younger and older children (e.g. Cremin & Myhill, 2012). For example, Grainger, Gooch and Lambirth (2005) highlight that there is a significant contrast between the motivation of 5 to 7-year olds compared with the motivation of 9 to 11-year olds. 74% of children from the latter group, when interviewed, raised the issue of a lack of autonomy unprompted. It was also reasoned that in comparison with younger children, these children would be able to produce a greater quantity of writing.
Further, the written and aural comprehension level of Year 5 children would allow them to best respond to the questions in the survey and to the instructions given for the writing task. Additionally, work on autonomy (e.g. Assor, Kaplan & Roth, 2002) indicates that the ability to conceptualise and evaluate one’s autonomy increases with age.

A decision was made, based on professional experience, and following discussion with teachers and children across Key Stage 2, (Year 3-6) that to draw a sample of children from Year 6 would have been inappropriate. The potential for the impact from Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) on Year 6 would have been too significant as an extraneous variable on attitudes towards, and attainment in, writing. Thus, as the eldest from the remaining year groups, Year 5 was selected.

5.2.2 Secondary data collection

The only additional data requested concerned children’s gender, their eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) and whether they were being supported by an individual education plan for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) at the time of the study.

As Table 5.2 shows, secondary data was not returned for all participants. A table for teachers to complete was included in the pack sent at Time Point 2. Teachers were asked to complete the details but no follow up was possible if details were not filled in as data was anonymous and participation in Stage 1 of the study was complete. Teachers were also reassured that they were under no obligation to provide any information that they couldn’t or didn’t want to and so it would not have been appropriate to follow up, even with contact details for specific class codes.

Table 5.2
Summary of numbers for secondary data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Number of participants for whom data was returned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supported with an Individual Education Plan for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.3 Gender

Of 687 children, data about gender was obtained for 296. Of this number, 45% were girls and 55% were boys. Of the 135 children whose writing samples were analysed, data about gender was obtained for 48. Of this sample, 23 were girls and 25 were boys. There was no statistical difference between the outcomes of girls and boys in this sample of 48, determined by a one-way ANOVA ($F = .143$, $p = 1.00$). As five samples were taken from each class and gender data was not available for 75 of the samples, gender may have remained an extraneous variable. It is important to recognise this variable as National performance data has consistently highlighted a significant gap in attainment between girls and boys in writing at the end of primary school (e.g. Beard & Burrell, 2010; DfE, 2012). In 2015, the year in which the children within the sample would have completed end of Key Stage 2 assessments, 91% of girls achieved the expected standard compared with 83% of boys (a gap of 8%) (DfE, 2015).

5.2.4 Eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM)

Of 687 children, data about FSM was obtained for 200. Of this number 55% of the children were eligible for FSM. This figure may well have been distorted by one class that reported all children as being eligible for FSM. This may have been due to the fact that in two of the boroughs of the schools involved, all children were entitled to a free school meal. However, this does not mean that they are classified as being eligible for FSM. Of the 135 children whose writing samples were analysed, data about FSM was obtained for 48. Of this sample, 20% were eligible for FSM (10 children across 4 classes in which there were fewer than 5 children not eligible for FSM) and 80% were not. There was no statistical difference between the outcomes of children eligible for FSM and those ineligible in this sample of 48, determined by a one-way ANOVA ($F = .212$, $p = 1.00$). It was necessary to control, as much as possible, for this variable as National performance data also consistently highlights a significant gap in attainment between children eligible, and those ineligible, for FSM at the end of primary school (e.g. DfE, 2012). In 2015, the year in which the children within the sample would have completed end of Key Stage 2 results, 83% of children ineligible for FSM achieved the expected standard compared with 66% of children eligible for FSM (a gap of 17%) (DfE, 2015). However, it is
worth providing a note of caution. This data is not directly comparable with the data that was collected in Stage 1 of the present study. Progress, rather than attainment, was measured in the present study. Data from 2015 shows that the gap between those illegible and those eligible for FSM is 4% when expected progress is measured, rather than attainment (DfE, 2015).

5.2.5 Children classified as having Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Of 687 children, data about SEND was obtained for 205. Of this number, 16% of the children sampled were described by their teacher as having an individual education plan for SEND. Of the 135 children whose writing samples were analysed, data about SEND was obtained for 65. Of this sample, 0% were described by their teacher as having an individual education plan for SEND. Further, from the 70 samples with no data about SEND, none were marked if they were illegible. This will have controlled for any extremes in difficulties with writing. It was necessary to attempt to control for this variable as National performance data consistently highlights a significant gap in writing attainment between children with SEND and their peers without SEND at the end of primary school. (e.g. DfE, 2012). In 2015, the year in which the children within the sample would have completed end of Key Stage 2 results, 30% of children classified as having SEND achieved the expected standard compared with 90% of children eligible without SEND (a gap of 60%) (DfE, 2015). Again, it is worth highlighting the same note of caution as for FSM data. This data is not directly comparable with the data that was collected in Stage 1 of the present study. Progress, rather than attainment, was measured in the present study. Data from 2015 shows that the gap between those with SEND and those middle and high prior-attaining children without SEND is 13% when expected progress is measured, rather than attainment (DfE, 2015).

5.2.6 Schools

22 schools participated in Stage 1 of the present study. At the time of data collection, the status of all the schools in the sample was community state funded. At the time of data collection, the schools involved were all within the control of five inner city Local Education Authorities (LEAs). The selection of schools was made on the basis of these two variables (funding and locality) alone.
5.2.7 Teachers

27 teachers participated in Stage 1 of the current study. Teachers were not selected or deselected for any reasons other than the year group they were teaching in at the time of data collection (Year 5) and whether or not consent had been given by the teacher him/herself and the Head Teacher. All teachers held Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and were employed full time by the school.

5.3 Measures / Instruments

For both teachers and children, self-perceptions of competence, autonomy and autonomy-support were measured using questionnaires. Progress in writing was measured using a timed writing task adapted from Curriculum Based Measures of Writing Assessment (CBM-W; Dockrell, Connelly, Walter & Critten, 2015). Table 5.3 provides a summary of the constructs measured, the measurements used and the empirical underpinning for the construction of each measure. All measurements, with the exception of the writing task, were used for the first time in this study, adapted from the various sources cited in the table.
Table 5.3: Summary of measures used in Stage 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct to be measured</th>
<th>Measurement Used</th>
<th>Empirical basis for the construction of the measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Perceived Teacher Competence in the teaching of writing</td>
<td>Teacher questionnaire</td>
<td>Contemporary qualitative research (e.g. Grainger, 2005; Cremin and Myhill, 2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Perceived Teacher Autonomy in the teaching of writing</td>
<td>Teacher questionnaire</td>
<td>Teaching Autonomy Scale (TAS; Pearson and Moomaw, 2006) Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ; e.g. Black &amp; Deci, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Perceived Teacher Autonomy-support in the teaching of writing</td>
<td>Teacher questionnaire</td>
<td>Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ; e.g. Black &amp; Deci, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Perceived Child Competence in the learning of writing in school</td>
<td>Child questionnaire (Autumn)</td>
<td>Contemporary qualitative research (e.g. Grainger, 2005; Cremin and Myhill, 2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Perceived Child Competence in the learning of writing in school</td>
<td>Child questionnaire (Summer)</td>
<td>Contemporary qualitative research; e.g. Grainger, 2005; Cremin and Myhill, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child perception of Teacher Autonomy-support (Child Autonomy) in the learning of writing</td>
<td>Child questionnaire (Summer)</td>
<td>Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ; e.g. Black &amp; Deci, 2000) Scale measuring autonomy-affecting teacher behaviours: (Assor, Kaplan and Roth, 2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compositional and transcriptional writing Attainment</td>
<td>Timed writing task</td>
<td>Curriculum Based Measures of Writing (CBM-W; Dockrell, Connelly, Walter &amp; Critten, 2015)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.1 The Teacher Questionnaire (see appendix 5.1)

A 45-item survey using a Likert scale of 0-3 was completed by teachers to measure self-perceived teacher competence, self-perceived teacher autonomy, and teacher self-perceived autonomy-support (the autonomy that they perceived that they provide for the children.) The survey also included exploratory questions about contemporary pedagogical issues. The survey design included 14
questions related to self-perceived teacher competence, 9 questions related to self-perceived teacher autonomy and 10 questions related to self-perceived autonomy-support (towards children.) A further 12 questions were formulated with the intention of exploring how contemporary pedagogical issues may impact outcomes. These 12 questions did not satisfy tests for reliability, as will be outlined later. In its complete form in the present study, the survey had not been previously used and tested.

Items related to self-perceptions of competence were constructed using themes from the findings of qualitative research involving teacher interviews, classroom observations and audio and video recordings (e.g. Grainger, 2005; Fisher, 2006). Items related to self-perceptions of autonomy were adapted from the Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ; e.g. Black & Deci, 2000). In all cases the language of the items was only adapted to reflect that the questionnaire in the present study was domain specific while the LCQ is not. As an example, wording such as, “I feel that my instructor provides me choices and options,” (LCQ, p.3) was adapted to become, “I feel that my school give me choices and options in the teaching of writing.” Items related to self-perceived autonomy-support were also adapted from the LCQ (e.g. Black & Deci, 2000) and again, in all cases the language of the items was only adapted to reflect that the questionnaire in the present study was domain specific while the LCQ is not. As an example, wording such as, “my instructor tries to understand how I see things before suggesting a new way to do things,” (LCQ p.5) were adapted to become, “In writing, I try to understand the children in my class’s ideas before suggesting a new way to do things.”

5.3.2 Piloting

As previous measures of self-perceived competence, in this context, had not involved quantitative surveys, it was necessary to pilot the measures. It was equally necessary to pilot the measures for self-perceived teacher autonomy and self-perceived autonomy-support because the items in the questionnaire were all adapted from non-domain specific items to be domain specific to writing in the current context in English primary schools.

For piloting, 10 teachers were invited for a focus group to discuss the study. The teachers were invited using a school network from an Inner-City Local Education Authority. Teachers voluntarily participated and came with different levels of experience, teaching across different primary year groups.
The teachers discussed each item on the survey and commented on adapting language to avoid ambiguity, the potential for leading questions and repetition. The survey was edited based on the consensus on items that required change. There was strong agreement about the external validity and relevance of the measures. No statistical analysis was possible due to the small sample size of the pilot. None of the teachers within the focus group participated in the study.

5.3.3 Scoring Procedure

A four-point Likert scale was used to measure the constructs discussed above. Participants were asked to circle the number that corresponded most closely with how they felt. The scoring was as follows:

0 = completely false
1 = mainly false
2 = mainly true
3 = very true

For a number of items, the wording was matched with the children’s survey. Where items were not matched, the wording was balanced so there were equal numbers of positively worded and negatively worded items. This was done to avoid any possible response bias (e.g. Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). For data input purposes, for negatively worded items, the numerical scale was reversed so that 0 still represented the lowest score for self-perceived competence, self-perceived autonomy and self-perceived autonomy-support, while 3 still represented the highest score. Thus, a higher mean score would indicate a perception of high autonomy and competence while a lower mean score would indicate a perception of low autonomy and competence.

5.3.4 Child Questionnaire (autumn) (see appendix 5.2)

A 28-item survey using a Likert scale of 1-5 was completed by children to measure perceived competence and autonomy. The survey also included exploratory questions about the perceived authenticity of writing tasks in school. The survey design included 8 questions related to perceptions of autonomy and 13 questions related to perceptions of competence. A further 7 questions were
formulated with the intention of exploring how perceptions of authenticity may impact outcomes. These 7 questions did not satisfy tests for reliability, as will be outlined later. Items related to self-perceived competence were constructed using themes from the findings of qualitative research, as outlined in Chapters 2 and 3. Items related to self-perceived autonomy were constructed by adapting autonomy items included in questionnaires used in studies involving Self-Determination Theory (as shown in Table 5.3). The adaptation of the wording was informed by contemporary research and professional practice in the specific domain of the teaching and learning of writing.

5.3.5 Piloting

In the academic year before the data was collected, the survey, in its original draft form, was presented to a focus group of six Year 5 children in the school I was working in. Based on the feedback given, adaptations were made according to language and concepts that were unclear. The language on the Likert scale was also adapted to avoid any confusion. The updated draft was then piloted with 100 children in my own school to test the reliability of the scales. A reliability analysis (see Appendix 5.3) revealed that while both concepts appeared to be internally reliable the score for self-perceived autonomy indicated the need for the lowest reliability item for self-perceived autonomy to be changed and two more items added, after consultation with the original focus group.

5.3.6 Scoring Procedure

A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the constructs discussed above. Participants were asked to circle the number that corresponded most closely with how they felt. The scoring was as follows:

1 = completely untrue
2 = mainly untrue
3 = a bit of both
4 = mainly true
5 = very true

The wording was balanced for positively worded and negatively worded items. This was done to avoid any possible response bias (e.g. Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). For data input purposes,
for negatively worded items, the numerical scale was reversed so that 1 still represented the lowest score for self-perceived competence, self-perceived autonomy and self-perceived autonomy-support, while 5 still represented the highest score. Thus a higher mean score would indicate a perception of high autonomy and competence while a lower mean score would indicate a perception of low autonomy and competence.

5.3.7 Child Questionnaire (summer) (see appendix 5.4)

As will be outlined in section 5.4 to follow, reliability analyses of the autumn questionnaire showed that while items for self-perceived competence were internally reliable, those for self-perceived autonomy were not. As a result, a new measure was constructed for self-perceived autonomy that was more closely matched to existing measures and more closely matched to the measure used by the teachers in the study. For this measure, a 56-item survey using a Likert scale of 0-3 was completed by children to measure perceived competence and autonomy. The survey also included exploratory questions about contemporary pedagogical issues, related to those posed in the Teacher survey. The survey design included 31 questions related to perceptions of autonomy. 12 of these items were matched to those of the teacher survey, adapted from the Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ; e.g. Black & Deci, 2000). The remaining 19 items were adapted from the scale measuring autonomy-affecting teacher behaviours developed and used by Assor, Kaplan and Roth, (2002). Questions related to self-perceived autonomy were worded to explore the perceptions in relation to the teacher. This was a change from the autumn survey, in which the wording was about the child. The intention was to make it easier for the child to identify the autonomy afforded. The 13 questions related to perceptions of competence matched those used in the autumn measure. A further 12 questions were formulated with the intention of exploring how contemporary pedagogical issues may impact outcomes. These 12 questions did not satisfy tests for reliability, as will be outlined later. In its complete form in the present study, the survey had not been previously used and tested.
5.3.8 Piloting

In the term before data collection, 60 Year 5 children who attend the school in which I worked completed the new draft survey. To attempt to correct possible issues surrounding language and reflectiveness of the sample, rather than conduct a focus group, all children were asked to mark any item that they were unclear about in any way. Any item that was marked by 5% or more of the participants was removed. 7 items were removed for this reason. A reliability analysis (see Appendix 5.5) revealed that both measures of self-perceived autonomy and measures of self-perceived competence appeared to be internally reliable. As discussed, measures related to contemporary pedagogical issues were not internally reliable.

5.3.9 Scoring Procedure

A four-point Likert scale was used to measure the constructs discussed above. Participants were asked to circle the number that corresponded most closely with how they felt. The scoring was as follows:

- 0 = completely false
- 1 = mainly false
- 2 = mainly true
- 3 = very true

For a number of items, the wording was matched with the teachers’ survey. Where items were not matched, the wording was balanced so there were equal numbers of positively worded and negatively worded items. This was done to avoid any possible response bias (e.g. Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). For data input purposes, for negatively worded items, the numerical scale was reversed so that 0 still represented the lowest score for self-perceived competence, self-perceived autonomy and self-perceived autonomy-support, while 3 still represented the highest score. Thus, a higher mean score would indicate a perception of high autonomy and competence while a lower mean score would indicate a perception of low autonomy and competence.
5.3.10 The Writing Task

The writing task used was taken from the *Curriculum Based Measures of writing Assessment* (CBM-W; Dockrell et al, 2015). The CBM-W asks children to write, after one minutes thinking time, from a given title. The titles given were ‘the best day at school ever’ and ‘the worst day at school ever’. The prompt was presented at the top of a sheet of lined paper, with additional sheets available if required. Participants were asked to write the best story they could within the time limit. After explaining the task, children were given 1 minute to think about what they wanted to write and 10 minutes to write it. Half of the classes were asked to complete writing based on one of the titles in the autumn term while the other half completed writing based on the other title. In the summer, children completed writing based on the alternative title.

5.3.11 Piloting

Piloting with two Year 6 classes indicated that children felt that the original five-minute time limit was too restrictive but that 15 minutes was unnecessary. Therefore, the only adaptation made as a result of piloting was to extend the time given to children from five to ten minutes.

5.3.12 Scoring Procedure

As indicated in Table 5.4, the writing samples of 5 children in each of the 27 classes were randomly selected for analysis. Writing samples were scored for transcriptional fluency, transcriptional accuracy and compositional effect, matching the scoring outlined by Dockrell (2012). Section 5.4.2 outlines the protocols for scoring all measures.

5.3.13 Sample broken down by measures

The introduction to Section 5.2 explains that 687 children (aged 9-10) and 27 teachers from 22 schools participated in Stage 1 of the study. However, the scores of all participants were not used for all measures. Table 5.4 presents the sample size broken down by each measure.
Table 5.4

Sample size broken down by each measure for Stage 1 of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Teacher Competence</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Teacher Autonomy</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Teacher Autonomy-support</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Child Competence</td>
<td>687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Child Autonomy</td>
<td>687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Child Autonomy-support</td>
<td>687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child perception of Teacher Autonomy-support (Child Autonomy)</td>
<td>687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcriptional Accuracy</td>
<td>135*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcriptional Fluency</td>
<td>135*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compositional effect</td>
<td>135*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher attitudes to contemporary pedagogical practices</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s attitudes to contemporary pedagogical practices</td>
<td>687</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The writing samples of 5 participants in 27 classes were selected at random to analyse for transcriptional fluency, transcriptional accuracy and compositional effect

5.4 Procedure

5.4.1 Data collection

Data collection took place at two time-points in the academic year 2013-14. At the first time-point, all child surveys and writing samples were completed in the week beginning 18th November 2013. Surveys and writing sample materials, as well as all instructions, consent forms and return envelope, were posted to all schools in the two weeks before completion and were either collected in person or returned by post. The procedure was repeated in the summer term with all surveys and writing samples completed in the week beginning 16th June 2014.

5.4.2 Protocol for scoring survey measures

The scores for all questions on the survey were entered onto a spreadsheet in SPSS. The answers to the questions on the survey that were negatively worded were transposed so that numbers were consistent for measuring high and low self-perceptions of competence and autonomy. The researcher scored all surveys.
5.4.3 Protocol for scoring Transcriptional Accuracy

As outlined by Dockrell (2012), scores for transcriptional accuracy were calculated by combining three sub-scores: **total words, correct word sequences** and **number of sentences**. Correct word sequences were calculated by counting the number of adjacent words that made grammatical sense within the sentence. Incorrect grammar, or obvious missing punctuation interrupted a sequence. When all scores were entered into SPSS, the data was transposed to ensure that the scales for each score were equal. The researcher scored all writing tasks for transcriptional accuracy.

5.4.4 Protocol for scoring Transcriptional Fluency

As outlined by Dockrell (2012), scores for transcriptional fluency were calculated by combining four sub-scores: **Proportion of words spelled correctly, proportion of correct word sequences, proportion of complete correct sentences**. When all scores were entered into SPSS, the data was transposed to ensure that the scales for each score were equal. The researcher scored all writing tasks for transcriptional fluency.

5.4.5 Protocol for scoring composition

Compositional effect was measured using the Weschler Individual Achievement Test (WIATT-II) (Weschler, 2005). Scores from 0-6 were given by the reader according to the strength of the compositional aspects of the text. For example, the criteria for a score of 0 is that the writing, “demonstrates no relationship to the prompt,” while a score of 6 indicates that the writing, “presents a clear, organized and developed description of the topic.” (CBM-W; Dockrell, 2012, p.10). An independent moderator scored a sample of the writing tasks for the compositional effect because it was the only one of the measures for which the scoring was open to interpretation by the reader. 40 writing samples were moderated and an analysis indicated a substantial level of agreement (k=0.743, p = 0.00).
5.4.6 Reliability of measures

As highlighted previously, the original intention was that children’s scores for autonomy and competence would be measured at two time-points and that the within-participant differences between time-points would be analysed, in addition to the analysis that did take place. However, as Table 5.5 shows, the measure for self-perceived child autonomy from Time-Point 1 was not reliable. As a result, measures of self-perceived child autonomy and self-perceived child competence were scored for analysis at one time-point only – in the summer term. The only other unreliable measures were exploratory measures that were not directly related to the research questions for Stage 1 of the present study.
Table 5.5

Reliability of the measures/data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct to be measured</th>
<th>Measurement Used</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Teacher Competence in the teaching of writing</td>
<td>Teacher questionnaire</td>
<td>$\alpha = 0.707$ indicates that the measure was reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Teacher Autonomy in the teaching of writing</td>
<td>Teacher questionnaire</td>
<td>$\alpha = 0.894$ indicates that the measure was reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Teacher Autonomy-support in the teaching of writing</td>
<td>Teacher questionnaire</td>
<td>$\alpha = 0.741$ indicates that the measure was reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Child Competence in the learning of writing in school</td>
<td>Child questionnaire (Autumn)</td>
<td>$\alpha = 0.803$ indicates that the measure was reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Child Autonomy in the learning of writing in school</td>
<td>Child questionnaire (Autumn)</td>
<td>$\alpha = 0.229$ indicates that the measure was not reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Child Competence in the learning of writing in school</td>
<td>Child questionnaire (Summer)</td>
<td>$\alpha = 0.813$ indicates that the measure was reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child perception of Teacher Autonomy-support (Child Autonomy) in the learning of writing</td>
<td>Child questionnaire (Summer)</td>
<td>$\alpha = 0.817$ indicates that the measure was reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcriptional writing Attainment</td>
<td>Timed writing task</td>
<td>$\alpha = 0.814$ for Autumn and $\alpha = 0.832$ for Summer indicates that the measure was reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compositional writing Attainment</td>
<td>Timed writing task</td>
<td>$K=0.743$, $p = 0.00$ indicates a substantial level of agreement on 40 samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher attitudes to contemporary pedagogical practices</td>
<td>Teacher questionnaire</td>
<td>$\alpha = 0.193$ indicates that the measure was not reliable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children’s attitudes to contemporary pedagogical practices</td>
<td>Child questionnaire (Summer)</td>
<td>$\alpha = 0.578$ indicates that the measure was not reliable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4.7 Variations of sample size and number of items for study variables

As Table 5.6 shows, a child’s score for compositional effect was based on a single item. Scores for self-perceptions were based on a number of items per measure. The scale used for these scores was the same for all items so the mean score was recorded for each measure for each participant. The measure for transcriptional fluency and transcriptional accuracy were based on 4 items and 3 items respectively. The scale for these items was not consistent so Z scores were calculated and thus the means reported in Chapter 6 will be zero or close to zero.

Table 5.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Variable</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Number of items per variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived teacher competence</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived teacher autonomy</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived teacher autonomy-support</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived child competence</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived child autonomy</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child transcriptional accuracy</td>
<td>135*</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child transcriptional fluency</td>
<td>135*</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child compositional effect</td>
<td>135*</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The writing samples of 5 participants in 27 classes were selected at random to analyse for transcriptional fluency, transcriptional accuracy and compositional effect

5.4.8 Setting

Questionnaires and writing tasks were completed in the classroom. As such, children would have been in a familiar room with all their classmates and their teacher present. The researcher was not present so no unfamiliar people or conditions should have effected the completion of the questionnaires and writing tasks. Teachers were asked to instruct children to complete the tasks in silence and were asked to select a time in which there was no time-pressure (e.g. immediately before assembly or playtime).
5.4.9 Instructions

Class teachers were sent an envelope before Time-Point 1 and Time-Point 2. The envelopes contained all materials needed for the writing tasks and questionnaires. The envelope contained: 30 child questionnaires (labeled with the class letter code then a number from 1-30 – e.g. B13 – see appendices 5.2 and 5.4); 30 sheets of lined paper with the writing prompt as the title at the top (labeled as described above); one teacher questionnaire (summer only – labeled with the class letter code – see appendix 5.1) and a letter to read to the class, written by the researcher, to explain the rationale for completing the tasks (see appendices 5.6 and 5.7). The final item in the envelope was a letter to the teacher to outline the instructions to give to the children (see appendices 5.8 and 5.9 for the full letters).

5.4.10 Instructions for Time-Point 1

The letter for Time-Point 1 thanks the teacher for participating, provides details about anonymity and how to number the questionnaires and writing samples and provides a point of contact for any questions. None of the teachers got in contact to ask questions prior to data collection. The letter then instructed, clearly in bold:

Both tasks to be completed during the week beginning 11th November. Please complete the questionnaire before the writing task.

The letter then provided the following instructions for the completion of the questionnaires:

Questionnaires - please read the letter to children and hand out the questionnaire by register order. There is no time limit but it shouldn't take long. Please do not do it when there is time pressure (e.g. Before assembly). Help children with reading questions if necessary but give no more prompts.

Teachers were then given the following instructions to prepare for the completion of the writing task:

Writing task - it does not have to be done on the same day as the questionnaire as long as it is in the same week.

Please hand the numbered response sheets out in register order. Once children are ready, please read out the script below.

Please note: Instructions to be read aloud are in bold; instructions to teacher are in italics.
The teacher then read the instructions aloud to the children. These instructions were adapted from the original Curriculum Based Measures of Writing task (CBM-W; Dockrell, Connelly, Walter & Critten, 2015) as outlined previously. The instructions were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Script for writing task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Look carefully at the sentence at the top of your paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Now, read the prompt aloud: One day I had the worst day ever at school.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You need to write the best story you can about the best day ever at school. You will have 1 minute to think about what you are going to write and then 10 minutes to write it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you don’t know how to spell a word, have a go anyway. If you make a mistake just put a line through it and carry on writing. Remember to work in silence and focus on your writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any questions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Answer questions. (see FAQs below)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remember you are going to write the best story you can with the title ‘one day I had the best day ever at school.’ You have 1 minute to think about what you are going to write. Then I will tell you to start writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ok, your thinking time starts now.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Start timing. At the end of 1 minute say:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ok, you may begin your writing now.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Start timing the ten minutes. After 9 minutes say:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>You have 1 minute left</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>After 1 further minute say:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Stop writing now please.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in the script, teachers were also provided with a list of Frequently Asked Questions and their answers, in order to preempt any confusion that the children may have had. The letter to teachers then concluded with an explanation about how to collect and return the data. Teachers were thanked again for their participation.
5.4.11 Instructions for Time-Point 2

The instructions contained in the envelope for Time-Point 2 differed from those for Time-Point 1 in four ways. First, the date given for data collection was obviously different. At Time-Point 2, teachers were asked to complete the tasks during the week beginning 16th June. Second, for the purposes of controlling for extraneous variables, as outlined earlier in the chapter, teachers were asked to provide secondary data about children’s gender, eligibility for free school meals and whether they were described as having special educational needs. Teachers were also asked for teacher-assessed levels of writing for each child. The following guidance was given for the completion of the table:

**Data Sheet** - I have included a data sheet this time to provide some secondary demographic data. Please fill in as much as you can. If it proves difficult, the surveys and writing tasks are more vital but any information will be invaluable for me. Again, as the children will be anonymised, so too will the data.

The third difference in the instructions given for Time-Point 2 was that teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire as well as the children. In the section explaining how to administer the questionnaire, the following line was added:

Please do [the teacher questionnaire] yourself at exactly the same time (as the children).

The final difference related to the writing task prompt. As outlined previously, there were two titles for the writing task: *One day I had the worst day ever at school* and *One day I had the worst day ever at school*. Half of all classes completed the first of the titles at Time-Point 1 and half completed the second of the titles. Therefore, at Time-Point 2 children were given the alternate title and this was made clear in the instructions and on the writing prompt itself.

5.4.12 Duration

Teachers and children were given a window of one week to complete the questionnaires and writing tasks. No time limit was specified for the questionnaire but piloting indicated that the expected time for completion was 5-10 minutes. The writing task was timed to last exactly 10 minutes.
5.5 Data analysis

To address Research Questions 1a and 1b, I first conducted descriptive statistics and correlation matrices to indicate the associations between study variables. Then, regression analyses were carried out. My dataset had a hierarchical structure. The 687 children were nested within 27 classes. Similarly, for the child measures where a random sample of 5 was taken for each class, the 135 children were nested within 27 classes. This meant that because data from child participants was at two levels (child level and class level), a single level regression model might have resulted in an overestimation of the effect of teacher characteristics. Therefore, for each of the 5 outcomes tested to address the research questions, I began by running a single-level regression and a multilevel regression (random intercepts model with children nested within classes) and computed a Likelihood Ratio Test (LRT) for each nested model comparison. The formula is:  

\[ LR = -2 \log(L_1) - (-2 \log(L_2)) \]

where \( L_1 \) is log likelihood of the single-level model and \( L_2 \) is log likelihood of 2-level model. Then the LR was compared to a chi-square distribution with degrees of freedom equal to the number of extra parameters in the more complex model (in the multilevel model there is one extra parameter, the random intercept). Table 5.7 shows the results of the LRTs for each comparison. Significant class differences were found in Child Autonomy, Child Competence and Child Progress in Transcriptional Fluency scores. Hence, for those variables, the multilevel model was preferred over the single-level model. For Progress in Composition and Transcriptional Accuracy scores, there were no significant class differences and therefore the single-level model was run for these.
Table 5.7

Study variables with Likelihood Ratio scores, Intra class correlations and percentage variance reported

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Variable</th>
<th>Likelihood Ratio Test (LRT)</th>
<th>Intra Class Correlation (ICC)</th>
<th>Percentage Variance Explained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Child Competence</td>
<td>5.29*</td>
<td>.034 -.038</td>
<td>3.4 – 3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Child Autonomy</td>
<td>30.3**</td>
<td>.057 -.093</td>
<td>5.7 - 9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Transcriptional Accuracy</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>^</td>
<td>^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Transcriptional Fluency</td>
<td>5.02*</td>
<td>.174-.176</td>
<td>17.4-17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Compositional effect</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>^</td>
<td>^</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p <.05 ** p<.0001
^ICC and percentage variance not reported when LRT is not significant

As a result of the analysis in Table 5.7, multilevel regression models were run for Child Autonomy, Child Competence and Transcriptional Fluency. Single-level regression models were run for Transcriptional Accuracy and Progress in Composition

5.6 Ethical Considerations

The ethical application for data collection for the present study received approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the Institute of Education, University of London in 2013, prior to the merger with UCL and prior to the data collection commencing (see Appendix 5.10 for approved ethics application form). The headings given by the ‘Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research’ document (BERA, 2018) will be adopted to provide the structure for outlining the ethical considerations for Stage 1 of the present study.

5.6.1 Responsibilities to Participants

Every effort was made to ensure that the completion of surveys and writing tasks involved no additional time, effort or strain above that involved in the normal school day for participants. The surveys and the writing task were designed to place no extraneous demands above those required to get data necessary for the study. Questions for the survey and the prompts for the writing task were worded so that the gender, ethnicity and socio-economic status did not present an obstacle or advantage. The implications for those close to the participants, notably the parents of the children, were
considered and consent involved approval from head teachers, teachers and parents so that those with responsibility for children at the time of completing surveys and writing tasks were fully informed.

5.6.2 Informed Consent

Cohen, Manion & Morrison, (2007) highlight the importance of considering informed consent, particularly for children and vulnerable adults involved in educational research. The completion of the surveys and writing tasks followed obtaining the necessary consent of head teachers and participating teachers and after obtaining the parental consent for all child participants. Teachers were advised that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any stage without the need to give a reason and they were invited to use their judgement to provide children with the same right. As children in the study were either 9 or 10 years old, it was not robust enough to provide children with the option of opting out. As children would have been unlikely to refuse to complete either the survey or the writing task in a context in which they were in their classroom surrounded by their peers, teachers were asked to look for any sign that a child was uncomfortable. Parental consent was also sought with the aim of ensuring that no child was in a position of stress when completing the tasks. Letters to head teachers, parents, teachers and children made the purpose of the data collection clear and provided clear guidance about how to contact the researcher and to obtain further information. No additional pressure was applied by the presence of the researcher, as I was not present at the time that the surveys and writing tasks were completed (see appendix 5.11 for letter to HT, appendix 5.12 for letter to parents) Earlier appendices provide details given to teachers and children.

5.6.3 Transparency

The research design did not require any withholding of information about the study so full disclosure was given in the form of a summary for head teachers, parents, teachers and children, as well as the option to contact the researcher and supervisors.
5.6.4 Right to withdraw

As described in Section 5.2, teachers were provided with guidance, for both themselves and the children, regarding the right to withdraw. In line with BERA (2018) guidelines, it was made very clear that no reason was required for withdrawal at any stage and that consent did not prevent participants from later withdrawing.

5.6.5 Incentives

Participants were provided with no incentives to complete surveys and writing tasks. The letter to teachers and children thanked them and provided the rationale but this was as close as it came to reward.

5.6.6 Harm arising from participation in research

The participation in the completion of surveys and writing tasks was considered low risk in terms of the potential to have a negative impact on the participants. It was possible that considering perceptions of competence and autonomy would cause negative feelings and this is why the option to withdraw was particularly necessary. For the completion of the writing task, in any sample that disclosed any discomfort or potential harm, the researcher assured teachers that this sample would be returned so that the school could follow their own protocol. All efforts were made to reduce the potential for harm with child participants remaining in their classrooms and in the company of familiar adults at all times.

5.6.7 Privacy/anonymity and data storage

To ensure anonymity, all schools were assigned a letter code. Codes were not assigned by the researcher. Materials (children’s surveys and writing samples) were marked with the letter code and a number from 1-30. The Teacher survey was simply marked with the letter code. All test materials were placed in an envelope along with an envelope addressed to the researcher. The envelope was then labeled with the school’s name before the envelope was sealed. This stage was again not completed by the researcher. Teachers were instructed to send completed packs back without any indication of the
school. The researcher thus received 27 envelopes identifiable only by a letter code. This was repeated for both time points (Autumn and Summer). To ensure anonymity, no envelopes were opened, and therefore no codes seen, until all were returned. Any writing samples or surveys found to contain any names were marked through with permanent black ink. This was also done for any writing sample that contained any detail that would associate it with a particular school or class. Surveys and writing samples could not be traced to any individual or school. Even so, school and class codes were kept separate from contact details for the school and were kept in protected folders on computer. Scripts for writing samples and surveys were stored, and remain, in a locked cabinet.

5.6.8 Disclosure Confidentiality

Nothing through the duration of data collection and analysis gave reason to disclose any confidential and anonymous data over concerns related to safeguarding.
Chapter 6:  
Stage 1 Results

6.1 Chapter introduction: research questions and the structure of the chapter

This chapter will present findings relating to the following research questions:

1a. What is the relationship between the self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and the self-determination of the learner in the learning of writing?

1b. What is the relationship between self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and the written outcomes of the learner?

The findings to follow emerged from an analysis of the surveys completed by teachers and the children in their classes, as outlined in the previous chapter. The purpose of the survey was to measure levels of child and teacher self-perceived competence as well as self-perceived autonomy and teacher self-perceived autonomy-support. Also outlined in the previous chapter, the findings include an analysis of a writing task completed at two time points and marked for composition, transcriptional accuracy and transcriptional fluency.

The descriptive statistics related to all study variables will be presented first. The results of the analyses addressing each research question will then be presented in turn. For each, an introduction will be followed by a presentation of the relevant results from the analyses (correlations and multivariate analyses).

6.2 Descriptive Statistics

Section 5.2 explains that 687 children (aged 9-10) and 27 teachers from 22 schools participated in Stage 1 of the study. However, the scores of all participants were not used for all measures. Table 5.4 presents the sample size broken down by each measure. Table 6.1 shows the descriptive statistics alongside the sample sizes, previously shown in Table 5.4. Table 6.2 will show correlations but what Table 6.1 shows is that self-perception mean scores were all above the mid point score of 1.5. With a score of 1 representing mainly false and a score of 2 representing mainly true (on
positively worded items), participants tended to lean closer to mainly true in relation to self-perceived competence and autonomy. Children and teachers tended to rate self-perceptions of autonomy higher than self-perceptions of competence and teachers tended to rate their perception of the autonomy they gave children as high, in comparison with other perceptions and in comparison with the mid-point.

Table 6.1

Descriptive statistics for study variables for Stage 1 of the study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Teacher Competence</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Teacher Autonomy</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Teacher Autonomy-support</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Child Competence</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived Child Autonomy</td>
<td>687</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress in Transcriptional Accuracy</td>
<td>135*</td>
<td>0.00^</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>-9.44</td>
<td>9.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress in Transcriptional Fluency</td>
<td>135*</td>
<td>0.02^</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>-5.40</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress in Compositional effect</td>
<td>135*</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>-1.50</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: For the self-perception measures above, 0 indicates the lowest self-perception of the measure and a 3 indicates the highest. ^ The mean score was calculated using a Z score as the constituent measures did not have the same scale. * The writing samples of 5 participants in 27 classes were selected at random to analyse for transcriptional fluency, transcriptional accuracy and compositional effect.
6.3 Results in relation to Research Question 1a: What is the relationship between the self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and the self-determination of the learner in the learning of writing?

Table 6.2 shows the results of bivariate correlations. This analysis fails to indicate significant relationships between teacher and child measures. The only significant relationships are between teacher autonomy and autonomy-support and between child competence and autonomy.

Table 6.2
Correlations between teacher and child autonomy and competence variables for Research Question 1a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teacher Autonomy</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teacher Autonomy-support</td>
<td>.714**</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Teacher Competence</td>
<td>-.062</td>
<td>-.042</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Child Competence</td>
<td>-.068</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>_</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Child Autonomy</td>
<td>-.007</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>-.038</td>
<td>.314**</td>
<td>_</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

The results shown in Table 6.3 agree with those shown in Table 6.2 in failing to indicate any relationships between the self-perceptions of a teacher and those of the children in his or her class. The intra-class correlations ranged from .034 to .093 across models. After adjusting for teacher variables, child autonomy appeared to have more variation at the class level than child competence, as 5.7-9.3% of the variation in competence scores was explained by the class compared to 3.4-3.5% of the variation in autonomy scores was explained by the class.
Table 6.3  
{
Results of a multi-level regression model (showing both fixed effects and random effects) for Research Question 1a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Child Autonomy</th>
<th>Child Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Autonomy</td>
<td>-0.055 (0.048)</td>
<td>0.225 (0.014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Random effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Autonomy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Level</td>
<td>0.015 (0.006)</td>
<td>0.008 (0.005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Level</td>
<td>0.147 (0.010)</td>
<td>0.227 (0.149)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICCs</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.034</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Fixed effects**  |                |                  |
| Teacher Competence   | -0.029 (0.048) | 0.056 (0.54)     |
| **Random effects**  |                |                  |
| Teacher Competence   |                |                  |
| Class Level          | 0.009 (0.005)  | 0.009 (0.006)    |
| Child Level          | 0.148 (0.009)  | 0.226 (0.147)    |
| ICCs                 | 0.067          | 0.038            |
6.4 Results in relation to Research Question 1b: What is the relationship between self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and the written outcomes of the learner?

Table 6.4 shows the results of correlations. This analysis indicates a significant relationship between self-perceived teacher autonomy and children’s progress in composition and between self-perceived teacher autonomy-support and children’s progress in composition. No other significant relationships were indicated between teacher self-perceptions and children’s written outcomes. The only other significant relationships were the previously reported within-teacher correlation for autonomy and autonomy-support and correlations between the progress scores for written outcomes.

Table 6.4
Correlations between teacher autonomy and competence and children’s written outcome variables for Research Question 1b

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Teacher Autonomy</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teacher Autonomy-support</td>
<td>.706**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Teacher Competence</td>
<td>- .062</td>
<td>-.042</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Progress in composition</td>
<td>.398**</td>
<td>.373**</td>
<td>-.024</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Progress in Transcriptional Accuracy</td>
<td>-.026</td>
<td>-.059</td>
<td>-.033</td>
<td>.242*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Progress in Transcriptional Fluency</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>-.009</td>
<td>.361**</td>
<td>.679**</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

In separate models, teacher autonomy and teacher autonomy-support significantly predicted progress in composition, such that an increase in autonomy and autonomy-support was related to more progress in composition. Specifically, an increase in 1 point on the autonomy and autonomy-support scales was associated with an increase in progress of .48 and .92 in mean standard deviation units. For the progress in transcriptional fluency models, which were multilevel, between 17% and 18% of the variation in progress in transcriptional fluency was explained by class.
Table 6.5
Results of a multi-level regression model (showing both fixed effects and random effects) for Research Question 1b

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Progress in Composition</th>
<th>Progress in Transcriptional Accuracy</th>
<th>Progress in Transcriptional Fluency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. (SE)</td>
<td>95% CI</td>
<td>b. (SE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Competence</td>
<td>-0.169 (0.171)</td>
<td>[-0.509, 0.170]</td>
<td>-0.159 (0.584)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Autonomy</td>
<td>0.477** (0.167)</td>
<td>[0.145, 0.809]</td>
<td>-0.253 (0.574)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Autonomy-support</td>
<td>0.915** (0.308)</td>
<td>[0.303, 1.528]</td>
<td>-0.180 (1.099)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Random effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Competence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Level</td>
<td>1.461 (0.948)</td>
<td>[0.409, 5.212]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Level</td>
<td>6.847 (1.136)</td>
<td>[4.947, 9.477]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Autonomy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Level</td>
<td>1.447 (0.945)</td>
<td>[0.402, 5.206]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Level</td>
<td>6.849 (1.136)</td>
<td>[4.948, 9.481]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>.174</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Autonomy-support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Level</td>
<td>1.460 (0.948)</td>
<td>[0.409, 5.213]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Level</td>
<td>6.847 (1.136)</td>
<td>[4.947, 9.478]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICC</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.5 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Progress in Composition</th>
<th>Progress in Transcriptional Accuracy</th>
<th>Progress in Transcriptional Fluency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Competence</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teacher Autonomy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teacher Autonomy-support</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( b, (SE) )</td>
<td>( 95% \ CI )</td>
<td>( 95% \ CI )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.169 (0.171)</td>
<td>[-0.509, 0.170]</td>
<td>-0.159 (0.584)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( 95% \ CI )</td>
<td><strong>Teacher Autonomy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teacher Autonomy-support</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-0.169 (0.171)</td>
<td>[-0.509, 0.170]</td>
<td>-0.159 (0.584)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Random effects</strong></td>
<td><strong>Random effects</strong></td>
<td><strong>Random effects</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Variance (SE)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Variance (SE)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Variance (SE)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Competence</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teacher Autonomy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Teacher Autonomy-support</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Level</td>
<td>Class Level</td>
<td>Class Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.461 (0.948)</td>
<td>1.447 (0.945)</td>
<td>1.460 (0.948)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( 95% \ CI )</td>
<td>( 95% \ CI )</td>
<td>( 95% \ CI )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[0.409, 5.212]</td>
<td>[0.402, 5.206]</td>
<td>[0.409, 5.213]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child Level</strong></td>
<td><strong>Child Level</strong></td>
<td><strong>Child Level</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.847 (1.136)</td>
<td>6.849 (1.136)</td>
<td>6.847 (1.136)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( 95% \ CI )</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ICC</strong></td>
<td><strong>ICC</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>.176</td>
<td>.176</td>
<td>.176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05; **p < .01

LRTs for progress in composition and progress in transcriptional accuracy measures indicated that a multi-level analysis was not necessary and so only fixed effects results for single-level models are displayed.
6.5 Chapter conclusion: Summary of Results

Before moving onto the discussion chapter and an exploration of the results, the strengths, the limitations, the synthesis with previous findings and the implications, Table 6.6 summarises the findings in relation to the Stage 1 Research Questions.

Table 6.6
Summary of results in relation to the Stage 1 Research Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Summary of results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Question 1a:</strong> What is the relationship between the self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and the self-determination of the learner in the learning of writing?</td>
<td><strong>No significant relationships</strong> found between teacher measures and child measures for competence and autonomy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Question 1b:</strong> What is the relationship between self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and the written outcomes of the learner?</td>
<td><strong>A significant relationship</strong> between scores of teacher autonomy and children’s progress in composition, as indicated by a regression analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>No significant relationship</strong> between teacher autonomy, teacher autonomy-support or teacher competence and children’s progress in transcription.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>No significant relationship</strong> between teacher competence and children’s progress in composition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>A significant impact</strong> on progress in composition, compared with transcription was indicated with respect to teacher autonomy and teacher autonomy-support but not with respect to teacher competence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 7:
Stage 1 Discussion

7.1 Chapter Introduction and the structure of the chapter

As the chapter to follow will highlight, the results presented in Chapter 6 are as significant for the elements of the research questions that remain unanswered as they are for what they do contribute to the understanding of the answer. In relation to the research questions, the chapter will ultimately conclude that it is the failure of the results to address the overarching hypothesis, *that teachers high in self-determination will prioritise the writer above the writing product while those low in self-determination will prioritise the writing product above the writer*, that made further data collection necessary.

7.1.1 Key conclusions

The results shown in the previous chapter yield the following conclusions that will be explored in this chapter:

1. In relation to Research Question 1a: The results illustrate that the measures used in Stage 1 of the study did not indicate a relationship between the self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and the self-determination of the learner in the learning of writing. The chapter will explore whether this is indicative of an absence of a relationship between teacher and child self-determination or if the results challenge the validity of the measures used in this specific domain of writing.

2. In relation to Research Question 1b: The partial support for the notion that the self-determination of a teacher can have an impact on the learning outcomes, of the children in his or her class. The chapter will explore whether this is indicative of the fact that teacher self-perceived autonomy is necessary while teacher self-perceived competence isn’t a prerequisite. Equally, the chapter will explore whether the results are indicative of the limitations of self-perception scores for competence and autonomy in this specific domain.
3. In relation to the overarching hypothesis: The chapter will explore whether the difference in the impact of teacher self-perceived autonomy on scores for composition (reported as significant), as compared with scores for transcription, indicates that teacher self-perceived autonomy is a prerequisite of developing strong composition. Ultimately, the chapter will conclude that to argue that scores for composition, alone, indicate the capability to prioritise the development of the writer above the writing product would be extremely difficult.

The conclusions above, in relation to the research questions and overarching hypothesis, provide the structure for the chapter. In the analysis to follow, for each conclusion, the strengths and limitations of the findings will be explored, the relationship between the findings and previous theory and research will be illustrated and what the results contribute will be highlighted – with new theory where necessary – before the implications and recommendations for future research are presented. The chapter concludes with a summary of the questions raised that will be addressed in Stage 2 of the present study.

7.2 Discussion of Research Question 1a: What is the relationship between the self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and the self-determination of the learner in the learning of writing?

The results from Chapter 6 illustrate that the measures used in Stage 1 of the study did not indicate a relationship between the self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and the self-determination of the learner in the learning of writing. Deci, Nezlek and Sheinman (1981, p.649) claim that teacher self-determination, “should, in turn, filter down to the students.” The word, ‘should’ in this quote is fairly informative. The notion that the motivation of a teacher effects the motivation of the child appears intuitive – indeed in discussion with colleagues and school staff throughout the duration of the PhD, the response to this hypothesis is, ‘well, obviously’ or words to that effect. However, empirical support for this claim is scarce (Roth et al., 2007). As the notion of a relationship in the domain of writing is challenged by the findings, the analysis below will look at why this may have been the case and what can be learned.
7.2.1 Analysis of the finding

The relationship between teacher self-determination and child self-determination was investigated using survey responses. Children’s and teachers’ self-determination responses, scored for self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy (as well as self-perceived autonomy-support in the case of the teachers), failed to show any significant (or near significant) correlation. Multi-level analyses reinforced the absence of a relationship in the data. As previously indicated, this raises a crucial question: is this finding the result of an absence of a relationship or the result of a flaw in the capability of the survey to capture the concepts it was designed to capture? This is clearly not a question that can be answered unequivocally on the basis of these results but an exploration of the latter explanation may reduce the possibility that the former explanation, that no relationship exists, is credible. A look at the reliability analysis, reported in Chapter 5, shows that both teacher and child measures for self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy appeared reliable. This would appear to suggest that the data was reliable and that the findings are robust. However, three related factors throw into question the validity of the responses given by children in the surveys.

7.2.2 The original surveys given to children were unreliable

The original design of the study aimed to capture children’s self-determination scores in the autumn, as well as in the summer. Reliability scores indicated that results for autonomy in the autumn were statistically unreliable. The implication of this, informing the subsequent design of the summer surveys, was that the focus group used to pilot the measures had not been representative of the sample and that the language had been unnecessarily ambiguous and/or complicated. The summer survey piloting involved a larger sample with stricter criteria for omitting items on the survey. However, as the measures for self-perceived competence in the autumn were reliable, this does point to the concept of self-perceived autonomy as being particularly difficult to comprehend for the participants. The counter argument to this explanation would question why the summer measures then appeared to be reliable. One explanation is that children comprehended the question without comprehending the concept, as the concept of self-perceived autonomy is a sophisticated and relative concept. In support of this explanation is the finding that scores for competence and autonomy correlated.
Teacher scores for competence and autonomy did not correlate while children’s scores for competence and autonomy showed a significant correlation. Of course it is not impossible, for individuals to perceive themselves as both competent and autonomous but across a large sample, this does raise the possibility that children were not able to differentiate between the two concepts. In other words, children who had a tendency to score highly for self-perceived competence may simply have scored highly for self-perceived autonomy without understanding the concept and likewise those that gave low scores for self-perceived competence may have done the same, without understanding the question, for self-perceived autonomy. If this response bias explanation is to be viewed as credible then it is necessary to explore what it is about autonomy, framed in this way, that makes it difficult for 9 and 10-year old children to comprehend.

7.2.3 Children may not have understood the concept of autonomy – particularly with a lack of comparison – when framed in this way

There are two elements to this possible explanation. One is the specific survey used in this study and the second is the understanding of the concept of autonomy for a child of 9 or 10 years of age. Regarding the first element, the redesign of the survey for the summer removed the first person from the questions. For example, ‘I have choices when I write in class’ became, ‘My teacher allows me to make decisions about my writing by myself’. This followed the survey design of the Learning Climate Questionnaire (LCQ; e.g. Black & Deci, 2000) and of the scales measuring autonomy-affecting teacher behaviours used by Assor, Kaplan and Roth, (2002). However, by effectively taking the child’s perception of the autonomy afforded by the teacher as a proxy measure of the autonomy perceived, the responses may have been influenced by a more general opinion of the teacher. Further, this may be related to their feelings of competence and add to the explanation of the correlation. For example, a child who feels confident about their competence in writing is likely to view their teacher favourably and thus, whether understanding the concept of autonomy or not, may have been inclined to score highly any item related to the teacher. Likewise, a child with low confidence may have scored low for competence and may have conflated this with their perception of the teacher. This hypothesis of course
also depends on the child being unable to fully comprehend the notion of autonomy, at least as presented by the survey.

One possible difficulty for the children in the sample, in comprehending the concept of autonomy in this specific domain, may lie in the inability to call on a comparison. If a 9 or 10 year old has only experienced one school and by the summer has little memory for how they felt about writing in Year 4, one could argue that they have no comparison with which to judge autonomy. Autonomy is a relative judgement – you are most likely to feel a strong sense of autonomy or lack of autonomy if it compares favourably or unfavourably to previous experiences (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Indeed, the motivation to embark on the present study came from a realisation that I had enjoyed a great deal of autonomy in my teaching – a realisation that only came from visiting different schools and talking to teachers in different settings. Most children of 9 or 10 do not have these experiences to call upon. This perhaps points to the most significant conclusion in relation to this finding, that survey data of this nature may be incapable of capturing young children’s domain specific perceptions of autonomy and that qualitative data is required.

7.2.4 Summary of strengths, limitations and links to previous theory and research

The aim of Research Question 1a was to explore the relationship between teacher and child self-determination. The findings highlight how difficult it is to reduce the concept of self-perceived autonomy to a set of items on a survey and raise questions about the notion of self-perceived autonomy for children of this age – particularly in relation to a particular domain. The findings provide the catalyst for further exploration of the notion of a relationship between child and teacher self-determination.

The limitation of the finding would appear to be that it is drawn from survey data alone. The question as to whether the finding is a support for a rejection of a relationship or a challenge to the notion that a SDT survey is capable of capturing the relationship cannot be answered confidently in the absence of data to triangulate the findings. The only other primary data available from the children in the study was the writing sample and it may be necessary to explore what the writing reveals about the self-determination of the child.
The finding is in contrast to that of Roth et al. (2007) who found support for a relationship between teachers’ autonomous motivation for teaching and students’ autonomous motivation for learning amongst primary age children. They too used survey data alone. However, they differentiated between children’s ‘autonomous motivation’ and their ‘perception of autonomy-supportive teaching’. The present study found that the measure of the former – used in the autumn surveys – was unreliable and has treated the latter as a proxy measure of children’s feelings of autonomy. As highlighted in the previous chapter, the study of Roth et al. (2007), though also involving primary age children, transposed raw scores into four sub-scales of motivation. Further, they too found that scores for child competence support and autonomy-support correlated, raising the possibility of a response bias. In their analysis of the findings they point to statistical controls that reduce the possibility of these confounding factors but acknowledge that the effect sizes were modest at best. Perhaps most significantly, the study of Roth et al. (2007) was also about learning in general. As such, if a focus on the relationship between general teacher and child self-determination requires a statistical analysis of the complexity of that used by Roth et al. (2007), to reveal modestly significant findings, one might legitimately question whether a focus on a specific domain – in this case writing – requires a more nuanced measure of autonomy. A more nuanced measure may point towards a qualitative design.

However, despite extensive exploration of teacher and child attitudes to writing over the last two decades, Cremin and Oliver (2017, p.18) acknowledge that, “the evidence base in relation to pedagogical consequences (of teacher engagement in writing) is extremely thin, particularly regarding impact on student outcomes.” They go on to suggest that teacher confidence, appears to influence their pedagogical choices… and teaching appears to have value for student motivation,” but cannot substantiate this with clear findings from studies simultaneously measuring teacher and child motivation. This raises a fundamental question about how possible it is to measure the relationship between the attitudes of a teacher and those of the children in his or her class. Chapters 2 and 3 illustrate the strength of feeling towards self-determination in the domain of writing and the exploration that Cremin and Oliver (2017) refer to, outlined extensively in those earlier chapters provide clear evidence of issues for both teachers and children when it comes to writing. If measuring the space
between the teacher and the child remains illusive – the relationship remains intangible – how does one make use of the rich body of evidence (e.g. Andrews, 2008; Cremin, 2006; Cremin & Baker, 2010; Grainger, Goouch & Lambirth, 2005) in relation to teachers and children separately, to provide the catalyst for a positive transfer from one to the other? In short, what can be done, by proxy - by supporting teacher self-determination - to facilitate the development of the writer? And, can this be measured? That is the challenge of the remainder of the present study.

7.2.5 The contribution of the finding and Implications and recommendations for future research

In relation to Research Question 1a, the findings have not contributed support for the theoretical link between teacher and child self-determination. However, as the first study to explore this link, using survey responses, in the specific domain of writing in English primary schools, it has contributed to a body of research exploring the motivations of teachers and children and the impact these have on writing outcomes. It does so by illustrating the complexity of the teacher/child relationship and the ambiguities surrounding the concept of self-perceived autonomy in particular. It contributes by raising questions about the very notion of an attitudinal relationship between teacher and learner and it forces one to evaluate whether any exploration can be considered valid, where the phenomena being scrutinised are intangible and hard to measure. The finding contributes by challenging the validity of a SDT survey to capture concepts at the level of a specific domain.

Thus, the implication arising is that greater depth is necessary in the exploration of the attitudes of both children and teachers. One would argue that this implication would still have arisen if the survey data had shown a significant relationship, as the responses given did not provide space for participants to explain their perceptions of competence and autonomy. The recommendation for future research would be that if survey data is collected, space is available for participants to explain their responses and that a sample of teachers and children are interviewed. This recommendation highlights a second implication of the finding: that using one data source to address the research question has been insufficient and that triangulation with other data sources is necessary. The recommendation would be to use at least two data sources (e.g. survey data and interview data) in future research of this nature. In the context of the present study, it highlights the potential of the writing samples in responding
to this research question. A further scrutiny of this data set may yield useful findings in relation to children’s self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy.

7.3 Discussion of Research Question 1b: What is the relationship between self-determination of the teacher in the teaching of writing and the written outcomes of the learner?

The findings provide partial support for the notion that the self-determination of a teacher can have an impact on learning outcomes in writing and that the impact will be more significant for composition than for transcription. As reported in section 7.2, Cremin and Oliver (2017, p.18), concluded that the evidence base for any impact of teacher attitudes on writing is, “extremely thin.” Indeed in Chapter 4 it was highlighted that no previous study has directly related teacher measures of self-determination with written outcomes. Those very few studies that look at a relationship between teacher self-determination and learning outcomes of any kind have relied on self-report for outcomes (e.g. Deci et al, 1981; Grolnick et al., 1991) and have looked at domains other than writing, if they have looked at specific domains at all (e.g. Standage & Gillison, 2007). This raises the potential for the findings of the present study to contribute to the field of knowledge but also, without similar findings to support or contradict, necessitates a close analysis of the strength of the findings and careful considerations for the implications for future inquiry.

7.3.1 Analysis of the finding

The regression analyses reported in Chapter 6 indicated that there was a significant relationship between scores of teacher self-perceived autonomy and children’s progress in composition with the indication that teacher self-perceived autonomy accounted for 4.2% of the variance in children’s progress in composition. However, the regression analysis failed to indicate a relationship between teacher self-perceived competence and children’s progress in composition. As self-determination is understood as the relationship between the self-perceptions of both competence and autonomy, both the relationships would benefit from further investigation/triangulation to explore the security of the measurements, especially as the variance accounted for regarding autonomy was relatively small.
The findings reported in the previous chapter may imply that teacher self-perceived autonomy effects progress with composition while teacher self-perceived competence doesn’t. However, a focus on the specific constructs measured may reveal an explanation for the discrepancy and a need to further investigate both concepts in relation to children’s writing outcomes. Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) argues that intrinsic motivation - or extrinsic motivation that can be internalised - is reliant on a combination of self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy. Crucially, it is the perception of competence and autonomy that generates feelings of self-determination. As such, the present study used survey data to measure a teacher’s perceived autonomy and perceived competence.

However, it could be argued that there is a significant difference between the validity of self-assessed measures of these two constructs. The perspective of an outside observer about an individual’s autonomy may differ from that of the individual but it has been shown that if a teacher feels that they have a strong, “perceived locus of causality,” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p.58), they will, in turn, provide this for their learners (e.g. Pelletier, Seguin-Levesque and Legault, 2002; Taylor, Ntoumanis and Standage, 2008). Indeed, the results of the present study suggest that a teacher with a high perception of autonomy is one who provides autonomy for their learners. In other words, the flow of autonomy may go from teacher to learner in spite of any objective measure and thus may have resulted in greater progress in composition.

Competence could not be argued to be the same. Yes, the perception of competence is what contributes to the self-determination of a teacher but an objective measure of ‘actual’ competence is likely to effect children’s learning profoundly. In other words, the flow of competence is very unlikely to go from teacher to child if that perception of competence is misplaced. It is a conclusion of the present study that relying on self-report measurements of competence and autonomy when relating findings to learning outcomes may represent a significant limitation. Before further exploring the measurements of self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy, it may be necessary to account for the extraneous impact of ‘actual’ competence, and/or the specific perspective of competence held by the teacher. This may be the key to developing writers capable of expressing individual writer voice.
7.3.2 The measures of composition and transcription were not nuanced enough to explore differences between writers

The mixed findings of the present study also necessitate a scrutiny of the measure used for progress in composition. In the present study, compositional effect was measured using the Weschler Individual Achievement Test (WIATT-II) (Weschler, 2005). As presented in Chapter 5, scores from 0-6 were given by the reader according to the strength of the compositional aspects of the text. However, it is argued here that a writer could have achieved a score of 6 without being self-determined. The marking criteria demand that a composition scoring a 6, “presents a clear, organized and developed description of the topic.” (CBM-W; Dockrell, 2012, p.10). The argument of the present study is that a self-determined writer, one who is sufficiently competent and autonomous, will be able to do these things.

Crucially however, it doesn’t argue that a child lacking in self-determination cannot do these things. It could be argued that competence alone is required and that the measure does not allow for an exploration of the impact of autonomy. A key reflection from the marking of the writing samples that supports this argument was that samples of the same score (in this case a 5 or a 6) still varied widely according to how formulaic they appeared to be. In other words, it appears that clarity, organisation and developed description can be taught in a manner that bypasses the individual writer. Thus the measure used provides a starting point for exploring the impact of teacher self-determination on composition but doesn’t adequately scrutinise the individual expression of the writer, perhaps a proxy measure of autonomy. In short, the compositional aspects of the writing were measured rather than the compositional capabilities of the writer. It is the latter that the overarching hypothesis seeks to explore.

This argument, regarding composition could also be applied to the measure of transcription. The finding that neither teacher self-perceived competence, nor teacher self-perceived autonomy correlated with transcriptional progress, supports the notion that the teaching and learning of transcription is not similarly effected by teacher self-determination. However, the notion that progress would be greater in composition than in transcription is not the same as claiming that there would be no
impact on transcriptional progress. It is argued here that the measure of transcription used in the analysis of the writing samples may have failed to capture how transcription can be used to support compositional effect. Chapter 2 includes a clear rationale for ensuring that transcriptional fluency isn’t preventing compositional progress and the measures of transcription used would have measured the degree to which transcription could be said to be automatic adequately. The present thesis may not have adequately measured transcriptional competence beyond the level necessary for automaticity. There was no measure of the breadth of transcription used or the degree to which transcriptional choices matched the desired effect. In short, in a repeat of the conclusion of the previous section, the transcriptional adequacy of the writing was measured rather than the self-determined transcriptional capabilities of the writer. Again, it is the latter that the overarching hypothesis seeks to explore.

7.3.3 The contribution of the finding and Implications and recommendations for future research

The finding does not directly support or bring into question previous research. This is because previous empirical studies have focused on either self-determination and learning, but have not been writing-specific (e.g. Grolnick & Ryan, 1987); have looked at measures of writing but not in relation to teacher measures (e.g. Albin, Benton & Khramstsova, 1996; Hidi and Maclaren, 1991) or have focused on teacher self-determination in relation to children’s self-determination but lack learning outcomes (e.g. Assor, Kaplin & Roth, 2002; Roth et al., 2007). Research that has explored the interactions and has argued for a relationship between teacher autonomy and children’s motivation and writing capabilities has been qualitative. As cited previously, this research has failed to establish measurable evidence for a link (e.g. Cremin & Oliver, 2017). As concluded in that same section, it is the seemingly intangible nature of the dynamic between teacher, child and children’s learning outcomes that makes further exploration more exciting – not a rationale to give up!

Previous research has failed to empirically test a relationship between teacher attitudes and learning outcomes in writing. It is true to say that the depth of the finding has potentially been compromised by the failure of the measurements to capture the nuance of the constructs but it does contribute a level of understanding about the influences of a teacher on children’s learning – this case in the domain of writing. With regard to writing, the finding provides empirical support for the notion of
promoting teacher autonomy and validates qualitative data that relates teacher self-perceived autonomy to effective pedagogies (Cremin & Oliver, 2017). The finding also provides a starting point for attempting to capture large-scale data about teacher attitudes. It provides a rationale for the exploration of teacher self-perceived autonomy across year groups and domains. Fundamentally, it provides a repost for those that may argue that teacher motivation is less important than, or unrelated to, children’s learning. The indication is that the two cannot be viewed in isolation and although the nature of the dynamic may be hard to measure, difficult to define and impossible to articulate, the impact needn’t be.

The implication of the finding cited above lies in the need for a deeper exploration of both teacher self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy. The failure to establish support for a relationship between teacher self-perceived competence and composition makes the need for a more nuanced measure of self-perceived autonomy just as necessary as the need for a more nuanced measure of self-perceived competence but perhaps for different reasons. It may be necessary to explore ‘actual’ competence – to look at the extraneous impact on children’s outcomes. It is necessary to explore the notion of self-perceived autonomy in order to triangulate the findings reported in this section.

As such, the recommendations are that self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy are both explored qualitatively. Ideally this would be explored alongside quantitative data so that the findings can be triangulated and the relationships and discrepancies analysed. A second implication is that the compositional aspects of a piece of writing may differ from the compositional capabilities of a writer. It is not sufficient to focus solely on the uniform features of a composition. A related implication is that to measure capability is complex. Thus, the recommendation is that the concept of writer ‘capability’ is explored in greater depth, as a concept separate from, though related to, writing ‘ability’. In line with the thesis title and the overarching hypothesis, more attention is needed on the writer, as separate from the writing if the impact of the teacher on writing which has a ‘voice’ is to be analysed. Similarly, the implication regarding transcription is that the data so far has presented a false dichotomy. By reducing the concept of transcription to fluency and accuracy, the data didn’t measure the way in which transcription had been used by the children. The recommendation is that a further
exploration of the writing looks at how transcription is used to craft writing in order to match the writer’s intent (e.g. Kress, 1994).

7.4 Chapter conclusion

The structure of the present thesis means that despite being a discussion chapter, this is not the final chapter. As such, the purpose of this section is to provide a bridge between the findings, implications and recommendations of Stage 1 of the study and the further exploration of the core hypothesis in Stage 2 of the study. The recommendations below outline how further scrutiny of the overarching hypothesis could take place and inform the research questions of Stage 2 of the present thesis. For each recommendation, it will be made clear whether this has informed Stage 2 of the thesis or whether this remains a recommendation for future research.

Table 7.1 summarises the findings, implications and recommendations in relation to Research Question 1a: What is the relationship between self-determination of the teacher and self-determination of the learner in the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Implications</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No significant relationships found between teacher measures and child measures for competence and autonomy.</td>
<td>Greater depth is necessary in the exploration of the attitudes of both children and teachers</td>
<td>1a.1. Surveys should provide space for participants to explain their responses. 1a.2. A sample of teachers and children should be interviewed to triangulate the data. 1a.3. A further scrutiny of writing samples may yield useful findings in relation to children’s competence and autonomy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.4.1 Recommendation 1a.1

This recommendation was not possible to follow through on in the present study, as surveys could not have been retrospectively returned to participants to include their perspectives. Limitations would remain if one were to adapt the design of Stage 1 in future studies to include space for
explanation of responses. Participants would be lead by the structure of the question, their writing capabilities would be a variable and their could be no follow up for ambiguous or absent responses. However, for large numbers of participants, this adaptation would provide an additional layer of information for future work in this area.

7.4.2 Recommendation 1a.2

The timing of the data analysis and the anonymity procedures meant that it was possible to follow up the survey responses of the teachers but not the children. Teachers were anonymised using a letter code but it remained possible to contact these participants. This was not the case for the children. No link was ever established between the child’s letter and number code and any other information other than the matching letter and number code on the writing samples. Further, at the time of analysis, children will have been in secondary school and it is doubtful that their recollections of writing in Year 5 would have been considered valid and robust. As Chapter 8 will outline, the present study continued by interviewing a sample of teachers. In future studies, teacher interviews could follow more immediately after the survey responses and a random sample of children could be selected for interview. This would address one of the main limitations – that the voice of children is lacking as the validity of the survey data is questionable.

7.4.3 Recommendation 1a.3

The limitation discussed above – that the findings of Stage 1 lack a strong voice from children – was addressed in Stage 2 of the present study. As Chapter 8 and Chapter 9 will outline, the existence or absence of individual voice in the writing samples was employed as a proxy measure of children’s competence and autonomy in the development of their writing.
Table 7.2 summarises the findings, implications and recommendations in relation to Research Question 1a: What is the relationship between self-determination of the teacher and the written outcomes of the learner in the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools?

Table 7.2
*Findings, implications and recommendations in relation to Research Question 1a*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Implications</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. A significant relationship</strong> between scores of teacher autonomy and children's progress in composition, as indicated by a regression analysis.**</td>
<td>1. Greater depth is necessary in the exploration of the competence and autonomy of teachers.</td>
<td>1b.1. Actual competence should be explored using teacher interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. No significant relationship</strong> between teacher autonomy, teacher autonomy-support or teacher competence and children's progress in transcription.**</td>
<td>2. The measure of composition and transcription may have relied on differences in competence but not autonomy so a measure that differentiates on the basis of autonomy is required.</td>
<td>1b.2. Teacher interviews would allow an exploration of what is meant by autonomy so that quantitative findings can be triangulated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. No significant relationship</strong> between teacher competence and children's progress in composition.**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1b.3. Explore the concept of individual writer voice as an indicator of writer autonomy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4. A significant impact</strong> on progress in composition, compared with transcription was indicated with respect to teacher autonomy and teacher autonomy-support but not with respect to teacher competence.**</td>
<td></td>
<td>1b.4. Develop a measure of individual writer voice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.4.4 Recommendation 1b.1

As the chapters to follow will show, teacher interviews were employed in Stage 2 of the present study. The structure of the interviews was key to exploring teachers’ own conceptions of their competence. The responses of the teachers could be compared with the responses given in the survey data, which also offered the potential to validate the strengths and limitations discussed in this chapter.
7.4.5 Recommendation 1b.2

The comparison of survey data and interview responses was also possible for the study of autonomy. This combined data offered the potential to explore why autonomy had appeared significant in promoting progress in composition but competence hadn’t.

7.4.6 Recommendation 1b.3

This recommendation became the focus of Stage 2 of the study and the chapter to follow will present the theoretical rationale for the exploration of voice.

7.4.7 Recommendation 1b.4

This recommendation became the focus of the further exploration of the writing samples. The writing samples provided a permanent and wide-scale data set from which to explore writer voice. The means by which this was done is the focus of Chapter 9.

7.4.8 Overall recommendation: The further exploration of voice

The core question, the writing or the writer: What is the priority for a teacher of writing in English primary schools? required further scrutiny. The overarching hypothesis, that teachers high in self-determination will prioritise the writer above the writing product had yet to be adequately tested. As emphasised by the recommendations above, the overall conclusion of the discussion of Stage 1 of the present study was that the ‘voice’ of both teachers and children was lacking from the findings. Survey data provided a broad data set and the writing samples similarly. However, the responses of the former and the method of analysis of the latter meant that the impact of self-determination on the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools couldn’t be explored in necessary depth.

Informed by the recommendations above, the remainder of the thesis further explores how a teacher’s attitudes relate to their capability to prioritise the writer above the writing product. It does this by giving teachers a greater ‘voice’. The thesis also continues with a focus on individual writer voice, as a key concept in differentiating those children who have sufficient self-perceived competence and self-
perceived autonomy to develop as individual writers. In this sense, the writing provides the children with a ‘voice’. It will be argued that sufficient self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy on the part of the teacher does not automatically mean that a 9 or 10-year-old child will develop individual writer voice, instead the conditions are enabling in that the child is likely to have their own competence and autonomy supported. More definitively, the remainder of the thesis will argue that an absence of sufficient self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy on the part of the teacher actively inhibits the development of individual writer voice. In these circumstances, the teacher is likely to prioritise the writing product and is thus unable to provide the necessary competence and autonomy-support for the individual writer.
Chapter 8: The development of individual writer voice

“Some writers, in some types of writing, make their ‘voice’… heard more than others. Writers may put themselves at the centre of the writing, exerting control over it and establishing a presence within it. At the other extreme writers may relinquish control of the situation to other, named authorities.”

(Clark & Ivanic, 1997, p.152)

The aim of this chapter will be to identify what it means to make one’s voice heard in writing, what allows some children to be able to do this and what pedagogical practices have the potential to facilitate or inhibit the development of individual voice in writing.

8.1 Chapter introduction

This chapter builds on the findings from Stage 1 of the present study. An argument will be constructed that high self-determination – of the teacher and the child – is a prerequisite in the development of individual writer voice. As the concept of voice is ambiguous and contested, the chapter will outline what is meant by individual writer voice. This exploration will be underpinned by three complementary theories – dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981), social constructivism (e.g. Vygotsky, 1978) and social semiotics (e.g. Halliday, 1993; Kress, 1994). In line with the overarching hypothesis, it will be argued that the development of individual writer voice provides a more robust measure of the teacher’s ability to prioritise the learner above the learning outcome.

8.1.1 Writer voice in English primary schools

Educators often refer to the highest quality writing as having a ‘voice’ (e.g. Zhao & Llosa, 2008). Indeed when one scrutinises the Standards and Testing Agency guidance on assessing and levelling writing in England (STA, 2013, p.5), teachers are advised that writing, “that conveys an individual voice,” is a significant indicator of ‘Level 6’ writing – percentages of which had become a benchmark for the highest performing English primary schools between 2013 and 2017. This suggests that pedagogy that promotes writer voice should be encouraged in English primary schools. However, it is argued that teachers in English primary schools too often constrain the voice of the writers in their
classrooms, due to the dominance of the ‘skills’ discourse (e.g. Bearne, 2017; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Fisher, 2006; Lambirth, 2016). Instead of exploring voice and reader-impact in writing, there is a tendency to prescribe ‘correct’ linguistic structures and work to avoid ‘bad grammar’. Emphasis is placed on the reproduction of prescribed linguistic patterns rather than on developing linguistic capabilities to allow children the means to exploit these for their chosen effect (e.g. Bearne, 2017; Ivanic, 2004; Lambirth, 2016).

It is argued that teachers of writing in English primary schools need to place a balanced emphasis on the ‘skills’ discourse and the ‘creativity’ discourse if voice is to be heard (Bearne, 2017). However, in the face of disproportionate policy, rhetoric and curricula, (discussed in Chapter 3) and the professional scepticism that this has yielded, finding a balance between skills and creativity relies heavily on high levels of self-perceived competence and the autonomy to exploit it (e.g. Bearne, 2017; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Fisher, 2006; Ivanic, 2004; Myhill, 2009).

8.1.2 Why the development of individual writer voice matters: The politics of writing and learning to write

“Those able to produce meanings and messages are few by comparison with those who consume meanings and messages. Hence the control of messages and meanings is in the hands of a relatively small number of people.”

(Kress, 1994, p.3)

The teaching and learning of writing contributes to and is symptomatic of the inequity of opportunity for learners in English primary schools, based largely on class and ethnicity (e.g. Clark & Ivanic, 1997; Kress, 1994). When defending why it matters that children are given the opportunity to develop their own individual writer voice, the potential of this development in breaking the hegemony – the maintenance of the status quo in which power is retained and monopolised by the dominant economic and political groups in society – is perhaps the most compelling argument. However, it should be noted that this was not the motivation for the present study. As such, no bold claims will be made that changing writing practices are the solution to the inequities that exist in society.

Instead, while embarking on a PhD thesis about the development of individual writer voice and the contexts in which it is facilitated or inhibited was motivated by a strong sense and professional experience of the inequity of opportunity given to both children and teachers in English primary schools,
in the teaching and learning of writing, the lens of the present study is focused on how this inequity manifests in the levels of self-perceived competence and autonomy of both teacher and learner and on how this influences the degree to which teachers can develop autonomous writers in a socio-political discourse that makes doing so difficult and even professionally risky (e.g. Bearne, 2017; Clark and Ivanic, 1997). There is necessarily less of a focus on the way in which the teaching and learning of writing both contributes to, and continues to be upheld by, this socio-political inequity. However, this chapter will continue with a brief synthesis of research and educational commentary looking at the pivotal place of individual writer voice within the current socio-political and educational discourse.

8.1.3 The ability to write with individual voice equals the ability to influence and hold power

“The vast majority of the writing that has high social value... is done by a very small minority of the population.”

(Clark & Ivanic, 1997, p.42)

Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) claim that all individuals are capable of writing - if sufficiently motivated - regardless of ability. However, such a claim masks the vast spectrum of access to and capability in writing (e.g. Graham & Perin, 2007; Kress, 1994). The distribution of writing attainment in England is uneven with a small proportion reaching the level of a skilled writer - one able to compose competently and develop individual voice (e.g. Clark & Ivanic, 1994; Kress, 1994). Williams (1976) describes these individuals as ‘transmitters’. Given that writing is central to two spheres of influence in society – education and the press – it is clear to see why these individuals are described in such a way (Clark & Ivanic, 1994). However, as Kress (1994, p.2) highlights, “few children grow up to be writers in any significant sense of the word.” Evidently, individuals without the compositional ability to utilise writing - for communicating their voice - will struggle to hold academic, social or political influence (e.g. Bearne, 2017; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Clark & Ivanic, 1997; Cremin & Myhill 2012; Kress, 1994). Williams (1976) describes these individuals as ‘receivers.’

The distribution of writing capability across the population may be uneven but it is certainly not random. Individuals described as working class and/or those from an ethnic minority background are relatively rarely within the ‘transmitter’ group. As a result, the voices of these groups within society are at risk of being marginalised. Perhaps confounding this effect, the voices of the few – often individuals
who are white and middle or upper class – may be viewed as speaking on their behalf (Clark & Ivanic, 1997). The result is that hegemony is maintained and arguably, emancipation in its fullest sense is withheld from the many.

Such a sobering assessment raises an obvious question: why? What is the mechanism for the continuing cycle of hegemony and the exclusion of a large proportion of society from access to the means to use writing as a voice to influence? Clark and Ivanic (1997) highlight disparities in experiences at home as being an immediate and continuing reinforcement of differences in the expected access to the highest level of writing in school. Those that see writing at home are more likely to expect to engage with meaning making through writing while those that enter school without such an experience may view skilled writing as something that is unobtainable and written by ‘others’. The irony is not lost on me that as a white middle class man, I sit here writing my doctoral thesis having grown up watching both parents writing medical journals and studying for post-graduate qualifications.

Once more, it is argued in the present study that as a teacher of writing, it is necessary and possible to have necessarily high self-perceptions of competence and autonomy to allow children - regardless of class, gender or ethnicity - the opportunity to develop writing as a form of expressing individual voice. As Clark & Ivanic, (1997, p.47) explain, “Some working-class children do of course ‘succeed’ in educational terms… They are strongly motivated.” This highlights that indeed, there exists an urge in all individuals to have agency that in theory should overcome the obstacles presented by educational norms (e.g. Bearne, 2017; Clark & Ivanic, 1997; Ryan & Deci, 2000). However, there are significant obstacles to being afforded the autonomy necessary to teach or learn writing that communicates individual writer voice.

8.1.4 How political intervention since 1997 has retained hegemony

“The kinds of writing which children are taught and learn to produce at school may provide an insight into the value-system of our societies.”

(Kress, 1994, p.2)

“Leaners are rewarded for their ability to ape the conventions, rather than for engaging in the underlying purpose for writing.”

(Clark & Ivanic, 1997, p.53)
Clark and Ivanic (1997) explain that a classroom represents an opportunity for equity. They highlight that the individual values and experiences of the teacher can counteract the dominant political discourse when it comes to writing. However, the present study argues that as the weight of intervention in the teaching of writing since the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy (NLS; DfEE, 1998) has continued to increase, the potential to resist has become increasingly limited. In an argument predating the introduction of the NLS (DfEE), Kress (1994, p.11) criticises genre-based learning in writing and argues that it leads to, “the subordination of the child’s creative abilities.” It is argued that such an approach leads to a conceptualisation that there exists a ‘correct’ and ‘incorrect’ way to communicate in writing (e.g. Bearne, 2017; Ivanic, 2004; Kress, 1994). The introduction of the NLS (DfEE, 1998) and, more recently, changes to the assessment regime and a narrower focus on constituent skills and features of writing (as outlined in chapter 3) have exacerbated this trend with attainment being measured by what children can correctly replicate. The focus on the ‘knowledge’ of the conventions of writing, at the expense of an ‘understanding’ of the power of writing to convey meaning can only be overcome, as suggested by the core hypothesis, if teachers prioritise the development of the writer and their individual voice over the writing outcomes.

8.1.5 Conceptualising individual writer voice

“Despite many theoretical and operational definitions… voice remains a slippery construct.”
(Cappello, 2006, p.483)

Writer voice has been – and remains - something of an enigmatic concept (e.g. Cappello, 2006; Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003). It is therefore necessary to explore what is meant by ‘voice’ in children’s writing.
8.2 Individual writer voice and dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981)

“The word in language is half someone else’s. It becomes “one’s own” only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it with his own semantic and expressive intention… language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker’s intentions; it is populated – overpopulated – with the intentions of others.”

(Bakhtin, 1981, pp.293-294)

Dialogism describes the concept that language is context bound and that meaning is not a unitary construction. Instead it is constructed between the speaker and the listener, between the writer and the reader. For voice to emerge in this dialogic discourse, it is argued that the writer must subordinate form and standard convention to meaning and must display conviction in their intentions. Even then, the reader will bring his or her interpretation to the writing (Bakhtin, 1981). Despite the late twentieth century publication date, Mikhail Bakhtin wrote about language during the early decades of the twentieth century in post-revolutionary Russia. It is all the more noteworthy therefore, that the messages and warnings given, are still relevant to the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools in the twenty-first century.

8.2.1 The impact of the reduction of language on individual writer voice

“A passive understanding of linguistic meaning is no understanding at all.”

(Bakhtin, 1981, p.281)

Bakhtin (1981) warns that when too much attention is paid to the constituent elements of writing - the linguistic features or the agreed form, and when these features are analysed and commented on as if referring to the writing as a whole, voice is absent. The unitary nature of linguistic norms is at odds with the dialogic nature of writing with voice. Writing in contexts where common unitary language is dominant, “inevitably comes across as flat and abstract (and the writing) is denied any artistic value at all.” (Bakhtin, 1981 pp.259-260). Similar criticisms have been leveled at the writing generated by children in recent years in English primary schools, caused by disproportionate attention being paid to the constituent features of text (e.g. Barrs, 2002; Beame, 2017; Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Fisher, 2002; Fisher, 2010; Ivanic, 2004). Indeed Wyse and Jones (2001, p.128) lament that, “writing for real purpose and reasons in order to communicate meaning has been replaced by an emphasis on textual analysis.” In contrast, when writing is read as a whole and context is considered alongside or
above form, voice can emerge. This is not to deny a place for the learning of linguistic structures. As Myhill (2008) and Kress (1994) argue, an understanding of grammar allows the writer to shape a text for the desired purpose and audience. However, it is the conceptualisation of the writer as a ‘designer’ of language – one that uses the available norms to express voice in dialogic discourse that is key.

8.2.2 Defining individual writer voice: dialogism

Bakhtin provides no definition of ‘what voice is’. Indeed, the concept of dialogism resists the very idea of a single agreed authorial voice. Instead, in attempting to explore individual writer voice in the writing of 9 and 10 year old children, two assumptions emerge. First, although defining what voice is may be conceptually contradictory, identifying what voice isn’t should prove possible. Within a composition, this may be indicated by the inclusion of various linguistic structures that do little or nothing to serve the meaning of the text. Between compositions within the same class, homogeneity of form may be indicative of writing that pays more attention to agreed forms and structures than it does to the communication of the text as a whole and the expression of individual writer voice. Second, while the concept of voice remains tricky to define, dialogism provides a means by which to define pedagogy that facilitates the development of individual writer voice. Teachers or teaching that pays attention to the interaction of writer and reader, the affective potential of the text as a whole and the subordination of the linguistic structures to the intentions of the author will be argued to be indicative of pedagogy that promotes individual writer voice.

The concept of dialogism implies that individual writer voice can only emerge if the idea of one, “single-languaged and single-styled,” form for writing is rejected (Bakhtin, 1981, p.266). This immediately necessitates a degree of self-perceived autonomy on the part of both teacher and child. To have the form and content of the writing controlled externally, to have the control relinquished to another (as stated in the quote that started the chapter) is to inhibit the capability of the writer to communicate his or her voice. The writing becomes dominated by the intentions of the reader (arguably, in many cases the teacher informed by assessment criterion) and the dialogical nature of the language is denied. It is clear that autonomy, for the both teacher and child, is necessary if the individual development of the writer is to be prioritised above the production of ‘correct' writing. However, in line
with the overarching hypothesis, self-perceived autonomy alone is insufficient. A teacher must also possess the competence and confidence necessary to guide a writer so that the meaning of the text as a whole is greater than the fragmented norms of its parts. Linguistic forms, vocabulary and genre should be understood in the context of the meaning of text as a whole and when a teacher is able to facilitate this, a child may then, “populate (the writing) with his (or her) own intention” (Bakhtin, 1981, p.293).

8.3 Individual writer voice and social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978)

“Children should be taught written language, not just the writing of letters.”

(Vygotsky, 1978, p.119)

Vygotsky (1978) argues that human capability and intellect is only adequately understood and determined by exploring the potential to acquire knowledge and understanding (rather than simply existing ability), within a social setting. The influential conceptual model of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) illustrates the fundamental role of the interaction between the child learner and the teacher or “more capable peers” in allowing a child to be autonomous in their learning and development (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86). This social interaction allows the learner to develop and move from their ‘actual’ level – one that is static and measures development as an end product, to their ‘potential’ level – one that is fluid and treats the learning process as development. Vygotsky (1962) presents the collaboration of thought and language as the developmental catalyst for this uniquely human social learning. It is argued that ‘voice’ in speech is, “the most significant moment in the course of intellectual development” (Vygotsky, 1978, p.24).

The present study is underpinned by the argument that voice in writing is significant, as in speech, in signifying the capability of an individual to subordinate words to meaning and operate in a social context. It argues that for this to happen and for voice to develop in writing, the learning must be socially constructed.
8.3.1 Social constructivist pedagogy and the promotion of individual writer voice

“Reading and writing must be something the child needs.”

(Vygotsky, 1978, p.117)

For individual writer voice to develop, the child must have something that they want to ‘speak’ about. Vygotsky (1978) argues that the writing must be necessary – it must serve a purpose that without putting pen to paper cannot be served. It follows that pedagogy that promotes the development of individual writer voice is characterised by clear purpose and authenticity. Further, this purpose and meaning must come from the individual child. The pedagogy of the teacher must seek to engage a child’s intrinsic needs, rather than to simply assume that the task will motivate because a purpose has been presented. Providing choice within a writing brief allows a child to feel that the writing is relevant and necessary. Only in these contexts can one be, “certain that (writing) will develop not as a matter of hand and finger habits but as a really new and complex form of speech.” (Vygotsky, 1978, p.117) Individual writer voice is argued to be synonymous with this ‘form of speech’.

Conversely, Vygotsky (1978, p.105) warns that while writing has the potential to play an “enormous role in children’s cultural development,” only when school practice is influenced by socially constructed pedagogy will this happen. As was highlighted in the previous section about Bakhtin, it is noteworthy that while Vygotsky made reference to the problems of didactic teaching against the backdrop of revolution and political and cultural turmoil in early twentieth century Russia, two criticisms in particular are still relevant in the context of writing in English primary schools today. First, Vygotsky (1978, p.105) warns that pedagogy, “concentrated entirely on correct production,” will overshadow the voice of the writer. While it would be inaccurate to suggest that pedagogy in English primary schools is based ‘entirely’ on correct production, there are parallels here with the disproportionate focus on transcriptional accuracy, as argued in Chapter 3. Second, Vygotsky (1978, p.105) laments that the, “Teaching of written language is based on artificial training.” There is an argument that as writing is complex and cognitively demanding, demoting the place of meaning within the teaching of writing means that a child’s individual voice is suppressed, that, “writing is given to them from without, from the teacher’s hand.” Again, there are parallels here with contemporary pedagogy that prioritises the inclusion of particular features.
The present study is based on the notion that the teaching of writing in English primary schools needn't involve the decontextualised training of composition or a disproportionate focus on correct transcriptional production. It is based on the notion that a self-determined teacher is capable of teaching correct transcription and enabling children to learn predetermined ‘skills’ in composition, while also facilitating the development of individual writer voice. It argues that this capability is characterised by pedagogy that is purposeful and authentic – pedagogy that seeks to engage a child’s individual intrinsic drive to communicate in a social setting.

8.3.2 Defining individual writer voice: social constructivism

While Vygotsky indicates that individual writer voice is characterised by writing in which the words are subordinated to meaning, it is tempting, in trying to address the adequacy of social constructivism in providing a definition of individual writer voice, to simply copy and paste section 8.2.2 which attempts the same with dialogism. It is clear that providing a theoretical argument for the contexts that facilitate or inhibit this development is more straightforward than defining what ‘voice’ is. Indeed Elbow (1981, pp.299-300), talking about this very subject admits, “I don’t know the objective characteristics that distinguish writing with real voice... there are no objective criteria.” Such a conclusion leaves one with something of an ultimatum: accept that individual writer voice cannot be defined and explore those aspects of writing development that can be defined or accept that individual writer voice cannot be defined and acknowledge that it is this enigmatic quality that makes a study of the contexts in which it is learned so critical, rather than studying how its features can be taught. This distinction between teaching and learning is fundamental to the argument of the present study. Unlike in the teaching of English writing to second language learners (e.g. Zhao, 2013) it is argued that individual writer voice cannot be ‘taught’. In fact, the very notion of one individual transmitting the necessary skills to thirty learners so that they can communicate individually is paradoxical. Instead, individual voice is learned. It develops when a teacher hands over control to the child. As Vygotsky (1978, p.118) explains, “Children should be ‘cultivated’ rather than ‘imposed’”

One may hypothesise therefore, that once again, a lack of homogeneity across a sample of writing may be indicative of pedagogy that ‘cultivates’ the development of individual writer voice – that
allows the words to be subordinated to meaning. One may hypothesise that teachers or teaching that pay attention to the communicative purpose of the text, the potential of the text to provide the author with a unique medium of communication that is necessary and authentic are indicative of pedagogy that promotes individual writer voice. Once again, it should be possible to identify this pedagogy and the chapter to follow will outline how this will be done.

8.3.3 social constructivism and the core hypothesis

The distinction that underpins the present study – that between the writer and the writing – can be understood and conceptualised using Vygotsky’s theory of social constructivism. Vygotsky (1978, p.86) refers to “buds” and “fruits” when distinguishing between a focus on the development of the individual learner and a focus on the product of the development, respectively. Vygotsky (1978) is clear that effective learning occurs when the environment prioritises the learner – their intrinsic need to explore, discover and communicate in a social setting. To extend the analogy, the development of individual writer voice is inhibited when the focus is on the “fruits” – in this case the writing product and the accuracy and correctness of the writing as a measure of ‘actual’ ability. In direct contrast, the development of individual writer voice is facilitated when the focus is on the “buds” – in this case the writer and the communicative ‘potential’ capability in a social setting.

8.4 Individual writer voice and language as social semiotic (Kress, 1994)

“For most people, nothing helps their writing so much as learning to ignore grammar.”

(Elbow, 1981, p.169)

There is a sharp irony that Elbow, (1981) a prominent writer about the concept of writer voice; one who sought to define writer voice as, “words that capture the sound of the individual on the page,” (Elbow, 1981, p.287) should be apparently so dismissive of an element of writing development that provides the mechanism for authorial design and voice (e.g. Halliday, 1993; Kress, 1994). Writing about the development of writers in English primary schools, Kress (1994, p.160) highlights that linguistic features are indicative of voice when stating that, “The function of grammar is to allow (the writer) to express a range of thoughts.” Writing is social semiotic (Halliday, 1993; Kress, 1996).
8.4.1 The expression of causality through linguistic choices in children’s writing (Kress, 1994)

“The structure is a record of choices exercised by the writer or speaker.”
(Kress, 1994, p.130)

By the time children arrive at school and are exposed to the rules and conventions of writing, they are already highly experienced in communicating meaning (and expressing voice) in many modes including, but certainly not exclusively, spoken language (Harpin, 1976; Kress, 1994). The cognitive demand of learning new linguistic rules and conventions in writing can cause a regression in the ability of a child to express him/herself in writing, compared with spoken communication (Halliday, 1993; Harpin, 1976; Vygotsky, 1962). Thus, in primary school, one could infer that writer voice may be slow to emerge and will lag behind the ability to express one’s voice in spoken language. One could further hypothesise that this theoretical gap between the capability to express individual voice in spoken and written language should remain the same, if not narrow, in contexts in which linguistic development is aimed at allowing the expression of individual writer voice. In contrast, if the gap increases – children continue to develop an individual spoken voice but this isn’t reflected in writing – one could infer that this is indicative of contexts in which linguistic development is not aimed at the expression of individual writer voice.

Kress (1994, p.131) warns that choice and expression is inhibited in contexts in which the learning of grammar is, “highly facilitated.” Thus, while decisions about the punctuation and syntax used in writing should be synonymous with individual writer voice (e.g. Kress, 1994; Myhill, 2009), writing on the page may not be a reliable indicator of causality when it comes to grammar. Current discourse in relation to the teaching of grammar and the pressure to include grammatical features as a means of providing evidence for assessment purposes (e.g. Bearne, 2017) means that one cannot be confident that grammatical choices can be analysed for writer voice, as should be possible (e.g. Bearne, 2017; Clark & Ivanic, 1997; Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003; Matsuda, 2001; Myhill, 2008).

Ivanic (2004) highlights the importance of teacher confidence and competence in promoting the ‘creativity discourse’, which encompasses the expression of writer voice. It is argued that voice can be suppressed by conceptually narrow teaching that inhibits the development of children’s ability to make
their own linguistic choices and prioritises error avoidance over risk-taking and self-expression (e.g. Beame, 2017; Cremin & Myhill, 2011; Ivanic, 2004; Kress, 1994; Myhill, 2009).

Conversely, those teachers that feel competent are able to support the development of writer voice by increasing the repertoire of linguistic structures upon which children can draw when writing in English primary schools (Ivanic, 2004, Myhill, 2009). A confident and competent teacher has the ability to make linguistic resources available at the appropriate time, rather than as a curriculum prescribes. Myhill (2008, p.274) explains that this is essential as, “writing development is not simply chronological.” The analysis of linguistic structures indicates that maturity in writing (including expression of individual voice) is correlated with overall writing quality rather than age.

For children writing in primary school there is an implicit, “pressure to conform” and children are eager to, “create a good impression,” for their teacher (Clark & Ivanic, 1997, p.143-144). In the current high-stakes assessment climate, teachers are typically under greater pressure to focus the writing curriculum on transcriptional correctness and providing evidence of linguistic structures, rather than on creativity and the expression of voice. As writing is increasingly assessed, “according to how accurately [linguistic] patterns have been reproduced,” a downward pressure is likely to narrow children’s conceptualisation of effective writing and restrict outcomes to narrow, knowledge-telling writing.

There is also an argument about the negative effect of inhibiting children’s autonomy, on the expression of voice, in scaffolding and marking of writing (Cremin & Myhill, 2012; Fisher, 2006; Ivanic, 2004; Kress, 1994; Kress, 1996). Kress (1994, p.131) warns that the development of the ability of children to make discerning choices about grammar - and for assessors to analyse these linguistic structures - is made more difficult if children’s writing is, “highly facilitated.”

Linguistic choices offer potential as a measure of individual writer voice. However, for two reasons, one must be cautious with analysing the linguistic choices of 9 and 10-year-old writers to this end. First, much contemporary literature about linguistic structures and writer voice is from research into the English writing of college students for whom English is not their first language (e.g. Ivanic & Camps, 2001; Matsuda, 2012; Zhao & Llosa, 2008). In this context, analysis of linguistic structures is primarily designed to inform pedagogy for adult second language writers so that writer voice is as prominent as it
would be in the first language. The second note of caution is that in order to explore writer voice through linguistic patterns, one would have to adopt a methodology based predominantly on work with secondary age children, rather than primary. The work of Myhill (2008) with adolescents, explores linguistic features that are indicative of discerning choices connected with effect, as well as the trajectory of linguistic maturity in general. Similar work with primary age children (e.g. Harpin, 1976; Perera, 1984) has tended to focus just on the trajectory of observable patterns in linguistic development. Patterns that occur during primary school include the move from coordination to subordination, (e.g. Harpin, 1976; Kress, 1994) increases in clause, sentence and word length (e.g. Harpin, 1976) and a reduction of the use of the personal pronoun (Myhill, 2008; Perera, 1984). It will be argued that these features are insufficient in a scrutiny of child voice for two related reasons. First, all three of these patterns are likely to be heavily influenced by prescriptive pedagogy. To a greater or lesser extent, teachers in English primary schools are inclined to direct children to include these features as a means of producing writing of a ‘higher level’. It therefore becomes very difficult to isolate these features as symptoms of children’s choices from being symptoms of prescriptive instructions. Second, as Myhill (2008) indicates, these trajectories plateau as child writers become more discerning about the effect that linguistic choices have on the writing. Therefore, in an analysis of voice, its variety (e.g. of clause type; of sentence length) and the ability to control this variety that will be argued to be most crucial.

8.5 Homogeneity as a measure of the absence of individual writer voice

All three of the theoretical positions in relation to individual writer voice indicate that the antithesis of individual voice is homogenous voice, or writing that is heavily influenced by an external authority – namely the teacher or teaching. This allows the hypothesis that within-class homogeneity may indicate the suppression of individual writer voice. This would be consistent with the dominance of the skills discourse and the compliance discourse (Ivanic, 2004; Lambirth, 2016) discussed in Chapter 3. The presence of homogenous patterns in children’s compositions would also be consistent with arguments that critique the influence of high-stakes assessment criteria (e.g. Moss, 2017) and with the explanation of how this causes the marginalisation of individuality (e.g. Bearne, 2017). The absence of
homogeneity should indicate the rejection of single-styled writing (Bakhtin, 1981), should indicate
genuine purpose and social communication (Vygotsky, 1978) and should differentiate between
grammar that is causal and has been employed to craft meaning (Kress, 1994) and grammar that
appears across samples as evidence of compliance (Lambirth, 2016).

8.6 Self-Determination Theory, individual writer voice and the overarching hypothesis

“The need for autonomy (or self-determination) encompasses people’s strivings to be
agentic… and to have a voice.”

(Deci & Ryan, 1990, p.134)

The more eagle-eyed reader may recognise this quote as a repeat of one that appeared in
Chapter 4 in relation to the potential for Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci and Ryan, 1985) to
support in answering the principle question about how a teacher prioritises a learner over the learning
outcomes. It is significant that the word ‘voice’ is used as synonymous with agency and this informs an
assumption that individual writer voice may serve as a proxy measure of self-determination both in the
teaching and learning of writing. 9 or 10 year old children may have sufficient self-perceptions of
autonomy to be agentic; they may have sufficient confidence and competence to write to a good
academic standard. However, it will be argued that it is only those with the necessary self-perceptions
of both competence and autonomy – those truly self-determined – that are capable of composing writing
that expresses individual voice. Equally, a teacher with self-perceived autonomy may wish to create the
conditions in which voice thrives; a teacher with self-perceived competence may be confident in having
the know-how to do so but only a teacher with the a high self-perception of both competence and
autonomy – those truly self-determined – can marry the intention with the execution.
8.7 Chapter conclusion

This chapter has presented the rationale for a focus on individual writer voice in the specific context of the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools. The following chapter will outline how the present study aimed to build on the results of Stage 1, to explore individual writer voice and to address the core hypothesis.

8.7.1 Stage 2 Research Questions

The Stage 2 Research Questions were posed with the intention of helping to address the core question:

‘The writing or the writer: What is the priority for a teacher of writing in English primary schools?’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2a. To what extent do teacher interviews and survey responses triangulate in terms of self-perceived competence and autonomy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. What do teachers’ perspectives add to the understanding of the relationship between self-determination and the development of voice in English primary schools?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c. What effect does the self-determination of the teacher have on the development of individual writer voice?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Stage 2 Research Questions were also intended to support in addressing the core hypothesis that:

‘Teachers high in self-determination will prioritise the writer above the writing product. Those low in self-determination will prioritise the writing product above the writer. High competence and autonomy are prerequisites of the capability of prioritising the individual development of the writer’
Chapter 9:  
Stage 2 Methodology

9.1 Chapter introduction and the structure of the chapter

The aim for the design of Stage 2 of the present study was to build on the findings from Stage 1 of the present study, to address some of the limitations and recommendations cited at the end of Chapter 7 and to further explore the relationship between teacher self-determination and the development of young writers in English primary schools. The design of Stage 2 aimed to provide primary teachers with a voice not adequately captured by the survey responses in order to more broadly explore the nature of attitudes to the teaching of writing with the intention of raising further questions and deepening an understanding of how such attitudes may effect pedagogy and writing outcomes, specifically the potential to write with individual voice.

This chapter cannot be viewed in isolation. Particularly in relation to carrying out and analysing the teacher interviews, the process and results from Stage 1 influenced the motivation and rationale for the approach outlined. As such, a high degree of transparency is necessary in this chapter so that the reader can see how the influence of the themes and findings of Stage 1 informed the data collection and analysis, while simultaneously demonstrating how steps were taken to ensure that the ‘voice’ of all teachers was fully heard. It was necessary to ensure that attitudes that were not consistent with, or even in direct contrast with, those reflected in the literature outlined in Chapters 2-4 were equally recognised, explored and analysed.

9.1.1 Structure of the chapter

The structure of this chapter will be framed by the chronology of the research questions, outlined at the end of the previous chapter. Section 9.2 will focus on the teacher interviews – data collection that took place after Stage 1 data of the present study had been analysed. The section will provide the rationale for the sample and measures adopted before outlining how a thematic approach to the analysis of the interviews juxtaposed the deductive identification of themes, based on the concepts and theories from Stage 1, with the development of themes via the inductive coding process (Braun & Clark, 2006). Section 9.3 will focus on the further analysis of the samples of children’s writing – data
collection that took place during Stage 1 of the present study. The section will outline how the sample from the teacher interviews informed the sample of writing scripts chosen for analysis and it will provide the rationale for the two methods of analysis: the first, a scale designed to measure voice intensity, adapted from previous research in a domain other than primary age writing and the second, a new method of analysis, designed to explore homogeneity, informed by the theories outlined in Chapter 8. The chapter will conclude by presenting the ethical considerations. As with the methodology for Stage 1, outlined in Chapter 5, the presentation of ethical considerations is underpinned by the ‘Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research’ document (BERA, 2018).

9.2 Teacher interviews (to address Research Questions 2a and 2b)

Teacher interviews were designed to address the following research questions:

- 2a. To what extent do teacher interviews and survey responses triangulate in terms of self-perceived competence and autonomy?
- 2b. What do teachers’ perspectives add to the understanding of the relationship between self-determination and the development of voice in English primary schools?

As will be outlined within Section 9.2, the design of the interview was modeled on an existing qualitative research design (Grainger Goouch and Lambirth, 2003) while the thematic analysis of the interview transcripts allowed the inductive exploration of all data, as well as a deductive analysis of the data related to the themes and findings of Stage 1 of the study.

9.2.2 Sample: Teachers

From the sample of 27 teachers who completed surveys in Stage 1 of the study, four teachers were interviewed. All four teachers were female and were teaching in inner-city community aided and Local Education Authority controlled schools at the time of teaching the children from Stage 1. Their experience ranged from one whose reflections were about her first year as a qualified teacher, one in her second year at the time of the surveys and writing sample, one in her third year and one with seven years of experience. The teachers invited to participate were informed that they had been chosen
because of their participation in Stage 1 and in relation to their responses on the survey about
competence and autonomy. The selection of the four teachers was made using a
Competence/Autonomy quadrant.
9.2.3 The Competence/Autonomy Quadrant

As the core hypothesis proposes that only a teacher high in self-perceived competence and autonomy will be able to prioritise the writer above the writing and thus facilitate, rather than inhibit, the development of individual writer voice, the quadrant provided a way of identifying teachers self-reporting as high in both self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy, as well as those low in both, those whose scores indicated that they consider that they are high for self-perceived autonomy and low for self-perceived competence and those whose scores indicated that had high self-perceived competence and low self-perceived autonomy.

Figure 9.1
The Competence/Autonomy Quadrant

The sample of four teachers was selected based on the mean scores for self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy from Stage 1 of the study. Figure 9.2 shows the mean scores of all teachers but with the selected teachers highlighted in dark circles.
Figure 9.2:
*Self-perceived teacher competence and teacher autonomy scatterplot with interviewees highlighted*

The two lines defining the four quadrants above represent the mean scores on self-perceived competence (horizontal line) and self-perceived autonomy (vertical line).

As Figure 9.2 illustrates, identifying a teacher high in both self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy was straightforward. Finding two teachers scoring relatively high for one score and low for the other was also straightforward. However, the grouping of autonomy scores beyond the mid value of 1.5 made the identification of a teacher low in both self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy more problematic and thus the relative scores, in relation to the mean were used to identify all four teachers. Figure 9.3 is designed for added clarity. It shows the mean scores of all four interviewees for self-perceived competence and autonomy, arranged according to the Competence/Autonomy Quadrant.
It is important to note that while Figure 9.3 shows the teacher number that relates to their findings in Chapter 10, at the stage of inviting teachers for interview, the 27 teachers from Stage 1 remained identifiable only by a letter code. A moderator gave me the details for the four teachers to be interviewed but did not indicate which of the teachers corresponded with which letter code. Thus, while overall I was expecting to hear interview responses that reflected differences in self-perceptions of autonomy and competence, I did not go into any single interview with a preconception of the teacher’s attitudes.

9.2.4 The inclusion of self-perceived autonomy-support as a variable

The concept of self-determination focuses on the self-perceptions of competence and autonomy. In this context the self-perception of autonomy means the feelings of an individual about how much autonomy they receive. These two variables are also those that contribute to the quadrant and the classification of the four sample teachers. However, the chapters to follow will also focus on a third variable: self-perceived autonomy-support. A teacher of writing will have a perception of how much...
autonomy they receive but they will also have a perception of how much autonomy they provide. **Self-perceived autonomy-support** is a measure of how much autonomy a teacher believes he or she provides for the children in the class. The survey from Stage 1 yielded scores for self-perceived autonomy-support, as well as for self-perceived autonomy and competence and so Stage 2 will similarly explore these three variables in relation to the teacher interviews.

### 9.2.5 Limitations of the sample

As highlighted, Teacher 2, who was classified as being low in self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy, according to the mean scores from Stage 1, recorded a self-perceived autonomy score of 1.86. This is above the mid-point, indicating that the self-perception was more inclined towards high autonomy than low autonomy. However, in relation to the mean scores of the sample, the teacher was classified as low self-perceived autonomy. Six other teachers recorded lower self-perceived autonomy scores, though that includes Teacher 1 who was selected as low for self-perceived autonomy and high for self-perceived competence. The remaining five teachers’ scores were relatively high for self-perceived competence. As Chapter 6 highlighted, teachers showed a greater tendency to report higher self-perceived autonomy than self-perceived competence so a decision was made that Teacher 2 was the most appropriate choice. A further limitation of the sample was in the identification and invitation of only one interviewee for each position in the quadrant. A sample size of 8 or 12 would have made findings more robust, would have allowed a higher degree of generalisation and would have provided the potential to discuss the impact of extraneous variables, such as time spent teaching. This limitation is discussed in Chapter 11.

### 9.2.6 Measures

The design of the interview questions followed that of Grainger, Goouch and Lambirth, (2003, p.10) when they interviewed children about their attitudes towards writing by asking simply, “*When your teacher says ‘Now we are going to do some writing’, what goes through your head?’*” The validity of subsequent interviewee responses in relation to the core theme of autonomy was argued to have been greater as the responses were generated from the participant, rather than being prompted by the
interviewer. As Section 9.2.7.1 will illustrate, similarly worded questions were put to interviewees in the present study to explore responses in relation to self-perceptions of competence, autonomy and autonomy-support. While the nature of the questions was intended to place the control with the interviewee and to allow a natural discussion without mention of competence and autonomy, in line with the “interview guide approach,” (Patton, 1980 p.206), the intention was to make judgements about necessary further questions during the course of the interview. Interviewees were informed from the start that there were four questions but that I would ask further prompt questions in relation to their responses and that my prompt questions would be either to clarify something that was unclear or to focus on the response in relation to the themes of self-perceived competence from the survey questions. Interviewees were reassured that I did not know what their survey responses had been and that I was unaware of whether they had been selected because of scoring relatively high or low for self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy.

9.2.7 Procedure

As outlined, the teachers invited to participate were informed that they had been chosen because of their participation in Stage 1 and in relation to their responses on the survey about self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy. However, the words competence and autonomy were intentionally omitted from the interview questions and only four standardised open questions were planned in advance.
9.2.7.1 Interview Schedule

An introduction was read out to each interviewee before the interview started. The introduction thanked the interviewee, reminded them of the purpose of the interview and study and explained my responsibilities in relation to ethical considerations. Please see Appendix 9.1 for the full introduction given. Once I had checked that the participant understood and that the participant had indicated that they were happy to proceed, the interview began and was structured around the following questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In relation to the year that you were teaching Year 5…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What went through your mind when you were planning writing lessons?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What went through your mind when you were teaching writing lessons?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Can you tell me about the writing that the children in that class produced?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What is good writing?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.2.7.2 Piloting

A pilot interview was conducted with an experienced primary school teacher independent of the study. The purpose of the pilot was to ensure that the questions were clear and unambiguous, that they were easy to respond to, that they did not place any obvious pressure on the interviewee and that they were suitable in facilitating a discussion that would yield responses in line with the research questions. No changes were made to the questions as a result of the pilot.

9.2.7.3 Recording and transcribing

Three of the interviews were conducted face-to-face. I visited the current schools of the participants at a time convenient to them. The fourth interview took place by telephone at a time convenient to the participant. All interviews were recorded and transcribed in full by the researcher. As
Section 9.4 will reinforce, recordings were deleted after the audio had been transcribed and the files of the transcripts were anonymised and stored in secure locations on a password-protected computer.

9.2.8 Analysis of data

As introduced in Section 9.1, the method of analysis adopted for the teacher interviews required the juxtaposition of the exploration of themes through a focus on the concepts and theories from Stage 1 of the study alongside the in-depth exploration of the data as a whole. Thematic analysis provided the means by which to combine a constructionist approach via the identification of theoretical (or deductive) codes with the realist or interpretivist approach and the development of inductive themes (e.g. Braun & Clark, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The Research Questions provided the structure within which to differentiate the thematic analyses used. As the section about the protocol for analysing the data will illustrate in more detail, initial coding took place using the interview data in its entirety and without explicit influence from the themes from Stage 1 of the present study. When codes were then clustered into themes, Research Question 2a and the triangulation of survey data from Stage 1 of the study informed the generation of deductive themes – those underpinned by the theories and concepts that also underpinned the survey.

In order to analyse the data in relation to Research Question 2b and the broader understanding of the perspectives of teachers of writing in English primary schools, codes were re-clustered by creating thematic maps, not informed by the theories and concepts of Stage 1 of the study. The emergent, inductive themes were generated with the intention of providing full ‘voice’ to the perspectives of the teachers.

9.2.8.1 Epistemological considerations

The research questions drove the demand for a simultaneous analysis that both sought to triangulate the findings from Stage 1 of the study and to broaden the understanding and critique of the notion of a relationship between teacher self-determination and writing development. This construction of parallel research questions was a deliberate, reflexive move towards a more qualitative and
interpretivist methodology. Embarking on the present study was motivated largely by a desire to explore the contexts that facilitate or inhibit the development of individual voice in children’s writing. As Chapter 8 suggests, the exploration of this enigmatic concept of writer voice demands that one is open to multiple perspectives, open to exploring unexpected data and open to the strong possibility that the data will not provide a neat pattern that matches a hypothesis or null hypothesis. The attempt to reduce the methodology of Stage 1 to that of analysing variables that are directly observable and measurable betrayed the predominantly positivist perspective and history of this researcher and became strong evidence that a change of approach was necessary. The thematic analysis of the teacher interviews demanded a reflexive approach to the rationale for coding and developing themes. This approach was supported by feedback given by supervisors, colleagues and external examiners. Such feedback ensured that any tendency to return to the theories and themes of Stage 1 was transparent as a limitation and ensured that decisions about methodology were taken to ensure that the balance towards the exploration of the data as a whole was kept. Thematic analysis allowed this combination of transparent reference to previous themes and the exploration of the data as a whole.

9.2.8.2 Epistemological limitations

As the interviewer and researcher, I conducted the interviews with an understanding of why the participants had been selected and with an understanding of the purpose of the interviews and the research questions to be explored. This was necessary as I was able to pose prompt questions, within the interview, to encourage discussion about the core concepts of self-perceived autonomy and self-perceived competence. Crucial to the validity of the findings, as has been outlined, the position of the individual interviewee within the Competence/Autonomy Quadrant was unknown at the time of interview. However, it is clear that the responses given by the interviewee would have informed me, to a greater or lesser extent, of their perceptions of competence and autonomy. Whilst this was necessary for the post-interview analysis, it is likely that this information was conveyed, again to a greater or lesser extent, during the interview. It is possible therefore, that the prompt questions, those not planned in advance, were influenced by my developing judgement of the level of the interviewee’s self-perceptions of autonomy and competence. This has the potential to have influenced the responses given and in
turn, the extent to which the responses could be interpreted as supporting the judgement. To attempt to reduce the potential for this influence, the analysis of responses given to prompt questions, rather than to one of the four core questions, were looked at carefully for the potential to be over-interpreted in line with the core hypothesis.

9.2.8.2 Protocol for analysing the data: Phases of thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006)

The thematic analysis of the interview data followed the process described by Braun and Clark (2006, p.87).

1. Familiarising yourself with the data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing, defining and naming themes
5. Producing the report

1. Familiarising yourself with the data

I made the decision to transcribe the interview recordings myself so that I could become familiar with the data on three occasions before attempting to generate codes. Transcribing the data myself also provided an opportunity to write up pauses, hesitations and intonation in a way in which I would then be able to fully interpret on reading at a later date. Once all transcripts were written up, I started with Transcript 1 and read through the interview twice before beginning the process of coding. The analysis of Transcript 1 provided a list of initial codes, as will be described in the next paragraph. However, even with the initial list of codes available, I read each of the remaining transcripts in their entirety twice each before coding began (see Appendices 9.2-9.5 for all interview transcripts).

2. Generating initial codes

Before initial codes were generated, I annotated Transcript 1 with expanded notes in relation to all responses given in the interview. This was done to avoid narrowing the focus towards codes too quickly and thus to avoid the risk of missing potentially meaningful themes from being recognised (see
Appendix 9.6 for Transcript 1 with expanded annotations). The close analysis of Transcript 1 also provided an opportunity to demarcate the responses that were given that were not in relation to the target year, as the interviewee had answered a number of the initial questions with reference to attitudes in relation to recent changes at her school. Using the annotations, an initial list of codes was generated and these were then used to code Transcript 1 (see Appendix 9.7). When Transcript 2 was coded, a number of codes were added and I returned to Transcript 1 to refine and amend any necessary annotations based on the addition of the new codes (see Appendix 9.8). This process was repeated for Transcript 3 (see Appendix 9.9). Transcripts 1-3 were then sent to a moderator without a code list and codes were then compared. This resulted in a code list of 33. Transcript 4 was coded and then the updated list of 42 codes was sent to the moderator. The moderator then coded Transcript 4 independently. There was 89% agreement in the way in which the transcript was coded. I had coded the text 45 times with the moderator agreeing with 40 of the codes given (see Appendix 9.10 and 9.11 for the coded Transcripts for Interview 4). The final 42 codes are listed in Table 9.1.
<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Influence of NLS</td>
<td>2. Prescription from school supportive</td>
<td>3. Positive support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Autonomy from school as neutral</td>
<td>5. Using other areas of English curriculum</td>
<td>6. Focus on summative assessment and levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Desire to provide children with autonomy /ownership</td>
<td>8. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing</td>
<td>9. Prescription from the school neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Understanding the needs of the children</td>
<td>11. Autonomy from school as supportive</td>
<td>12. Focus on transcriptional skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Unhelpful input</td>
<td>14 Support synonymous with assessment</td>
<td>15. Enjoys composing with class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Structured support given to children</td>
<td>17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure / inclusion of features (success criteria)</td>
<td>18. Formative assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Knowledge of the curriculum</td>
<td>32. Sharing ideas</td>
<td>33. Examples of autonomy given to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Start from curriculum objective</td>
<td>35. Grammar as a skill</td>
<td>36. Balance of transcription and composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Autonomy negative</td>
<td>41. Felt a lack of experience / competence with the needs of the children</td>
<td>42. Focus on composition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Creating themes

*A priori or deductive themes (for addressing Research Question 2a)*

In order to address Research Question 2a and the triangulation of interview responses with Stage 1 survey data, 30 of the 42 codes could be mapped to the constructs measured in the survey: self-perceived autonomy, self-perceived autonomy-support and self-perceived teacher competence. These a priori deductive themes with corresponding codes are listed in Table 9.2

Table 9.2

*A priori (deductive) themes and corresponding codes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Self-perceived autonomy</th>
<th>B. Self-perceived autonomy-support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Influence of NLS (features of text type/genre)</td>
<td>16. Structured support given to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prescription from school supportive</td>
<td>20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding /autonomy and free choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Autonomy from school as neutral</td>
<td>22. Low child motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Prescription from the school neutral</td>
<td>23. High child motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Autonomy from school as supportive</td>
<td>28. Structured support needed before autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Prescription from the school negative</td>
<td>33. Examples of autonomy given to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Desire for more support</td>
<td>24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Autonomy negative</td>
<td>7. Desire to provide children with autonomy /ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Pressure for assessment evidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Balance of prescription and autonomy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Structured support given to children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding /autonomy and free choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Low child motivation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. High child motivation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Structured support needed before autonomy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Examples of autonomy given to children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Desire to provide children with autonomy /ownership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. Self-perceived teacher competence</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Positive support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Feeling of support from the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. High teacher competence /experience /confidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Focus on summative assessment and levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Support synonymous with assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Felt a lack of experience /competence with the needs of the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Understanding the needs of the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Enjoys composing with class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Knowledge of the curriculum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A posteriori or inductive themes (for addressing Research Question 2b)

40 of the 42 codes were then re-clustered to enable the generation of inductive themes (codes 13 and 18 were omitted). Thematic maps were drawn in order to collate all the codes from Table 9.1. This comprehensive thematic mapping was carried out in order to address Research Question 2b and ensure that teachers’ perspectives were given full ‘voice’ and influenced as little as possible by the epistemology of the researcher. The final themes from the mapping process with corresponding codes are shown in Table 9.3. See appendix 9.12 for an example of an early draft thematic map.

Table 9.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A posteriori (inductive) themes and corresponding codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mixed attitudes towards teacher autonomy and prescription</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prescription from school supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Autonomy from school as neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Autonomy from school as supportive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Prescription from the school negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Prescription from the school neutral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Autonomy negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Desire for more support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Balance of prescription and autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Positive support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Support synonymous with assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Feeling of support from the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Influence of NLS (features of text type/genre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Focus on transcriptional skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure / inclusion of features (success criteria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Start from curriculum objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Grammar as a skill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Balance of transcription and composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Using other areas of English curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Joint composing / shared writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Sharing ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Writer voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Focus on composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Desire to provide children with autonomy /ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Structured support given to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding /autonomy and free choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Low child competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Low child motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. High child motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Structured support needed before autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Examples of autonomy given to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Child behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Pressure for assessment evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Enjoys composing with class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. High teacher competence /experience /confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Felt a lack of experience / competence with the needs of the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Focus on summative assessment and levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Understanding the needs of the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Knowledge of the curriculum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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4. Reviewing, defining and naming themes

All four transcripts were then scrutinised again to analyse whether the responses given were appropriately aligned with the themes to which they had now been assigned. A moderator completed the same process described above before the list of themes and corresponding codes was finalised (see appendices 9.13-9.16 for themed transcripts).

5. Producing the report

For the purposes of transparency and in order to address the distinct requirements of each research question, the themes will be reported separately, in relation to Research Questions 2a and 2b, in Chapter 10.

9.3 Writing samples (to address Research Question 2c)

The writing samples were collected during Stage 1 of the present study. They were used for further analysis in Stage 2, as outlined below, in order to explore Research Question 2c: What effect does the self-determination of the teacher have on the development of individual writer voice?

9.3.1 Sample: Children

The Stage 1 writing samples of 87 children were reexamined for Stage 2 of the present study. These children were those in the four classes corresponding to the four teachers interviewed. All the children had been in Year 5 (age 9-10) at the time of the writing task and were not selected nor deselected for any reason other than their year group and whether or not consent had been given by the child, his/her parents, the teacher and Headteacher. The rationale for selecting Year 5 children is outlined in Chapter 5. Also outlined in Chapter 5 with detail about the rationale, is that data was requested concerned children’s gender, their eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) and whether they were being supported by an individual education plan for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) at the time of the study. Of the four teachers selected for interview, three provided no data in
relation to gender, FSM and SEND. The fourth provided only information about gender. In that class, of
the 19 children whose samples were analysed, 8 were girls and 11 were boys.

9.3.1.1 Limitations of the sample

In the previous section it was highlighted that data for FSM and SEND is entirely absent for the
class. As Section 5.2 outlines, these variables have the potential to confound results in relation to
written outcomes. Gender also has this potential and so the fact that all but 19 of the 87 children’s
gender were not shared is a limitation. The most significant means by which the potential for these
variables to confound the data was reduced was by measuring progress rather than using a raw
attainment score. As Section 5.2 illustrates, when progress is the measure, national data for 2015
indicated that children eligible for FSM were 4% behind when compared with non-FSM. This is
compared with a 21% gap when a raw attainment score was compared. Children with SEND were 13%
behind in comparison with children without SEND. This is compared with a 60% gap when a raw
attainment score was compared (DfE, 2015). Thus, while focusing on a progress measure hasn’t
eradicated the potential for unknown variation between children in these groups and their peers, all
reasonable steps have been taken to limit the potential.

9.3.2 Analysis of the writing task

The writing samples were taken from those collected for Stage 1 of the present study. The
details about the writing task used have previously been outlined in Section 5.3.4. The procedure for
data collection of the writing task is outlined in Section 5.4. The analysis of the writing tasks, in relation
to Research Question 2c, was split into two parts. The first part involved scoring the composition as a
whole, using an adapted version of the Voice Intensity Rating (VIR) Scale (Helms-Park & Stapleton,
2003) and the second part involved exploring themes and features within, then across, compositions to
analyse levels of homogeneity.

9.3.2.1 Method of analysis 1: The Voice Intensity Rating (VIR) Scale (Helms-Park & Stapleton,
2003)

The ‘Voice Intensity Rating Scale’ was the first rating scale of writing, “focussed exclusively
upon voice.” (Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003, p.248). The scale is based on four features of voice
intensity: Assertiveness; Self-Identification; Reiteration of the central point; Authorial presence and autonomy of thought. For the purpose of the current study, only the final feature — Authorial presence and autonomy of thought — was to be measured.

The first two features are measured by analysing linguistic patterns: the ratio of hedges to intensifiers (assertiveness) and the frequency of the use of the first person singular (self-identification). The third feature (Reiteration of the central point) was measured by counting the number of times that the central argument was restated. For the following reasons, these three features were not used in the current study. First, all three features were designed specifically for the text type, which was argument. This is particularly relevant for the Reiteration of central point. It is doubtful whether transposing this for children’s narrative writing is valid. Second, the analysis of linguistic patterns was focussed on students writing in a second language. The signifiers of voice amongst children in English schools (e.g. Kress 1994; Myhill, 2008) do not correspond with those used in the ‘Voice Intensity Rating Scale’.

In the current study, only authorial presence and autonomy of thought was measured using the scale developed by Helms-Park and Stapleton (2003). The use of just one of the four features can be justified by considering the analysis of Zhao and Llosa (2008). The same rating scale was used in their study and an analysis revealed that Authorial presence and autonomy of thought correlated significantly with all three remaining features and, most crucially and most strongly, with overall voice intensity (r=0.895). However, the most compelling argument for using this feature of the rating scale lies in the language used in the analysis of writing. The methodology of both the aforementioned studies required three appropriate assessors to give a mark between 0 and 25 for Authorial presence and autonomy of thought. To arrive at the mark, 25 breaks down into four grade ranges, each with descriptors given to guide the assessors. All of the descriptors began with, “The reader feels that the author…” (Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003, p.260). To bring together the ratings of two experts of primary writing, based on their own ‘feeling’ about the intensity of individual voice in a piece of writing offered the potential to unlock the intangible quality of voice in writing (e.g. Elbow, 1981) and allow it to be rigorously measured. However, as previously stated, even though the use of independent assessors increases the reliability of the rating, the current study sought not to rely on this scale due to the potentially subjective nature of the scores given.
9.3.2.2 Protocol for scoring using the VIR scale

Scoring the writing samples

Each writing sample was read in its entirety before being scored using the scale shown in Table 9.4.

Table 9.4
Method of scoring for the measures of individual writer voice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Method of scoring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voice Intensity</td>
<td>The writing samples were given a score of 0-3 (including half scores) for voice intensity. The descriptors were as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(adapted from Helms-Park and Stapleton, 2003 p.260)</td>
<td>The reader feels that…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 = …there is little or no sense of individuality is displayed in the writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 = …there is a somewhat weak sense of individuality is displayed in the writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 = …there is a fairly strong sense of individuality is displayed in the writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 = …there is a very strong sense of individuality is displayed in the writing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extracts from samples scored

The following extracts provide examples of writing samples scored as 0, 1, 2 and 3 on the scale shown in Table 9.4. All the samples selected and shown below were amongst those scored by both the researcher and moderator.

Extracts from writing samples scoring 0 for Voice Intensity

1. I went to the beautiful (sic), wonderful, beach but it took bit long to go there. I played with the sand and made a sand castle. Then I swam in the sea. Next I looked to my friends and play with them.
2. I played PS3 and Xbox One I played infamous second son I unlocked different powers
3. Then I woke up and saw the teacher just looking at me and then I got a detention furthermore there was this guy.

(See Appendix 9.17 for the full writing samples for the extracts above).
Extracts from writing samples scoring 1 for Voice Intensity

1. Tom was at school. But he wasn’t (sic) in a good mood. Tom was on traffic (sic) light yellow and is (his) teacher said to him “this isn’t like you”

2. Time is not moving wear (sic) stuck at schoole (sic) for ever the teachers boring us people falling asleep will this day get eny (sic) worst (sic)

(See Appendix 9.18 for the full writing samples for the extracts above).

Extracts from writing samples scoring 2 for Voice Intensity

1. I went to school the other day,
I was very sad, I had no play.
The reason of that was because I was in trouble,
After that it became double,
Yep, it was the worst day ever

2. Johnny entered the hall. Everybody stared at him, he ran to his class and put his bag down and sat down at his desk. Hastily, Tom and Leonardo looked at him. A fat short woman slammed the door open, a ruler in her hand, everybody sat up straight this was the beginning of a school day…

(See Appendix 9.19 for the full writing samples for the extracts above).

Extracts from writing samples scoring 3 for Voice Intensity

1. At the school gates I found a £50 note, a football and gloves. Good luck I guess. When it was time for literacy, a UFO came and blasted the building and abducted the teacher. Perfect timing.

2. “Being a little goody boy are you Brian?” Malcolm had just entered the room. Although he was very short, he could intimidate anyone that got in his way, even the 14 year olds.

3. I saw boys surrounding a girl, calling names, push her in the corner and leave her crying. Why didn’t I help? (I suppose I thought I would get teased.

(See Appendix 9.20 for the full writing samples for the extracts above).
Reliability and Piloting

An independent marker, an expert in primary English, was asked to score a sample of writing compositions to ensure the validity of the scores above. It was agreed that the VIR scale was suitable in its original form, although the scale of 0-25 representing four grade ranges was replaced by a scale of 0-3, as shown in Table 9.4. The marker scored 40 samples (5 each from each class as two time points), on the assessment of autonomy of thought / authorial presence using the Voice Intensity Rating Scale’ (Helms-Park & Stapleton, 2003). There was substantial agreement between the two markers' judgements ($\kappa = .604, p < .0001$.) This was despite the moderating marker not opting to use any half scores (e.g. 0.5; 2.5). There was also a strong positive correlation between the scores of the two markers ($r=.948**, n=40, p=<0.001$) indicating that where there were discrepancies, the difference was minimal.

9.3.2.3 Epistemological considerations and limitations of the adapted VIR scale

1. Subjectivity in the notion of what renders a composition to be non-individual

For the use of the adapted VIR scale, it was necessary to be highly reflexive about the compositions that I considered to be lacking in individual writer voice. My experience of observing the teaching of writing in English primary schools means that there are features of children’s compositions that can be symptomatic of prescriptive pedagogical approaches. For example, the repeated use of temporal connectives, even when the composition doesn’t demand it, can be symptomatic of the VCOP approach (Wilson, 2012) - that focuses on Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers, and Punctuation - common to many of those schools I have visited. Extract 2 within those samples that scored 2 is an example of when such features appeared but the individuality was still judged to be fairly strong.
2. The tendency to interpret the composition as a recount

A significant limitation of using the same writing samples for a scrutiny of individuality was that while narrative provides opportunity for writer voice, recount presents more of a difficulty. Where children wrote a recount in response the writing prompt, the score did not go above 0.

3. Compositions that were of relatively poor transcriptional and compositional quality

A further significant limitation lies in the fact that it is impossible to isolate individual voice as the only variable. A relative score of 0 as compared to 3 does not indicate that the transcriptional and compositional quality is equal and that the individuality is the only difference. When writing was relatively very poor, the score did not go above 0.

9.3.2.4 Method of analysis 2: Exploring homogeneity

The analysis had not taken place in previous research and took place over two time points. The first analysis of the writing samples involved the identification of themes or features. This took place without knowledge of the corresponding teacher code and without knowledge of whether the sample had been composed at the start of the school year (time point 1 from Stage 1) or at the end of the school year (time point 2 from Stage 1). Compositional themes and features were not predetermined – the emergence was inductive as all aspects of the composition were analysed. All writing samples were read in their entirety first, before being annotated for themes and features. The frequency of the themes and features was then measured within class and within time-point. The compositional features outlined in Table 9.5 were found in more than three writing samples.

Table 9.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compositional Feature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commonality in the plot of the composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over embellishment with adjectives and adverbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misuse of particular forms of punctuation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonality in the content of the opening line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The overuse or/and misuse of connectives to begin sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue that stands out as adding to the narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unnecessary fronted adverbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative verbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The second phase of the analysis involved collating all the compositions for each class and for separate time points within each class set. This was done to explore whether within-class patterns were observable. The frequency of the features above – within each class and within each time point - was then measured. This is shown in Table 9.6.

### Table 9.6
**Frequency of compositional features found in more than three writing samples within any one class and time point**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compositional Feature</th>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Class 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Class 3</th>
<th></th>
<th>Class 4</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Point 1</td>
<td>Point</td>
<td>Point 1</td>
<td>Point</td>
<td>Point 1</td>
<td>Point</td>
<td>Point 1</td>
<td>Point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonality in the plot of the composition</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over embellishment with adjectives and adverbs</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misuse of particular forms of punctuation</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonality in the content of the opening line</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The overuse or and misuse of connectives to begin sentences</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final step involved matching the class samples to the teacher and their mean scores from Stage 1, their position within the Competence/Autonomy Quadrant. The class that corresponded with Teacher 1 were named Class 1, with all remaining class numbers also matching the teacher number.

### 9.3.2.5 Epistemological considerations and limitations

Specific to the exploration of homogeneity, it was necessary to be reflexive about the potential to highlight features that I have experienced as being synonymous with teacher-control above those that were either neutral or indicative of competent control over a composition. This itself is a limitation as the purpose of the method was to identify teacher-control rather than individual child agency. As such, the qualitative nature of those samples without notable compositional patterns was left relatively unexplored. To limit the potential for me to over-interpret the inclusion of certain features as being symptomatic of teacher control, the writing tasks were analysed before the teachers were interviewed.

This meant that at the time of analysing the scripts (scoring using the VIR scale and initial exploration of compositional features), not only was I unaware of the attitudes and perspectives of the teacher to
which the scripts corresponded but I was also unable to speculate on the basis of the responses from the teacher interviews.

9.4 Ethical Considerations

As outlined in Section 5.5, the ethical application for data collection for the present study received approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the Institute of Education, University of London in 2013, prior to the merger with UCL and prior to the data collection commencing (see Appendix 5.10 for approved ethics application form). The initial application for ethical approval included the potential for interviewing teachers, subsequent to the initial participation in the completion of the surveys. The headings given by the ‘Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research’ document (BERA, 2018) will be adopted to provide the structure for outlining the ethical considerations for Stage 2 of the present study.

9.4.1 Responsibilities to Participants

Every effort was made to ensure that questions, reactions and further prompts in relation to the responses of the interviewees showed respect and fairness. Questions were composed so as not to differentiate on the basis of any differences arising from significant characteristics such as age, gender and ethnicity. During the introduction to the interview (see Appendix 9.1), it was made clear that as the researcher, I was completely unaware of the experiences and contexts of the interviewee. Interviewees were reassured that any reference made to schools, colleagues and children would be anonymised and, if necessary, be removed from the transcript so as not to make judgements on individuals or groups of individuals who had not provided consent. It didn’t become necessary to remove any of the content of the transcripts for this reason. Participants were told that an electronic file of the complete thesis would be sent to them. Participants were asked if they would like to review the analysis of transcripts prior to completion.
9.4.2 Informed Consent

All four teachers were advised that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any stage without the need to give a reason. They were also advised that they could request that their interview transcripts be deleted and not used for analysis, again without any reason needed, at any stage between the completion of the interview and the completion of the thesis. I was aware of the need to be sensitive to non-verbal cues that might have indicated a wish to stop and in one interview, when a teacher was interrupted to attend a meeting, I made an offer to end the interview rather than await a request. Participants were informed of the purpose of the interview and how the data would be stored and used.

9.4.3 Transparency

The research design did not require any withholding of information about the study so full disclosure was given in the form of the initial summary and introduction to interview, as well as the option to contact the researcher and supervisors.

9.4.4 Right to withdraw

As described in Section 9.2, teachers were provided with guidance regarding the right to withdraw. In line with BERA (2018) guidelines, it was made very clear that no reason was required for withdrawal at any stage and that consent did not prevent participants from later withdrawing.

9.4.5 Incentives

Participants were provided with no incentives to participate in the interview process.

9.4.6 Harm arising from participation in research

The participation in completing the interview was considered low risk in terms of the potential to have a negative impact on the participants. It was possible that reviewing the experiences of the
target year of teaching could have caused negative feelings and this is why the option to withdraw was particularly necessary. The findings and discussion chapters will also focus on self-perceptions of competence and autonomy. Particularly as far as competence is concerned, no judgement will be made in relation to observer-perceived competence. Discussions will focus on the self-perceptions in relation to the research questions.

9.4.7 Privacy/anonymity and data storage

To ensure anonymity, all teachers and classes had been were assigned a letter code. Codes were not assigned by the researcher. Teacher and class codes were kept separate from contact details for the school and were kept in protected folders on computer. Scripts for writing samples were stored, and remain, in a locked cabinet. Interview transcripts were kept electronically on a password protected computer. All references to schools or individuals, as well as any information that may identify either the school or an individual were anonymised in the transcript and the recording deleted.

9.4.8 Disclosure Confidentiality

Nothing through the duration of data collection and analysis gave reason to disclose any confidential and anonymous data over concerns related to safeguarding
Chapter 10: 
Stage 2 Results

10.1 Chapter introduction: research questions and the structure of the chapter

This chapter will present findings relating to the following research questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2a.</td>
<td>To what extent do teacher interviews and survey responses triangulate in terms of self-perceived competence and autonomy?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b.</td>
<td>What do teachers’ perspectives add to the understanding of the relationship between self-determination and the development of voice in English primary schools?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c.</td>
<td>What effect does the self-determination of a teacher have on the development of individual writer voice?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the analyses addressing each Research Question will be presented in turn. In Section 10.2, the analysis of the teacher interviews will be organised by teacher. Within the section for each teacher, the findings will be organised according to the a priori themes with the aim of addressing Research Question 1. In Section 10.3, the analysis of teacher interviews will be organised by a posteriori themes. The aim of the section will be to address Research Question 2b in bringing together the perspectives of all four teachers. Section 10.4 will be organised by method of analysis. The findings of the analysis of writing samples using the adapted Voice Intensity Rating Scale will be presented first before the findings in relation to the exploration of homogeneity. The chapter will end with a summary of findings in relation to the Research Questions that will provide a structure for the discussion in Chapter 11.

10.2 Analysis of teacher interviews to address Research Question 2a: To what extent do teacher interviews and survey responses triangulate in terms of self-perceived competence and autonomy?

As outlined in Section 9.2.8.2, all initial interview codes had been generated a posteriori – the result of an inductive analysis of the transcripts in their entirety. As explained, the concepts, theories and findings from the study to this point will of course have influenced the coding process but this only explicitly influenced the analysis of themes once the list of codes was finalised. In order to address Research Question 2a and triangulation with Stage 1 survey data, a list of a priori themes was drafted
and the list of codes was then collated and categorised within these themes. These themes with corresponding codes are listed in Table 10.1, a repeat of Table 9.2.

Table 10.1

*A priori (deductive) themes and corresponding codes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Self-perceived autonomy</th>
<th>B. Self-perceived autonomy-support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Influence of NLS (features of text type/genre)</td>
<td>16. Structured support given to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prescription from school supportive</td>
<td>20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding /autonomy and free choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Autonomy from school as neutral</td>
<td>22. Low child motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Prescription from the school neutral</td>
<td>23. High child motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Autonomy from school as supportive</td>
<td>28. Structured support needed before autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Prescription from the school negative</td>
<td>33. Examples of autonomy given to children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Desire for more support</td>
<td>24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Autonomy negative</td>
<td>7. Desire to provide children with autonomy /ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Balance of prescription and autonomy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. Self-perceived teacher competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Positive support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Feeling of support from the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. High teacher competence /experience /confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Focus on summative assessment and levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Support synonymous with assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Felt a lack of experience /competence with the needs of the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Understanding the needs of the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Enjoys composing with class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Knowledge of the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The research question requires an exploration of the individual teachers in turn so Figure 10.1 is a reminder of where the four interviewees sit within the Competence/Autonomy Quadrant. At the start of the section about each teacher, a scatterplot of all teacher mean scores will be presented that highlights just the interviewee. The survey responses also yielded a third mean score for autonomy support. As outlined in Section 9.2.4, the survey scored teachers’ responses for items measuring three constructs: self-perceived autonomy, self-perceived competence and self-perceived autonomy-support. Self-perceived autonomy refers to the autonomy that a teacher feels that they are given (in this context by the school) while self-perceived autonomy-support refers to the support they feel they provide for the children’s autonomy in their teaching of writing. The model of self-determination does not include the construct of self-perceived autonomy-support and so the mean scores are not displayed in the quadrant. However, as self-perceived autonomy-support is one of the three themes in relation to Research Question 2a, in the relevant section for each teacher the mean score for self-perceived autonomy support will be reported.

Figure 10.1
*Mean scores from Stage 1 for the four interviewees*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher 1</th>
<th>Teacher 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived competence = 1.89</td>
<td>Self-perceived competence = 2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived autonomy = 0.38</td>
<td>Self-perceived autonomy = 2.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher 2</th>
<th>Teacher 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived competence = 1.86</td>
<td>Self-perceived competence = 0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived autonomy = 1.86</td>
<td>Self-perceived autonomy = 2.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.2.1 Teacher 1: contextual information

Teacher 1 was interviewed at the end of her fourth year as a primary school teacher. She had taught Year 5 for the third and fourth years of her time at the school, a community primary school in an inner city borough of a large city. A change of senior leadership between the third and fourth year resulted in discussion during the interview of recent changes to teaching practices. The interviewer was careful to prompt the interviewee towards responses that related to the year in which the writing samples had been taken.

Figure 10.2
Self-perceived competence and Self-perceived autonomy scatterplot (inc. mean lines) with Teacher 1 highlighted

As Figure 10.2 indicates, the responses to the survey in Stage 1 of the present study suggested that Teacher 1 had a self-perception of relatively low autonomy and relatively high competence. To address Research Question 2a, it is in relation to these self-perceptions that the responses will be scrutinised, structured using the themes outlined in Table 10.1.
10.2.1.1 Teacher 1: Self-perceived autonomy

The results from Stage 1 of the study show that Teacher 1 scored very low for self-perceived autonomy in the teaching of writing. Her mean score 0.38 was the lowest by a distance. As such, in addressing Research Question 2a and the extent to which the perspectives relate to self-perceived levels, it might have been expected that Teacher 1 would discuss restrictions on her autonomy.

When the interview began with the question, “what went through your mind when you’re planning writing?” the very first response supported this expectation and gave an indication of the influence of the National Literacy Strategy.

“Because we were following very much the National Literacy … so if we were doing narrative we’d be told exactly what kind of narrative.”

The words, “we’d be told exactly what kind” betray a perception that autonomy is limited. This appears to relate to Teacher 1’s self-perception score and reflects a trend reported in the literature in relation to the National Literacy Strategy (e.g. Fisher, 2012; Gardner, 2012; Grainger, 2005; Ivanic, 2004; Pearson & Moomaw, 2010). The influence of the National Literacy Strategy is evident throughout the interview.

“The objectives are very much given to you so the national strategies you’d have a whole list so speaking and listening objectives, reading objectives, writing objectives.”

However, the prescription described is counterbalanced, to an extent, by an explanation that once the objective and nature of the text had been given, some of the other decisions were left to the teacher.

“We were allowed to choose maybe three weeks if we needed it or just one.”

“Whereas even though it’s kind of it was still prescriptive it was kind of up to us how long we spent on it.”

There is also evidence that Teacher 1 felt that the school provided a level of autonomy for her to be able to adjust her teaching for the needs of the children.
“You really have to know your children so you need that little bit more freedom to be able to decide as a professional.”

In response to the research question the responses from the interview related to some degree to the teacher’s response to the survey questionnaire. There are certainly responses that suggest that certain decisions are out of the hands of Teacher 1 but there are also responses that show that there are judgements that remained in her hands in the teaching of writing. As will be highlighted in Section 10.3, Teacher 1 also casts doubt on the dichotomy of low or high levels of self-perceived autonomy. For most of the responses there is a sense that Teacher 1 is neutral when it comes to issues of autonomy and this certainly doesn’t align with the self-perception score from the survey in Stage 1. This raises the possibility that the survey responses fell short of capturing the complexity of self-perceived autonomy in this domain. Arguably, agreeing or disagreeing with a statement such as, ‘I feel that my school give me choices and options in the teaching of writing’ may not have captured the nuance required.

10.2.1.2 Teacher 1: Self-perceived autonomy-support

Teacher 1 recorded a mean score of 1.5 for self-perceived autonomy-support. Although this indicates a response exactly halfway between the highest and the lowest, it is well below the overall mean for autonomy-support (2.25). It is also notable that while self-perceived teacher scores for autonomy and autonomy-support showed a significant correlation (.706, p<0.1) in Chapter 6, the two scores for Teacher 1 appear to be unusually distant from one another.

In relation to the research question, the responses given do appear to relate to the mid value self-perception score to a greater extent. There are responses that indicate that support is heavily structured.

“It’s always like the getting started that they find the hardest so we kind of construct together ‘right opening paragraph ok right I’m going to take that away right let’s go to our tables and you write yours now’.”

“Some teachers prewrite like models that they are going to show them – I do that sometimes – I just think that sometimes it’s more beneficial for them.”

“So showing them how to put those ideas and kind of how to construct it in a way that’s like coherent, that makes sense.”
"I would have decided what they were planning so you know if it was instructions on how to build something, I would have decided on that."

However, these responses are counter-balanced with those that show a commitment to providing the children with agency and ownership.

"That it’s their ideas that I’ve helped them to construct and then they’ve got them there."

"Things like that just means that it’s theirs rather than they just sit their watch me, right ‘I’m going to write this.’"

"This was the point where now it’s their turn and to make theirs really individual."

The responses appear to be related, to a large degree, to the teacher’s response to the survey questionnaire, perhaps in line with what might be expected from the correlation reported at the start of this section, the responses also appear to align with those given in relation to how teacher 1 perceives the autonomy that she receives.

10.2.1.3 Teacher 1: Self-perceived teacher Competence

Teacher 1 recorded a mean score of 1.89 for self-perceived competence in Stage 1 of the present study. This sits above the mean score for self-perceived competence of all teachers surveyed. The responses of Teacher 1 do show an understanding of the needs of the children that appears to match her self-perception of competence from the survey.

"The things that these kids in particular need, you know the stimulus they need something that they’ve experienced to be able to write a significant amount."

"I still think you need to use your teacher judgement about how much input your children need."

"Every child has got just completely different problems."

"Knowing the children, knowing what they need to work on"

"You can change it so it’s at their level."

However, there is a sense from the responses that her confidence is fragile when reference is made to the unique difficulties of teaching writing.
“I think it is the hardest thing to teach because there are so many elements to it and I never felt confident particularly myself with writing I’ve always been – you know I did maths and sciences A-levels and things and music degrees so I’ve never really like enjoyed it but I think it’s the most difficult because there are so many different elements – you’ve got grammar, punctuation, spelling, you’ve got then actual content you’ve got tenses, sentence structure.”

“Yeah it’s been the most challenging particularly when you’ve got in your class a range of maybe three or four years – you know some of them below and some of them above – yeah it’s hard.”

As well as providing a sense of competence with addressing the needs of the children but with fragile confidence based on the perceived complexity of the subject of writing, Teacher 1 also provides a valuable perspective on her notion of what competence means in the teaching of writing. As discussed in Chapter 3, definitions of competence are multi-faceted and contested and while the research question demands a scrutiny of the degree of self-perceived competence and autonomy shown by responses compared with a self-perception score, there is also an opportunity here to see what perspectives about competence are being suggested. There are a number of responses in which Teacher 1 appears to align with what was described in Chapter 3 as a political perspective regarding competence; one argued to be influenced by the skills discourse in primary education (Ivanic, 2004). Teacher 1 appears to synonymise competence with the capability to summatively assess children’s writing in line with statutory frameworks. When discussing what had been supportive of her competence, Teacher 1 replied:

“Yeah, I think just kind of examples of children’s writing that we sat down and unpicked.”

“Yeah, particularly focusing on – I know levels are going out – but kind of the same thing because we’re still using levels now just sitting down and seeing, ‘look what does a 3c writer actually look like’ what would that be, what would a 2b writer be. Just kind of having that understanding of ‘this is 2b because they’ve used you know, they’ve got first person, there’s some full stops – there’s not all full stops… no. you know, exactly what it is to be that level.”

Teacher 1 talked positively about staff meetings involving professional development that was designed to support this process:

“We had weekly sessions and they were generally maths and English so we looked at leveling, we looked at things like APS, we looked at again, more books, we looked at how to plan for books for the different genres of writing and things like that so that was – you know the NQT year was what made me really understand about how to plan.”
Teacher 1 is clear that this supported her perceptions of competence while support that was perhaps influenced by a contrasting notion of what competence in the teaching of writing means, was viewed as less helpful.

“I felt like in PGCE we learned all the, what’s it called – the research all behind everything but actually the practicals of teaching – that’s what the NQT kind of showed you what to do essentially.”

In summary, the responses appear to be related to a certain degree to the teacher’s response to the survey questionnaire. While reference is made to Teacher 1’s understanding of the children and the development of her competence with assessment, doubts are expressed about the teaching of writing and there is a sense that confidence in this specific domain is fragile. This may again point to the failure of the survey to capture the complexities of self-perceived teacher competence. As an example that supports this claim, one of the items in the survey asks teachers to agree or disagree about whether, ‘continuing professional development has had a positive impact on my teaching of writing’. This binary agreement or disagreement may not sufficiently capture the complexity of the construct of competence when one focuses on a specific domain.

10.2.1.4 Teacher 1: Summary in relation to Research Question 2a

| Research Question 2a: To what extent do teacher interviews and survey responses triangulate in terms of self-perceived competence and autonomy? |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Self-perceived autonomy         | The perspectives given in the interview only appear to relate to the self-perceived levels of autonomy from the survey score to a certain extent. |
| Self-perceived autonomy-support | The responses given by Teacher 1 do appear to relate to the survey score to a certain extent.               |
| Self-perceived teacher competence | The responses given by Teacher 1 do appear to relate to the survey score to a certain extent.           |
### 10.2.2 Teacher 2: contextual information

Teacher 2 was interviewed at the end of her second year as a primary school teacher. The year in which the writing samples were collected was her NQT year. She had taught Year 5 for both years at the same school, a community primary school in an inner city borough of a large city.

**Figure 10.3**
*Self-perceived competence and Self-perceived autonomy scatterplot (inc. mean lines) with Teacher 2 highlighted*

As Figure 10.3 indicates, the responses to the survey in Stage 1 of the present study suggested that Teacher 2 had a self-perception of relatively low autonomy and relatively low competence. To address Research Question 2a, it is in relation to these self-perceptions that the responses will be scrutinised, structured using the themes outlined in Table 10.1.

#### 10.2.2.1 Teacher 2: Self-perceived autonomy

Many of the interview responses from Teacher 2 do appear to be consistent with the self-perception of low autonomy presented by the survey responses. Indeed, the words, “have to,” “got to,” and “need to” occur throughout the interview (on more than ten occasions) in the responses given concerning the planning of writing.

“We had to go thematically so you had to link it to your topic”

“What you need to include, is very prescriptive”
There are further references to prescription when Teacher 2 refers to two published schemes that are used throughout the school.

“Alan Pete, yeah he uses actions to link with words so you tell a story and they get to write it – I think it’s meant to be visual and things like that.”

“It’s called Success For All it’s a reading scheme that kind of streams across the whole school.”

And although there are also two references to autonomy…

“How you go about that – the hook to your lesson – is very much up to the teacher”

“You are given creative control over that. So no I don’t have to teach a letter on WW2, it could have been on anything.”

…There is also further reference to the control retained by the school:

“Obviously that’s not always the case – sometime you have to do what’s set out for you.”

To conclude that Teacher 2’s responses agree to a large extent with the self-perception score of low autonomy would be accurate but would not present the full story. This is because Teacher 2 is clear throughout the interview that she is happy with the school’s approach and that she finds the prescriptive nature of the planning supportive.

“Obviously the planning is fantastic, the flipcharts that we use and things like that. The school is very good at balancing between being quite prescriptive and you not having to panic about having nothing but you put everything onto it if that makes sense so there is a cycle that you follow and those flipcharts have that.”

“We’re prescriptive because we need to make sure that they cover a lot of genres.”

This finding raises questions about the notion of autonomy. As Section 10.2.2.3 will illustrate, Teacher 2 reveals that she lacked confidence at the time teaching her Year 5 class and it is notable that as a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) with fragile confidence, autonomy didn’t present as a positive. Instead, the prescription was viewed as having been supportive.

10.2.2.2 Teacher 2: Self-perceived autonomy-support

Teacher 2 recorded a mean score of 2.1 for self-perceived autonomy-support. This mean score sits just below the overall mean for autonomy-support (2.25) but is above the mid-point value indicating that Teacher 2 perceived that she gave children a fair degree of autonomy.
In relation to the research question, the responses given did indicate a desire to provide autonomy.

“So it was always trying to make it relevant to them.”

“But we tried our best to see what areas they were interested in and see if we could gear it that way.”

“We built it from there so we could try and go off in different tangents to suit them the best we could.”

“Oh obviously sometimes what I planned was not always what they want and I learned to just go with it in the end.”

However, there are other responses throughout the interview that do not appear to relate to the self-perception of autonomy-support as they indicate that, in reality, support was heavily structured.

“It’s very clear how you have to plan it and how they can improve upon their writing. It’s very/ a step ladder approach.”

“So I realised that I needed to have the best model for them to do the best piece of work, particularly for the lowers so I used to write my plan out first and put them on post-it notes. They felt like they had personalised my model – they could magpie my ideas and they’ve got a starting point for themselves so it worked quite well in the end.”

“Picking up the right vocabulary...they loved using the ‘right’ vocabulary.”

“But each book has a particular word bank – they have to learn vocabulary and because that’s up in most rooms anything that we were doing.”

“I had to make sure that their stories followed a pattern and there was a problem and things I like that.”

This disconnect, between the desire to provide autonomy and the clear references to, at times, heavily structured support, appears to be explained by references to the cohort. Teacher 2 is clear she felt that
the competence of the young writers was not sufficient for them to be able to make some of the choices that she and they would have liked.

“They had amazing imagination quite often – it sounds awful trying to reign it in – I had to make sure that their stories followed a pattern and there was a problem and things like that because they just had so many ideas that they wanted to cram in.”

“It’s a bit of a balance because particularly with boys you don’t want to crush their confidence I’m just thankful that they’re writing. Some of them have a tendency to go off piste don’t they.”

“They can’t have that complete autonomy. I’ve not let it that they can just write what they’ve wanted.”

“They can talk about their ideas can go whichever way but it’s just very careful the way you pick them out to make sure you get the piece that you want so that they’ll write the right piece.”

This last quote that refers to ‘the right piece’ also indicates that Teacher 2 felt a degree of pressure to ensure that the writing produced by her class conformed to particular criteria and that this was part of the reason that the desired autonomy was sometimes replaced by necessary prescription. No more is this summed up than in the following quote from Teacher 2:

“As long as I made sure I modeled that very clearly in their writing.”

As with the self-perception and responses in relation to autonomy from the school, evaluating the extent to which the responses in relation to autonomy-support relate to the self-perception for Teacher 2 is complex. There is a divide between the desire to provide autonomy and the pressure to provide structured support. This raises questions about the notion of a simple triangulation between the survey scores and the responses at interview. This also reinforces the argument, presented in relation to Teacher 1 and in relation to the other two constructs, that the survey questionnaire did not sufficiently capture the complexity of the construct of autonomy-support. As an example, it could be questioned whether agreeing or disagreeing with the statement, ‘I understand what the children in my class want to write about’ provides enough complexity to highlight the disparity between what a teacher wants to do and what they feel capable and enabled to do.
10.2.2.3 Teacher 2: Self-perceived teacher Competence

The findings in relation to teacher competence are far less complex than for the previous two themes. Teacher 2 scored the second lowest self-perception score for competence (1) – significantly below the mean for competence (1.77). The responses from the interview appear to relate this self-perception score to a large extent.

“I was an NQT at the time so I was very nervous about writing cos it’s that moment when you have to do it on the board off the bat with your back to them for a longer period of time than in like maths.”

“Originally, like I said, a panic.”

“(I feel now) a lot better than I did then.”

“In September it was probably the topic I dreaded teaching.”

As suggested in the previous two sections, viewing these perceptions in isolation can be misleading. It is likely that Teacher 2’s perception of her competence was influential in her positive attitude towards the prescriptive measures that the school put in place and influential too, in the decisions made when balancing a desire to provide children with autonomy and ensure that they were making the required progress.

10.2.2.4 Teacher 2: Summary in relation to Research Question 2a

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<th>Research Question 2a: To what extent do teacher interviews and survey responses triangulate in terms of self-perceived competence and autonomy?</th>
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<td><strong>Self-perceived teacher competence</strong></td>
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10.2.3 Teacher 3: contextual information

At the time that Teacher 3 was interviewed, she held the position of Deputy Head, with responsibility for curriculum, at an inner city school. She had been teaching at a different school, also a community primary school in an inner city borough of a large city, during the year in which the samples were collected. References to her role since the move have not been included in the analysis. Teacher 3 had been in the classroom for more than five years at the time the samples were collected and had worked for the Local Education Authority to help moderate writing for the borough.

Figure 10.4
Self-perceived competence and Self-perceived autonomy scatterplot (inc. mean lines) with Teacher 3 highlighted

As Figure 10.4 indicates, the responses to the survey in Stage 1 of the present study suggested that Teacher 3 had a self-perception of relatively high autonomy and relatively high competence. To address Research Question 2a, it is in relation to these self-perceptions that the responses will be scrutinised, structured using the themes outlined in Table 10.1.

10.2.3.1 Teacher 3: Self-perceived autonomy

Given the high self-perception score for autonomy, references to the autonomy afforded Teacher 3 are conspicuous by their infrequency. The three responses that were themed for autonomy
indicate a degree of surprise that the issue of autonomy would interfere with the planning and teaching of writing at all. This in itself may be viewed as indicative of a high degree of autonomy.

“I don’t think there was any restrictions.”

“I can’t imagine any head ever going ‘no, can’t be doing that’.”

“I suppose it’s hard for me to understand anywhere that would put restrictions on that.”

While these responses would appear to agree with the self-perception to a large extent, it is notable that all three responses followed prompting specifically about autonomy. As described in Chapter 9, the interview design followed that of Grainger Gooch and Lambirth, (2003) in intentionally omitting words related to autonomy from the core questions. As such, without prompts it is likely that Teacher 3 would not have raised the issue of autonomy at all. This raises questions about the validity of a self-report survey that forces a participant to respond about concepts that may or may not be relevant to their attitudes towards the teaching of writing.

10.2.3.2 Teacher 3: Self-perceived autonomy-support

Teacher 3 recorded a mean score of 2.6 for self-perceived autonomy-support. This mean score sits above the overall mean for autonomy-support (2.25) indicating that Teacher 3 perceived that she gave children a large degree of autonomy.

As with Teacher 2, Teacher 3 makes regular reference to her commitment and desire to provide autonomy to young writers when possible. This rhetoric agrees with her self-perception score to a large extent.

“I think giving children something meaty enough, having a nice hook in to be able to get a good piece of writing out – I think sometimes as teachers we can be a bit dry and boring... and how we expect lovely writing to come out of something that’s a little bit flat.”

“So I think certainly something that grabs the children’s attention something that you know they’re going to get fired up about is going to produce much better writing.”

“Having an exciting input to get a good piece of writing out of it.”
However, unlike Teacher 2, Teacher 3 provides concrete examples of teaching sequences that have given children autonomy over their writing. This appears to further validate the self-perception score.

"My cake was stolen and they had to use clues to work out who the culprit was. But then we then went into reports, police reports, newspaper reports... The writing that came out of it was incredibly well thought out writing because they were associating and when they found out it was actually the deputy head that had stolen my cake you know it was very much getting them all engaged but you know that came, it started off in my head while planning it as very much a maths/ but then in that first Monday’s lesson you could see where it could grow to"

"I know particularly in that that they then chose to retell the story that I had started of telling them about me seeing the UFO in the morning in whatever way so some were very sort of, The Sun kind of headline you know and others went for a much more formal superintendents report on the matter and I think even wanted a letter out of the HT to me about you know seeing things in the playground you know and obviously going a bit mad so yeah I think it is possible."

Despite this clear commitment and examples given, Teacher 3 makes reference to wanting to develop the degree of autonomy given to the children still further.

"I think also giving children – and I probably don’t do this as much as I would like to and maybe that’s is where the restrictions of the curriculum come in."

“Perhaps if we gave children more opportunities to choose what they’re going to write, when they’re going to write rather than saying well this is what we’re studying so this is what we’re going to have a go at writing."

"How often do you just give someone a piece of paper and a pen and go ‘do what you want’ you know which I’m sure would be absolutely chaotic and wonderful at the same time and perhaps giving just a little more free choice in that."

"I’d probably like to be a bit more creative with that in order to do it I think that’s a tricky thing and it’s certainly not something that I’m an expert at but it’s certainly something that could and should be developed."

Significantly, Teacher 3 appears to present a rationale for the limitations on the degree of autonomy given. She makes a number of references to the notion of children having to reach a prerequisite level of competence with transcription before compositional freedom can be utilised.

“So there was very much an aspect of spelling and handwriting and sentence structuring so there was lots of nuts and bolts of writing that we needed to get fixed first."

“There are some things that I think you almost have to teach, you have to direct... I suppose slightly more didactic teaching."
“You get to that stage of moving on and actually having all of that vocabulary in your toolbox that you can put into your writing again for choices rather than just ‘oh I’ve heard it, I’m just going to stick it in everywhere now’ because that’s the stage I am at to then making those choices ‘this is the best thing to use’.”

Teacher 3 appears to summarise this attitude when she reflects that:

“To be a good writer you need to have the tools and the skills then you need to know how to apply them and then you need to know how to apply them effectively and start making those stylistic choices.”

10.3.3 Teacher 3: Self-perceived teacher competence

The responses given by Teacher 3 throughout the interview indicate a strong agreement with the high self-perception score for competence given in her survey responses. Teacher 3 makes reference to her level of confidence and experience not just with teaching her class, but also with the curriculum for writing across the primary age range.

“I like to keep my planning flexible enough to do that, I’m not going to push on through with something if you know it’s not working particularly well I think that’s something that comes with experience – being able to be confident enough to let something go, to do something instead.”

“Well I think certainly our executive HT – one of the reasons he employed me was to look at the curriculum as a whole so I know the curriculum inside out, I write the curriculum mapping so I think having that good understanding of the curriculum as a whole.”

“As a teacher knowing what it is from the beginning to the end of the year they (children) need to have under their belt is very important and that just takes a while especially this year with the new curriculum.”

“You need to have taught quite a few different year groups to be able to learn that process .”

“I like to think I’m alright at it. But I’d like to think that I’m an alright teacher full stop.”
Teacher 3 reinforces this sense of experience, confidence and knowledge of the curriculum in responses that make reference to her role in supporting colleagues within her school and across the borough.

“So I had lots of the teachers involved and there was lots of INSET days when we sat down together as a team and pulled it apart and decided that this is what we wanted for the school.”

“I have my hat as a teacher but I also worked as (borough) moderator as well which meant that I went round to the schools and moderated people’s writing in Year 6 over the SATs.”

Significantly, Teacher 3 makes no reference to a lack of competence and is very clear that she enjoys teaching writing, that she is committed to being engaged in writing and that she doesn’t worry about making mistakes.

“But I really enjoy teaching writing and I think I’m not worried about modeling writing in front of children and getting up and making those mistakes and I think some teachers do wobble a little bit with and I think that being a writer yourself in front of children is extremely important so I do try and do that in the classroom whether it’s a good or a bad piece of writing because sometimes I do a rubbish piece and they have to help me with it.”

“I mean I enjoy teaching writing as oppose to geography you know I particularly love teaching poetry I love teaching poetry and getting terribly excited and bouncing off the walls when something like that comes up and I’d like to think I’m fairly competent but I don’t consider myself a particularly good writer but I just think we all can be just fairly competent writers – there’s nothing stopping anyone you know.”

The responses of Teacher 3 appear to correspond strongly with the self-perception scores given in the survey. The caveat to this summary, as discussed, is that in relation to her own perceptions of autonomy from the school. Teacher 3 did not appear to present this as being a significant factor in her teaching of writing. The very idea that autonomy could be restricted prompted surprise and responses given were only done so after prompting following the core questions.
10.2.3.4 Teacher 3: Summary in relation to Research Question 2a

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10.2.4 Teacher 4: contextual information

At the time that the samples were collected, Teacher 4 was in her second year of teaching in a community primary school in an inner city borough of a large city. In her two years in the classroom, Teacher 4 had worked for three different headteachers. At the time of the interview, Teacher 4 had relocated to a rural primary school.

Figure 10.5

*Self-perceived competence and Self-perceived autonomy scatterplot (inc. mean lines) with Teacher 4 highlighted*

As Figure 10.5 indicates, the responses to the survey in Stage 1 of the present study suggested that Teacher 4 had a self-perception of relatively high autonomy and relatively low competence. To address
Research Question 2a, it is in relation to these self-perceptions that the responses will be scrutinised, structured using the themes outlined in Table 10.1.

10.2.4.1 Teacher 4: Self-perceived autonomy

Teacher 4 recorded a self-perception score above the mean for autonomy. Early in the interview, Teacher 4 is prompted and asked if there were any expectations about the way in which lessons had to be planned. The response, “Not really no,” gave an early indication that the responses were consistent with the self-perception score. However, Teacher 4 then makes reference to the requisite elements of the planning format used by the school. It is obvious within these responses, that the planning format is viewed as a positive support rather than as a restriction on autonomy.

“Obviously we have things that we have to get through and things that they need to be taught and evidence that they can do or can’t do and it’s about trying to meet those targets.”

“We had a planning proforma, a document sheet with different boxes that needed to be filled in, in the main to help structure our ideas and processes to make sure we were doing the same thing consistently across the school.”

“Every school has a different way of planning I think the main ideas are – as long as it is helpful and as long as it’s consistent in the main across the school then if anyone comes in to look they know that the school has had an agreed policy on – it’s sort of that idea of non-negotiables really – every lesson has to have a clear objective it has to have criteria that is meaningful you know you have to show what the main teaching is and then you know how you might help those that get stuck you might push on those that are finding it too easy – yeah I think having a planning frame is really, really important and helpful to help you not miss bits out when you are thinking it through in advance.”

Teacher 4 then summarises this perception by explaining that prescription with planning was perceived as supportive and necessary.

“I think generally I’ve had autonomy – yeah I think there’s pros and cons really because you don’t want to get into a/ I don’t know, feel that you’re being restricted by having boxes to fill in. However, as long as the boxes are useful and what you are already thinking about then it is useful to structure how you’re thinking about your lesson.”

As the interview progresses, Teacher 4’s responses continue to agree with her self-perception score for autonomy but, significantly, this autonomy is not considered to be desirable. Instead, Teacher 4 makes reference to feeling that she was lacking the support that she needed, especially as she was a new teacher.
“I think in a way it was almost too much autonomy because I remember at times feeling quite lost about what to do with those children and how to engage them.”

“So I didn’t get that when I was teaching year 5 so and that was with an even trickier range of abilities and behaviours so I think I would have liked someone to come in to coach or team-teach with me it just would have been nice. Rather than coming in and observing, coming in and offering supportive guidance would’ve been nice.”

“You can follow a scheme but have someone come in and help you with it so I don’t think the two things are completely different but I think I would have liked to have had more guidance and people coming in and having a look and then offering practical advice.”

While the responses agree with the self-perception score, the key finding appears to be that autonomy is not automatically desirable. As will become apparent in more detail in Section 10.2.4.3, combined with a low self-perception of competence, Teacher 4 gives greater value to support and structure.

10.2.4.2 Teacher 4: Self-perceived autonomy-support

Teacher 4 recorded a self-perception score of 2.5 for autonomy-support, above the mean of 2.25. There are early responses given in the interview that appear consistent with a desire to provide children with autonomy.

“In ways that are as engaging as possible for a group of children generally disengaged with writing so I’d always try to set an exciting context for them.”

“I guess I am in the main thinking about getting them on board, engagement and thinking about what I would be doing or saying or showing them that would engage them enough to buy into the lessons so a lot of I don’t know – trying to make it meaningful for them.”

However, later responses appear indicative of an uneasy relationship between autonomy and scaffolded support – notably mirroring the responses in relation to Teacher 4’s own feelings of autonomy. These responses are exemplified by Teacher 4’s description of “autonomy with guidance – sometimes heavy guidance.”

“I would’ve probably given them options, to an extent, of things that they could write about – if they were writing a story I would have said you can either do/ set it here or here or your main character can be like this or like that and expose them to a number of different options and have them choose so that they didn’t feel that it was being forced down their throats.”

“More giving them a choice of scaffold... you know, I kind of link autonomy to confidence I suppose where if you need / if you want your hand held you can have this one or I guess if you feel confident then you have the autonomy to choose that ‘I don’t want what you are offering me, I’m going to do it this way.’ As long as you’re meeting that objective.”
“So there was quite often the issue of sequencing where I would try to use things like storyboards with them and plan out what happens first, what happens next and does that make sense but when we gave them the skills and then let them free and said ‘right now you go and produce your writing’ it did quite often come out that they had an idea that maybe they ran away with and so their sentence structure went out the window and after all that teaching of, you know, capital letters and conjunctions and varying sentence openers, you would just get, ‘and then and then and then’ “

10.2.4.3 Teacher 4: Self-perceived teacher competence

Teacher 4 recorded the lowest score for self-perceived competence amongst all participants in Stage 1 of the present study. Her score of 0.88 is significantly below the mean and is indicative of a response between ‘completely false’ and ‘mainly false’ for positively worded questions about self-perceived competence. In apparent contrast to the low score for self-perceived competence, Teacher 4 provides early responses that show an understanding of the needs of the writers in her class.

“Differentiation and making that learning accessible for different groups of children with different needs and abilities whether it be SEN or the higher level that needs to be pushed.”

“It was about engagement because a lot of them were turned off writing but I had more success through doing things like comic strips and story boarding and that sort of thing.”

However, as the interview progresses, the responses given appear to relate more strongly to the low self-perception score for competence. In fact, Teacher 4 makes reference to a lack of experience combined with fragile confidence and describes that she had, “felt slightly out of my depth.”

“Yeah I think I just generally feel that way – I’m not sure whether other teachers feel similarly or if that’s just a personal thing to do with my subject knowledge or my professional development.”

“I didn’t really have the experience – I didn’t feel experienced enough to deal with children at that low end of the scale of ability who are more sort of key stage one level but in Year 5.”

“Whereas I find literacy I bit more – the writing is a bit of a grey area really and more of a spectrum rather than discrete – you can do this but you can’t do that.”

“That was tricky to deal with, building up writing stamina also because there was such a diverse mix – I had children with English as an additional language (EAL) and a lot of additional learning needs their vocabulary wasn’t brilliant and their sentence structure wasn’t always clear. So there were children who had additional needs – even dyslexics – it made their writing quite difficult to read not just from the handwriting perspective and spelling – also the sentence structure didn’t really make a lot of sense- I found that quite hard to work on.”

When reflecting on whether Teacher 4’s responses relate to the self-perception scores, it is probably of secondary significance that they seem to agree to a large extent. More significant in the responses of
Teacher 4 is the relationship between high self-perceived autonomy and low self-perceived competence. Teacher 4 feels that she had “too much autonomy” at a time when she felt “out of (her) depth” as a new teacher.

10.2.4.4 Teacher 4: Summary in relation to Research Question 2a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question 2a: To what extent do teacher interviews and survey responses triangulate in terms of self-perceived competence and autonomy?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived autonomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-perceived autonomy-support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-perceived teacher Competence</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

10.2.5 Summary of themes in relation to Research Question 2a: To what extent do teacher interviews and survey responses triangulate in terms of self-perceived competence and autonomy?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Self-perceived autonomy | The responses of all four teachers appear to agree to a certain or greater extent with the self-perception scores given in the survey. However, to answer the research question by claiming that this agreement in crude levels is synonymous with a strong relationship between survey and interview would be misleading. Teacher 1 and 2 self-perceived low autonomy and this was supported by interview responses. However, both teachers were positive about the level of prescription with Teacher 1 balanced in the school’s approach and Teacher 2 making clear that the prescription had provided much needed support. This view is replicated by Teacher 4. Her responses also agree with her self-perception of high autonomy from the school. For Teacher 4 this was undesirable and left her feeling unsupported and ‘out of (her) depth’. Teacher 3’s responses also agreed with the high self-perception score for autonomy but it was notable that references to autonomy were only provided when prompted. | 1. Autonomy isn’t necessarily desirable or relevant for a teacher of writing.  
2. The balance of perceived autonomy and prescription appears to be more relevant to a teacher than autonomy itself and the desired balance appears to be mediated by experience, competence and confidence.  
3. A binary option to agree or disagree on a survey item may have failed to capture the complexity of the construct of self-perceived autonomy – especially for a specific domain such as writing. |
| Self-perceived autonomy-support | All four teachers give responses that indicate a wish and commitment to provide autonomy for 1. A self-perception score for autonomy-support may simply |
The writers in their classes. This is consistent with the self-perception scores for autonomy-support that are all above the mid-point score of 1.5. However, it is notable that only Teacher 3 provides examples of having provided autonomy and only Teacher 3 is clear about how she manages the balance between support and freedom. This is consistent with the hypothesis that prioritising the writer and the development of voice requires both high competence and high autonomy. Teachers 1, 2 and 4 appear to be less at ease with the balance between structured support and autonomy. All three give responses that indicate that the teaching of writing is, at times, heavily structured, despite their wish to provide autonomy. Phrases such as, “As long as I made sure I modeled that very clearly in their writing” and “autonomy with guidance – sometimes heavy guidance” reflect this uneasy relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>More tentative and displays less confidence but provides responses consistent with the higher than the mean self-perceived competence score. Notably, while competence is synonymous with experience, curriculum and the support of colleagues for Teacher 3, the capability to summatively assess writing is what appears to provide Teacher 1 with her sense of competence. This draws interesting questions related to the multi-faceted nature of competence that is discussed in Chapter 3.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>Low self-perception scores and their responses make regular reference to their lack of confidence and experience. They use words such as ‘panic’, ‘nervous’ and ‘dread’ when describing the teaching of writing. In contrast Teacher 3 describes the enjoyment of teaching writing. Her responses make reference to experience with the curriculum and to supporting colleagues both in her own school and across the borough. She refers to her confidence in her teaching of writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>High self-perceived competence and autonomy seems at ease with the balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>Low self-perception scores and their responses make regular reference to their lack of confidence and experience. They use words such as ‘panic’, ‘nervous’ and ‘dread’ when describing the teaching of writing. In contrast Teacher 3 describes the enjoyment of teaching writing. Her responses make reference to experience with the curriculum and to supporting colleagues both in her own school and across the borough. She refers to her confidence in her teaching of writing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a strong agreement between the responses of all four teachers and the self-perception scores given in their respective surveys for competence. Teachers 2 and 4 gave low self-perception scores and their responses make regular reference to their lack of confidence and experience. They use words such as ‘panic’, ‘nervous’ and ‘dread’ when describing the teaching of writing. In contrast Teacher 3 describes the enjoyment of teaching writing. Her responses make reference to experience with the curriculum and to supporting colleagues both in her own school and across the borough. She refers to her confidence in her teaching of writing. Teacher 1 more tentative and displays less confidence but provides responses consistent with the higher than the mean self-perceived competence score. Notably, while competence is synonymous with experience, curriculum and the support of colleagues for Teacher 3, the capability to summatively assess writing is what appears to provide Teacher 1 with her sense of competence. This draws interesting questions related to the multi-faceted nature of competence that is discussed in Chapter 3.

- Competence appears to relate to, or be synonymous with, experience, confidence and enjoyment.
- Responses concerning competence evoke strong emotional responses that have implications for the nature of the teaching of writing.
- A self-perception score for competence does nothing to indicate what the notion of competence means to the teacher surveyed.

1. The balance between structured support and autonomy is a delicate and tricky one.
2. Only the teacher with high self-perceived competence and autonomy seems at ease with the balance.
3. Give an indication of the wish to provide autonomy.
10.3 Analysis of teacher interviews to address Research Question 2b: What do teachers’ perspectives add to the understanding of the relationship between self-determination and the development of voice in English primary schools?

As outlined in Chapter 9, initial interview codes were generated as a result of an inductive analysis of the transcripts in their entirety. Table 10.2, a repeat of Table 9.3 shows the finalised four themes that will provide the structure for the findings from the teacher interviews in relation to Research Question 2b.

Table 10.2
A posteriori (inductive) themes and corresponding codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Mixed attitudes towards teacher autonomy and prescription</th>
<th>2. Multiple influences on pedagogy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Prescription from school supportive</td>
<td>1. Influence of NLS (features of text type/genre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Autonomy from school as neutral</td>
<td>12. Focus on transcriptional skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Autonomy from school as supportive</td>
<td>17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure / inclusion of features (success criteria)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Prescription from the school negative</td>
<td>34. Start from curriculum objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Prescription from the school neutral</td>
<td>35. Grammar as a skill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Autonomy negative</td>
<td>36. Balance of transcription and composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Desire for more support</td>
<td>5. Using other areas of English curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Positive support</td>
<td>32. Sharing ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Support synonymous with assessment</td>
<td>29. Writer voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Feeling of support from the school</td>
<td>42. Focus on composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tensions in the provision of autonomy and competence for children</td>
<td>4. Complexities of competence (synonyms and child-level influences)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Desire to provide children with autonomy /ownership</td>
<td>8. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Structured support given to children</td>
<td>15. Enjoys composing with class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding /autonomy and free choice</td>
<td>30. High teacher competence /experience /confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Low child competence</td>
<td>41. Felt a lack of experience / competence with the needs of the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Low child motivation</td>
<td>6. Focus on summative assessment and levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. High child motivation</td>
<td>10. Understanding the needs of the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum</td>
<td>31. Knowledge of the curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Examples of autonomy given to children</td>
<td>38. Pressure for assessment evidence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10.3.1 Mixed attitudes towards teacher autonomy and prescription

The core hypothesis of the present study proposes that only a teacher with high levels of self-determination – that is high self-perceived competence and autonomy – is able to prioritise the writer above the writing product and facilitate the development of individual voice. In responding to Research Question 2b, it is immediately clear that the perspectives of the teachers add a level of complexity to the notion of what autonomy means to a teacher of writing in English primary schools.

There are four findings that will be presented within the responses categorised within this theme. These findings relate to the research question and add to the understanding of the relationship between teacher self-determination and the development of writers in English primary schools. The four findings were that:

1. The teachers interviewed spoke positively about prescriptive policies and schemes being supportive and, at times, spoke about autonomy negatively.
2. In most of the responses within this theme, references to autonomy were neutral.
3. Specific references to autonomy often related to the individual elements of the role of a teacher rather than to an overall perception.
4. Perceptions of autonomy appear to be influenced by degrees of self-perceived competence, experience or confidence.

Across all four interviews, responses made reference to the benefits of – and support provided by – agreed policies and planning formats. There were no responses that indicated a desire for more autonomy with the way in which planning took place in the school.

“If anyone comes in to look they know that the school has had an agreed policy.”
   (Teacher 4)

“The school is very good at balancing between being quite prescriptive and you not having to panic about having nothing… it is laid out basically for you.”
   (Teacher 2)

“So if we were doing narrative we’d be told exactly what kind of narrative. It is historical so we were given more kind of objectives to meet.”
   (Teacher 1)

Only one of the teachers makes reference to published schemes used by the school but, again, these references were positive about the support that the scheme provided.
“Alan Pete, yeah he uses actions to link with words so you tell a story and they get to write it.”
(Teacher 2)

Not only were references to prescribed policies and planning formats spoken about positively or neutrally, rather than as a restriction on autonomy, but autonomy itself was referred to by one teacher as unsupported and undesirable.

“It was almost too much autonomy because I remember at times feeling quite lost.”
(Teacher 4)

When references were made to levels of autonomy or prescription, it is notable that these were very balanced. There is no sense that autonomy is particularly positive or that prescription is particularly negative.

“I think generally I’ve had autonomy – yeah I think there’s pros and cons.”
(Teacher 4)

“We’re prescriptive because we need to make sure that they cover a lot of genres.”
(Teacher 2)

Where autonomy had obviously been given to Teacher 3 by the school, one could infer that this was positive but it is surprise at the notion of restriction rather than a positive response that is given.

“It’s hard for me to understand anywhere that would put restrictions on that.”
(Teacher 3)

In contrast to the binary nature of the survey in Stage 1, in which teachers would opt to agree or disagree with statements about their perceptions of autonomy, the responses above reinforce the notion that there is complexity and nuance that the survey wasn’t able to capture in the present study.

A further limitation of the survey, suggested by the interview responses, is that self-perception scores from Stage 1 of the present study provide an overall score for autonomy. Similarly, the concept of self-determination being beneficial is based on general levels of perceived autonomy. However, references made to autonomy during the interviews tended to be specific to particular aspects of the job, rather than being presented as overarching feelings.

“But how you go about that – the hook to your lesson – is very much up to the teacher.”
“We were allowed to choose maybe three weeks if we needed it or just one.”

Perhaps most notable in relation to the interaction of the self-perceptions of competence and autonomy, (central to the concept of self-determination), there is a direct contrast in how autonomy is discussed that appears related to the perceived levels of competence, confidence or expertise. While one teacher is clear that her autonomy is appropriate because of her level of competence…

“I had that freedom because I wrote the curriculum for them.”

… another teacher is equally clear that the level of autonomy was inappropriate because of her perceived lack of competence:

“It was almost too much autonomy because I remember at times feeling quite lost.”

10.3.1.5 Summary in relation to Research Question 2b

What these findings add to the understanding of the relationship between self-determination and the development of voice in English primary schools is to:

1. Raise questions about whether a scale that produces a quantitative aggregate self-perceived autonomy score provides sufficient complexity

2. Counter any implication that autonomy and prescription are opposite ends of a ‘desirable to undesirable’ dichotomy

3. Emphasise the importance, to a teacher, of the balance between autonomy and prescription

4. Support the notion that high self-determination – that is the combination of high self-perceived autonomy and high self-perceived competence – is key to providing teaching capable of developing individual voice, rather than self-perceptions of autonomy or competence individually.

The implications of these findings will be discussed in Chapter 11.

10.3.2 Multiple influences on pedagogy

The previous section adds complexity to the understanding of the place of autonomy in the capability to prioritise the writer above the writing product and facilitate the development of individual
voice. In relation to Research Question 2b, the responses from the teacher interviews also indicate that external and internal influences on pedagogy for writing vary from teacher to teacher. These influences may have potential in providing a proxy measure for autonomy.

There appear to be three broad influences on the pedagogy described by the teachers during the interviews. These influences are likely to mediate, and be mediated by, the degree to which a teacher is capable of focusing on the development of an individual writer and the development of written voice. This will be discussed in Chapter 11. The three influences were:

1. Pedagogy influenced by the NLS (DfEE, 1998) and other prescriptive schemes of work
2. Pedagogy influenced by external assessment foci
3. Pedagogy influenced by the needs of the writer and/or reader

All but one of the teachers interviewed made reference to the NLS, either directly by name or indirectly by reference to pedagogical features that underpinned the implementation of the NLS. This is noteworthy as the interviews were conducted four years or more after the resources from the Primary National Strategies (DfES, 2006) were archived by the coalition government in 2010.

"Because we were following very much the National Literacy the old style." (Teacher 1)

"You start by immersing them completely in the genre, so you’re looking at – so if you’re doing recount you’re looking at different types of letters, if you’re doing a newspaper you’re looking at newspapers." (Teacher 2)

“All sorts of genres, fiction, non-fiction.” (Teacher 3)

It is also worth noting that the only teacher not to make reference to the NLS, Teacher 4, was the one who was clearest about the wish to have had more structure and support. As well as reference to the NLS, Teacher 2 also made reference to two schemes for teaching that her school subscribed to.

“Alan Pete, yeah he uses actions to link with words write certain sentences in one and another sentence in another so using stars or dots to help them with full stops.” (Teacher 2)
The responses of all four teachers indicate that future exploration of the relative autonomy versus prescription of a teacher may involve a closer focus on the specific nature and content of schemes of work that are used by the teacher.

All four teachers made reference to the need to support children with the inclusion of particular elements of writing. These references were themed as being influenced by external assessment foci because they either make direct reference to this or because the emphasis is on the inclusion of features without mention of the needs or wants of the writer.

“Remember the things that we need to include’, focus on success criteria and that kind of thing.”  
(Teacher 1)

“As long as I knew what I needed to include because there’s certain SPAG that you have to include in our extended writing.”  
(Teacher 2)

“Whether it’s a skills based lesson when I’m focusing on more grammar or sentence types and that sort of thing.”  
(Teacher 4)

“I have that moderator tick list in my head for all these things that they can do for putting a sub level on.”  
(Teacher 3)

It is interesting to note that although these responses are collated together, there is variety in the extent to which the external pressure appears to influence the teaching. While one teacher refers to having these expectations in her head, another talks about ‘making sure’ and ‘up-leveling’.

Despite the pressure from external agents, a number of responses made clear that pedagogical decisions were based directly on the needs of the children, as a group or individually.

“Maybe to work particularly with the children who are struggling with full stops.”  
(Teacher 1)

“Whether it’s going to be a lesson where they’ve got those skills already and then to apply them to a situation that may be a piece of story writing or non-fiction.”  
(Teacher 4)

“So I suppose when I’m planning it’s the needs of the children, it’s having that good AfL to know what it is that those children need to improve on and what those next steps.”  
(Teacher 3)
In contrast to a consistent dialogue from all the teachers around the teaching of writing skills, only two of the teachers also made direct reference to voice, writers or readers, though Teacher 2 only fleetingly.

"Voice. I think if you have got a voice, it doesn’t matter if there are a load of simple sentences I think as long as your author voice comes through.”
(Teacher 2)

“...”

I think to see themselves as writers they need to see other people as writers first and then when that happens then that’s always a wonderful moment when they start, you know, getting it.”
(Teacher 3)

What these references do is to suggest that a specific research focus on a teacher’s understanding of voice and the assessment of individual voice for a group of children that they know would provide an additional layer of complexity in the understanding of the teaching of writing.

10.3.2.4 Summary in relation to Research Question 2b

What these findings add to the understanding of the relationship between self-determination and the development of voice in English primary schools is to raise the following questions:

1. To what extent can a teacher be autonomous and focus on individual needs if their pedagogy is influenced by the NLS or other prescribed schemes of work?

2. How can a teacher retain autonomy and a focus on individual children in the face of generic, external requirements?

3. Is talking about the needs of individual writers or groups of writers indicative of pedagogy capable of facilitating the development of a child’s individual writer voice?

The implications of these findings and the questions raised will be discussed in Chapter 11.

10.3.3 Tensions in the provision of autonomy and competence for children

This section focuses on the complex relationship between competence-support and autonomy-support in relation to a teacher’s capability to prioritise the writer above the writing product and facilitate the development of individual voice. In relation to Research Question 2b, the responses from the teacher interviews indicate that there is a tension that draws all responses together. When looking for the optimal balance between autonomy and competence support, the responses of the teachers show a tension between the desire to provide autonomy and the perceived need to support aspects of
children’s writing competence. All four teachers were clear in their responses that they had a desire to provide children with autonomy and relevance in the development of their writing.

“Things like that just means that it’s theirs rather than they just sit their watch me.”
(Teacher 1)

“Always trying to make it relevant to them.”
(Teacher 2)

“Perhaps if we gave children more opportunities to choose what they’re going to write.”
(Teacher 3)

“I would’ve probably given them options, to an extent, of things that they could write about …and expose them to a number of different options and have them choose so that they didn’t feel that it was being forced down their throats.”
(Teacher 4)

However, as highlighted earlier, only one teacher provided a concrete example of having provided relevance and autonomy in her teaching of writing.

“I know particularly in that that they then chose to retell the story that I had started of telling them about me seeing the UFO in the morning in whatever way.”
(Teacher 3)

This desire to provide autonomy is juxtaposed with responses that indicate that the support of competence was, at times, heavily structured and an admission that autonomy sometimes needed to be restricted.

“Some teachers prewrite like models that they are going to show them – I do that sometimes.”
(Teacher 1)

“As long as I made sure I modeled that very clearly in their writing.”
(Teacher 2)

“There are some things that I think you almost have to teach, you have to direct, you have to give the children.”
(Teacher 3)

“Obviously we have things that we have to get through and things that they need to be taught and evidence that they can do or can’t do and it’s about trying to meet those targets.”
(Teacher 4)

While this tension was evident in the contrast between one response and another, there were also examples of the tension within the same response.
“That it's their ideas that I've helped them to construct and then they've got them there you know even though I take it away because otherwise they would just copy what I'd just written and that's not the point of it.”  
(Teacher 1)

“So it was a mish-mash of my writing and theirs so – it was actually quite a lot of autonomy.”  
(Teacher 2)

“Autonomy with guidance – sometimes heavy guidance.”  
(Teacher 4)

In Chapter 11, it will be necessary to explore how a teacher achieves the optimal balance between competence-support and the provision of autonomy. One concept that was common to a number of responses was that of a child needing a base level of prerequisite competence before autonomy can be utilised. Some of the responses above have already exemplified this idea but others were even clearer in this view.

“Before we could really start enjoying our writing we had to kind of focus on that structural writing.”  
(Teacher 2)

“So there was very much an aspect of spelling and handwriting and sentence structuring so there was lots of nuts and bolts of writing that we needed to get fixed first.”  
(Teacher 3)

“They had an idea that maybe they ran away with and so their sentence structure went out the window… they weren’t confident or competent enough to hold several different strands in their head.”  
(Teacher 4)

10.3.3.2 Summary in relation to Research Question 2b

The responses suggest that there is a feeling that transcriptional accuracy and fluency are prerequisites of being able to compose with agency. This raises pertinent questions in relation to Research Question 2b:

1. Is it possible for a teacher to provide autonomy for the development of children’s compositional competence and simultaneously support the development of emerging aspects of transcriptional fluency and accuracy?

2. Are only those writers with competence in transcription, as well as composition, capable of writing with voice and what needs to come first, the provision of autonomy or the capability to utilise autonomy in order to write with voice?

These questions will be discussed in Chapter 11.
10.3.4 Complexities of competence (synonyms and child-level influences)

The closest any of the four teachers came to making specific, positive reference to their own competence in teaching writing was when Teacher 3 stated that, “I like to think I’m alright at it.” This modest and understated evaluation of competence may be indicative of how rare it is to have teachers directly self-evaluate their competence. As it is the self-perception of competence that contributes to self-determination rather than any one notion of competence, the perspectives of the teachers provide possible synonyms for self-competence. These synonyms included experience, confidence and understanding. In addressing Research Question 2b, the responses present the different perspectives of what self-perceptions of competence may mean to different teachers. There were two themes to emerge from the responses and these will be considered in Chapter 11, in relation to whether they appear complimentary or at odds with the development of individual voice.

The two themes were:
1. Competence as an understanding of children, curriculum and assessment
2. Competence as a spectrum from low to high confidence – from fear to enjoyment

In response to the question about what goes through their minds during the planning and teaching of writing, all four teachers gave a number of responses each about the importance of understanding the needs of the children.

“Urm, knowing the children, knowing what they need to work on.” (Teacher 1)

“Knowing your children.” (Teacher 2)

“It very much depends on the class and the children involved.” (Teacher 3)

“For me it depends on the cohort of children I’ve got rather than what I know so I think it’s more how I cater to individual needs more than ‘I don’t know what I’m doing’.” (Teacher 4)
It is noteworthy that these references vastly outnumbered any references to writing-specific subject knowledge. This itself raises questions about the notion of domain-specific self-competence measures. Two of the four teachers also made reference to their understanding of summative assessment when explaining how their teaching of writing has developed.

“Just kind of having that understanding of ‘this is 2b because they’ve used you know, they’ve got first person, there’s some full stops – there’s not all full stops… no. you know, exactly what it is to be that level.” (Teacher 1)

“Especially when you are looking at your 5 and your 6 (Year 5&6) that older key stage 2 where you really are trying to put together a portfolio of writing that they’re going to be judged on at the end of the school.” (Teacher 3)

One teacher, Teacher 3, also made reference to her understanding of the English curriculum.

“Knowing what it is from the beginning to the end of the year (children) need to have under their belt is very important…I do think that if you know (the curriculum) well enough you can see where they’re coming from and where they’re going to.” (Teacher 3)

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the responses revealed that teachers were more comfortable discussing their understanding of children, assessment and curriculum than they were in making judgements about their own competence. This raises the question of whether there is a disconnect between self-perceptions of competence given in self-determination surveys, the responses given in interviews and the inferences that one may make on the basis of multiple notions of competence.

Teachers may not have made direct reference to competence but they were very comfortable sharing their sense of confidence in the teaching of writing. While an external judgement of competence may be at odds with confidence, self-perceptions of competence and confidence are likely to be closely aligned. There was a wide spectrum of confidence evident in the responses of the teachers. Responses ranged from those that conveyed a lack of confidence and feelings of panic and dread…

“Originally, like I said, a panic.” (Teacher 2)

“I felt slightly out of my depth.” (Teacher 4)

…through to those that conveyed a sense of experience, confidence and enjoyment.
“But I really enjoy teaching writing and I think I’m not worried about modeling writing in front of children and getting up and making those mistakes… and I think that being a writer yourself in front of children is extremely important so I do try and do that in the classroom whether it’s a good or a bad piece of writing because sometimes I do a rubbish piece and they have to help me with it.”

(Teacher 3)

“I have my hat as a teacher but I also worked as an (borough) moderator as well which meant that I went round to the schools and moderated people’s writing in Year 6 over the SATs.”

(Teacher 3)

“I tend to enjoy the actual composing – like coming up with their first drafts.”

(Teacher 1)

“Then by the end of it and it still is now it’s something that I love teaching and that’s just because we’ve figured out different ways of doing it over the year.”

(Teacher 2)

The responses of Teacher 3, in particular, highlight the possibility of the influence of experience on the perceptions of the teachers. It will be necessary to consider this extraneous variable in relation to the limitations and implications in Chapter 11.

10.3.4.3 Summary in relation to Research Question 2b

The responses of the teachers during the interview support the position of Chapter 3 in arguing that the concept of teacher competence is multi-faceted and disputed. What the responses further contribute is to highlight how complex it is to evaluate a teacher’s sense of their own competence. The goal in constructing a good, valid and reliable quantitative scale includes capturing a degree of complexity around a construct, so the scale used in the present study may simply not have managed this. While the score was used to determine levels of self-determination, it is the nuanced perspectives in the present study that are likely to offer more in exploring how a teacher is capable of facilitating the development of voice. As such, the questions to be considered in Chapter 11 are:

1. Rather than general references to understanding’, are there particular aspects of the teaching of writing that are more important for a teacher to understand in order to develop voice?

2. What ‘experiences’ are ones that support a teacher to develop their capability to prioritise writers and develop individual voice?

3. What lessons can be learned in relation to the measurement of self-perceptions of competence?
### 10.3.5 Summary of themes in relation to Research Question 2b: What do teachers’ perspectives add to the understanding of the relationship between self-determination and the development of voice in English primary schools?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Questions and Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Mixed attitudes towards teacher autonomy and prescription** | 1. The teachers interviewed spoke positively about prescriptive policies and schemes being supportive and, at times, spoke about autonomy negatively.  
2. In most of the responses within this theme, references to autonomy were neutral  
3. Specific references to autonomy often related to the individual elements of the role of a teacher rather than to an overall perception  
4. Perceptions of autonomy appear to be influenced by degrees of competence, experience or confidence | 1. Raise questions about the validity of a quantitative aggregate self-perceived autonomy score  
2. Counter any implication that autonomy and prescription are opposite ends of a ‘desirable to undesirable’ dichotomy  
3. Emphasise the importance to a teacher of the balance between autonomy and prescription  
4. Support the notion that high self-determination – that is the combination of high autonomy and high competence – is key to providing teaching capable of developing individual voice, rather than autonomy or competence individually. |
| **Multiple influences on pedagogy**              | 1. Pedagogy influenced by the NLS (DfEE, 1998) and other prescriptive schemes of work  
2. Pedagogy influenced by external assessment foci  
3. Pedagogy influenced by the needs of the writer and/or reader | 1. Can a teacher be autonomous and focus on individual needs if their pedagogy is influenced by the NLS or other prescribed schemes of work?  
2. How can a teacher retain autonomy and a focus on individual children if they are aware of generic, external requirements?  
3. Is talking about the needs of individual writers or groups of writers indicative of pedagogy capable of facilitating the development of a child’s individual writer voice? |
| **Tensions in the provision of autonomy and competence for children** | Common to all interviews was a tension between the desire to provide autonomy and the perceived need to support aspects of children’s writing competence. | 1. Is it possible for a teacher to provide autonomy for the development of children’s compositional competence and simultaneously support the development of emerging aspects of transcriptional fluency and accuracy?  
2. Are only those writers with competence in transcription, as well as composition, capable of writing with voice and what needs to come first, the provision of autonomy or the capability to utilise autonomy in order to write with voice? |
| **Complexities of competence (synonyms)**       | 1. Competence as an understanding of children, curriculum and assessment | 1. Rather than general references to ‘understanding’, are there particular aspects of the teaching of writing that are... |
2. Competence as a spectrum from low to high confidence – from fear to enjoyment

more important for a teacher to understand in order to develop voice?

2. What lessons can be learned in relation to the measurement of self-perceptions of competence?

### 10.4 Analysis of writing samples to address Research Question 2c: What effect does the self-determination of a teacher have on the development of individual writer voice?

To address Research Question 2c, this section will present the results of two analyses of the writing samples collected during Stage 1 of the study. The results will show:

1. The **Voice Intensity Scores** (adapted from Helms-Park and Stapleton, 2003 p.260) for the four classes in order to give a measure of **authorial presence and autonomy of thought**. An analysis of the scores between the samples in the four classes will be presented in order to explore if differences between the scores relate to differences in the self-determination score reported in Stage 1 of the study.

2. The patterns observed in the analysis of writing samples when exploring **homogeneity**. The frequency and nature of all homogenous patterns will be presented for all four classes.

Authorial presence and autonomy of thought was measured using the adapted VIR scale (Helms-Park and Stapleton, 2003). Voice intensity was scored on a scale of 0-3, as outlined and exemplified in Chapter 9. Progress scores are reported in Table 10.3.

**Table 10.3**

*Progress could only be measured when samples from both Time Point 1 and Time Point 2 were collected. Differences in sample size reflect that for some children, one or both samples were not collected.*
It is worth noting that although there was variation in the progress or regression shown in the scores given for authorial presence and autonomy of thought, the mean score for all marked writing samples at Time Point 1 was just 0.49 rising to 0.54 for Time Point 2. This is indicative of a large number of samples that scored zero on the scale. 59.8% of writing samples were scored zero for authorial presence / autonomy of thought at Time Point 1 reducing to 55.9% at Time Point 2. Although this represents a large proportion of writing samples, there were still significant numbers of writing samples that were scored between 0.5 and 3 (40.2% rising to 44.1%).

The means reported above show variation between classes, in terms of progress but do not indicate whether the variations are significant. Analysis of variance showed a main effect for class number on progress for authorial presence and autonomy of thought, $F(3, 74) = 5.16, p = .003$. Post hoc analyses using the Bonferroni comparison indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the mean progress shown in Class 2 and Class 3 ($p=.006$). The mean score for progress shown by Class 3 was significantly higher than the mean score for progress shown by Class 2. Mean scores did not differ significantly between the remaining combinations of pairs of classes.

As Figure 10.1 indicates, the significant difference in progress shown in the measure of authorial presence and autonomy of thought corresponds to the difference between the teacher categorised as both high for self-perceived autonomy and high for self-perceived competence and the teacher categorised as both low for self-perceived autonomy and low for self-perceived competence.
However, this should be interpreted cautiously for two reasons, both to be discussed further in Chapter 11. First, the analysis establishes statistical difference but does not attribute the difference to a given variable. In Stage 1 of the study, regression models provided an indication of the percentage of variance that could be confidently attributed to teacher self-report scores for autonomy and competence. This finding does not provide such a relationship. Instead, it generates a question for further exploration – with a larger sample of classes. Second, the core hypothesis is clear that both autonomy and competence are necessary for a teacher to be able to provide the environment for individual voice to develop. If the results of this analysis were to align with that hypothesis then one would expect the progress in Class 3 to be significantly different to that in all three remaining classes, not just Class 2. This raises questions about the validity of the measure and of the writing samples used to score using the measure. This will also be discussed in Chapter 11.

The previous chapter outlines the approach to the analysis of writing samples in full. In short, once writing samples had been scored for the measures discussed in Section 10.4.1, the samples were then re-read, without knowledge of class or time point, to identify compositional features common to
writing samples. The table below is a repeat of the one displayed in Chapter 9 and reminds the reader of the features found in more than three samples.

Table 10.4

*Compositional features found in more than three writing samples*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compositional Feature</th>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>Class 2</th>
<th>Class 3</th>
<th>Class 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commonality in the plot of the composition</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over embellishment with adjectives and adverbs</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misuse of particular forms of punctuation</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonality in the content of the opening line</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The overuse or/and misuse of connectives to begin sentences</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue that stands out as adding to the narrative</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unnecessary fronted adverbs</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative verbs</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As highlighted previously, to explore whether within-class patterns were observable, the writing samples were then organised into class and time point groups to explore whether within-class patterns were observable. Thus the frequency of the features above – within each class and within each time point - was then measured. This is shown in Table 10.5.

Table 10.5

*Frequency of compositional features found in more than three writing samples within any one class and time point*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compositional Feature</th>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>Class 2</th>
<th>Class 3</th>
<th>Class 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commonality in the plot of the composition</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The overuse or/and misuse of connectives to begin sentences</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>&lt;3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Class 1

The writing samples for Class 1 yielded one compositional feature common to 10 samples at Time Point 1 and one compositional feature common to 9 samples at Time Point 2.

Patterns emerging from the writing samples from Class 1

**Time point One**
1. There was homogeneity in the plot of the composition in the writing samples in the autumn samples.
   The central plot of 10 of the writing samples (38%) involved aliens and UFOs.

   **Examples**
   - “Then zap! Aliens destroyed are (sic) ship.”
   - “One day aliens landed at our school.”

**Time point Two**
2. Over embellishment with adjectives and adverbs was evident in over a third of the summer writing samples.
   Overuse of adjectives was judged to have occurred in 9 of the writing samples (35%).

   **Example**
   - “My mum’s clean kitchen.”

   The overuse took the form of expanded noun phrases in 3 of the samples (12.5%)

   **Example**
   - “She had me bleeding out red warm blood.”

   Overuse of adverbs (more than one within a few lines of text) was judged to have occurred in 5 of the samples (21%)

   **Example**
   - “I asked them gently… They said rudely.”
Class 2

The writing samples for Class 2 yielded one compositional feature common to 11 samples at Time Point 1 and three compositional features common to between 7 and 11 samples at Time Point 2.

Patterns emerging from the writing samples from Class 2

**Time point One**

1. Homogeneity was found in the misuse of particular forms of punctuation (ellipses and exclamation marks) in the autumn samples.
   
   An ellipsis was included, unnecessarily, at least once in 6 of the writing samples (32%)

   **Examples**
   - “Like that would be quick…”
   - “What are you doing...do you know you are stealing my best thing?”

   In a further 5 samples, (26%) unnecessary exclamation marks were included.

   **Example**
   - “I’m going to tell you about it!!!!”

**Time point Two**

2. The opening line was almost exactly the same as the title in the majority of writing samples from the summer.
   
   A repeat (or near repeat) of the title – The Best Day Ever at School – was used as the opening line in 11 of the samples (79%)

   **Examples**
   - “The best day at school was when…”
   - “The best day ever at school was when…”

3. Homogeneity remained in the misuse of particular forms of punctuation (exclamation marks, (as well as ellipses and bullet points)) in the summer samples.
   
   Multiple exclamation marks were evident in 6 of the writing samples (43%) while in half of these samples, at least one additional unnecessary form of punctuation was included.

   **Examples**
   - “The lunch was great!!!!”
   - “We had a big day ahead of us! Let me now list the events down:
     - Bouncy castle
     - Art project”

4. The overuse or/and misuse of connectives to begin sentences was evident in half of the summer writing samples.
   
   The overuse of temporal connectives was particularly evident amongst the 7 writing samples (50%) identified.

   **Examples**
- “Firstly we went on a tour… Next we went to a carnival… After we saw a gigantic fairess (sic) wheel.”
- “All of a sudden, meanwhils we were talking.”

Class 3

The writing samples for Class 3 yielded one compositional feature common to 7 samples at Time Point 1 and didn’t have any of the compositional features common to more than three of the samples at Time Point 2.

Patterns emerging from the writing samples from Class 3

**Time point One**

1. One of two opening lines was used in the majority of writing samples from the autumn. 7 writing samples (33%) opened with the words “One day…” and a further 6 writing samples (29%) opened with the word “Today…”

**Examples**

- “One day a boy called Jake…”
- “Today was the worst day at school…”

**Time point Two**

No within class patterns were found across the 19 writing samples from the summer.
Class 4

The writing samples for Class 4 yielded one compositional feature common to 5 samples at Time Point 1 and two compositional features common to between 6 samples each at Time Point 2.

Patterns emerging from the writing sample from Class 4

**Time point One**

1. Over embellishment with adjectives was evident in over a third of the writing samples in the autumn
Overuse of adjectives was judged to have occurred in 5 of the writing samples (25%).

Examples
- “…a horrible day. That despicable day…”
- “One little big problem.”

**Time point Two**

2. Over embellishment with adjectives and adverbs was evident in over half of the writing samples in the summer
Overuse of adjectives was judged to have occurred in 6 of the writing samples (30%).

Examples
- “Today a child has been awarded for an outstanding, meticulous behaviour.”
- “Her blue glasses at the end of her sharp nose.”

Fronted adverbs were notable in 5 of the writing samples (25%).

Examples
- “Hastily, Tom and Leonardo looked at him.”
- “Tiredly, I got on my elephant.”

3. Homogeneity was found in use of ellipses in the summer samples.

6 of the summer samples (30%) included an ellipsis. The appropriateness of the use varied with half judged to have drawn the reader into the narrative and half judged to have been ineffective and misplaced.

Examples
- “1hour later…”
- “The only problem was that... our teacher is really dull.”

As with the analysis of authorial presence and autonomy of thought, one should interpret the findings shown in relation to homogeneity with caution. The findings show that children in Class 3 and Class 2 both showed homogeneity in one feature at the start of the year. Samples in Class 3 then showed no clear homogeneity in the time point while those in Class 2 showed 3 common features.
However, it is again not possible to attribute these differences to a particular variable such as self-perceived competence and autonomy. Further, the numbers of common features are low for all classes so it would be unwise to over-interpret small differences in numbers. Instead, these findings support the notion that individuality may vary between classes and exemplifies what homogeneity may look like. The nature of the common features also provides a potential sense of the priorities of young writers within different classrooms.

10.5 Chapter conclusion

Sections 10.2 and 10.3 present findings that challenge the survey responses from Stage 1 and illuminate the perspectives of teachers in relation to the concepts of self-perceived competence, self-perceived autonomy and the complex interaction of the two when supporting children’s competence and autonomy in the primary classroom. The findings yield a number of implications that will be discussed in Chapter 11. Section 10.4 presents the findings in relation to two methods of analysis that were used for the first time (certainly for first language primary writers) in this study. The findings offer no definitive response to the research question but instead contribute to the potential to explore the question in future research. Between-class differences in writing samples were consistent with the position of the corresponding teachers in the Competence/Autonomy Quadrant but the analyses fell short of being able to attribute the differences to those measures. Thus, Chapter 11 will seek to unpick the implications of these findings in relation to future enquiry, rather than in relation to Research Question 2c.
Chapter 11:  
Stage 2 Discussion

11.1 Chapter Introduction and the structure of the chapter

This final chapter will focus on addressing the Stage 2 research questions and the further questions and implications to arise from the findings in Chapter 10. The chapter will make reference to previous research and to the contribution of the findings to the field of knowledge. As with Chapter 10, the research questions below will guide the structure of the discussion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2a.</th>
<th>To what extent do teacher interviews and survey responses triangulate in terms of self-perceived competence and autonomy?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2b.</td>
<td>What do teachers’ perspectives add to the understanding of the relationship between self-determination and the development of voice in English primary schools?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c.</td>
<td>What effect does the self-determination of a teacher have on the development of individual writer voice?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chapter and the thesis as a whole will conclude with a presentation of the key findings and the contribution to the field of understanding

11.2 To what extent do teacher interviews and survey responses triangulate in terms of self-perceived competence and autonomy?

11.2.1 Teachers perceptions of autonomy

The way the four teachers talked about the autonomy they were given by their schools agreed fairly well with their responses to the autonomy scale in the questionnaire, albeit providing a more complex account of autonomy. However, the notion of autonomy as a positive construct, as it is presented within the theoretical model of Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 1985), is challenged by the findings in Stage 2 of the present study. Studies from the paradigm of SDT (e.g. Pelletier, Seguin-Levesque & Legault, 2002; Roth et al, 2007; Standage & Gillison, 2007) present correlations between self-perception autonomy scores and positive attitudinal outcomes. However,
these studies do not provide the participant with the opportunity to indicate that autonomy is either unimportant as a construct or that restrictions of autonomy may, at times, be beneficial.

A comparison can be drawn between the findings of the present study and one that used a similar qualitative method of gaining perspectives. The study of Grainger, Goouch & Lambirth, (2003) has been cited on a number of occasions, first because it indicates that autonomy is a relevant issue for young writers in primary schools and second, because the questions in the present study followed the structure of those used in their study, with the intention of eliciting responses without use of the word ‘autonomy’. It is therefore noteworthy that while close to two-thirds of children raised the concept of a desire for greater autonomy (Grainger, Goouch & Lambirth, 2003), in the present study, not a single response suggested a wish for more autonomy on the part of the teachers. The teachers interviewed were largely neutral or balanced in their responses about autonomy, while one teacher was very clear that autonomy had in fact been undesirable for her when teaching writing. This reinforces the argument for the need to both gain qualitative perspectives of autonomy and to avoid separating autonomy and competence in an analysis of self-determination. When one factors in the self-perceived competence score and the corresponding perspectives of Teacher 4, it is clear that these mediate the perspectives regarding autonomy and vice versa.

The findings promote the position of balance in relation to autonomy and prescription. It is this balance, rather than the degree of autonomy, that appears more relevant for a teacher of writing in English primary schools. All four teachers gave responses that indicated that they viewed at least a degree of prescription and/or uniformity as beneficial. However, the degree appeared to vary dependent again on self-perceived competence and experience. This is reminiscent of the debate surrounding the NLS in Chapter 3 about whether the nationalised scheme of work represented a support or a shackle to teachers of writing (e.g. Moss, 2004; Wyse & Jones, 2001). The implication of these findings is that one should be cautious about a one-dimensional dichotomy of either autonomy or prescription being presented as undeniably positive or negative. Besides the implications around uniformity in pursuit of notions of equity and quality control, attitudes towards autonomy are unsurprisingly related to the individual’s confidence in the teaching of writing. In line with the core hypothesis regarding the development of individual voice, a further implication is certainly a support for the notion that the twin
development of both self-perceived teacher competence and self-perceived teacher autonomy should be a priority for schools looking to develop the potential of young writers.

11.2.3 Teachers’ perceptions of autonomy-support

The results shown in Chapter 6 of the present study show a strong correlation between a teacher’s self-perception of autonomy and their perception of the autonomy that they provide for the children they teach in the specific domain of writing. These findings replicate those of Pelletier, Seguin-Levesque and Legault (2002) and of Taylor, Ntoumanis & Standage, (2008) in suggesting that the more autonomous a teacher feels, the more autonomy they are likely to provide. However, the perspectives of the teachers reported in Chapter 10 again provide a level of complexity that is missing in the interpretation of numerical data. The findings raise the possibility that a self-perceived score for autonomy-support may relate more to the desire to provide autonomy than any real sense of doing so. A look at one of the items on the teacher survey (see appendix 5.1 for the full Teacher questionnaire) illustrates this possibility. In agreeing or disagreeing with the statement, ‘I understand what the children in my class want to write about,’ a teacher may understand what the children want but that doesn’t mean that they actually provide that. The findings also replicate those discussed in the previous section in highlighting the balance between autonomy-support and structured support as being key to the role of teaching writing. Once more, the findings also provide support for the notion that both autonomy and competence are required if this balance is to be navigated to the benefit of individual young writers and their expression of voice.

The highest of the three self-perception scores for all four teachers was for autonomy-support and three of the four mean scores were well above the mid-point score of 1.5. However, although teachers expressed a desire to provide autonomy the examples of actually providing autonomy were more sparse. Only Teacher 3, who self-scored high for both competence and autonomy, provided examples pedagogy and justifications for the provision of autonomy. Teacher 4 was very clear in expressing a wish to have provided more autonomy than she had felt able to and this may be reflective of the mediating impact of the difference in self-perceived competence scores. A significant implication of the findings is that studies that attempt to draw autonomy-support into the exploration of SDT should
do so with caution. While the findings appear to support the notion that self-perceived competence and autonomy interact in the motivation or self-determination of a teacher, autonomy-support appears to represent more of a bi-product. More nuanced survey items or interview prompts may be required to establish the difference between the extent to which a teacher wishes to provide autonomy and the extent to which they actually manage to do so. One option for future exploration would be to establish a more reliable measure of a child’s perspective towards the autonomy given by the teacher. However, the limitations of this are discussed in Chapter 7. Alternatively, future work in this area could look to replicate the study of Deci et al. (1981) in providing vignette based surveys concerning autonomy-support, rather than a 4-point scale, as used in the present study.

Just as the perspectives of the interviewees emphasised the importance of balance between the autonomy and structured support provided to them as teachers, so too was the emphasis apparent in relation to the balance between the autonomy and structured support that they provided for the young writers in their classes. Deci, Nezlek and Sheinman (1981, p.649) proposed that the support of a teacher’s autonomy “Should, in turn, filter down to the students.” What the findings of the present study and the perspectives of the teachers add is to introduce the concept that it is the balance between the provision of autonomy and the provision of structured support that may instead filter down.

It was clear, from the responses given, that this balance is a difficult one to achieve, for all teachers and certainly when it comes to the personalised provision for individual writers. Teachers 1, 2 and 4 expressed a degree of unease in relation to decisions about how much freedom to allow the children in their classes while speaking positively about the structures in place to secure the fundamental competencies expected of their young writers. Further, the findings suggest that Teacher 3, the teacher with high self-report scores for autonomy and competence, appeared most at ease with striking the balance in the provision of learning for the writers in her class. This supports the core hypothesis in suggesting that in the absence of sufficient self-perceived levels of both competence and autonomy, a teacher may struggle to find the balance that young writers require in order to develop as individuals. The risk is that children, already in Year 5, but not competent writers, may not be given opportunities to experience writing as a means of self-expression.
11.2.4 Teachers’ perceptions of their competence

Chapter 3 of the present study presents teacher competence as a contested and multi-faceted construct. It is highlighted that a teacher’s concept of competence may have multiple influences. The political discourse may shape a teacher’s concept of competence and they may view subject knowledge according to the objectives set out by the National Curriculum (DfE, 2013) and by assessment documents (e.g. STA, 2017) (e.g. Bearne & Reedy, 2018; Grainger, 2005; Twiselton, 2006). A teacher’s concept may also be influenced by a socio-cultural perspective - one that promotes the development of individual writers engaged in meaningful writing opportunities (e.g. Dombey, 2013; Kress, 1994; Riley & Reedy, 2000). As argued throughout Chapter 3, it is worth noting that the attitudes of an individual teacher is unlikely to fit neatly into one or other perspective.

Perspectives aside, in addressing the research question, it is actually the degree of perceived competence, rather than the perspective of competence, which is given primacy. As Section 10.2.5 summarises, there was large agreement between the levels of perceived competence in the responses given and the levels of perceived competence in the survey responses. One could argue that that is what the research question addressed and that the responses from the interview have triangulated with those in the survey. However, there are a number of notable conclusions from the exploration of the connection between survey responses and interview responses that have implications for future work in this area.

The first notable conclusion is that a self-perception score does not indicate what perception of competence is held. If one takes Teachers 1 and 3 as a clear illustration, both recorded high mean scores for self-perceived competence and autonomy in the survey. Both also gave responses during the interview that were indicative of having confidence in their level of competence. However, the perspectives of the two teachers were notably different. Teacher 1 makes clear reference to the development of her competence being linked with the development of her confidence with navigating curriculum and assessment documents and requirements. Teacher 3 also references curriculum and assessment but emphasises her provision of meaningful writing opportunities, her capability to support colleagues and children and her capability to follow children’s interests and needs. In the case of the
development of individual writer voice, where it is being argued that children should be encouraged to express themselves and not solely follow prescribed guidance on what constitutes good writing, the perspective taken by the teacher on what constitutes competent teaching is important. High self-perceived competence, as in the case of Teacher 1, may be associated with a political perspective that embraces a pedagogy where skills are foregrounded and writer voice minimized. It is clear that self-determination is not the only factor influencing a child’s writing but in this case particularly, perceived competence is problematic as a sole variable, and this raises a challenge for SDT. It is likely that further work in this field will require a detailed exploration of the relationship between perspectives, pedagogies and outcomes.

The findings presented in Chapter 10 also highlight the need for future work in this area to acknowledge and account for the extraneous variables of experience, confidence and enjoyment. It is clear from the responses during all four interviews that these concepts are viewed as impacting on, and/or synonymous with, competence. In this case, Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 may be useful as a comparison that illustrates this point. Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 scored at opposite ends of the extreme with Teacher 3 self-perceiving high competence and Teacher 4 self-perceiving low competence. However, Teacher 4 also references being a Newly Qualified Teacher while Teacher 3 talked about the years of experience that she has. Teacher 4 talks about her lack of confidence while Teacher 3 is clear about her high levels of confidence and while Teacher 4 talks about dread and fear when it came to teaching writing, particularly at the start of her first year, Teacher 3 makes reference to enjoyment and emotional responses to children’s writing. This highlights that while a teacher’s level of self-perceived competence is likely to influence the progress of young writers and that the perspectives of the teacher may influence the extent to which individuality, voice and meaning making are prioritised, teacher experience, confidence and enjoyment may also influence the development of young writers. One could even question what comes first: self-perceived competence in the teaching of writing or experience, confidence and enjoyment in the teaching of writing?

In a related conclusion, discussions that allow teachers to talk about their feelings of competence appear to evoke strong emotional responses. As highlighted in Chapter 3, to develop a teacher’s competence with writing is far from straightforward. Teachers enter the primary classroom
with a wide variety of aptitudes, attitudes, experiences, memories, fears and ideas about writing (e.g. Grainger, 2005; Twiselton, 2006). The contrast cited in the previous paragraph between fear and enjoyment is illustrative of the need for work in this area to be sensitive to the emotions of the teachers. Certainly, the careful support of teachers, through professional development such as that of Ings (2009) and Grainger (2005) is more likely to support teaching that promotes the development of individual writers than the presentation of data that implies that teachers without sufficient levels of competence or autonomy are incapable of achieving that goal. While the present study argues that only those teachers with high levels of both self-perceived competence and autonomy are capable of providing the context for individual child writers to develop voice, the implication is that all primary school teachers are capable of providing such contexts and should have their need for competence and autonomy-supported – not that some teachers are somehow incapable. In fact, this cuts to the very heart of the difficulty for schools and teachers. In the climate in which external pressure is felt so keenly in relation to writing outcomes (e.g. Fisher, 2012; Moss, 2017), the temptation appears to have been to support competence by removing autonomy (e.g. Alexander & Mayall, 2010). In relation to Research Question 2a, the conclusion is clear: the perspectives of the teachers indicate that a simultaneous support for both teacher competence and teacher autonomy is necessary to increase self-determination, as well as feelings of experience, confidence and enjoyment.

11.2.5 Summary in relation to Research Question 2a: To what extent do teacher interviews and survey responses triangulate in terms of self-perceived competence and autonomy?

In relation to all three themes discussed in this section, the summary in addressing the research question is the same. The extent to which the perspectives of the teachers, shared during the interviews, appeared to relate to the responses given in the earlier self-determination survey was large. However, the discussion has been clear that the conclusions and implications to be drawn relate not to the support of the survey findings but instead to the complexities missed by the survey responses. It is these complexities that are presented as being key to the understanding of the contexts that support a teacher's capability to develop writers with individual voice. The core hypothesis that both self-perceived competence and autonomy are prerequisites has been given support but more importantly, the route to
enabling all teachers to achieve that combination is what the implications presented potentially offer.

What this finding does is to highlight the complexities of applying the model of SDT to specific educational contexts. While previous domain-specific studies in SDT have been rare, rarer still are studies that look at an aspect of a domain (e.g. writing within English) and a focus within that focus (voice within writing). It may be that the application of SDT at this level, when perceptions of competence and autonomy become more nuanced, needs adapting.

11.3 What do teachers’ perspectives add to the understanding of the relationship between self-determination and the development of voice in English primary schools?

It may have been expected that discussion in relation to Research Question 2a, based on the concept of triangulation, developed from findings themed deductively from the concepts of Stage 1 of the present study would contrast with the discussion in relation to Research Question 2b. Research Question 2b gives primacy to what the perspectives of the teachers during the interviews add that may be missing from numerical survey responses. The discussion is based on developing the findings themed inductively. In reality, as Section 11.2 has made clear, the discussion in relation to Research Question 2a gave primacy to the perspectives of the teachers as well. This section of the discussion provides a further level of complexity in the exploration of the relationships between self-perceived teacher competence, self-perceived teacher autonomy, balance, pedagogy and provision for young writers and presents implications for the future study of the relationship between teacher attitudes and the individual development of young writers. This section of the discussion will focus on:

1. Mixed attitudes towards teacher autonomy and prescription
2. Multiple influences on pedagogy
3. Tensions in the provision of autonomy and competence for children

11.3.1 Mixed attitudes towards teacher autonomy and prescription

The findings from the previous chapter present a warning against presenting autonomy and prescription as opposite ends of a ‘desirable to undesirable’ dichotomy. It appeared to be the balance between the freedom that a teacher was given and the structures prescribed by the school that was
more relevant than the simple notion of high or low autonomy. Self-perceptions of competence appeared to mediate the degree to which attitudes were either favourable (as for Teacher 3) or unfavourable (as for Teacher 4) when it came to autonomy. Further, the structures that were prescribed by the schools discussed by the four teachers were not dismissed as restrictive. Perspectives were similar in recognising the place of certain prescription and uniformity and what varied instead, was the extent to which these structures were promoted as key to competence. While Teachers 1 and 3 made little reference to prescription, Teacher 2 was clear about how structures for planning had supported competence while Teacher 4 was equally clear that the absence of this support was what she felt had restricted her competence.

The implication is that in the future exploration of the development of a teacher capable of prioritising the development of writers with individual voice, the teacher’s perceptions of the balance between autonomy and prescription is likely to be more valid and helpful than a measure of the degree of autonomy alone. If one follows the hypothesis that a teacher requires both high levels of competence and autonomy, then this implication points to a sensitive and personalised progression of professional development. To implement the provision of autonomy, in the absence of competence support may undermine the development of a teacher. To implement structures for supporting competence without the allowance of flexibility and autonomy may equally undermine this development. The debates surrounding the ‘one size fits all’ nature of the NLS and how it restricted the autonomy of the more competent teachers of writing is an illustration of the need to focus on balance. However, the findings in the previous chapter show that prescription itself is not an inhibitor of autonomy. Instead it appears to be the implementation and rhetoric from the school, and how that is interpreted by a teacher, that is key.

11.3.2 Multiple influences on pedagogy

While the responses during the interviews support the notion that prescribed structures and a degree of uniformity does not necessarily equate to frustration at the lack of autonomy, there was evidence to support the suggestion that schemes of work and external assessment requirements may inhibit teacher autonomy and their autonomy-support for writers in the classroom. All four teachers made references to adhering to given curriculum objectives, methods of teaching writing and criteria
from statutory assessment frameworks. The implication is that while the bottom up development of teacher competence and autonomy may provide a means to support the development of writers with individual voice, one must also be aware of the top-down pressure that may militate against this development. Ivanic (2004), Lambirth (2017) Cremin & Myhill, (2012) and Gardner, (2012) are among those to highlight how high-stakes assessment and the resultant disproportionate focus on transcriptional correctness makes the route to teaching that allows children the freedom and competence to express voice very challenging. What the perspectives of the teachers during the interviews shows is that while this route is hard, it is not impossible by any means. There is a strong sense that Teacher 3 was confident in her balance of external requirements and the individual development of writers. Significantly, what was equally strong was the sense that for the remaining three teachers, this was a clear ambition. There was recognition of the requirements but there was also a sense of what these teachers would like to have achieved with the children in their classes.

One of the implications to arise is that the extraneous variable of children’s competence in writing needs exploration in future work in this area. It is possible, for example, that a teacher with high levels of self-perceived competence and autonomy would still struggle to develop voice if teaching a cohort with gaps in competence in relation to external assessment criteria. Equally, it is not impossible that a teacher with lower self-perceptions of competence and autonomy, but working with writers who had evidenced competencies that adhered to the assessment criteria, may be able to support the development of individual voice. What this indicates is that while the strength of the influence of policy, curriculum and assessment, on a teacher’s pedagogy, may be mediated by their levels of competence and autonomy, this strength may also be mediated by the attainment of the writers in the classroom.

11.3.3 Tensions in the provision of autonomy and competence for children

What Sections 11.2.1 and 11.3.1 illustrate is that the complex balance between the provision of autonomy and the support of competence is more important for a teacher than the degree of autonomy alone. The perspectives of the teachers interviewed further contribute by illustrating that this complexity is mirrored when it comes to the balance in teaching young writers. Chapter 2 is clear in outlining the elements involved in the development of a young writer from the earliest stages of writing
to competence at the age of 10 (e.g. Riley & Reedy, 2000; Kress, 1994). It was emphasised that automaticity with elements of transcription represents the necessary removal of a cognitive burden that then makes compositional expression more of a focus (e.g. Christensen, 2009). However, the responses of the teachers demonstrate the complexity that still remains in balancing the simultaneous development of composition and transcription in the later years of primary school. All four teachers were teaching Year 5 classes. There is reason to believe that children at this age should have a good degree of automaticity when it comes to transcription. However, all four teachers talked about the importance of transcriptional accuracy and the struggle of balancing both transcription and composition. One could hypothesise that this could be the result of teaching Year 5 cohorts with many writers who had yet to reach automaticity. One could also hypothesise that this could be the result of the burden of assessment requirements, outlined in the previous section. A combination of the analysis of the writing samples and the teachers’ responses indicates that both these factors influenced the expression of complexity and challenge.

This raises a key implication of the present study, in the form of a question: what must come first, the provision of autonomy for young writers or the capability to utilise the autonomy in order to write with individual voice? If one follows the logic that a child first needs to be capable of utilising the autonomy in order to develop voice then how does a child develop that capability? It is possible that the only way of developing such a capability is through writing with autonomy. Such a conundrum is at the heart of the argument for those that promote the term ‘risk-taking’ in relation to the teaching of writing. Essentially, the present study argues that a teacher has to absorb the risk that transcriptional aspects of writing may suffer, at least initially, as compositional freedom is given. The perspectives of the teachers in the present study are crystal clear in their references to this risk. They all discuss the ‘nuts and bolts’, the tendency to go ‘off-piste’ and the notion of children reaching a threshold before being able to express themselves. It appears clear that this dilemma exists for all teachers. What the findings support is the notion that a teacher with high self-perceived levels of both competence and autonomy is more likely to be comfortable with absorbing the risk. In turn, they may be more likely to provide autonomy and the opportunities for developing strong competence and a sense of voice, rather than waiting for
strong competence before providing such opportunities.

11.3.6 Summary in relation to Research Question 2b: What do teachers’ perspectives add to the understanding of the relationship between self-determination and the development of voice in English primary schools?

The perspectives of the teachers provide support the notion that the combination of high self-perceived autonomy and high self-perceived competence is key to providing teaching capable of developing individual voice. However, the perspectives also add a level of complexity, potential and tension that the survey from Stage 1 appears to have failed to capture. In addressing the research question it becomes apparent that it is the balance of autonomy and prescription that is key to a teacher feeling supported, not simply the degree of autonomy. It becomes apparent that external pressures impact all teachers, not just those with lower self-determination but that the optimum combination of self-perceived competence and autonomy may offer the best chance for a teacher to shield the writers in his or her class from these pressures. Finally, it becomes apparent that a risk may need to be taken in the classroom, if children are to develop individual voice. While the pressures related to transcriptional correctness may lead to only those children with transcriptional automaticity and compositional expression being afforded autonomy, it may require the provision of autonomy to support the remainder of the writers in the class in reaching this level of development. Future work in this area should focus on how this balance can be achieved and at the relationship between this and a teacher’s sense of their own competence and autonomy.

As well as measuring the level of a teacher’s sense of their competence, it may be that a closer scrutiny of the perspective of competence is also required in future work. Stage 2 of the present study has begun to do this but the present study was clear in isolating the level of teacher self-perceived competence as a variable, not the perspective of competence. The exploration of the notion of competence in Chapter 3 indicates that prioritising the development of individual voice is indicative of a socio-cultural perspective and a closer focus on this link in future work would be beneficial. The hypothesis that a teacher with a skills focused political perspective, even one with a high level of self-perceived competence, may be denying a child the necessary autonomy to develop individual voice is also worth exploring.
11.4 What effect does the self-determination of a teacher have on the development of individual writer voice?

Research Questions 2a and 2b drew on well established methods of data collection and analyses (SDT surveys and the thematic analysis of teacher interviews) in the exploration of the relationship between a teacher’s self-perceptions and the development of writers and writing in the primary classroom. Conclusions have been drawn relating to individual writer voice - a concept introduced in detail in Chapter 8 at the start of Stage 2 of the present study. The response to Research Question 2c did not draw on existing methodologies and data analyses. Instead, two new forms of analysing the writing of primary age children were put forward in Chapter 9. It is perhaps unsurprising therefore, that the discussion of the findings from the analysis of children’s writing, outlined in Chapter 10, should draw tentative suggestions for future enquiry, rather than confident assertions about the relationship between teacher self-determination and written outcomes.

With this in mind, the conclusions and tentative suggestions arising from the analyses of writing samples were that:

1. The differences observed in children’s writing, using these analyses, could not be reliably attributed to the self-determination of the teacher

2. The findings offer support for the notion that individuality may vary between classes

3. The findings indicate that individual writer voice that can be captured in the writing product may be very rare for children of primary age

4. The findings offer potential for exemplifying what homogeneity may look like and provide a potential sense of the priorities of young writers within different classrooms.

11.4.1 The differences observed in children’s writing, using these analyses, could not be reliably attributed to the self-determination of the teacher
The analysis of the writing samples using the scores for authorial presence and autonomy of thought showed that the progress made varied between the classes. A significant difference was found between the class with the teacher who self-classified as high for both competence and autonomy and the class with the teacher who self-classified as low for both competence and autonomy. However, as described in Chapter 10, such conclusions drawn should be done so with significant caution. First, if self-determination was responsible for differences in progress then one would have expected the difference to have been shown between the class with the teacher who self-classified as high for both competence and autonomy and all three remaining classes. This difference was not evident. Second, with a sample of only four teachers, it was not possible to establish a correlation between teacher self-determination and writing outcomes in the way it had been with teacher autonomy and progress in composition in Chapter 6. Future work in this area should aim to establish a wider sample of teachers and classes in order to further explore these relationships. Third, the analysis of voice using the adapted Voice Intensity Rating Scale was reliant on the writing samples collected for Stage 1 of the study. These samples were time restricted and the same subject was given to children in order to control for the variables of transcriptional accuracy, transcriptional fluency and compositional effect. These restrictions may have inhibited the expression of individual voice. Section 11.5 will highlight recommendations, such as working with teachers to assess voice and adopting a sample of writing that allows a more natural expression of individuality.

The analysis of homogeneity was similarly unable to draw any relationship between the number of common features and the self-determination of the teacher. The fact that the class with the teacher who self-classified as high for both competence and autonomy displayed the fewest common features points to the validity of a wider exploration of homogeneity but this would have to be undertaken with a far greater number of writing samples. Further, an understanding of the pedagogy that preceded the writing would allow more valid conclusions to be drawn.

11.4.2 The findings offer support for the notion that individuality may vary between classes

While it would be a leap to associate differences in progress with authorial presence and autonomy of thought and of homogeneity to levels of teacher self-determination, the fact that variance
was observed in relation to these measures and that individuality did vary between class cohorts does suggest that further exploration is worthwhile. As outlined in the previous section, such exploration would need to refine and develop the measures used in the present study and would need to draw upon a significantly wider sample of both teachers and written compositions.

11.4.3. The findings indicate that individual writer voice may be rare for children of primary age

As highlighted, any patterns in the progress made in different classes in relation to authorial presence and autonomy of thought should be presented with caution. One of the main reasons for this caution is that over half of the writing samples were judged to have displayed an absence of any individual voice. That is they scored zero on the Voice Intensity Rating scale that ranges from zero to three. Further, just 1.2% of writing samples were judged to have shown the highest level of authorial presence/autonomy of thought, that is, the reader felt that the composition showed ‘A very strong sense of individuality is displayed in the writing’. Extend this finding and if you eliminate those compositions showing ‘no individuality’ and ‘a fairly weak sense of individuality’ and you are still left with just 14.5% demonstrating a, ‘fairly strong’ or ‘very strong’ sense of voice. Highlighting the rarity with which voice is measurable amongst the compositions of 9 and 10-year old writers serves to clarify and refine the central argument of the thesis. It cannot be argued that teachers high in self-determination alone will facilitate the development of individual writer voice. Such an argument implies a cause and effect association that would discount factors independent of the teacher or classroom environment. Instead, the evidence presented supports the notion that teacher self-determination may be an important prerequisite for the potential to support young writers develop voice and that an absence of sufficient self-perceived competence or autonomy would make this support for the development of individual writer voice even harder.

11.4.4. The findings offer potential for exemplifying what homogeneity may look like and provide a potential sense of the priorities of young writers within different classrooms.

The analysis of homogeneity highlights that there are patterns that are common to children within a classroom when presented with the same writing task. This conclusion could hardly be argued
to be revolutionary. In fact it would be enormously frustrating for a teacher, if having focused his or her teaching around expanded noun phrases, for example, there was not homogeneity in the inclusion of expanded noun phrases in the writing that followed. What this highlights is that homogeneity itself should not be viewed as a sign that individual voice is absent. Instead, patterns of homogeneity and the absence of homogeneity offer potential for exploring individuality and writer voice, a concept acknowledged as enigmatic. Again, this highlights the need to explore alternative methods, in conjunction with a wider analysis of homogeneity, in future research. An analysis of pedagogy, the matching of teacher plans to children’s writing or interviews that relate to specific lessons or sequences of lessons may support the closer analysis of homogeneity and individuality.

11.3.6 Summary in relation to Research Question 2c: What effect does the self-determination of a teacher have on the development of individual writer voice?

The discussion in relation to the final research question is clear that a relationship between teacher self-determination and the development of individual writer voice cannot be scrutinised, let alone supported with the measures and sample used in the present study. It is also clear that there are potential avenues for developing the exploration of this research question in future research. Ultimately, a more thorough analysis of individuality may necessitate the closer involvement of the teacher. The class teacher would be able to isolate the common features that were part of the teaching input from those that weren’t. Drawing the thesis right back to Chapter 1 and my rationale for embarking on a study of individual voice in writing, the teacher, in collaboration with the child, may ultimately also be the only person who is able to truly assess the presence of individual voice in the writing of a child of primary age. It is possible that this judgement requires the relationship with, and understanding of, the young writer his or herself.
11.5 Stage 2 limitations and recommendations

Many of the limitations of the present study have been highlighted at relevant stages of the thesis but this summary draws all the limitations together with recommendations for future work in the field of teacher self-determination and the provision of opportunities for children to develop individual writer voice. The limitations that will be discussed are:

1. The sample size for the teacher interviews
2. The absence of the voice of the young writers
3. The reliance on writing samples and interviews from between five and seven years ago
4. The reliance on one pair of timed writing samples with a given title
5. The untested nature of the adapted Voice Intensity Rating scale
6. The untested nature of the exploration of homogeneity

11.5.1 The sample size for the teacher interviews

In the present study, only one participant was interviewed for each of the four quadrants of the Competence/Autonomy Quadrant. The nature of the responses appears to support the relationship between the perspectives given and the self-reported scores for self-determination but extraneous factors may have had a confounding effect. Any associations reported have been necessarily tentative and, as the discussion in relation to Research Question 2a concluded, the implications concerned the perspectives of the teachers more than the degree of agreement between interviews and surveys. As discussed earlier in Chapter 11, future work in this area would benefit from a wider sample of teachers who self-categorise in each of the four quadrants. Ideally, the sample would be large enough to allow the analysis to control, to some extent, the variables of experience and confidence. The attainment of the children within each class was also missing from the data set of the present study. This too, represents a significant extraneous variable that should be controlled for in future research in this area.
11.5.2 The absence of the voice of the young writers

Over 600 children completed surveys concerning their self-perceptions of competence and autonomy. However, while four teachers were able to provide depth to the responses given by the wider sample of 27 teachers surveyed, no children were interviewed to provide the same depth for the responses given in the child surveys. Even without using survey responses for children – identified as a limitation in Chapter 7 – future work in this area would benefit from providing children with the opportunity to provide their perspectives about autonomy-support, competence-support and the development of individual voice. In a thesis focused on the development of children’s voice, their voice in the data collected is conspicuous by its absence. If surveys are used, children should be interviewed during the same period in which they are surveyed. While the present study was able to identity teachers and ask them to call upon experiences from the past, doing so with children would not have been possible.

11.5.3 The reliance on writing samples and interviews conducted and collected from between five and seven years ago

As highlighted in relation to the previous limitation, the thesis spans a number of years. This means that the writing samples and surveys were not collected in the same year as the teacher interviews. Perhaps more significantly, the years 2012 to 2020 have seen a number of fundamental changes to policy, curriculum and assessment of writing in English primary schools. Chapter 3 provides a sense of the timeline of the changes and draws together enduring themes but it is a noteworthy limitation that the exploration of the research questions and the analysis of the findings in relation to the research questions took place in a different educational context to that from which the data was drawn.

11.5.4 The reliance on one pair of timed writing samples with a given title

Section 11.4.1 highlighted the fact that the analysis of voice using the adapted Voice Intensity Rating Scale was reliant on the writing samples collected for Stage 1 of the study. As stated, these samples were time restricted and the same subject was given to children in order to control for the
variables of transcriptional accuracy, transcriptional fluency and compositional effect. These restrictions may have inhibited the expression of individual voice. The implication is that future studies in this field should aim to analyse writing that children have composed more organically – perhaps by focusing on their writing books from school. This would also address a second limitation of the writing samples, one that was highlighted in Chapter 9. A significant proportion of the writing samples were composed as a recount rather than as a narrative so future work could focus on narrative alone. In summary, it is perhaps ironic that a study that has argued that providing young writers of autonomy is a prerequisite for the development of individual voice should rely on an analysis of a writing sample completed in a manner that had given children little autonomy.

11.5.5 The untested nature of the adapted Voice Intensity Rating scale

It is necessary to acknowledge the limitation presented by the analysis of individual writer voice. This enigmatic quality is hard to measure and, certainly, the use of a scale that is scored by two people with no understanding of the child renders all conclusions speculative. Perhaps the description of ‘voice intensity’ or the description of ‘authorial presence and autonomy of thought’ are misnomers and thus unhelpful. The rating scale relies on the feelings of the reader. While Bakhtin (1981, pp.293-294) describes the author’s writing as “half someone else’s… populated – overpopulated – with the intentions of others,” even if the reader is responsible for inferring half of the voice present, this still means that half is left with the author. As argued in Section 11.4, the child and the teacher should not be silenced in the analysis of individual voice. Future work should include a sense of the intentions of the child and the perspectives of the adult who knows their writing better than any other professional.

11.5.6 The untested nature of the exploration of homogeneity

As the summary in relation to Research Question 2c highlights in Section 11.4, the findings of the exploration of homogeneity serves to generate future hypotheses, rather than representing a strong answer to the current research question. A significant limitation that was highlighted is that homogeneity of one pattern needn’t prevent the individuality of a whole composition. A child who included an ellipsis
for example, even if judged to have been unnecessary, may still be capable of writing a composition that is predominantly individual. This serves as a caution against the notion that homogeneity and individuality are a dichotomy when it comes to children’s writing. It would also be unhelpful to propose that any influence from the teacher renders a composition as lacking individuality. Rather, one should be exploring the levels of individuality and homogeneity. It could be argued that the measure in its existing form does not leave room for this subtlety.

Section 11.5 illustrates that significant progress is still required in the exploration of how teacher self-determination relates to the development of individual writer voice in English primary schools. Indeed, the title presents a closed question, ‘The writing or the writer: What is the priority for a teacher of writing in English primary schools?’ The present thesis has exposed the nuances of how a teacher’s self-perceptions, experiences and contexts interact with those of the children and how this in turn influences the capacity to use writing to express individual voice. Evidently, this interaction is complex and so it is necessary to reflect on what the present study has done to move forward the understanding of this complex set of relationships.
11.6 Conclusion

The present study has certainly turned the focus onto the self-perceptions of teachers in the domain-specific area of writing. This focus has reinforced the concept presented by Self-Determination Theory, that self-perceptions of autonomy and competence are inextricably linked and mediate one another. In focusing on this specific area, the present study also highlights the limitations of numerical data in relation to self-determination. Such data risks missing the nuance and complexity that became apparent in the interviews with teachers. The nuance and complexity of particular note involves the emphasis on balance rather than dichotomy that was common to all interview responses. Teachers did not present autonomy as positive and prescription as negative. Instead, the present study illustrates the capability of teachers to recognise how autonomy and prescription from a school balance to support their sense of competence. Mirroring this, the present study shows how a teacher is keenly aware of the same delicate balance between the need to support a child’s developing competence with all aspects of writing development with the clear desire to support their need for autonomy.

In drawing the thesis to a close and considering the findings from Stage 1 and from Stage 2, the key findings from the present thesis are that in the specific context of the development of individual writer voice in English primary schools:

1. There appears to be a fine line between a supportive scaffold and autonomy-restricting prescription for both teachers and children

2. Feelings of competence and autonomy appear to be necessary for a teacher in order to resist the weight of the skills discourse

3. The notion that a child's motivation should not be considered "in isolation" and that the motivation of the teacher is "more or less implicitly transmitted" remains complex and in need of further exploration

4. The notion that SDT surveys work in a specific domain in which perceptions of competence are particularly nuanced and influenced by perspectives is challenged
5. The presentation of a conceptualisation of individual voice by adopting three complementary concepts

6. The argument that different perspectives about what constitutes competence in the teaching of writing needn’t result in false divisions because a skilled teacher can benefit from and marry together different priorities

7. Highlighting that self-perceived competence is undermined by restricting autonomy and self-perceived autonomy is undermined by the provision of insufficient competence-support

8. The notion that self-perceived autonomy may be a prerequisite of self-perceived competence for teachers and children

Fisher (2006) discusses the balance between providing a scaffold for children’s developing confidence and competence with written composition on the one hand and providing them with the autonomy necessary to develop individuality in writing on the other hand. Cremin & Myhill (2012) and Lambirth (2017) highlight the limitations placed on children’s autonomy and argue that this balance is often missing and that children are showing signs of simply complying. The present thesis illustrates the delicacy of the balance in providing sufficient support for both competence and autonomy. Teacher interviews highlighted that both competence support and autonomy support were in the mind of a teacher but that self-perceptions of their own competence and autonomy influenced the actual and perceived degree to which they achieved the optimum balance for the children they taught. This contributes to the field of understanding by illustrating that this awareness of balance is present, regardless of extraneous variables such as the children and experience. What would be worthy of exploration is how factors such as years of service and children’s attainment mediate the capability of a teacher to turn the recognition of the need for balance into reality in the classroom.

The present thesis reinforces the argument that feelings of competence and autonomy appear to be necessary for a teacher in order to resist the weight of the skills discourse. As the quote from Fisher (2006, p.196) shown in Chapter 2 highlights, despite the pressures to adhere to external assessment criteria, “it is the task of the teacher to enable the child to learn these conventions
without losing the awareness of how writing can be used by the writer for their own purposes." The responses of the teachers show that the demands of external accountability, both within school and beyond, are present for all teachers. However, the extent to which this influences the discourse in the classroom appears to be mediated by the self-determination of the teacher. As highlighted previously, a wider sample of teachers, allowing for the more robust control of extraneous variables, is required in order to further substantiate and enlighten this relationship.

Boscolo (2009) expresses the common sense view that teacher self-determination and child self-determination shouldn’t be considered in isolation and that a teacher’s motivation is likely to have an influence on the motivation of the children in the classroom. The present thesis aimed to address the limitation that empirical evidence to support this hypothesis is lacking (Boscolo, 2009). Rather than supporting the hypothesis that teacher self-determination will influence child self-determination, the present study has challenged the notion that this dynamic can be captured using SDT surveys. The relationships in a classroom are complex and the present thesis contributes to the field of understanding by critiquing findings based solely on survey data. The related recommendation is that while teacher interviews provided a layer of complexity, future studies should aim to bring together the perspectives of a teacher and the children in his or her class.

The present thesis has contributed to the field of understanding by providing a conceptualisation of individual voice in writing that is underpinned by three complementary concepts. The thesis argues that writing should be dialogic, a conversation between the writer and the reader (Bakhtin, 1981), that it should be socially constructed, grounded in genuine purpose and social communication (Vygotsky, 1978) and that it should be socio-semiotic, promoting the understanding of grammar through examples that have been employed to craft meaning (Kress, 1994).

The present thesis illustrates that perspectives of competence in the teaching of writing should be viewed as complimentary and valid for different reasons. The emphasis on the development of individual voice is indicative of a socio-cultural perspective of competence (Ivanic, 2004). However, as Chapter 3 proposes and the responses of the teachers exemplifies, the most skilled teachers are able to balance perspectives. There is recognition of the importance of transcriptional automaticity, an understanding of the political discourse and a capability to include all perspectives within the teaching of
writing. Whether this balance is better achieved by some teachers than others is a possible focus for future work in this area.

There is support throughout the present study for the notion that a teacher needs self-perceptions of both high competence and high autonomy to fully support individual young writers. So, how does a teacher reach a point in which they feel this way and how does a child reach a point where they also self-perceive sufficiently high levels of competence and autonomy to develop individual voice? For a teacher, what must come first, the provision of autonomy from the school or the support of the competence and confidence necessary to utilise the autonomy to support young writers? For a child, what must come first, the provision of autonomy for young writers or the capability to utilise the autonomy in order to write with individual voice? In both cases, if one follows the logic that an individual first needs to be capable of utilising autonomy in order to develop, then how does an individual develop that capability? Is it possible that the only way of developing such a capability is through the provision of autonomy?

This thesis started with the issue of writer motivation and adopted the most widely used contemporary theory of motivation to explore these issues. The research reported here challenges both certain aspects of SDT and also how constructs have previously been measured. The thesis also points the way to how these questions related to the balance between the provision of autonomy and the development of competence can inform future investigation in this important area.
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Appendices
Appendix 5.1

The Teacher Questionnaire

When I teach writing...

This survey is designed to find out how you generally feel about teaching writing. Please answer honestly, there are no right or wrong answers and your answers are anonymous.

For the following statements, please circle the number that best describes how you generally feel when you teach writing.

I feel confident in my ability to teach writing

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Completely false</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mainly false</td>
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I am not improving as a teacher of writing

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<td>Completely false</td>
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I feel confident writing from scratch in front of my class

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I don’t know how to teach writing well

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<td>Completely false</td>
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I would like more help to improve my teaching of writing

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<td>Completely false</td>
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My Initial Teacher Training has helped my confidence in teaching writing

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Continuing professional development has had a positive impact on my teaching of writing

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My own subject knowledge in writing is weak

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<td>Mainly false</td>
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My own memories of writing at school make have a negative impact on my teaching of writing

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<td>Completely false</td>
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I have positive memories of my own writing at school

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<td>Completely false</td>
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I never write beyond necessity in my personal life

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<td>Completely false</td>
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I worry about writing in front of my class

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<td>Completely false</td>
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Writing is important to me outside school

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<td>Completely false</td>
<td>Mainly false</td>
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I see myself as a writer

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<td>Completely false</td>
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I feel that my school give me choices and options in the teaching of writing

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<td>Completely false</td>
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</table>

My school support the way in which I want to teach writing

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<td>Completely false</td>
<td>Mainly false</td>
<td>Mainly true</td>
<td>Very true</td>
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<td>Statement</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>I am able to ask for support with my teaching of writing</strong></td>
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<td>(Completely false) (Mainly false) (Mainly true) (Very true)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>My school make me feel confident about my teaching of writing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Completely false) (Mainly false) (Mainly true) (Very true)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staff in my school are happy with my teaching of writing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Completely false) (Mainly false) (Mainly true) (Very true)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>My school help me to understand how to teach writing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Completely false) (Mainly false) (Mainly true) (Very true)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>I feel that my school care about the way I want to teach writing</strong></td>
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<td>(Completely false) (Mainly false) (Mainly true) (Very true)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>My school try to understand my ideas before suggesting ways to teach writing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Completely false) (Mainly false) (Mainly true) (Very true)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>I feel able to share my feelings about the teaching of writing with the school</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Completely false) (Mainly false) (Mainly true) (Very true)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>In writing lessons, I feel that I give children in my class choices and options.</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>(Completely false) (Mainly false) (Mainly true) (Very true)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>I understand what the children in my class want to write about.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(Completely false) (Mainly false) (Mainly true) (Very true)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The children in my class are able to ask me questions about their writing.

0 1 2 3
Completely false  Mainly false  Mainly true  Very true

I make the children in my class feel confident about their writing.

0 1 2 3
Completely false  Mainly false  Mainly true  Very true

I am happy with the work in writing of the children in my class.

0 1 2 3
Completely false  Mainly false  Mainly true  Very true

I make sure the children in my class understand the purpose of writing and how to do it.

0 1 2 3
Completely false  Mainly false  Mainly true  Very true

During writing lessons, I answer the children in my class’s questions fully and carefully.

0 1 2 3
Completely false  Mainly false  Mainly true  Very true

The children in my class feel that I care about their writing.

0 1 2 3
Completely false  Mainly false  Mainly true  Very true

In writing, I try to understand the children in my class’s ideas before suggesting a new way to do things.

0 1 2 3
Completely false  Mainly false  Mainly true  Very true

In writing, the children in my class feel able to share their feelings with me.

0 1 2 3
Completely false  Mainly false  Mainly true  Very true
I give children the chance to talk about their ideas and their work

In some writing lessons, in about half of writing lessons, in most writing lessons, in all writing lessons.

There is a rush to start writing

In some writing lessons, in about half of writing lessons, in most writing lessons, in all writing lessons.

I give children the chance to think about audience and who will read their work

In some writing lessons, in about half of writing lessons, in most writing lessons, in all writing lessons.

I remind children about punctuation, handwriting and spelling

In some writing lessons, in about half of writing lessons, in most writing lessons, in all writing lessons.

I give children time to talk, plan and edit

In some writing lessons, in about half of writing lessons, in most writing lessons, in all writing lessons.

I am rigid about how children have to plan and edit their work

In some writing lessons, in about half of writing lessons, in most writing lessons, in all writing lessons.

I give children a success criteria to follow

In some writing lessons, in about half of writing lessons, in most writing lessons, in all writing lessons.
I encourage children to take risks and experiment

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
<td>In most writing lessons</td>
<td>In all writing lessons</td>
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I enable children to make choices

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
<td>In most writing lessons</td>
<td>In all writing lessons</td>
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I remind children about tests or targets

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
<td>In most writing lessons</td>
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I give enough time for children to finish work the way they want to

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<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
<td>In most writing lessons</td>
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I allow children to write just for fun in any way they choose

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
<td>In most writing lessons</td>
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</table>

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. I will make sure that you understand the results and the reasons for the survey soon.
Appendix 5.2
The Child Questionnaire (autumn)

When I Write…

This survey is designed to find out how you generally feel when you do writing at school. Please answer honestly, there are no right or wrong answers and your answers are anonymous.

For the following statements, please circle the number that best describes how you generally feel when you write in class.

I have choices when I write in class

1 2 3 4 5
Completely untrue Mainly untrue A bit of both Mainly true Very true

What I write about is controlled by my teacher

1 2 3 4 5
Completely untrue Mainly untrue A bit of both Mainly true Very true

I use my own ideas in my writing

1 2 3 4 5
Completely untrue Mainly untrue A bit of both Mainly true Very true

How I write in class is up to me

1 2 3 4 5
Completely untrue Mainly untrue A bit of both Mainly true Very true

My teacher chooses who I write for (my audience)

1 2 3 4 5
Completely untrue Mainly untrue A bit of both Mainly true Very true
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When I’m confident, I’m allowed to write without help</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
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<td>Very true</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mainly untrue</td>
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<td>A bit of both</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I would like more freedom when I write in class</th>
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<th>2</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>I feel like I have control when I write in class</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I feel confident in my ability in writing</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am proud of my writing</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Very true</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I would like to be better at writing</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Completely untrue</td>
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<td>Mainly untrue</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>My writing isn’t improving as much as I’d like it to</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>5</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td>Completely untrue</td>
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<td>I know how to use punctuation in my writing</td>
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<td>I am good at making my writing interesting for the reader</td>
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<td>I am good at coming up with ideas for my writing</td>
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I find planning my writing difficult

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<td>Mainly untrue</td>
<td>A bit of both</td>
<td>Mainly true</td>
<td>Very true</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I am good at editing my writing

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<td>A bit of both</td>
<td>Mainly true</td>
<td>Very true</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I can’t see the point of the writing I do in class

<table>
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<th>5</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Mainly untrue</td>
<td>A bit of both</td>
<td>Mainly true</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The writing I do in class feels important for my life

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<td>A bit of both</td>
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The writing I do in class has a real life purpose

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<td></td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Mainly untrue</td>
<td>A bit of both</td>
<td>Mainly true</td>
<td>Very true</td>
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</table>

Adults outside school do the sort of writing I do in class

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Mainly untrue</td>
<td>A bit of both</td>
<td>Mainly true</td>
<td>Very true</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The writing I do in class is only for my teacher to read

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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Completely untrue</td>
<td>Mainly untrue</td>
<td>A bit of both</td>
<td>Mainly true</td>
<td>Very true</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The writing that I do in school is only for pretend situations

1  2  3  4  5
Completely Mainly A bit of Mainly Very
untrue untrue both true true

Writing is similar in school and outside school

1  2  3  4  5
Completely Mainly A bit of Mainly Very
untrue untrue both true true

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. I will make sure that you understand the results and the reasons for the survey soon.
Appendix 5.3
Reliability test results for autumn pilot child questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived autonomy</td>
<td>$\alpha = .586$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived competence</td>
<td>$\alpha = .734$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5.4
The Child Questionnaire (summer)

When I Write…

This survey is designed to find out how you generally feel when you do writing at school. Please answer honestly, there are no right or wrong answers and your answers are anonymous.

For the following statements, please circle the number that best describes how you generally feel when you write in class.

I feel that my teacher gives me choices and options when I write in class

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completely false</td>
<td>Mainly false</td>
<td>Mainly true</td>
<td>Very true</td>
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</table>

My teacher understands what I want to write about

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<td>Completely false</td>
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<td>Mainly true</td>
<td>Very true</td>
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I am able to ask my teacher questions about my writing

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completely false</td>
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My teacher makes me feel confident about my writing

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My teacher is happy with my work in writing

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<td>Completely false</td>
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My teacher makes sure I understand the purpose of writing

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<td>Completely false</td>
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My teacher makes sure I understand how to write

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<tr>
<td>Completely false</td>
<td>Mainly false</td>
<td>Mainly true</td>
<td>Very true</td>
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</table>
My teacher makes sure I understand who will read my writing (my audience)

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

My teacher listens to how I would like to do things in writing

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

I feel that my teacher cares about my writing

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

My teacher tries to understand my ideas in writing

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

In writing, I feel able to share my feelings with my teacher

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

My teacher allows me to choose how to do my writing in class

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

My teacher allows me to choose to write about topics that interest me

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

My teacher gives us options or choices about what writing we do

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

My teacher encourages me to write in my own way

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true
It is important to my teacher that I write about things that interest me

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My teacher explains why the writing we do in class is so important

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My teacher listens to my opinions and ideas in writing lessons

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My teacher allows me to make decisions about my writing by myself

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My teacher listens if there are things that I don’t want to do in writing lessons

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My teacher shows me how to do the writing myself instead of doing it for me

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My teacher tells me what to write about all the time

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My teacher allows me to write at my own speed

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My teacher stops me before I want to finish writing

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<td>Mainly false</td>
<td>Mainly true</td>
<td>Very true</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My teacher makes me carry on writing when I don’t want to

0  1  2  3
Completely false   Mainly false    Mainly true     Very true

My teacher tells me to go back and add more to my writing when I don’t want to

0  1  2  3
Completely false   Mainly false    Mainly true     Very true

My teacher tries to choose what I write about

0  1  2  3
Completely false   Mainly false    Mainly true     Very true

My teacher makes me write about boring things

0  1  2  3
Completely false   Mainly false    Mainly true     Very true

In writing lessons my teacher makes me do worksheets that don’t mean anything

0  1  2  3
Completely false   Mainly false    Mainly true     Very true

My teacher gives me pointless writing activities

0  1  2  3
Completely false   Mainly false    Mainly true     Very true

I feel confident in my ability in writing

0  1  2  3
Completely false   Mainly false    Mainly true     Very true

I am proud of my writing

0  1  2  3
Completely false   Mainly false    Mainly true     Very true

I would like to be better at writing

0  1  2  3
Completely false   Mainly false    Mainly true     Very true
My writing isn’t improving as much as I’d like it to

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

I find handwriting difficult

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

My spelling is good

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

I know how to use punctuation in my writing

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

I find grammar difficult to understand

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

I find grammar difficult to use

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

I am good at making my writing interesting for the reader

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

My writing can sometimes be confusing to follow

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

I am good at coming up with ideas for my writing

0 1 2 3
Completely false Mainly false Mainly true Very true

I find planning my writing difficult
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am good at editing my writing</th>
<th>0</th>
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<tr>
<th>I have the chance to talk about my ideas and my work</th>
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<td>In some writing lessons</td>
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<td>In most writing lessons</td>
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<td>In all writing lessons</td>
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<tr>
<th>There is a rush to start writing</th>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>I have the chance to think about my audience and who will read my work</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
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<td>In all writing lessons</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am reminded about punctuation, handwriting and spelling</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am given time to talk, plan and edit</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
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<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
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<td>In all writing lessons</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I have to plan and edit the way the teacher tells me to</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
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<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
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<td>In most writing lessons</td>
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<tr>
<td>In all writing lessons</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
I am given a success criteria to follow

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
<td>In most writing lessons</td>
<td>In all writing lessons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am encouraged to take risks and experiment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
<td>In most writing lessons</td>
<td>In all writing lessons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I can make choices about the topic

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
<td>In most writing lessons</td>
<td>In all writing lessons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am reminded about tests or targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
<td>In most writing lessons</td>
<td>In all writing lessons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am given enough time to finish my work the way I want to

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
<td>In most writing lessons</td>
<td>In all writing lessons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I am allowed to write just for fun in any way I choose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In some writing lessons</td>
<td>In about half of writing lessons</td>
<td>In most writing lessons</td>
<td>In all writing lessons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. I will make sure that you understand the results and the reasons for the survey soon.
Appendix 5.5
Reliability test results for summer pilot child questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child autonomy</td>
<td>$\alpha = .924$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child competence</td>
<td>$\alpha = .864$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child autonomous pedagogy</td>
<td>$\alpha = .578$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5.6
Letter to read to the class at Time-Point 1, written by the researcher, to explain the rationale for completing the tasks

Dear Class [insert class name]

My name is Josh Franks. I am a Year 2 teacher and I'm also studying at university. I am learning lots about writing in school and what helps Year 5 children and teachers feel motivated.

However, I would love to learn even more about what effects feelings about writing so that I can think of and suggest ways to make writing even more motivating for children and teachers.

To help me do this I would like you to answer a short questionnaire. For each question please circle the answer that best describes how you usually feel about writing in school. Please answer honestly - only I will read your answers and I do not want you to write your name so it will be completely anonymous. Only the number of your register order will be on the questionnaire. Your teacher has also kindly agreed to answer questions at the same time and their answers are also anonymous.

I would also like you to do a short piece of writing for me. This will help me see how feelings effect writing. You will be given a title and then you'll have 1 minute to think of ideas for a story in your head. Your teacher will then give you 10 minutes to write. It is not a test and you can write your story in any style of writing that you think fits the title. Again, please don't include your name.

When you've finished your teacher will send everything back to me. I will write to you again in the summer to ask you to do it again and then I'll make sure I write to you all to tell you what I found out with your help.

Thank you so much and enjoy answering the questions and doing the writing - I'll definitely enjoy reading all that you write.

Best wishes
Josh
Appendix 5.7

Letter to read to the class at Time-Point 2, written by the researcher, to explain the rationale for completing the tasks

Dear Class [insert class name]

My name is Josh Franks. I wrote to you before Christmas. I am a Year 2 teacher and I'm also studying at university. As I told you before, I am learning lots about writing in school and what helps Year 5 children and teachers feel motivated.

However, I would love to learn even more about what effects feelings about writing so that I can think of and suggest ways to make writing even more motivating for children and teachers.

To help me do this I would like you to answer a short questionnaire again. The questionnaire is slightly longer than in the Autumn and the statements and scoring is slightly different as well.

For each question please circle the answer that best describes how you usually feel about writing in school. Please answer honestly - only I will read your answers and I do not want you to write your name so it will be completely anonymous. Only the number of your register order will be on the questionnaire. Your teacher has also kindly agreed to answer questions at the same time and their answers are also anonymous.

I would also like you to do a short piece of writing for me. This will help me see how feelings effect writing. You will be given a title and then you'll have 1 minute to think of ideas for a story in your head. Your teacher will then give you 10 minutes to write. It is not a test and you can write your story in any style of writing that you think fits the title. Again, please don't include your name.

When you've finished your teacher will send everything back to me. I will write to you when you are in Year 6 l to tell you what I found out with your help.

Thank you so much and enjoy answering the questions and doing the writing - I'll definitely enjoy reading all that you write.

Best wishes
Josh
Appendix 5.8  
Letter given to teachers at Time-Point 1 to outline instructions

Dear Teacher

Thank you so much once again for helping with my research - I can't tell you enough how grateful I am for your support.

I have included a letter to read to the children that should explain all that they need to know about the questionnaire and the writing task. I have also included an opt in consent form if your head teacher would like to send one home.

Can I reassure you once again that all responses are anonymous. I have numbered the questionnaires and writing tasks 1-30 to correspond to register order. If you have any absentees please leave that number blank rather than moving a child up a number. I have included a master copy in case of any problems. Your questionnaire is marked 'teacher'.

Even I will not be able to match your responses to a school as I've asked an independent person to assign numbers to the different schools - hence addressing you as 'teacher' rather than by name. I will not know which responses are from which teacher or school as I wish to avoid any risk of any knowledge of you or your school having an influence in the analysis of the responses.

This does not prevent you from contacting me with any questions about the tasks - please do if you have any queries at all.

Both tasks to be completed during the week beginning 11th November. Please complete the questionnaire before the writing task.

Questionnaires - please read the letter to children and hand out the questionnaire by register order. There is no time limit but it shouldn't take long. Please do not do it when there is time pressure (e.g. Before assembly). Help children with reading questions if necessary but give no more prompts. At any stage, children have the right to withdraw from participating without any reason needed. In practice, it is more likely that you will notice something (discomfort or emotion) that causes you to step in and withdraw them. Please do not hesitate to do this and no explanation of any kind is needed.

Writing task - it does not have to be done on the same day as the questionnaire as long as it is in the same week. The right to withdraw is the same as for the questionnaire above.

Please hand the numbered response sheets out in register order. Once children are ready, please read out the script below.

Please note: Instructions to be read aloud are in bold; instructions to teacher are in italics.
Look carefully at the sentence at the top of your paper.

Now, read the prompt aloud: One day I had the best day ever at school.

You need to write the best story you can about the best day ever at school. You will have 1 minute to think about what you are going to write and then 10 minutes to write it.

If you don’t know how to spell a word, have a go anyway. If you make a mistake just put a line through it and carry on writing. Remember to work in silence and focus on your writing.

Are there any questions?

Answer questions. (see FAQs below)

Remember you are going to write the best story you can to go with the title ‘one day I had the best day ever at school.

You have 1 minute to think about what you are going to write. Then I will tell you to start writing.

Ok, your thinking time starts now.

Start timing. At the end of 1 minute say:
Ok, you may begin your writing now.

Start timing the ten minutes. After 9 minutes say:

You have 1 minute left

After 1 further minute say:

Stop writing now please.

When the children have finished writing, collect up their responses. If you want them to continue, please ensure that you mark with a colour pen at the exact point that they reached after 10 minutes.

When you have collected all the questionnaires and writing samples, please put everything in the envelope and I will collect everything at a time that suits you.

Many thanks again
Josh
Common FAQs from children

Q1. Do I have to write out the prompt sentence again?
No - just start writing your story

Q2. Do I have to write in proper sentences or can I use notes / bullet points / numbers?
It is a story writing task so please write in full sentences.

Q3. Can I make something up? / Can it be a true story?
It is entirely your choice - it can be a true story, a made up story or a bit of both.

Q4. What if I can’t think of anything to write?
Try to use the 1 minute thinking time. Use your imagination and if you think of an idea, stick to it.

Q5. What shall I do if I finish before the time is up?
Try to think of something else to write but if you have really finished then read through what you have done. If you have absolutely finished, just put down your pencil and wait quietly.

Q6. (optional) What if I haven’t finished after 10 minutes?
I will ask you to stop after 10 minutes. I can then mark the exact point where you got to with a colour pen and then I will allow you to finish.
Appendix 5.9  
Letter given to teachers at Time-Point 2 to outline instructions

Dear Teacher

Thank you so much once again for helping with my research - I can't tell you enough how grateful I am for your support. This will be the last task like this I promise!

I have included a new letter to read to the children that should explain all that they need to know about the second questionnaire and the writing task. I have also included an opt in consent form again, if your head teacher would like to send one home.

Can I reassure you once again that all responses are anonymous. I have numbered the questionnaires and writing tasks 1-30 again to correspond to register order. In order that the numbers correspond with those in the Autumn term, if you have any absentees please leave that number blank rather than moving a child up a number. I have included a master copy in case of any problems. Your questionnaire is marked 'teacher'.

As I said last time, even I will not be able to match your responses to a school as I've asked an independent person to assign numbers to the different schools - hence addressing you as 'teacher' rather than by name. I will not know which responses are from which teacher or school as I wish to avoid any risk of any knowledge of you or your school having an influence in the analysis of the responses.

This does not prevent you from contacting me with any questions about the tasks - please do if you have any queries at all.

Both tasks to be completed during the week beginning 16th June. (Optional SATs allowing. The week before or after is fine as well) Please complete the questionnaire before the writing task.

Data Sheet - I have included a data sheet this time to provide some secondary demographic data. Please fill in as much as you can. If it proves difficult, the surveys and writing tasks are more vital but any information will be invaluable for me. Again, as the children will be anonymised, so too will the data.

Questionnaires - please read the letter to children and hand out the questionnaire by register order. There is no time limit but it shouldn't take long. Please do not do it when there is time pressure (e.g. Before assembly) and please do it yourself at exactly the same time. Help children with reading questions if necessary but give no more prompts. At any stage, you and the children have the right to withdraw from participating without any reason needed. In practice, it is more likely that you will notice something (discomfort or emotion) that causes you to step in and withdraw children on their behalf. Please do not hesitate to do this and no explanation of any kind is needed.
**Writing task** - it does not have to be done on the same day as the questionnaire as long as it is in the same week. The right to withdraw is the same as for the questionnaire above.

Please hand the numbered response sheets out in register order. Once children are ready, please read out the script below.

**Please note:** Instructions to be read aloud are in bold; instructions to teacher are in italics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>script for writing task</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Look carefully at the sentence at the top of your paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Now, read the prompt aloud:</strong> One day I had the worst day ever at school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You need to write the best story you can about the best day ever at school. You will have 1 minute to think about what you are going to write and then 10 minutes to write it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you don’t know how to spell a word, have a go anyway. If you make a mistake just put a line through it and carry on writing. Remember to work in silence and focus on your writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any questions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Answer questions. (see FAQs below)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remember you are going to write the best story you can to go with the title ‘one day I had the best day ever at school. You have 1 minute to think about what you are going to write. Then I will tell you to start writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ok, your thinking time starts now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start timing. At the end of 1 minute say:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ok, you may begin your writing now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start timing the ten minutes. After 9 minutes say:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>You have 1 minute left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>After 1 further minute say:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop writing now please.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When the children have finished writing, collect up their responses. If you want them to continue, please ensure that you mark with a colour pen at the exact point that they reached after 10 minutes.

When you have collected all the questionnaires and writing samples, please put everything in the envelope and I will collect everything at a time that suits you.

Many thanks again
Josh

Common FAQs from children

Q1. Do I have to write out the prompt sentence again?
No - just start writing your story

Q2. Do I have to write in proper sentences or can I use notes / bullet points / numbers?
It is a story writing task so please write in full sentences.

Q3. Can I make something up? / Can it be a true story?
It is entirely your choice - it can be a true story, a made up story or a bit of both.

Q4. What if I can’t think of anything to write?
Try to use the 1 minute thinking time. Use your imagination and if you think of an idea, stick to it.

Q5. What shall I do if I finish before the time is up?
Try to think of something else to write but if you have really finished then read through what you have done. If you have absolutely finished, just put down your pencil and wait quietly.

Q6. (optional) What if I haven’t finished after 10 minutes?
I will ask you to stop after 10 minutes. I can then mark the exact point where you got to with a colour pen and then I will allow you to finish.
Appendix 5.10
Approved ethics application form

Ethics Application Form: Research Degree Students

All student research that use research methods to collect data from human participants is required to gain ethical approval before starting. Please answer all relevant questions. Your form may be returned if incomplete. Please write your responses in terms that can be understood by a lay person.

For further support and guidance please see Ethics Review Procedures for Student Research [http://www.ioe.ac.uk/about/policies/Procedures/42253.html](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/about/policies/Procedures/42253.html), contact your supervisor or researchethics@ioe.ac.uk.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 1 Project details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Project title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Student name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Advisory committee members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Faculty</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. Intended research start date</td>
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<td>h. Intended research end date</td>
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<tr>
<td>i. Funder (If applicable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Funding confirmed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country fieldwork will be conducted in</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

k. If research to be conducted abroad please check [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk) if the FCO advice against travel a full travel risk assessment form should also be completed and submitted: [http://international orc.gov.uk/if-49028-14440-6-22640](http://international orc.gov.uk/if-49028-14440-6-22640)

l. All research projects at the Institute of Education are required to specify a professional code of ethics according to which the research will be conducted. Which organisation’s research code will be used?

If your research is based in another institution then you may be required to submit your research to that institution’s ethics review process. If your research involves patients recruited through the NHS then you will need to apply for ethics approval through your NHS Local Research Ethics Committee. If either of these cases, you don’t need ethics approval from the Institute of Education.

m. Has this project been considered by another (external) Research Ethics Committee?

Yes ☐ No ☑ go to Section 2

If so, please insert the name of the committee, the date on which the project was considered, and attach the approval letter in either hard or electronic format with this form.

External Committee Name: Date of Approval:

Ⓒ if your project has been externally approved please go to Section 8 Attachments.
Section 2. Research Summary

Please provide an overview of your research. This can include some or all of the following: purpose of the research, aims, main research questions, research design, participants, sampling, data collection, reporting and dissemination. It is expected that this will take approximately 200-300 words, and you may write more if you feel it is necessary.

Purpose of the research:
To enhance the understanding of how motivational factors affect the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools.

Aims:
To explore how teacher motivation affects children's motivation and progress in the area of writing in English primary schools.

Main question:
To what extent does teachers motivation affect child motivation and progress (specifically competence with compositional skills) in the context of the teaching and learning of writing in English primary schools?

Design:
Teachers and children will complete motivation surveys. Children will complete two writing tasks.

Participants:
Teachers and children in Year 5 classes in English primary schools.

Sampling:
30-40 Year 5 teachers from primary schools across three London boroughs. 900 – 1200 children in the corresponding classes.

Data collection:
Teachers and children will complete the surveys in the spring term of the school year. Children will complete the writing task twice in the school year (once in the autumn term, once in the summer term.) The surveys will take 20-30 minutes to complete and the writing task should entail a similar time commitment.

Reporting and dissemination:
Correlations between teachers and children will be reported as well as the affect of teacher motivation on writing progress. In both respects, overall correlations and patterns will be reported rather than an analysis of any individual school, class, teacher or child. All schools and participants will be entirely anonymised.

Ethics Form: Doctoral Student Research 3.0 2012
### Section 3 Research participants Tick all that apply

- Early years/pre-school
- Primary School age 5-11
- Secondary School age 12-16
- Young people aged 17-18
- Unknown
- Advisory/consultation groups
- No participants
- Adults please specify below

### Section 4 Research methods Tick all that apply

- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Questionnaire
- Action research
- Observation
- Literature review
- Controlled trial/other intervention study
- Use of personal records
- Systematic review
- Secondary data analysis
- Other, give details: Samples of children’s writing

### Section 5 Systematic reviews Only complete if systematic reviews will be used

a. Will you be collecting any new data from participants? Yes □ No □

b. Will you be analysing any secondary data? Yes □ No □

### Section 6 Secondary data analysis Only complete if secondary data analysis will be used

a. Name of dataset/s

b. Owner of dataset/s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are the data in the public domain?</th>
<th>Yes □</th>
<th>No □</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If no, do you have the owner’s permission/license?</td>
<td>Yes □ No* □</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes □</td>
<td>No □</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d. Are the data anonymised?

| Do you plan to anonymise the data? | Yes □ No* □ |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|
| Do you plan to use individual level data? | Yes* □ No □ |
| Will you be linking data to individuals? | Yes* □ No □ |
| Yes □ | No □ |

e. Are the data sensitive (DPA definition)?

| Yes* □ | No □ |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|
| Yes □ | No* □ |

f. Will you be conducting analysis within the remit it was originally collected for?

| Was consent gained from participants for subsequent/future analysis? | Yes □ No* □ |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|
| Was data collected prior to ethics approval process? | Yes □ No* □ |
### Section 7: Ethical Issues

What are the ethical issues which may arise in the course of this research, and how will they be addressed?

Please consider all issues that may apply. It is expected that this will take approximately 200-300 words, and you may write more if you feel it is necessary.

- Potentially vulnerable participants
- Safeguarding/child protection
- Risks to participants and/or researchers
- International research
- Sensitive topics
- Sampling
- Gatekeepers
- Informed consent
- Assent
- Methods
- Confidentiality
- Anonymity
- Data storage/security
- Data transfer/transmission
- Data sharing/encryption
- Data documentation
- Data management plan
- Data protection
- Reporting
- Dissemination and use of findings

(Continued on next page)

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### Section 8: Attachments

Please attach the following items to this form, or explain if not attached.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Attached</th>
<th>Not Attached</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Further information about the work</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval letter from external Research Ethics Committee, if applicable</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information sheets and other materials to be used to inform potential participants about the research.</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Section 9: Declaration

I confirm that to the best of my knowledge this is a full description of the ethical issues that may arise in the course of this project.

Name: [Redacted]  
Date: 23.5.2013

Please submit your completed ethics form to your supervisor/course administrator.
Departmental use
If a project raises particularly challenging ethics issues, or a more detailed review would be appropriate, you may refer the application to the Research Ethics Coordinator (via researchethics@nrc.ac.uk) so that it can be submitted to the Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) for consideration. FREC Chairs, FREC representatives in your department and the research ethics coordinator can advise you, either to support your review process, or help decide whether an application should be referred to the FREC.

Also see 'who to pass a student ethics review up to Faculty level committee':
http://intranet.london.nrc/crm/scrp.asp?tid=13449

Reviewer 1
Supervisor name

Jane Hurry

Supervisor comments

Supervisor signature

Reviewer 2
Advisory committee member name

Maria Katonisou

Advisory committee member comments

Advisory committee member signature

Decision
Date decision was made
29/5/13

Decision
Approved and reported to FREC [x]
Referrred back to applicant and supervisor [ ]

Referrred to FREC for review [ ]

Recording
Recorded in the student information system [ ]

Once completed and approved, please send this form and associated documents to the faculty research administrator to record on the student information system and to securely store.

Further guidance on ethical issues can be found on the ICR website at:
http://www.icr.ac.uk/about/policies/Procedures/p01899.html and www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk

Further guidance on recording ethics applications in the student information system can be found on the intranet: http://intranet.london.nrc/crm/scrp.asp?tid=13449

Ethics Form: Doctoral Student Research 3.0 2012
Appendix 5.11
Letter of ethical approval for Headteachers

Dear Headteacher,

I am currently studying for a PhD in the area of motivation and writing in English primary schools at the Institute of Education, University of London.

I am writing to request permission to involve the teacher/s and children in your Year 5 class/classes in the research that I plan to conduct. The research involves collecting samples of children’s writing and surveying both children and teachers (details below). I would then like to follow up the survey data with a small sample of teacher interviews so I may contact your teachers again to request this.

The purpose of the research is to explore a link between teachers’ motivation and children’s motivation - in the area of writing - and the impact of motivation on writing composition. It is hoped that the results will extend the understanding of how motivation and writing composition can be developed for the benefit of teachers, children and schools.

I am searching for overall patterns from a large sample and as such I would like to assure you that all data will be made completely anonymous. No one, myself included, will be able to link any results to a particular teacher, child or school and of course no judgement whatsoever will be made concerning your school, the teachers or the children.

The requirement for Year 5 teacher and children would be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autumn Term 2013</td>
<td>One standardised writing task to be completed by all children. The task will take no more than 20 minutes to complete and all instructions will be given to teachers beforehand. One survey to be completed by all Year 5 teachers and children. The survey should take less than 20 minutes to complete and all instructions will be written at the top.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Term 2014</td>
<td>A repeat of the tasks from the Autumn term</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I am happy to send a draft copy of each questionnaire as well as an outline of the writing task. I will also provide you with a parental consent form if you agree to participate.

If you would like to know more about the theoretical background of the research – or indeed anything else about the research - please do not hesitate to contact me (my contact details are below). I would be delighted to give you any further information regarding the research, its background and its rationale. Additionally, I will of course provide feedback regarding the results once the study is completed.

If you wish to verify any of the information I have given, including my identity and the nature of the research, please contact either of my supervisors at the Institute of Education (Contact details for both are included below.)

Many thanks and I look forward to hearing from you.

Joshua Franks (j.******co.uk)

Supervisors:  Dr Jane Hurry (j.****.ac.uk)  Dr Jeni Riley (j***.com)
PhD Research: Writing in Primary Schools

Dear Parent,

My name is Joshua Franks and I am a qualified teacher with ten years experience teaching in London primary schools. As well as teaching, I am currently a PhD student at the Institute of Education, University of London.

Why am I writing to you?
I am investigating what influences motivation and attainment in writing and as part of my PhD research I would like your child to fill in a brief questionnaire and complete a 10 minute writing task.

What will the tasks involve?
The questionnaire will contain questions about how your child feels about writing. The writing task is designed to be a fun story writing activity.

Are my child’s details safe?
Your child’s responses will be entirely anonymous. Your child’s name will not appear on either the questionnaire or the writing task - the identity of your child and even the school will be entirely anonymous - even to me.

I have an enhanced DBS disclosure and this project has received ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee at the Institute of Education. Furthermore, I will not be present when your child completes the task. Your child’s teacher will give all the instructions and send everything back to me.

What if I am not happy for my child to participate?
I have sought permission from your child’s headteacher and teacher to carry out these tasks. They will have absolutely no negative impact on your child’s learning. The study is designed to improve the teaching and learning of writing.
However, if you wish to ask any questions about the research, please contact me on the email address below. You may also contact my PhD supervisor Dr Jane Hurry (email address below)

Children will complete the questionnaire and writing task next week but if you are not happy for your child to take part then you needn’t take any action. If you are happy for them to take part then please fill in the form below and return it to your child’s teacher by Monday 11th November. I will not see any of the forms sent back.

Very many thanks in anticipation of your support

Kind Regards
Joshua Franks

Dr Jane Hurry

J*****.co.uk

j.****.ac.uk

PhD Research: Writing in Primary Schools

Opt in Request

I would like my child to participate in the research outlined above.
Name of child__________________ Class __________________
Appendix 9.1

Interview Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of my doctoral research. I am really grateful for the time that you are giving me. The purpose of the interview is to follow up the results of the survey that I sent to you and 26 other Year 5 teachers last year. I am interested in what the scores on a survey mean in your own words and I am also interested in hearing more about your experiences of teaching writing to Year 5 children. The overall purpose of my research is to look at how the feelings of a teacher relate to the feelings of the children in her or his class and to look at how these feelings relate to their writing. I will share the results of the study with you when I have completed the research. Do you have any questions for me so far?

Ok thank you, I am going to ask you 4 core questions. However, I may ask additional questions in response to the things that you say. The idea is that it becomes more of a natural conversation rather than you feeling like I am throwing questions at you and that you have to answer them. Do you have any questions for me about that?

Ok thank you. Before we start, it is important to make you aware of the following things:
1. I will be recording the interview. Once I have then transcribed the interview I will delete the recording and the transcript will be kept on a password-protected computer until the research is finished.
2. All responses will be completely anonymised. No one reading the final thesis will be able to identify you. Your name, the school’s name, children’s names and any reference made that could give an indication of any of these will be deleted if mentioned during the interview.
3. I am unaware of your responses from the survey. You have been identified using a letter code but I do not know which letter code is yours, only that you are one of four possible letters. This process ensures that your survey responses do not influence my additional questions.
4. You do not have to answer any questions. If you decide to go ahead with the interview, you may also omit any question of your choice or withdraw from the interview without having to give any reason at all. If you wish to withdraw or if you wish to withdraw your responses at a later stage, before completion of the research then I will delete all responses that may have been given. Again, absolutely no explanation is required if you wish to do this.
Do you have any questions before we begin?
Are you happy to begin?
JF: Can you tell me what goes through your mind when you’re planning writing?

P1: Urm, so I pick the genre, we have kind of a medium term plan where we are given the option of four genres so we pick either instructions or narratives – we pick one of those… urm… processes – thinking about what the children have done previously, whether they’ve got much experience of that genre and whether they’ve written it before we’ve got examples to look at urm so kind of I know we have to start by identifying features within that genre so thinking about if it’s instructions, what needs to be in instructions and kind of eliminating you know story language and the things that won’t be in there so reading lots of examples kind of emersion in that genre. Urm and then thinking then what I can link it to in the curriculum so what our topic is so actually what, could they write instructions about something that is relevant to what we’ve learned maybe in science or kind of cross curricular links in that sense… urm…

JF: When you talk about the four genres, tell me more about that. You say you’ve got four genres.

P1: Yeah so well to choose from each term cos we do like a writing cycle of four lessons.

JF: OK

P1: so it would be genre emersion, planning, drafting and then, yeah, genre emersion planning, drafting, editing so they’re like redrafting. So I know there is going to be four lessons per genre of writing so instructions, you know recounts, stories – they are all the different genres…

JF: And there are four lessons for each?

P1: yeah, for each one in a term.

JF: And what are the four lessons?

P1: so it would be the genre emersion, finding features, the planning second lesson then third lesson is the writing the first draft and then it would be marked and they’d redraft and improve and up level is the fourth lesson.

JF: OK
P1: so that’s kind of how it works.

JF: And how do you come up with the ideas for those?

P1: Urm… so yeah try and base it as much as I can on the topic that we’re working on so if we’re doing space for example we would try and link it to make it relevant to what we’re doing in other subjects.

JF: And how did the four lessons come about?

P1: That was something that was given to us by the English coordinator at this school.

JF: And how does that go with you?

P1: Urm, it’s different. To what we were doing the previous three years that I’ve been here. Because we were following very much the National Literacy the old style but focussing on more… so if we were doing narrative we’d be told exactly what kind of narrative. It is historical so we were given more kind of objectives to meet. There would be a lot more kind of genre emersion, maybe a drama lesson and then there would be a reading lesson incorporated into that so there was a lot more… we weren’t restricted to four lessons, we were allowed to choose maybe three weeks if we needed it or just one.

JF: So that’s how it used to be?

P1: Yeah

JF: Up until this year?

P1: Yeah, so the new SLT, all of them are brand new this year so they introduced the four lesson cycle.

JF: So, has there been any difference in how you feel about teaching writing from this year compared to last year?

P1: Yeah, I think it was quite a big change. So obviously I had spent three years doing what I had done previously. So I’ve looked at my plans from last year that I was happy with and happy how they went and trying to kind of condense them down I found quite difficult like particularly with the genre emersion. Urm, trying to get you know, drama in there, getting the subject knowledge – finding the features I found
a lot to try and cram into one lesson. But I think the way I’ve tried to find my way around that is to do more in the other subjects. So if I knew we were doing instructions and we were doing it about something to do with science I’d make sure we were doing a science lesson where we were using instructions.

JF: And thinking about last year, when you were asked to plan writing last year, what would you be thinking then? Were you more comfortable because you’d done two years of it?

P1: I think so and the objectives are very much given to you so the national strategies you’d have a whole list so speaking and listening objectives, reading objectives, writing objectives, and you knew over say over two or three weeks you’d have to cover all those so you’d take those objectives and put them into your daily plan and you’d say right I can cover those on that lesson cos we’ll do the drama there we’ll do that and it kind of

JF: So it was up to you where…

P1: … Yeah, how we did it. Whereas even though it’s kind of it was still prescriptive it was kind of up to us how long we spent on it. Whereas this year it was four lessons – it’s got to be…

JF: And why has that been done do you think?

P1: Urm, to get more genres of writing fitted in to each term I think. To try and make sure the children are getting a variety of genres over a term so not spending too long on the actual writing lesson not writing you know not spending too long on doing things like drama you know reading.

JF: And what’s your feeling on that?

P1: I think in some ways I think it has helped doing a lot more writing – I think generally because there’s not as much engagement in regards to drama and like the things that these kids in particular need, you know the stimulus they need something that they’ve experienced to be able to write a significant amount so it’s kind of been more writing but maybe not as much because there’s not been that extensive amount of input at the beginning of when you’ve changed genres.

JF: And for the four years that you’ve been teaching, has there been any feeling of frustration, have you been happy, you know, you’ve mentioned a couple of times – I’d like to be spending time – you said that last year you got to spend a bit longer if you thought that that was needed…
P1: Yeah

JF: In general, what’s your feeling on that?

P1: I think that maybe a balance between the two, like I felt that it was better the fact that the children were writing more frequently (this year) in lessons cos they you know, in four lessons they would have two long pieces written so that could have been one or two weeks (last year) whereas it was more drawn out. I think a balance between the two cos I still think you need to use your teacher judgement about how much input your children need. If, you know, they’ve written instructions four or five times during the year and you get to the sixth time and you think right, I know we know the features you know I’m going to recap it really quickly and then go straight in that’s fine but you really have to know your children so you need that little bit more freedom to be able to decide as a professional.

JF: And in terms of that freedom, you feel that you did have that freedom and you don’t or? What’s your feeling on how that’s been?

7.00

P1: Yeah, not so much this year it’s been… there’s been a lot of pressure on getting the children into their routine of it being right - feature finding, planning, drafting, editing, you know getting them into that routine so it’s been very kind of you know regimented this year which I understand, you know changing things quite a lot – they want children to get used to a new way of doing it.

JF: Why are they doing that do you think?

P1: To get more pieces of writing in the books. Also so there’s more writing opportunities – more writing opportunities for the children.

JF: Why do you think they are doing that?

P1: Because I think writing in the school is generally what is below age expectations so I think there has been a big focus in regards Ofsted and SIP visits that writing needs to be addressed as the biggest area that the school needs to focus on.

JF: How has that impacted you do you think?
P1: Yeah, I think it was difficult to change it at first but I've seen the impact, I mean children have made progress so you know, the evidence is there that actually to some extent it is working for them.

JF: OK so we've talked about the planning side a little bit. Sorry if there are any bits that seem like I am repeating. What's your experience of writing? Tell me about you - When you came to teach writing, what were your feelings about it?

P1: I think it is the hardest thing to teach because there are so many elements to it and I never felt confident particularly myself with writing I've always been – you know I did maths and sciences A-levels and things and music degrees so I've never really like enjoyed it but I think it's the most difficult because there are so many different elements – you've got grammar, punctuation, spelling, you've got then actual content you've got tenses, sentence structure, it's just so much in it and every child has got just completely different problems – yeah it's been the most challenging particularly when you've got in your class a range of maybe three or four years – you know some of them below and some of them above – yeah it's hard.

JF: And when you talk about that challenge, what can you do about that? do you feel that you've had support – has there been support there?

P1: Yeah definitely, I mean each class generally has an additional adult so you know you've got your TA so if you wanted them maybe to work particularly with the children who are struggling with full stops you could say, “as they're writing, I want you to focus on and remind children about full stops.” So you can kind of group them with the particular areas you are focussing on so you can have a group then and your TA can have a group. Then that's at least 8 children being focussed on in that lesson and you can rotate and in that way, if lessons always go to plan, you know if you have that adult all the time, you know they can be taken away or not in – there are just so many things that happen. In an ideal world you’d have your groups and then everyday you would have different groups so you’d get to see them all during the week.

JF: In terms of your own feelings about writing though, can you tell me what has either supported you or not supported you – you know are there any things that you can think of that have helped you or similarly things where you feel 'I needed more help'?

P1: I don't know I just think that the internet is such a valuable resource. That's where I go to you know 'I'm going to teach recounts… right examples of recounts' and I'll make sure I've read and I'll find, you
know, things that people have already done – looking at what is already out there and then adapting it.

JF: What helps you to adapt it?

P1: urm, knowing the children, knowing what they need to work on.

JF: What was your feeling from your training and your early teaching about the support you got with teaching writing?

P1: I think the training… I'm trying to remember about writing I think the only thing I can really think of that was you know really beneficial that really stuck with me was like a book list and then we did different ways of teaching about books and using like non-fiction and using stories and stories from other cultures and things like that and actually that's been the most valuable that I've brought here because you know I've got a genre 'ok we're doing story settings in an historical context… oo I remember that book, alright we'll look at that book' and I've kind of used that as the stimulus.

JF: And in terms of things that you feel, 'I could have done with more of', is there anything?

P1: Yeah, I think just kind of examples of children’s writing that we sat down and unpicked.

JF: You'd have liked that?

P1: yeah, particularly focussing on – I know levels are going out – but kind of the same thing because we’re still using levels now just sitting down and seeing, ‘look what does a 3c writer actually look like’ what would that be, what would a 2b writer be. Just kind of having that understanding of ‘this is 2b because they’ve used you know, they’ve got first person, there’s some full stops – there’s not all full stops… no. you know, exactly what it is to be that level.

JF: So you think that would have been useful early on?

P1: yeah

JF: And when did you get that kind of support?

P1: Everything was NQT year.
JF: tell me about the NQT year in terms of your writing support?

P1: We had weekly sessions and they were generally maths and English so we looked at levelling, we looked at things like APS, we looked at again, more books, we looked at how to plan for books for the different genres of writing and things like that so that was – you know the NQT year was what made me really understand about how to plan – I felt like in PGCE we learned all the, what’s it called – the research all behind everything but actually the practicals of teaching – that’s what the NQT kind of showed you what to do essentially.

JF: So you’ve talked about the planning and you’ve talked about your background with writing a little bit and how you feel about teaching writing but when you’re actually in front of the children and you are teaching writing, how do you feel at that point?

P1: (long pause) It depends what kind of lesson it is. I tend to enjoy the actual composing – like coming up with their first drafts because we spend a lot of time thinking of our plans, you know ‘ok we’ve done our plans, let’s think about that’ then we do the shared write where they’ll sit with their WBs on the carpet and we’ll think ‘right let’s think of that first sentence’ because it’s always the same and I feel the same, they’ve got a blank page and it’s always like the getting started that they find the hardest so we kind of construct together ‘right opening paragraph ok right I’m going to take that away right let’s go to our tables and you write yours now’ ‘remember the things that we need to include’, focus on success criteria and that kind of thing. Getting their ideas and putting it all together because I think lots of – some teachers prewrite like models that they are going to show them – I do that sometimes – I just think that sometimes it’s more beneficial for them, particularly the class I’ve had this year who cannot just sit and listen to you to write you know they have to and they’re like, ‘oh’ and normally their ideas are better than mine. So showing them how to put those ideas and kind of how to construct it in a way that’s like coherent, that makes sense and especially then you will get a lot of the high ability children who are like, ‘oh, well, I’ve got a really sophisticated sentence’ and the lows are like, ‘yeah I really like that,’ and I’m like ‘right, you repeat that now and you can change it so it’s at their level then they’ve actually used each other to gain ideas and things.

JF: So that’s the bit you feel most comfortable with?

P1: yeah

JF: And how much of the teaching is – you know I’m not asking for a percentage but you’ve talked a lot about the sequence of different bits of the writing process that you cover – how much of your teaching
of writing is that bit would you say?

P1: I’d say I wouldn’t get them sat down for any longer than 20 minutes.

JF: But in terms of let’s say a two-week sequence of being in school, how many lessons are like the one you just described?

P1: so, that would maybe be once a week.

JF: Once a week?

P1: yeah, at the most.

JF: Ok and what’s your feeling on that?

P1: That would just be writing on its own. We try to do one lesson a week in curriculum, in history or geography or science where we do the same thing for a piece of writing so I guess it could be about two

JF: Why is it that you find that bit the most comfortable do you think?

P1: I don’t know I guess I feel that is where the children are most involved and that’s when you see how much they have actually taken on board from the genre emersion and whether they’ve understood the planning and how it’s kind of reflected in what they produce.

JF: I’m quite interested in when you say ‘the children are involved’ what do you mean?
P1: That it’s their ideas that I’ve helped them to construct and then they’ve got them there you know even though I take it away because otherwise they would just copy what I’d just written and that’s not the point of it so we’ve done it together then I take it away and they go away and they you know either remember things we’ve done or they change it slightly – things like that just means that it’s theirs rather than they just sit their watch me, right ‘I’m going to write this sentence, oh that’s a good sentence, oh I need a capital you know I think it is important to think aloud but I think that you can do that with their ideas.

JF: So their ideas, during the other stages of the sequence of lessons, whose ideas are they? Are they their ideas, your ideas?

P1: No, I would have given them the examples to like find the features of – so I would have chosen those and the plans, I would have decided what they were planning so you know if it was instructions on how to build something, I would have decided on that so this was the point where now it’s their turn and to make theirs really individual
**Appendix 9.3**  
*Interview 2 Transcript*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JF: In relation to the year that you were teaching Year 5, what went through your mind when you were planning writing lessons?</th>
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<tr>
<td>T2: making it relevant to them. They were quite a low attaining group in general and they just didn’t enjoy writing – I got the obligatory groan each time so it was always thinking about what was relevant to them, trying to link it to/ at the time the way we planned we had to go thematically so you had to link it to your topic that was coming up or a book that had been advised to us so it was always trying to make it relevant to them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: So there was a theme you were following…</td>
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<tr>
<td>T2: yeah so what we did when we were doing WW2 we were reading Goodnight Mr Tom (GMT) – they were really engaged in that and we just tried to put / to make it as engaging as possible so we made sure that they were / if they were Tom in GMT and they were writing a recount about that they kind of had more of a purpose to it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: and you say you were trying to make it relevant to them but you had the theme and the topic laid down for you. Was there ever an issue there? What did you do in your planning if they were ever in conflict?</td>
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<tr>
<td>T2: The way we tried to do it was that during our topic we would do something called a KWL so what you know, what you want to know and what you learn so we always knew what they wanted to know before that and then we tried to fit that theme and that purpose trying to link it together. Obviously that’s not always the case – sometime you have to do what’s set out for you. But we tried our best to see what areas they were interested in and see if we could gear it that way so they were all fascinated with evacuation which worked very well with GMT but then they were very interested in the battlefields as well so we took a small bit where he gets a letter and we built it from there so we could try and go off in different tangents to suit them the best we could.</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: ok and you know when you say that there are obviously things that you have to do, when you are approaching planning, tell me about that so what process do you go through when you’re planning your writing lessons?</td>
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<td>T2: I just have to think back because it’s slightly different now. The way it’s laid out is that we have a cycle so you go through 4 (it’s now 6) but it was 4 cycles at the time where you start by immersing them completely in the genre, so you’re looking at – so if you’re doing recount you’re looking at different types of letters, if you’re doing a newspaper you’re looking at newspapers from that time then you’re able to model it the next session and they do like a first draft and then third is that they edit then fourth they pull it all together. So it’s very clear how you have to plan it and how they can improve upon their writing. It’s very/ a step ladder approach – they produce a final piece… so the</td>
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planning in that sense, what you need to include, is very prescriptive but how you go about that – the hook to your lesson – is very much up to the teacher and how you want to engage them and knowing your children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JF: OK so there are certain bits that were laid down for you as you said and other things that you were using what you knew about what the children’s interests were…</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T2: and then hopefully that topic as well would link in quite well with that.</td>
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<tr>
<th>JF: The idea of that question was to explore aspects of the Q that were looking at how you feel that you have autonomy from the school in planning writing, how you feel about your competence and your attitudes towards writing… the follow up question that you can add to if you think that you haven’t covered it is, ‘in the questionnaire you are asked about the autonomy you perceive the school give you regarding the teaching of writing – is there anything that you would add in relation to that?</th>
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<td>T2: I feel like we’re prescriptive because we need to make sure that they cover a lot of genres so for example, at the moment we’re having to do playscripts and then we know that we come onto something else but we can move those genres around so, while we have to cover everything, if there’s something in the news or something hard-hitting going on then we can make sure that they have the best piece of writing – we can move those genres around, you just follow that cycle so there is that autonomy in there, you can suit your planning to which genre as long as it’s all covered but it is laid out basically for you – it’s up to you how you tweak it and then things like what you actually put into that letter or to whatever you want to teach – it’s very much up to you – you are given creative control over that or the children obviously give you ideas or stimulus depending on what they come up with themselves so no I don’t have to teach a letter on WW2, it could have been on anything.</td>
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<th>JF: and what do you think that the school does to support your competence in the teaching of writing?</th>
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<td>T2: I was an NQT at the time so I was very nervous about writing cos it’s that moment when you have to do it on the board off the bat with your back to them for a longer period of time than in like maths but our school is very good – our deputy now, she is in charge of literacy and the training that we get is just brilliant so I felt quite confidently trained by the time I got here (year 3 of career)</td>
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<th>JF: Tell me about the training a little bit…</th>
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<td>T2: I know that we’ve/ kind of feeding up we do L&amp;Pete?? So we’re looking through how you do your actions through it.</td>
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JF: what's that sorry L and?

T2: Alan Pete, yeah he uses actions to link with words so you tell a story and they get to write it – I think it's meant to be visual and things like that. We have – obviously the planning is fantastic, the flipcharts that we use and things like that. We're given training on how children feel competent in their own writing so quick tricks of giving them different colour pens to help them write certain sentences in one and another sentence in another so using stars or dots to help them with full stops – it's like lots of little things that can make that writing really interesting for them and that really helps when we’re modelling because they're excited about getting back rather than dreading it.

JF: And when you talk about the flipcharts – are those given to you or are those – when you talk about the ‘fantastic flipcharts’

T2: So we have templates – so while again it's that – the school is very good at balancing between being quite prescriptive and you not having to panic about having nothing but you put everything onto it if that makes sense so there is a cycle that you follow and those flipcharts have that but what you put as your 'hook' is up to you so you don't start with one blank screen in front of you and it's nice as well because it triggers your memory 'oh god, I've got to put the vocabulary bit in there, I've got to do this, it works quite well.

JF: OK thank you, so that aspect is looking at the planning side of things but what about the actual teaching side so ‘what went through your mind when you were actually teaching writing lessons to that class’? You've talked I guess about that feeling of having your back to them and writing on a blank board but what else would go through your mind when you were teaching writing lessons?

T2: Originally, like I said, a panic because they're not quiet, they shout things out and I learnt to just embrace that and it be part of my teaching so I realised that I needed to have the best model for them to do the best piece of work, particularly for the lowers so I used to write my plan out first and put them on post-it notes – I still do that now- and pop them next to my board and then I can start writing - they think I'm looking at the board but I'm checking that I know where I am going with it. And I made sure I left gaps so if I wanted to use an adjective I know they're going to shout out because I'm going to be thinking aloud as I write it – that it's an opportunity for them to shout out at the right time and you get loads of ideas that way. So I made it less quiet and using their voices in the right way but that took a lot of wrong lessons to figure out that that's how I wanted to have it in my planning to make sure that their writing is engaging and they felt like they had personalised my model – they could magpie my ideas and they've got a starting point for themselves so it worked quite well in the end. Once we got into the swing of it, after Christmas it was all fine but up to that point it was a lot of shouting out until we figured it out.

JF: So if that's the competence side of things about how you felt about how well you were delivering the writing lessons, what did you feel in terms of your autonomy with delivering writing lessons?

T2: what do you mean, like what/how I wrote?
JF: well, how you approached it when you had the class in front of you. You’ve talked about the planning – there was some autonomy in terms of how you did it, there were some things laid down about the things that needed to be covered. How did that translate to the actual teaching?

T2: obviously sometimes what I planned was not always what they want and I learned to just go with it in the end – that the bits that were better were when they had more input into it and I found that as long as I knew what I needed to include because there’s certain SPAG that you have to include in our extended writing as long as I made sure I modelled that very clearly in their writing it was always really good on their tables but all the other bits that came from them it made their writing better as well so just going with them and knowing that their words are sometimes better than the word that you thought up that morning writing it out and it’s quite nice that they seem to magpie those ideas so the ideas that they had heard in one lesson and they liked one word that one child used, they’d use it in the next lesson so they were listening to their friends and I didn’t have to do anywhere near as much talking and sometimes we had them up at the board writing their sentences so it was a mish-mash of my writing and theirs so – it was actually quite a lot of autonomy because it became something that changed throughout that lesson.

JF: So you felt that you had the plan there and you had an idea about how it would link to a topic, you had what the content needed to be that was included but having that basis meant that you could then go with where the children were going…

T2: and that was always better writing because they felt that they were interested in that topic so they were going to write better about it and because we’d done it all together and we tweaked bits or I’d made mistakes and they’d corrected me it felt like it was more of a journey rather than ‘this is how you do it’ kind of like in maths sometimes – you teach them a skill and they do it, in writing it was more of a team – it was me and them.

JF: A similar follow up question I guess because I think you have talked about the autonomy you gave the children but actually, is there anything more you want to say about the autonomy you perceive you give the children in writing? You’ve touched on it a little bit

T2: I think it’s a case of, I know it sounds awful, but manipulate the fact that they can’t have that complete autonomy. I’ve not let it that they can just write what they’ve wanted – I’ve guided it with questioning and when they’ve talked to their talk partners then I’ve listened in and I’m like I really like that idea and I want that idea to shine so I’ve used that in my writing so they do have autonomy and they can talk about their ideas can go whichever way but it’s just very careful the way you pick them out to make sure you get the piece that you want so that they’ll write the right piece.

JF: What does ‘the right piece’ mean?

T2: I guess to that genre.

JF: OK

T2: so if we’re writing a newspaper article about being in the trenches it would be of that rather than
maybe some of them have a tendency to go off piste don’t they I guess it’s a bit harder in that it’s a bit more constrictive but in story writing if we’re doing a fairy tale you can see sometimes they go off and particularly the boys they’re into xbox and games aren’t they and all of a sudden you’re in a video game and it’s hard not to crush that creativity because it’s actually a great idea it’s just it’s not within that genre that you are trying to teach so it’s a bit of a balance because particularly with boys you don’t want to crush their confidence I’m just thankful that they’re writing.

JF: So you talk about one way in which you kind of listen in on talk partners and use that for the class model. Are there any other things that you can think of that you do to allow those children autonomy as oppose to free choice so yeah I’d agree with you that giving them free reign may be bedlam but is there anything else that you can think that you do to allow children some element of autonomy within the writing lessons?

T2: [a few seconds pause] I guess we do a lot of like picking up the right vocabulary and things like that so they magpie words they choose all those words and then it’s just a case of them being able to not just using the words that I have used they have a bank of things that they’ve come up by themselves or sometimes we have pictures up around the room and they go around and they write on them and come up with their own ideas and then you pull it apart so I want to see that setting – you’ve got a picture of a castle and then you pull their words apart so / but it’s all very the same but different it’s all very much trying to guide them with their questioning to make sure that they can create a word bank of things but the way you do it is different ways each time.

JF: How do you feel about your teaching of writing, thinking back at that time?

T2: [now] a lot better than I did then. How did I feel about my writing? I realise that it takes a lot of focus from the teacher you need to know what you want to write to make sure that they get the best from it and it’s not just a case of knowing that you’ve planned a lesson and you’re going to write a letter or you’re going to write a newspaper article you have to know what you want them to have in it to give them the best so there’s a lot of planning involved even if you want to create that autonomy in the class where they’re going to pull out all these ideas – there’s a lot of forethought.

JF: So during that year when you were with that year 5 class what did you think about your competence with writing?

T2: I think that it was a bit of a journey – in September it was probably the topic I dreaded teaching and then by the end of it and it still is now it’s something that I love teaching and that’s just because we’ve figured out different ways of doing it over the year.

JF: Thinking about that class again, can you tell me about the writing that the children in that class produced?

T2: Oh my gosh…

JF: Any kind of themes,?
T2: yes, in particular they were very good at story writing, they had amazing imagination quite often – it sounds awful trying to reign it in – I had to make sure that their stories followed a pattern and there was a problem and things like that because they just had so many ideas that they wanted to cram in

JF: problem?...

T2: like you have so there would be setting starting off, you meet your characters and then there would be a problem then they have to fix the problem and then there would be normally a celebration at the end and it always works very well with medieval stories but stories when you’re writing about fairy tales and things like that it was always they had so many ideas and wanted to go off piste but their creative writing, their imaginations were brilliant and as they started to get older when we started to look at more non-fiction that was really good – some of the things that they used from their science into their writing was really good / instructions and explanations that worked really well but they only worked well if they had done it first – if they had done something practically so that first hand experience so when we did Brazil with chocolate their writing was / their writing was to persuade you to go to Brazil was absolutely brilliant but to explain how chocolate was made – they struggled with that because they went straight from the cocoa bean to the chocolate bar and then when we did – what else did we do we did oh we did making a sword for instruction writing for Beowulf and for the Saxons they made the sword first and that writing was much better than the Brazil even though we did that earlier just because them doing something practical always helped them write the non-fiction things better.

JF: And in terms of the detail of the writing that they did, what do you remember about – you’ve talked about the content of it and the overall genre but in terms of the detail of the writing they did were there any kind of things that you remember, things that they found tricky, things they were strong at

T2: My class in particular, they loved using the ‘right’ vocabulary so they would hone in on certain things so we’d been talking about the cocoa bean and we were using the machete they will use that language – they want to make sure that you aware that they know it and they want to use it - we do SFA as reading scheme so there were always words up on that word wall [points to a word wall]

JF: What’s SFA?

T2: It’s called Success For All it’s a reading scheme that kind of streams across the whole school [children organised by ability rather than age (in theory a struggling Year 6 child could be in a group with Year 2 children)] but each book has a particular word bank – they have to learn vocabulary and because that’s up in most rooms anything that we were doing – particularly in my high ability – they’re very keen to like ‘oh what’s that word I could use that in my writing’ so they were always trying to get the ‘right’ words or ‘up-level their words – vocabulary was a massive thing for them – they took real pride in that
**JF:** And you talked about spelling and punctuation and grammar, was there anything that you remember from that group in terms of those things?

**T2:** yeah, their sentences always started with ‘and’ and particularly that low to low-middle that was something we had to get out of it like they didn’t know how to actually form a sentence so before we could really start enjoying our writing we had to kind of focus on that structural writing but that was something that they struggled on particularly with like the lowers / I think it’s because they have ideas as well they just want to go ‘and and and’ but ‘you need a full stop’ once that happened we were really able to go off and explore and use that vocabulary that the highers were using and we shared our ideas they were then able to get it in as well.

**JF:** Final question then, what is good writing?

**T2:** Voice. I think if you have got a voice, it doesn’t matter if there are a load of simple sentences I think as long as your author voice comes through and that’s something that the school is really focussing on this year is that authorship because our school is getting better and better – the quality of the writing is getting better but now it’s looking at that voice and a few of my children really had it in that year but they were always the highers. In this class some of the lowers have really good voice – I love listening to their work it’s not necessarily always perfectly structured but I can really tell, they’ve got a humour in it and I think that’s what’s important
Appendix 9.4
Interview 3 Transcript

**JF:** Regarding the year you taught Year 5, thinking about when you were planning, what goes through your mind when you're planning a writing lesson?

**T3:** It very much depends on the class and the children involved. That particular group, writing was certainly something that we needed to improve upon. And it was lots of different strands within that that needed to be improved. So there was very much an aspect of spelling and handwriting and sentence structuring so there was lots of nuts and bolts of writing that we needed to get fixed first and that was probably because lots of the children English was possibly their not just second language but third or fourth cos that's the sort of cohort we had. There was a very wide range of writers but also just I think giving children something meaty enough, having a nice hook in to be able to get a good piece of writing out – I think sometimes as teachers we can be a bit dry and boring… and how we expect lovely writing to come out of something that's a little bit flat so I think certainly something that grabs the children's attention something that you know they're going to get fired up about is going to produce much better writing than, you know, write a diary entry of Samuel Pepys. So I suppose when I'm planning it's the needs of the children, it's having that good AfL to know what it is that those children need to improve on and what those next steps are but also having an exciting input to get a good piece of writing out of it.

**JF:** Where does that come from? Where does that understanding of what children need, what will hook them, where does that come from?

**T3:** I think it comes from all sorts of things. A lot of the time it comes from the children themselves. So for example, one of my most successful pieces with that class that produced some wonderful writing – there are a couple of examples – one in particular – it came from a maths investigation and it was based on whodunit and they had to. My cake was stolen and they had to use clues to work out who the culprit was. But then we then went into reports, police reports, newspaper reports but then children can think 'this is made up, this is a load of nonsense, this didn't really happen' but they were so involved in the maths and the science experiments linked to it as well, we had this whole 'whodunit week' the writing that came out of it was incredibly well thought out writing because they were associating and when they found out it was actually the deputy head that had stolen my cake you know it was very much getting them all engaged but you know that came, it started off in my head while planning it as very much a maths/ but then in that first Monday's lesson you could see where it could grow to and I think certainly, I like to keep my planning flexible enough to do that, I'm not going to push on through with something if you know it's not working particularly well I think that's something
that comes with experience – being able to be confident enough to let something go, to do something instead.

JF: When you talk about experience, is that also, listening to your style of planning it’s very much based on what the children understand, based on what you think will engage them and that experience you talk about, does that allow you a bit more scope in terms of what the school allows? I mean, what was the school’s response to teacher’s planning in writing?

T3: Well I think certainly our executive HT – one of the reasons he employed me was to look at the curriculum as a whole so I know the curriculum inside out, I write the curriculum mapping so I think having that good understanding of the curriculum as a whole as a teacher knowing what it is from the beginning to the end of the year they (children) need to have under their belt is very important and that just takes a while especially this year with the new curriculum everyone is just finding their feet again but I do think that if you know it well enough you can see where they’re coming from and where they’re going to and you need to have taught quite a few different year groups to be able to learn that process – I think when you’re younger in your career you’ve just not done that as much you have a smaller experience of different year groups you don’t tend to see that.

JF: Were there any restrictions placed on teachers in terms of their teaching of writing? The picture coming across is that you understood the curriculum well enough that you could deliver these sessions but did you ever have a case of thinking ‘well the school is telling me I have to do this way’ certain expectations or…

T3: No, no urm but, I suppose partly I had that freedom because I wrote the curriculum for them so I thought, 'I’ve written it so this is what we’re doing’ but I think also it was I mean, part of my role was writing the curriculum so I had lots of the teachers involved and there was lots of INSET days when we sat down together as a team and pulled it apart and decided that this is what we wanted for the school so there was lots of that kind of input and engagement from everybody, not just me. I don’t think there was any restrictions - I’m trying to think back if I’ve ever had any head restrict me in that way. I think if you know what those kids need and you go for it I can’t imagine any head ever going ‘no, can’t be doing that’.

JF: I mean it’s interesting because from what I’ve written down here , I’m looking with that question to look at the autonomy that you receive from the school – quite a bit – the competence that you feel, the attitudes you have and the follow up question which I guess you have touched upon quite a lot is that in the questionnaire you were asked about the autonomy that you perceive the school give you, so I
suppose if I can summarise, you’ve said that regarding that you had a large amount of autonomy – partly because you were actually the one who designed the curriculum…

| T3: possibly but I think you know obviously when we did this we were looking at the old National Curriculum but we knew the new NC was on its way so as a school we were already stepping into that so that we were ahead of the game but it’s very much the same it has maybe moved on a little bit and pushed up a little bit more but you know, to be a good writer you need to have the tools and the skills and then you need to know how to apply them and then you need to know how to apply them effectively and start making those stylistic choices. I think that’s the same in any year group in any school anywhere really. So I suppose it’s hard for me to understand anywhere that would put restrictions on that. |
| JF: so that was about what goes through your mind when you’re planning – your thought process there but in terms of the actual teaching – same question but regarding teaching so what would go through your mind in terms of what is important, what you want to get across when you’re teaching writing? |
| T3: it very very much depends on what it is you’re doing I think. There are some things that I think you almost have to teach, you have to direct, you have to give the children, because this is a bit of knowledge that might be new and they don’t know it and you know, if you don’t know what an adverbial phrase is and you don’t know what parenthetic commas are you kind of have to teach them what that is in that, I suppose slightly more didactic teaching but I really enjoy teaching writing and I think I’m not worried about modelling writing in front of children and getting up and making those mistakes and I think some teachers do wobble a little bit with and I think that being a writer yourself in front of children is extremely important so I do try and do that in the classroom whether it’s a good or a bad piece of writing because sometimes I do a rubbish piece and they have to help me with it. But I think to see themselves as writers they need to see other people as writers first and then when that happens then that’s always a wonderful moment when they start, you know, getting it. And I think just being able to just tease things out getting children, especially in writing I’m all about nicking, you know you don’t make up new words, you nick stuff you borrow stuff from what you hear and getting them to think that’s ok. You’ve heard a phrase or a metaphor and that’s really good, I am going to put that down and store it up for next time – magpie, put it in my own writing because that’s what we do, that’s what people do and it’s ok to do that. And then you get to that stage of moving on and actually having all of that vocabulary in your toolbox that you can put into your writing again for choices rather than just ‘oh I’ve heard it, I’m just going to stick it in everywhere now’ because that’s the stage I am at to then making those choices ‘this is the best thing to use’ so I suppose a lot of that goes through my
head when I’m teaching but I think it’s also about that big thing of actually seeing themselves as writers and sharing each other’s writing, being able to look at each other’s and their own writing with a very critical eye as well – you know who really is a writer? I mean even when I’m writing a letter or an email I don’t just write it first time that’s it, you stop you proof read you check, you improve and that’s what everybody does day in day out in any piece you know even writing a text you stop and think has the subject changed back to something odd and getting kids to do that as part of their practise, you know it’s not just right I’ve done it, finished and I think that’s when you start developing good writers. I think and that’s what I try and do in my teaching.

JF: That’s fantastic, again, the idea of the question there was to explore bits of the questionnaire related to your support of their competence, which came through very strongly and your attitudes, which came through very strongly and you’re hinting at the autonomy that you give children – you talk about boosting their competence to the point that they can make their selections – is there anything else that you would want to talk about in terms of the autonomy that you give children within their writing?

T3: I think also giving children – and I probably don’t do this as much as I would like to and maybe that’s is where the restrictions of the curriculum come in, I think especially when you are looking at your 5 and your 6 (Year 5&6) that older key stage 2 where you really are trying to put together a portfolio of writing that they’re going to be judged on at the end of the school – I think perhaps if we gave children more opportunities to choose what they’re going to write, when they’re going to write rather than saying well this is what we’re studying so this is what we’re going to have a go at writing. I mean how often do you just give someone a piece of paper and a pen and go ‘do what you want’ you know which I’m sure would be absolutely chaotic and wonderful at the same time and perhaps giving just a little more free choice in that.

JF: Are there ways in which, taking the restrictions and the free choice as opposite ends of the spectrum, are there ways in which you can think that you look to find that middle ground where there are things that to be covered but there are elements of it that give the children autonomy?

T3: yeah I think that I lie to children all the time. I showed them a doctored photo of the school when I’d come in one morning and there was a UFO hovering overhead that I’d put in and obviously this had happened to me and then I gave them these secret files in envelopes that had all this different… and it was recounts, we were just learning about recounts you know there was newspaper cuttings in there, there was police reports in there, there was reports from the public in there was just all sorts of things all about UFOs you know but just all different kinds of recounts and I suppose I know particularly in
that they then chose to retell the story that I had started of telling them about me seeing the UFO in the morning in whatever way so some were very sort of, The Sun kind of headline you know and others went for a much more formal superintendents report on the matter and I think even wanted a letter out of the HT to me about you know seeing things in the playground you know and obviously going a bit mad so yeah I think it is possible... I’d probably like to be a bit more creative with that in order to do it I think that’s a tricky thing and it’s certainly not something that I’m an expert at but it’s certainly something that could and should be developed.

JF: You’ve answered to an extent, in fact you’ve covered this very much so but again I’m wondering if there is anything else you want to add in terms of how you feel about your teaching of writing, I mean earlier you talked about, when you talked about what goes through your head when you’re planning, you talked a lot about, that relates to your views about the teaching of writing but in terms of your competence, particularly in writing, how do you feel about that?

T3: I like to think I’m alright at it. But I’d like to think that I’m an alright teacher full stop.

JF: The famous modest profession!

T3: I mean I enjoy teaching writing as oppose to geography you know I particularly love teaching poetry I love teaching poetry and getting terribly excited and bouncing off the walls when something like that comes up and I’d like to think I’m fairly competent but I don’t consider myself a particularly good writer but I just think we all can be just fairly competent writers – there’s nothing stopping anyone you know

INTERUPTION AND NEED TO FINISH V SOON

JF: I’m going to put the last two questions together because I think they probably relate. The first question was ‘can you tell me about the writing that the children in your class produced?’ and with that ‘to you, what is good writing?’
T3: Certainly that group in that year produced a whole range of writing – all sorts of genres, fiction, non-fiction and it was with the intention of going into Year 6 to have a very wide sort of portfolio of writing that they could take up with them, urm, what is good writing? I have two hats, I have my hat as a teacher but I also worked as an Islington moderator as well which meant that I went round to the schools and moderated people’s writing in Year 6 over the SATs so I have that moderator tick list in my head for all these things that they can do for putting a sub level on but then there’s also those moments of goosebumps and hair standing on the back of your neck and you just knowing that that’s beautiful and it could be you know a whole essay or it could be a simple line and I think it comes down to having an emotional response to writing because that’s what we do as readers as adults, we read books that we like that make us laugh or cry and we have a response to and when children have that emotional response to each other’s writing that’s when it gets exciting in the classroom. So what makes good writing? There’s that tick list of skills but then there’s that moment of pure beauty when you go ‘wow, that just made me get excited about it’ so yeah, I don’t know how helpful that was
Appendix 9.5

Interview 4 Transcript

JF: Regarding the year that you taught Year 5, thinking about when you were planning, what went through your mind when you were planning writing lessons?

T4: It's quite an open question. I suppose, as with all sorts of planning, what the objective is so what I want the children to know or have learnt or practiced by the end of the lesson – whether it's a skills based lesson when I'm focusing on more grammar or sentence types and that sort of thing or whether it's going to be a lesson where they've got those skills already and then to apply them to a situation that may be a piece of story writing or non-fiction – whatever it happens to be and then I think I would have the issue of differentiation and making that learning accessible for different groups of children with different needs and abilities whether it be SEN or the higher level that needs to be pushed. I'm trying to remember back. I had at the time a lower set of writers, mainly boys I was teaching, by the summer of that year 5 class I was teaching the lower attaining portion of that year group writing.

JF: So they were streamed were they? They were split or did it just so happen that they were...

T4: ... they were streamed yeah. So I was taking the – we switched midway, we switched at some point during the year so that my partner teacher was taking the top writing and I was taking the lower writing group and so planning for them was quite tricky – it was about engagement because a lot of them were turned off writing but I had more success through doing things like comic strips and story boarding and that sort of thing.

JF: So you had in your mind when you were planning that you had the objectives and you roughly split them into either skills or application but what would be the things that you would have to consider? There are the things you have to do – the objectives - but then you've also talked about the class and the engagement of the comic strips. What one would come first, if either and how would you marry the two?

T4: I think they're both mutually as important because obviously we have things that we have to get through and things that they need to be taught and evidence that they can do or can't do and it's about trying to meet those targets in ways that are as engaging as possible for a group of children generally disengaged with writing so I'd always try to set an exciting context for them in which to use those skills so that they'd want to do it in the first place.

JF: Where were those skills and where were those objectives from?
T4: National Curriculum objectives, previous years’ planning that was on the shared area and we looked at because the curriculum was changing? No it wasn’t changing yet…

JF: It was in transition I think

T4: Yeah it was in transition so a lot of Primary Resources (internet site) were useful for ideas about meeting the objective

JF: And other than the NC, was there any expectation that you had to go to a particular place or do it a particular way with your planning?

T4: Not really no, only in terms of making sure that – we had a planning proforma, a document sheet with different boxes that needed to be filled in, in the main to help structure our ideas and processes to make sure we were doing the same thing consistently across the school and I think that’s since changed. It has changed a couple of times while I was at the school to try and make it more user friendly and help guide our planning in a bit more of a practical way. So you’d have things like boxes for where the curriculum objectives would fit in, whether there were any cross-curricular links, things like the objective itself and the criteria that would need to be met during the lesson so how those children could be successful – any starters that you were going to do or what the main teaching input would be – what you might do mid-way through or at the end, if there were any guided groups that you had planned to focus on – you know I’m focusing on this group because I’ve noticed a weakness with this area or this group has got it and I need to push them on and then space for evaluation and reflection after if you wanted to go back and write notes on the week for the planning and then hand it to the coordinator to have a look at

JF: And how helpful or unhelpful was that (the proforma)?

T4: At one point we all found it highly unhelpful as someone brought in a planning format that they had from a previous school which they thought was brilliant and none of us liked then it took quite a lot of months to come back to it and put it on the drawing board as something that needed editing so then we edited it and went with a different format so yeah it’s one of those things / every school has a different way of planning I think the main ideas are – as long as it is helpful and as long as it’s consistent in the main across the school then if anyone comes in to look they know that the school has had an agreed policy on – it’s sort of that idea of non-negotiables really – every lesson has to have a clear objective it has to have criteria that is meaningful you know you have to show what the main
teaching is and then you know how you might help those that get stuck, you might push on those that are finding it too easy – yeah I think having a planning frame is really, really important and helpful to help you not miss bits out when you are thinking it through in advance and to have it there either on-screen or printed to refer back to throughout the week is you know really valuable so that you’re not clutching at straws thinking what do I do for this lesson well hang on I’ve already planned it I just need to have a little refresh so you can go back to it and tweak it – it’s useful to have it written down in the format when you can go back and day well actually it didn’t go so well or it’s looking like it’s not going to meet these objectives or we’ve moved on from that throughout the week so you know you go back and discuss with people and edit.

JF: So by the end of the year when it was tweaked and adapted to suit the school, was it then helpful rather than unhelpful?

T4: Yeah, yeah I would say so.

JF: The questionnaires were trying to tap into how you felt the school gives you competence and autonomy and what’s interesting about this planning format that you talk about is the reason I asked if it was helpful or unhelpful is that it could be seen that a planning format like that gives you less autonomy but it could be seen that it supports your competence so I suppose in relation to the planning format and generally the approach of the school to the planning of writing, how did you feel that that balance was struck – did you feel that the school gave you autonomy and supported competence or were there tensions there?

T4: I think generally I’ve had autonomy – yeah I think there’s pros and cons really because you don’t want to get into a I don’t know, feel that you’re being restricted by having boxes to fill in. However, as long as the boxes are useful and what you are already thinking about then it is useful to structure how you’re thinking about your lesson. So I think it that sense it is useful I think it is about being fit for purpose but at the point where it is fit for purpose obviously it is very useful and helps your organisation.

JF: And other than the planning format then, what was your overall sense of the autonomy that the school gave and the way that they supported your competence?

T4: I think in a way it was almost too much autonomy because I remember at times feeling quite lost about what to do with those children and how to engage them. A lot of their levels were quite low and I didn’t really have the experience – I didn’t feel experienced enough to deal with children at that low
end of the scale of ability who are more sort of key stage one level but in Year 5 so I did seek some advice and guidance from KS1 teachers who did meet with me and give me ideas – urm, I probably would have preferred more of that but I did have that once or twice which was helpful.

JF: So you would have preferred more advice from KS1 teachers? Is there anything else that you feel would have been helpful at that stage?

T4: Maybe some team teaching, which I had had a bit of the previous year with writing – when I was in year 6 I had a sort of an outstanding teacher come in and co-teach with me literacy lessons which was really helpful because it boosted my confidence and helped me see things that I’d maybe missed out that she picked up on and vice versa so we were a bit like a double act and we had that for a couple of months for a couple of lessons and that was really nice so I didn’t get that when I was teaching year 5 so and that was with an even trickier range of abilities and behaviours so I think I would have liked someone to come in to coach or team-teach with me it just would have been nice. Rather than coming in and observing, coming in and offering supportive guidance would’ve been nice.

JF: It’s interesting that you talk about personal professional development, it sounds like what you’re saying…

T4: …yeah definitely

JF: as opposed to, I mean were there any kind of schemes of teaching writing that the school used – anything they bought in that had particular methods of teaching writing.

T4: Not really, not until the following year – the school bought into a phonics scheme but that year no.

JF: And had there been that option what would have been your thoughts on professional development of your own teaching with team teaching as opposed to having a scheme that you followed for the teaching of writing?

T4: I think the two can go hand in hand – you can follow a scheme but have someone come in and help you with it so I don’t think the two things are completely different but I think I would have liked to have had more guidance and people coming in and having a look and then offering practical advice.

JF: And do you feel that in particular about writing?
T4: At that time I felt that way about the writing because of the group of children that I had – I felt slightly out of my depth compared with the maths which I didn't find too troublesome that was fine.

JF: Why wasn't the maths as troublesome?

T4: I think because I was confident that I could cater for their different abilities and needs with the knowledge that I had, not that my maths knowledge is particularly amazing or better than anything else but I think there’s something about the logical nature of teaching in maths, even though I’ve always preferred English I find the teaching of maths to be more straightforward and more easily differentiated because there are rights and wrongs and you can group things by the number of digits or by the difficulty of the problem whereas I find literacy I bit more – the writing is a bit of a grey area really and more of a spectrum rather than discrete – you can do this but you can’t do that.

JF: Was that the case before and since with writing or was it that particular year?

T4: yeah I think I just generally feel that way – I’m not sure whether other teachers feel similarly or if that’s just a personal thing to do with my subject knowledge or my professional development but I’ve always loved writing but I seem to be more confident in maths some times although currently I think that that’s swinging back the other way again but for me it depends on the cohort of children I’ve got rather than what I know so I think it’s more how I cater to individual needs more than ‘I don’t know what I’m doing’

JF: That was about the planning side and I think there has actually been quite a lot of cross over so it might be that you don’t have that much to add for the next question but in the same regard, during that year, what went through your mind in terms of the teaching of writing?

T4: Yeah I guess that is a big cross over because I guess I am in the main thinking about getting them on board, engagement and thinking about what I would be doing or saying or showing them that would engage them enough to buy into the lessons so a lot of I don’t know – trying to make it meaningful for them and giving them a lot of visuals, a lot of pictures, tried to be a lot less of me talking and more of me showing them things and them trying things out – I used a lot of video clips but short ones for those with short attention spans so I found that I did a lot of visual literacy with pictures and video clips to help with them planning their ideas out and with things like story writing I did a lot of retelling to build up their skills rather than them having to make up from scratch and them having to really really lack ideas and feeling really uncomfortable and thrown in at the deep end so we did a lot of rehearsing through retelling and videos

JF: The questions in the questionnaire that that relates to refers to the competence that you perceive
that you give the children and I get that sense coming through from some of the things you've talked about so the way that you use videos and pictures as ways of getting them in – what about autonomy as well because they were the two strands of the questionnaire – there was competence and autonomy so if all of the things that you've just discussed were supporting the children's competence, is there anything that you can think of that you did to support their autonomy?

T4: I'm just trying to think back that long ago and I would've probably given them options, to an extent, of things that they could write about – if they were writing a story I would have said you can either do/set it here or here or your main character can be like this or like that and expose them to a number of different options and have them choose so that they didn't feel that it was being forced down their throats

JF: Can I clarify, do you mean you did do that or that you would have done if you could go back?

T4: I did do that, as much as possible – obviously there are occasions when you can't but if I could, I would. Or if there was something that I needed them to do then I might and did give them a range of planning formats so that if they wanted to plan something in a different way – it was easier for a child to say well I'm going to do it with pictures and write words underneath for a storyboard rather than doing a page of planning then if it was going to lead to a good level of writing then I would have got them to do that instead

JF: It's quite interesting to hear you talk about giving them a range of choices and not free choice and I think that's one of the misconceptions about autonomy – you know, it's not saying it's a free choice – you're saying that you're supporting their competence by giving them video clips…

T4: More giving them a choice of scaffold... you know, I kind of link autonomy to confidence I suppose where if you need / if you want your hand held you can have this one or I guess if you feel confident then you have the autonomy to choose that 'I don't want what you are offering me, I'm going to do it this way.' As long as you're meeting that objective

JF: So there's very much a sense that for the children the autonomy and competence were in a kind of spectrum. The more competent they were, the more autonomy they could have and vice versa but it was up to them to find out where they were on that line

T4: Yeah, you know, autonomy with guidance – sometimes heavy guidance
JF: for that particular group?

T4: yeah

JF: a couple of questions left. The first is – can you tell me about the writing that the children in that class produced? And I’m not expecting the finer details because I recognise that it was a couple of years ago but can you remember any particular themes or patterns or characteristics of the writing they produced?

T4: A lot of them had issues with writing stamina where they would write a couple of lines and then tail off, you know ‘oh I don’t have any ideas’ or ‘I’ve said it all in two lines’ or ‘I don’t know where to go next’ that kind of thing or ‘well I’ve done you two lines so I’m done now – I don’t really want to do anymore’ – that was tricky to deal with, building up writing stamina also because there was such a diverse mix – I had children with English as an additional language (EAL) and a lot of additional learning needs their vocabulary wasn’t brilliant and their sentence structure wasn’t always clear. So there were children who had additional needs – even dyslexics – it made their writing quite difficult to read not just from the handwriting perspective and spelling – also the sentence structure didn’t really make a lot of sense - I found that quite hard to work on

JF: And the overall actual composition of the writing – what they’d actually written? Were there any patterns there or anything you remember particularly?

T4: um

JF: Did they struggle with story writing, were they creative?

T4: Yeah I’d say that was one of the trickiest things because that involves more creativity – story writing so there was quite often the issue of sequencing where I would try to use things like storyboards with them and plan out what happens first, what happens next and does that make sense but when we gave them the skills and then let them free and said ‘right now you go and produce your writing’ it did quite often come out that they had an idea that maybe they ran away with and so their sentence structure went out the window and after all that teaching of, you know, capital letters and conjunctions and varying sentence openers, you would just get, ‘and then and then and then’ so a main characteristic was, well they weren’t confident or competent enough to hold several different strands in their head so when they were let loose to do writing, they would have their idea, but their idea would overwhelm their confident structure of how to set it out.
JF: It sounds familiar of the younger year groups a little bit – that idea of having either the composition or the transcription but the idea of bringing them both together is quite a challenge.

T4: Being a competent writer where you can internalise what you need to do, so it’s not like another cognitive burden – they hadn’t yet got that so they needed support to remember to do the basics so once you stepped back, the basics would go out the window

JF: That’s tricky for a Year 5 teacher - it sounds like a lot to be dealing with

T4: For a lower attaining Year 5 class, I’m not saying I’d generally expect that of Year 5 – I’d be quite worried if that was across the board of Year 5.

JF: OK last question – and it may either be the easiest or the most difficult – what is good writing?

T4: um, very open. Good writing is coherent, so you can follow it along, it’s meaningful -m you can understand it, it’s engaging so it’s actually thought about its reader and what would be interesting – it’s grammatically accurate enough so it can be read as it’s intended to be read.

JF: Do any of those stand out for you as being more important?

T4: I think it has to be interesting – I think you can allow for spelling mistakes and issues with some of the grammar – you know if you can read it at all then it has to be interesting but I think the spelling, grammar, you know the SPAG stuff comes a very close second – I know that people will probably disagree and say that you need the nuts and bolts before you can make it interesting – I guess a good piece of writing needs it all really
Appendix 9.6
Interview Transcript 1 with expanded annotations

JF: Can you tell me what goes through your mind when you're planning writing?

P1: Umm, so I pick the genre, we have kind of a medium term plan where we are given the option of four genres so we pick either instructions or narratives — we pick one of those — umm — processes — thinking about what the children have done previously, whether they’ve got much experience of that genre and whether they’ve written it before. We’ve got examples to look at um so kind of I know we have to start by identifying features within that genre so thinking about if it’s instructions, what needs to be in instructions and kind of eliminating you know story language and the things that won’t be in there so reading lots of examples kind of anchor in that genre. Umm and then thinking then what I can link it to in the curriculum so what our topic is so actually what, could they write instructions about something that is relevant to what we’ve learned maybe in science or kind of cross curricular links in that sense — umm —

JF: When you talk about the four genres, tell me more about that. You say you’ve got four genres.

P1: Yeah so well to choose from each term, cos we do a writing cycle of four lessons.

JF: OK
P1: so it would be genre emersion, planning, drafting and then, yeah, genre emersion, planning, drafting, editing so they’re like redrafting. So I know there is going to be four lessons per genre of writing so instructions, you know recounts, stories—they are all the different genres...

JF: And there are four lessons for each?

P1: yeah, for each one in a term.

JF: And what are the four lessons?
P1: so it would be the genre emersion, finding features, the planning second lesson then third lesson is the writing the first draft and then it would be marked and they’d redraft and improve and up level is the fourth lesson.

JF: OK

P1: so that’s kind of how it works.

JF: And how do you come up with the ideas for those?
P1: Umm... so yeah try and base it as much as i can on the topic that we're working on so if we're doing space for example we would try and link it to make it relevant to what we're doing in other subjects.

JF: And how did the four lessons come about?

P1: That was something that was given to us by the English coordinator at this school.

JF: And how does that go with you?

P1: Uhm. It's different. To what we were doing the previous three years that I've been here. Because we were following very much the National Literacy the old style but focusing on more... so if we were doing narrative we'd be told exactly what kind of narrative. It is historical so we were given more kind of objectives to meet. There would be a lot more kind of genre emersion, maybe a drama lesson and then there would be a reading lesson incorporated into that so there was a lot more... we weren't restricted to four lessons, we were allowed to choose maybe three weeks if we needed it or just one.

JF: So that's how it used to be?

P1: Yeah
JF: Up until this year?

P1: Yeah, so the new SLT, all of them are brand new this year so they introduced the four lesson cycle.

JF: So, has there been any difference in how you feel about teaching writing from this year compared to last year?

P1: Yeah, I think it was quite a big change. So obviously I had spent three years doing what I had done previously. So I've looked at my plans from last year that I was happy with and happy how they went and trying to kind of condense them down I found quite difficult like particularly with the genre element. Um, trying to get you know, drama in there, getting the subject knowledge – finding the features I found a lot to try and cram into one lesson. But I think the way I've tried to find my way around that is to do more in the other subjects. So if I knew we were doing instructions and we were doing it about something to do with science I'd make sure we were doing a science lesson where we were using instructions.

JF: And thinking about last year, when you were asked to plan writing last year, what would you be thinking then? Were you more comfortable because you'd done two years of it?
P1: I think so and the objectives are very much given to you so the national strategies you’d have a whole list so speaking and listening objectives, reading objectives, writing objectives, and you knew over say over two or three weeks you’d have to cover all those so you’d take those objectives and put them into your daily plan and you’d say right I can cover those on that lesson cos we’ll do the drama there we’ll do that and it kind of

JF: So it was up to you where...

P1: … Yeah, how we did it. Whereas even though it’s kind of it was still prescriptive it was kind of up to us how long we spent on it. Whereas this year it was four lessons – it’s got to be...

JF: And why has that been done do you think?

P1: Um, to get more genres of writing fitted in to each term I think. To try and make sure the children are getting a variety of genres over a term so not spending too long on the actual writing lesson not writing you know not spending too long on doing things like drama you know reading.

JF: And what’s your feeling on that?
P1: I think in some ways I think it has helped doing a lot more writing -
I think generally because there's not as much engagement in regards
to drama and like the things that these kids in particular need, you
know the stimulus they need something that they've experienced to be
able to write a significant amount so it's kind of been more writing but
maybe not as much because there's not been that extensive amount of
input at the beginning of when you've changed genre.

JF: And for the four years that you've been teaching, has there been
any feeling of frustration, have you been happy, you know, you've
mentioned a couple of times – I'd like to be spending time – you said
that last year you got to spend a bit longer if you thought that that was
needed…

P1: Yeah

JF: In general, what's your feeling on that?

P1: I think that maybe a balance between the two, like I felt that it was
better the fact that the children were writing more frequently (this year)
in lessons cos they you know, in four lessons they would have two long
pieces written so that could have been one or two weeks (last year)
whereas it was more drawn out. I think a balance between the two cos
I still think you need to use your teacher judgement about how much
input your children need. If, you know, they've written instructions four
or five times during the year and you get to the sixth time and you think right, I know we know the features you know I’m going to recap it really quickly and then go straight in that’s fine but you really have to know your children so you need that little bit more freedom to be able to decide as a professional.

JF: And in terms of that freedom, you feel that you did have that freedom and you don’t or? What’s your feeling on how that’s been?

7.00

P1: Yeah, not so much this year it’s been... there’s been a lot of pressure on getting the children into their routine of it being right—feature finding, planning, drafting, editing, you know getting them into that routine so it’s been very kind of you know regimented this year which I understand, you know changing things quite a lot—they want children to get used to a new way of doing it.

JF: Why are they doing that do you think?

P1: To get more pieces of writing in the books. Also so there’s more writing opportunities—more writing opportunities for the children.

JF: Why do you think they are doing that?
P1: Because I think writing in the school is generally what is below age expectations so I think there has been a big focus in regards Ofsted and SIP visits that writing needs to be addressed as the biggest area that the school needs to focus on.

JF: How has that impacted you do you think?

P1: Yeah, I think it was difficult to change it at first but I've seen the impact, I mean children have made progress so you know, the evidence is there that actually to some extent it is working for them.

JF: OK so we've talked about the planning side a little bit. Sorry if there are any bits that seem like I am repeating. What's your experience of writing? Tell me about you - When you came to teach writing, what were your feelings about it?

P1: I think it is the hardest thing to teach because there are so many elements to it and I never felt confident particularly myself with writing. I've always been - you know I did maths and sciences A-levels and things and music degrees so I've never really liked enjoyed it but I think it's the most difficult because there are so many different elements - you've got grammar, punctuation, spelling, you've got then actual content you've got tenses, sentence structure, it's just so much in it and every child has got just completely different problems - yeah it's been the most challenging particularly when you've got in your class a range...
of maybe three or four years — you know some of them below and some of them above — yeah it’s hard.

JF: And when you talk about that challenge, what can you do about that? do you feel that you’ve had support — has there been support there?

P1: Yeah definitely, I mean each class generally has an additional adult so you know you’ve got your TA so if you wanted them maybe to work particularly with the children who are struggling with full stops you could say, “as they’re writing, I want you to focus on and remind children about full stops.” So you can kind of group them with the particular areas you are focusing on so you can have a group then and your TA can have a group. Then that’s at least 8 children being focussed on in that lesson and you can rotate and in that way, if lessons always go to plan, you know if you have that adult all the time, you know they can be taken away or not in – there are just so many things that happen. In an ideal world you’d have your groups and then everyday you would have different groups so you’d get to see them all during the week.

JF: In terms of your own feelings about writing though, can you tell me what has either supported you or not supported you — you know are there any things that you can think of that have helped you or similarly things where you feel ‘I needed more help’?
P1: I don't know I just think that the internet is such a valuable resource. That's where I go to you know I'm going to teach recounts... right examples of recounts and I'll make sure I've read and I'll find you know, things that people have already done – looking at what is already out there and then adapting it.

JF: What helps you to adapt it?

P1: um, knowing the children, knowing what they need to work on.

JF: What was your feeling from your training and your early teaching about the support you got with teaching writing?

P1: I think the training... I'm trying to remember about writing I think the only thing I can really think of that was you know really beneficial that really stuck with me was like a book list and then we did different ways of teaching about books and using like non-fiction and using stories and stories from other cultures and things like that and actually that's been the most valuable that I've brought here because you know I've got a genre 'ok we're doing story settings in an historical context... so I remember that book, alright we'll look at that book' and I've kind of used that as the stimulus.

JF: And in terms of things that you feel, 'I could have done with more of', is there anything?
P1: Yeah, I think just kind of examples of children’s writing that we sat down and unpicked.

JF: You’d have liked that?

P1: Yeah, particularly focusing on – I know levels are going out – but kind of the same thing because we’re still using levels now just sitting down and seeing, ‘Look what does a 3c writer actually look like?’ what would that be, what would a 2b writer be. Just kind of having that understanding of this is 2b because they’ve used you know, they’ve got first person, there’s some full stops – there’s not all full stops... no. you know exactly what it is to be that level.

JF: So you think that would have been useful early on?

P1: Yeah.

JF: And when did you get that kind of support?

P1: Everything was NQT year.

JF: Tell me about the NQT year in terms of your writing support?
P1: We had weekly sessions and they were generally maths and English so we looked at levelling, we looked at things like APS, we looked at again, more books, we looked at how to plan for books for the different genres of writing and things like that so that was – you know the NQT year was what made me really understand about how to plan – I felt like in PGCE we learned all the, what’s it called – the research all behind everything but actually the practicals of teaching – that’s what the NQT kind of showed you what to do essentially.

JF: So you’ve talked about the planning and you’ve talked about your background with writing a little bit and how you feel about teaching writing but when you’re actually in front of the children and you are teaching writing, how do you feel at that point?

P1: (long pause) It depends what kind of lesson it is, I tend to enjoy the actual composing – like coming up with their first drafts because we spend a lot of time thinking of our plans, you know ‘ok we’ve done our plans, let’s think about that’ then we do the shared write where they’ll sit with their WBs on the carpet and we’ll think ‘right let’s think of that first sentence’ because it’s always the same and I feel the same, they’ve got a blank page and it’s always like the getting started that they find the hardest so we kind of construct together right opening paragraph ok right I’m going to take that away right let’s go to our tables and you write yours now I remember the things that we need to include’, focus on success criteria and that kind of thing. Getting their
ideas and putting it all together because I think lots of -- some teachers prewrite like models that they are going to show them -- I do that sometimes -- I just think that sometimes it's more beneficial for them, particularly the class I've had this year who cannot just sit and listen to you to write you know they have to and they're like, 'oh' and normally their ideas are better than mine. So showing them how to put those ideas and kind of how to construct it in a way that's like coherent, that makes sense and especially then you will get a lot of the high ability children who are like, 'oh, well, I've got a really sophisticated sentence' and the lows are like, 'yeah I really like that,' and I'm like 'right, you repeat that now and you can change it so it's at their level then they've actually used each other to gain ideas and things.

JF: So that's the bit you feel most comfortable with?

P1: yeah

JF: And how much of the teaching is -- you know I'm not asking for a percentage but you've talked a lot about the sequence of different bits of the writing process that you cover -- how much of your teaching of writing is that bit would you say?

P1: I'd say I wouldn't get them sat down for any longer than 20 minutes.
JF: But in terms of let's say a two-week sequence of being in school, how many lessons are like the one you just described?

P1: So, that would maybe be once a week.

JF: Once a week?

P1: Yeah, at the most.

JF: OK and what's your feeling on that?

P1: That would just be writing on its own. We try to do one lesson a week in the curriculum, in history or geography or science where we do the same thing for a piece of writing so I guess it could be about two.

JF: Why is it that you find that bit the most comfortable do you think?

P1: I don't know I guess I feel that that is where the children are most involved and I that's when you see how much they have actually taken on board from the genre emersion and whether they've understood the planning and how it's kind of reflected in what they produce.

JF: I'm quite interested in when you say 'the children are involved' what do you mean?
P1: That's their ideas that I've helped them to construct and then they've got them there, you know, even though I take it away because otherwise they would just copy what I'd just written and that's not the point of it so we've done it together. Then I take it away and they go away and they you know either remember things we've done or they change it slightly - things like that just means that it's theirs rather than they just sit there and watch me, right? I'm going to write this sentence, oh, that's a good sentence, oh I need a capital you know. I think it is important to think aloud but I think that you can do that with their ideas.

JF: So their ideas, during the other stages of the sequence of lessons, whose ideas are they? Are they their ideas, your ideas?

P1: No, I would have given them the examples to like find the features of - so I would have chosen those and the plans, I would have decided what they were planning so you know if it was instructions on how to build something, I would have decided on that so this was the point where now it's their turn and to make theirs really individual
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<td>P1: Yeah so well to choose from each term cos we do like a writing cycle of four lessons.</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: OK</td>
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<tr>
<td>P1: so it would be genre emersion, planning, drafting and then, yeah, genre emersion planning, drafting, editing so they're like redrafting. So I know there is going to be four lessons per genre of writing so instructions, you know recounts, stories – they are all the different genres...</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: And there are four lessons for each?</td>
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<tr>
<td>P1: yeah, for each one in a term.</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: And what are the four lessons?</td>
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P1: so it would be the genre emersion, finding features, the planning second lesson then third lesson is the writing the first draft and then it would be marked and they’d redraft and improve and up level is the fourth lesson.

JF: OK

P1: so that’s kind of how it works.

JF: And how do you come up with the ideas for those?

P1: Urm… so yeah try and base it as much as I can on the topic that we’re working on so if we’re doing space for example we would try and link it to make it relevant to what we’re doing in other subjects.

JF: And how did the four lessons come about?

P1: That was something that was given to us by the English coordinator at this school.

JF: And how does that go with you?

P1: Urm, it’s different. To what we were doing the previous three years that I’ve been here. Because we were following very much the National Literacy the old style but focussing on more… so if we were doing narrative we’d be told exactly what kind of narrative. It is historical so we were given more kind of objectives to meet. There would be a lot more kind of genre emersion, maybe a drama lesson and then there would be a reading lesson incorporated into that so there was a lot more… we weren’t restricted to four lessons, we were allowed to choose maybe three weeks if we needed it or just one.
JF: So that's how it used to be?

P1: Yeah

JF: Up until this year?

P1: Yeah, so the new SLT, all of them are brand new this year so they introduced the four lesson cycle.

JF: So, has there been any difference in how you feel about teaching writing from this year compared to last year?

P1: Yeah, I think it was quite a big change. So obviously I had spent three years doing what I had done previously. So I've looked at my plans from last year that I was happy with and happy how they went and trying to kind of condense them down I found quite difficult like particularly with genre emersion. Urm, trying to get you know, drama in there, getting the subject knowledge -- finding the features I found a lot to try and cram into one lesson. But I think the way I've tried to find my way around that is to do more in the other subjects. So if I knew we were doing instructions and we were doing it about something to do with science I'd make sure we were doing a science lesson where we were using instructions.

JF: And thinking about last year, when you were asked to plan writing last year, what would you be thinking then? Were you more comfortable because you'd done two years of it?

P1: I think so and the objectives are very much given to you so the national strategies you'd have a whole list so speaking and listening objectives, reading objectives, writing objectives, and you knew over say two or three weeks you'd have to cover all those so you'd take those objectives and put them into your daily plan and you'd say right I can cover those on that lesson cos we'll do the drama there we'll do that and it kind of

1. Influence of NLS

2. Prescription from school supportive
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<th>JF: So it was up to you where…</th>
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<td>P1: ... Yeah, how we did it. Whereas even though it’s kind of it was still prescriptive it was kind of up to us how long we spent on it. Whereas this year it was four lessons – it’s got to be…</td>
<td>4. Autonomy from school as neutral</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: And why has that been done do you think?</td>
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<td>P1: Urm, to get more genres of writing fitted in to each term I think. To try and make sure the children are getting a variety of genres over a term so not spending too long on the actual writing lesson not writing you know not spending too long on doing things like drama you know reading.</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: And what’s your feeling on that?</td>
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<td>P1: I think in some ways I think it has helped doing a lot more writing – I think generally because there’s not as much engagement in regards to drama and like the things that these kids in particular need, you know the stimulus they need something that they’ve experienced to be able to write a significant amount so it’s kind of been more writing but maybe not as much because there’s not been that extensive amount of input at the beginning of when you’ve changed genres.</td>
<td>5. Using other areas of English curriculum 11. Understanding the needs of the children</td>
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<td>JF: And for the four years that you’ve been teaching, has there been any feeling of frustration, have you been happy, you know, you’ve mentioned a couple of times – I’d like to be spending time – you said that last year you got to spend a bit longer if you thought that that was needed…</td>
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<tr>
<td>P1: Yeah</td>
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<td>JF: In general, what’s your feeling on that?</td>
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<td>P1: I think that maybe a balance between the two, like I felt that it was better the fact that the children were writing more frequently (this year) in lessons cos they you know, in four lessons they would have two long pieces written so that could have been one or two weeks (last year) whereas it was more drawn out. I think a</td>
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I still think you need to use your teacher judgement about how much input your children need. If, you know, they've written instructions four or five times during the year and you get to the sixth time and you think right, 

**I know we know the features** you know I’m going to recap it really quickly and then go straight in that’s fine but you really have to know your children so you need that little bit more freedom to be able to decide as a professional.

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<th>11. Understanding the needs of the children</th>
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<td>1. Influence of NLS</td>
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<td>12. Autonomy from school as supportive</td>
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JF: And in terms of that freedom, you feel that you did have that freedom and you don’t or? What’s your feeling on how that’s been?

7.00

P1: Yeah, not so much this year it’s been... there’s been a lot of pressure on getting the children into their routine of it being right — feature finding, planning, drafting, editing, you know getting them into that routine so it’s been very kind of you know regimented this year which I understand, you know changing things quite a lot — they want children to get used to a new way of doing it.

JF: Why are they doing that do you think?

P1: To get more pieces of writing in the books. Also so there’s more writing opportunities — more writing opportunities for the children.

JF: Why do you think they are doing that?

P1: Because I think writing in the school is generally what is below age expectations so I think there has been a big focus in regards Ofsted and SIP visits that writing needs to be addressed as the biggest area that the school needs to focus on.
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<th>JF: How has that impacted you do you think?</th>
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<td>P1: Yeah, I think it was difficult to change it at first but I’ve seen the impact – I mean children have made progress so you know, the evidence is there that actually to some extent it is working for them</td>
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JF: OK so we’ve talked about the planning side a little bit. Sorry if there are any bits that seem like I am repeating. What’s your experience of writing? Tell me about you - When you came to teach writing, what were your feelings about it?

**P1:** I think it is the hardest thing to teach because there are so many elements to it and I never felt confident particularly myself with writing I’ve always been – you know I did maths and sciences A-levels and things and music degrees so I’ve never really like enjoyed it but I think it’s the most difficult because there are so many different elements – you’ve got grammar, punctuation, spelling, you’ve got then actual content you’ve got tenses, sentence structure, it’s just so much in it and every child has got just completely different problems – yeah it’s been the most challenging particularly when you’ve got in your class a range of maybe three or four years – you know some of them below and some of them above – yeah it’s hard.

JF: And when you talk about that challenge, what can you do about that? do you feel that you’ve had support – has there been support there?

**P1:** Yeah definitely, I mean each class generally has an additional adult so you know you’ve got your TA so if you wanted them maybe to work particularly with the children who are struggling with full stops you could say, “as they’re writing I want you to focus on and remind children about full stops.” So you can kind of group them with the particular areas you are focussing on so you can have a group then and your TA can have a group. Then that’s at least 8 children being focussed on in that lesson and you can rotate and in that way, if lessons always go to plan, you know if you have that adult all the time, you know they can be

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9. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing

11. Understanding the needs of the children

9. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing

11. Understanding the needs of the children

13. Focus on transcriptional skills

11. Understanding the needs of the children
taken away or not in – there are just so many things that happen. In an ideal world you’d have your groups and then everyday you would have different groups so you’d get to see them all during the week.

JF: In terms of your own feelings about writing though, can you tell me what has either supported you or not supported you – you know are there any things that you can think of that have helped you or similarly things where you feel ‘I needed more help’?

P1: I don’t know I just think that the internet is such a valuable resource. That’s where I go to you know ‘I’m going to teach recounts… right examples of recounts’ and I’ll make sure I’ve read and I’ll find, you know, things that people have already done – looking at what is already out there and then adapting it.

JF: What helps you to adapt it?

P1: um, knowing the children, knowing what they need to work on.

JF: What was your feeling from your training and your early teaching about the support you got with teaching writing?

P1: I think the training… I’m trying to remember about writing I think the only thing I can really think of that was you know really beneficial that really stuck with me was like a book list and then we did different ways of teaching about books and using like non-fiction and using stories and stories from other cultures and things like that and actually that’s been the most valuable that I’ve brought here because you know I’ve got a genre ‘ok we’re doing story settings in an historical context… oo I remember that book, alright we’ll look at that book’ and I’ve kind of used that as the stimulus.
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<th>JF: And in terms of things that you feel, ‘I could have done with more of’, is there anything?</th>
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<td>P1: Yeah, I think just kind of examples of children’s writing that we sat down and unpicked.</td>
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<td>JF: You’d have liked that?</td>
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<td>P1: Yeah, particularly focussing on – I know levels are going out – but kind of the same thing because we’re still using levels now just sitting down and seeing, ‘look what does a 3c writer actually look like’ what would that be, what would a 2b writer be. Just kind of having that understanding of ‘this is 2b because they’ve used you know, they’ve got first person, there’s some full stops – there’s not all full stops…. no, you know, exactly what it is to be that level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: So you think that would have been useful early on?</td>
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<td>P1: yeah</td>
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<td>JF: And when did you get that kind of support?</td>
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<td>P1: Everything was NQT year.</td>
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<td>JF: tell me about the NQT year in terms of your writing support?</td>
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<td>P1: We had weekly sessions and they were generally maths and English so we looked at levelling, we looked at things like APS, we looked at again, more books, we looked at how to plan for books for the different genres of writing and things like that so that was – you know the NQT year was what made me really understand about how to plan – I felt like in PGCE we learned all the, what’s it called – the research all behind everything, but actually the practicals of teaching – that’s what the NQT kind of showed you what to do essentially.</td>
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JF: So you've talked about the planning and you've talked about your background with writing a little bit and how you feel about teaching writing but when you're actually in front of the children and you are teaching writing, how do you feel at that point?

P1: (long pause) It depends what kind of lesson it is. I tend to enjoy the actual composing – like coming up with their first drafts, because we spend a lot of time thinking of our plans, you know 'ok we've done our plans, let's think about that' then we do the shared write where they'll sit with their WBs on the carpet and we'll think 'right let's think of that first sentence' because it's always the same and I feel the same, they've got a blank page and it's always like the getting started that they find the hardest so we kind of construct together 'right opening paragraph ok right I'm going to take that away right let's go to our tables and you write yours now' 'remember the things that we need to include', focus on success criteria and that kind of thing. Getting their ideas and putting it all together because I think lots of – some teachers prewrite like models that they are going to show them – I do that sometimes – I just think that sometimes it's more beneficial for them, particularly the class I've had this year who cannot just sit and listen to you to write you know they have to and they're like, 'oh' and normally their ideas are better than mine. So showing them how to put those ideas and kind of how to construct it in a way that's like coherent, that makes sense and especially then you will get a lot of the high ability children who are like, 'oh, well, I've got a really sophisticated sentence' and the lows are like, 'yeah I really like that,' and I'm like 'right, you repeat that now and you can change it so it's at their level' then they've actually used each other to gain ideas and things.

| 3. Positive support | 15. Enjoys composing with class |
| 16. Structured support given to children |
| 17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure / inclusion of features (success criteria) |
| 16. Structured support given to children |
JF: So that’s the bit you feel most comfortable with?

P1: yeah

JF: And how much of the teaching is – you know I’m not asking for a percentage but you’ve talked a lot about the sequence of different bits of the writing process that you cover – how much of your teaching of writing is that bit would you say?

P1: I’d say I wouldn’t get them sat down for any longer than 20 minutes.

JF: But in terms of let’s say a two-week sequence of being in school, how many lessons are like the one you just described?

P1: so, that would maybe be once a week.

JF: Once a week?

P1: yeah, at the most.

JF: Ok and what’s your feeling on that?

P1: That would just be writing on its own. We try to do one lesson a week in curriculum, in history or geography or science where we do the same thing for a piece of writing so I guess it could be about two

JF: Why is it that you find that bit the most comfortable do you think?
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<tr>
<th>JF: I'm quite interested in when you say 'the children are involved' what do you mean?</th>
<th>P1: I don't know I guess I feel that that is where the children are most involved and I that's when you see how much they have actually taken on board from the genre emersion and whether they've understood the planning and how it's kind of reflected in what they produce.</th>
<th>7. Desire to provide children with more autonomy</th>
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<td>JF: So their ideas, during the other stages of the sequence of lessons, whose ideas are they? Are they their ideas, your ideas?</td>
<td>P1: That it's their ideas that I've helped them to construct and then they've got them there; you know even though I take it away because otherwise they would just copy what I'd just written and that's not the point of it so we've done it together then I take it away and they go away and they you know either remember things we've done or they change it slightly -- things like that just means that it's theirs rather than they just sit their watch me, right 'I'm going to write this sentence, oh that's a good sentence, oh I need a capital you know I think it is important to think aloud but I think that you can do that with their ideas.</td>
<td>7. Desire to provide children with more autonomy</td>
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<td>P1: No, I would have given them the examples to like find the features of -- so I would have chosen those and the plans, I would have decided what they were planning so you know if it was instructions on how to build something, I would have decided on that so this was the point where now it's their turn and to make theirs really individual</td>
<td>1. Influence of NLS</td>
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Appendix 9.8  
*Interview Transcript 2 with initial codes*

| JF: In relation to the year that you were teaching Year 5, what went through your mind when you were planning writing lessons? |  
|---|---|
| T2: making it relevant to them. They were quite a low attaining group in general and they just didn’t enjoy writing – I got the obligatory groan each time so it was always thinking about what was relevant to them, trying to link it to/ at the time the way we planned we had to go thematically so you had to link it to your topic that was coming up or a book that had been advised to us so it was always trying to make it relevant to them. | 7. Desire to provide children with autonomy/ownership  
21. Low child competence  
22. Low child motivation  
7. Desire to provide children with autonomy/ownership  
9. Prescription from the school neutral  
7. Desire to provide children with autonomy/ownership |
|  | 5. Using other areas of English curriculum  
13. High child motivation  
7. Desire to provide children with autonomy/ownership |
| JF: So there was a theme you were following… |  
| T2: yeah so what we did when we were doing WW2 we were reading Goodnight Mr Tom (GMT) – they were really engaged in that and we just tried to put / to make it as engaging as possible so we made sure that they were. If they were Tom in GMT and they were writing a recount about that they kind of had more of a purpose to it. |  
|  | 2. Prescription from school supportive  
7. Desire to provide children with autonomy/ownership  
19. Prescription from the school negative  
7. Desire to provide children with autonomy/ownership |
| JF: and you say you were trying to make it relevant to them but you had the theme and the topic laid down for you. Was there ever an issue there? What did you do in your planning if they were ever in conflict? |  
| T2: The way we tried to do it was that during our topic we would do something called a KWL so what you know, what you want to know and what you learn so we always knew what they wanted to know before that and then we tried to fit that theme and that purpose trying to link it together. Obviously that’s not always the case – sometime you have to do what’s set out for you. But we tried our best to see what areas they were interested in and see if we could gear it that way so they were all fascinated with evacuation which worked very well with GMT but then they were very interested in the battlefields as well so we took a small bit where he gets a letter and we built it from there so we could try and go off in different tangents to suit them the best we could. |  
|  |  
| JF: ok and you know when you say that there are obviously things that you have to do, when you are approaching planning, tell me about that so what process do you go through when you’re planning your writing lessons? |  
|  |  
|  |  
|  |  
|  |  |
T2: I just have to think back because it’s slightly different now. The way it’s laid out is that we have a cycle so you go through 4 (it’s now 6) but it was 4 cycles at the time where you start by immersing them completely in the genre, so you’re looking at – so if you’re doing recounts you’re looking at different types of letters, if you’re doing a newspaper you’re looking at newspapers from that time then you’re able to model it the next session and they do like a first draft and then third is that they edit then fourth they pull it all together. So it’s very clear how you have to plan it and how they can improve upon their writing. It’s very a step ladder approach – they produce a final piece... so the planning in that sense, what you need to include, is very prescriptive but how you go about that – the hook to your lesson – is very much up to the teacher and how you want to engage them and knowing your children;

9. Prescription from the school neutral
1. Influence of NLS
16. Structured support given to children

JF: OK so there are certain bits that were laid down for you as you said and other things that you were using what you knew about what the children’s interests were...

T2: and then hopefully that topic as well would link in quite well with that.

24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum

JF: The idea of that question was to explore aspects of the Q that were looking at how you feel that you have autonomy from the school in planning writing, how you feel about your competence and your attitudes towards writing... the follow up question that you can add to if you think that you haven’t covered it is, ‘in the questionnaire you are asked about the autonomy you perceive the school give you regarding the teaching of writing – is there anything that you would add in relation to that?

T2: I feel like we’re prescriptive because we need to make sure that they cover a lot of genres so for example, at the moment we’re having to do play scripts and then we know that we come onto something else but we can move those genres around so, while we have to cover everything, if there’s something in the news or something hard-hitting going on then we can make sure that they have the best piece of writing – we can move those genres around, you just follow that cycle, so there is that autonomy in there, you can suit your planning to which genre as long as it’s all covered but it is laid out basically for you – it’s up to you how you tweak it and then things like what you actually put into that letter or to whatever you want to teach – it’s very much up to you – you are given creative control over that or the children obviously give you ideas or stimulus, depending on what they come up with themselves so no I don’t have to teach a letter on WW2, it could have been on anything.

2. Prescription from school supportive
4. Autonomy from school as neutral
24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JF: and what do you think that the school does to support your competence in the teaching of writing?</th>
<th>11. Autonomy from school as supportive</th>
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<td>T2: I was an NQT at the time so I was very nervous about writing cos it's that moment when you have to do it on the board off the bat with your back to them for a longer period of time than in like maths but our school is very good – our deputy now, she is in charge of literacy and the training that we get is just brilliant so I felt quite confidently trained by the time I got here (year 3 of career)</td>
<td>8. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing 25. Feeling of support from the school</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: Tell me about the training a little bit…</td>
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<td>T2: I know that we've/ kind of feeding up we do L&amp;Pete?? So we're looking through how you do your actions through it.</td>
<td>2. Prescription from school supportive</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: what's that sorry L and?</td>
<td>3. Positive support</td>
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<td>T2: Alan Pete, yeah he uses actions to link with words so you tell a story and they get to write it – I think it’s meant to be visual and things like that. We have – obviously the planning is fantastic, the flipcharts that we use and things like that. We're given training on how children feel competent in their own writing so quick tricks of giving them different colour pens to help them write certain sentences in one and another sentence in another so using stars or dots to help them with full stops – it’s like lots of little things that can make that writing really interesting for them and that really helps when we're modelling because they're excited about getting back rather than dreading it.</td>
<td>16. Structured support given to children</td>
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<td>JF: And when you talk about the flipcharts – are those given to you or are those – when you talk about the ‘fantastic flipcharts’</td>
<td>13. High child motivation</td>
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<td>T2: So we have templates – so while again it’s that – the school is very good at balancing between being quite prescriptive and you not having to panic about having nothing but you put everything onto it if that makes sense so there is a cycle that you follow and those flipcharts have that but what you put as your ‘hook’ is up to you so you don’t start with one blank screen in front of you and it’s nice as well because it triggers your memory ‘oh god, I’ve got to put the vocabulary bit in there, I’ve got to do this, it works quite well.</td>
<td>2. Prescription from school supportive</td>
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<td>JF: OK thank you, so that aspect is looking at the planning side of things but what about the actual teaching side so ‘what went through your mind when you were actually teaching writing lessons to that class”? You’ve talked I guess about that feeling of having your back to them and writing on a blank board but what else would go through your mind when you were teaching writing lessons?</td>
<td>11. Autonomy from school as supportive 2. Prescription from school supportive</td>
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<td>T2: Originally, like I said, a panic because they’re not quiet, they shout things out and I learnt to just embrace that and it be part of my teaching so I realised that I needed to have the best model for them to do the best piece of work, particularly for the lowers so I used to write my plan</td>
<td>8. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing 26. Child behaviour 16. Structured support given</td>
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out first and put them on post-it notes — I still do that now- and pop them next to my board and then I can start writing - they think I’m looking at the board but I’m checking that I know where I am going with it. And I made sure I left gaps so if I wanted to use an adjective I know they’re going to shout out because I’m going to be thinking aloud as I write it – that it’s an opportunity for them to shout out at the right time and you get loads of ideas that way. So I made it less quiet and using their voices in the right way but that took a lot of wrong lessons to figure out that that’s how I wanted to have it in my planning to make sure that their writing is engaging and they felt like they had personalised my model – they could magpie my ideas and they’ve got a starting point for themselves so it worked quite well in the end. Once we got into the swing of it, after Christmas it was all fine but up to that point it was a lot of shouting out until we figured it out.

JF: So if that’s the competence side of things about how you felt about how well you were delivering the writing lessons, what did you feel in terms of your autonomy with delivering writing lessons?

T2: what do you mean, like what/how I wrote?

JF: well, how you approached it when you had the class in front of you. You’ve talked about the planning – there was some autonomy in terms of how you did it, there were some things laid down about the things that needed to be covered. How did that translate to the actual teaching?

T2: obviously sometimes what I planned was not always what they want and I learned to just go with it in the end – that the bits that were better were when they had more input into it and I found that as long as I knew what I needed to include because there’s certain SPAG that you have to include in our extended writing as long as I made sure I modelled that very clearly in their writing it was always really good on their tables but all the other bits that came from them it made their writing better as well so just going with them and knowing that their words are sometimes better than the word that you thought up that morning writing it out and it’s quite nice that they seem to magpie those ideas so the ideas that they had heard in one lesson and they liked one word that one child used, they’d use it in the next lesson so they were listening to their friends and I didn’t have to do anywhere near as much talking and sometimes we had them up at the board writing their sentences so it was a mish-mash of my writing and theirs so – it was actually quite a lot of autonomy because it became something that changed throughout that lesson.

JF: So you felt that you had the plan there and you had an idea about how it would link to a topic, you had what the content needed to be that was included but having that basis meant that you could then go with where the children were going…
T2: and that was always better writing because they felt that they were interested in that topic so they were going to write better about it and because we’d done it all together and we tweaked bits or I’d made mistakes and they’d corrected me it felt like it was more of a journey rather than ‘this is how you do it’ kind of like in maths sometimes – you teach them a skill and they do it, in writing it was more of a team – it was me and them.

7. Desire to provide children with autonomy/ownership

27. Joint composing/shared writing

JF: A similar follow up question I guess because I think you have talked about the autonomy you gave the children but actually, is there anything more you want to say about the autonomy you perceive you give the children in writing? You’ve touched on it a little bit

T2: I think it’s a case of, I know it sounds awful, but manipulate the fact that they can’t have that complete autonomy. I’ve not let it that they can just write what they’ve wanted – I’ve guided it with questioning and when they’ve talked to their talk partners then I’ve listened in and I’m like I really like that idea and I want that idea to shine so I’ve used that in my writing so they do have autonomy and they can talk about their ideas can go whichever way but it’s just very careful the way you pick them out to make sure you get the piece that you want so that they’ll write the right piece.

20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding/autonomy and free choice

17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure/inclusion of features (success criteria)

JF: What does ‘the right piece’ mean?

T2: I guess to that genre.

17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure/inclusion of features (success criteria)

JF: OK

T2: so if we’re writing a newspaper article about being in the trenches it would be of that rather than maybe some of them have a tendency to go off piste don’t they I guess it’s a bit harder in that it’s a bit more constritive but in story writing if we’re doing a fairy tale you can see sometimes they go off and particularly the boys they’re into xbox and games aren’t they and all of a sudden you’re in a video game and it’s hard not to crush that creativity because it’s actually a great idea it’s just it’s not within that genre that you are trying to teach so it’s a bit of a balance because particularly with boys you don’t want to crush their confidence I’m just thankful that they’re writing.

1. Influence of NLS

20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding/autonomy and free choice

JF: So you talk about one way in which you kind of listen in on talk partners and use that for the class model. Are there any other things that you can think of that you do to allow those children autonomy as oppose to free choice so yeah I’d agree with you that giving them free reign may be bedlam but is there anything else that you can think that
you do to allow children some element of autonomy within the writing lessons?

<table>
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<th>T2: [a few seconds pause] I guess we do a lot of like picking up the right vocabulary and things like that so they magpie words they choose all those words and then it’s just a case of them being able to not just using the words that I have used they have a bank of things that they’ve come up by themselves or sometimes we have pictures up around the room and they go around and they write on them and come up with their own ideas and then you pull it apart so I want to see that setting – you’ve got a picture of a castle and then you pull their words apart so I but it’s all very the same but different it’s all very much trying to guide them with their questioning to make sure that they can create a word bank of things but the way you do it is different ways each time.</th>
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JF: How do you feel about your teaching of writing, thinking back at that time?

| T2: [now] a lot better than I did then. How did I feel about my writing? I realise that it takes a lot of focus from the teacher you need to know what you want to write to make sure that they get the best from it and it’s not just a case of knowing that you’ve planned a lesson and you’re going to write a letter or you’re going to write a newspaper article you have to know what you want them to have in it to give them the best so there’s a lot of planning involved even if you want to create that autonomy in the class where they’re going to pull out all these ideas – there’s a lot of forethought. |
| 8. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing Appears to be in relation to the time of interview rather than time of the target year |

JF: So during that year when you were with that year 5 class what did you think about your competence with writing?

| T2: I think that it was a bit of a journey – in September it was probably the topic I dreaded teaching and then by the end of it and it still is now, it’s something that I love teaching and that’s just because we’ve figured out different ways of doing it over the year. |
| 8. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing 16. Enjoys composing with class |

JF: Thinking about that class again, can you tell me about the writing that the children in that class produced?

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<th>T2: Oh my gosh…</th>
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| T2: yes, in particular they were very good at story writing, they had amazing imagination quite often – it sounds awful trying to reign it in – I had to make sure that their stories followed a pattern and there was a problem and things like that because they just had so many ideas that they wanted to cram in. |
| 20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding / autonomy and free choice 17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure / inclusion of features (success criteria) 7. Desire to provide children with autonomy / ownership |

JF: Any kind of themes,?
<table>
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<th>JF: problem?…</th>
<th>17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure / inclusion of features (success criteria)</th>
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<tr>
<td>T2: like you have so there would be setting starting off, you meet your characters and then there would be a problem then they have to fix the problem and then there would be normally a celebration at the end and it always works very well with medieval stories but stories when you’re writing about fairy tales and things like that it was always they had so many ideas and wanted to go off piste but their creative writing, their imaginations were brilliant and as they started to get older when we started to look at more non-fiction that was really good – some of the things that they used from their science into their writing was really good / instructions and explanations that worked really well but they only worked well if they had done it first – if they had done something practically so that first hand experience so when we did Brazil with chocolate their writing was / their writing was to persuade you to go to Brazil was absolutely brilliant but to explain how chocolate was made – they struggled with that because they went straight from the cocoa bean to the chocolate bar and then when we did – what else did we do we did oh we did making a sword for instruction writing for Beowulf and for the Saxons they made the sword first and that writing was much better than the Brazil even though we did that earlier just because them doing something practical always helped them write the non-fiction things better.</td>
<td>7. Desire to provide children with autonomy / ownership</td>
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<td>16. Structured support given to children</td>
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<td>24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum</td>
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<td>JF: And in terms of the detail of the writing that they did, what do you remember about – you’ve talked about the content of it and the overall genre but in terms of the detail of the writing they did were there any kind of things that you remember, things that they found tricky, things they were strong at</td>
<td>16. Structured support given to children</td>
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<td>T2: My class in particular, they loved using the right vocabulary so they would hone in on certain things so we’d been talking about the cocoa bean and we were using the machete they will use that language – they want to make sure that you aware that they know it and they want to use it - we do SFA as reading scheme so there were always words up on that word wall [points to a word wall]</td>
<td>9. Prescription from the school neutral</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. Structured support given to children</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: What’s SFA?</td>
<td>9. Prescription from the school neutral</td>
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| T2: It’s called Success For All it’s a reading scheme that kind of streams across the whole school [children organised by ability rather
|
than age (in theory a struggling Year 6 child could be in a group with Year 2 children) but each book has a particular word bank – they have to learn vocabulary and because that's up in most rooms anything that we were doing – particularly in my high ability – they're very keen to like 'oh what's that word I could use that in my writing so they were always trying to get the 'right' words or 'up-level their words' – vocabulary was a massive thing for them – they took real pride in that

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<th>JF: And you talked about spelling and punctuation and grammar, was there anything that you remember from that group in terms of those things?</th>
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<td>T2: yeah, their sentences always started with 'and' and particularly that low to low-middle that was something we had to get out of it like they didn't know how to actually form a sentence so before we could really start enjoying our writing we had to kind of focus on that structural writing but that was something that they struggled on particularly with the lowers / I think it's because they have ideas as well they just want to go 'and and and' but 'you need a full stop' once that happened we were really able to go off and explore and use that vocabulary that the highers were using and we shared our ideas they were then able to get it in as well.</td>
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<th>JF: Final question then, what is good writing?</th>
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<td>T2: Voice. I think if you have got a voice, it doesn’t matter if there are a load of simple sentences I think as long as your author voice comes through and that's something that the school is really focussing on this year is that authorship because our school is getting better and better – the quality of the writing is getting better but now it's looking at that voice and a few of my children really had it in that year but they were always the highers. In this class some of the lowers have really good voice – I love listening to their work it's not necessarily always perfectly structured but I can really tell, they've got a humour in it and I think that's what's important.</td>
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<td>JF: Regarding the year you taught Year 5, thinking about when you were planning, what goes through your mind when you’re planning a writing lesson?</td>
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<td>T3: It very much depends on the class and the children involved. That particular group, writing was certainly something that we needed to improve upon. And it was lots of different strands within that needed to be improved. So there was very much an aspect of spelling and handwriting and sentence structuring so there was lots of nuts and bolts of writing that we needed to get fixed first and that was probably because lots of the children English was possibly their not just second language but third or fourth cos that’s the sort of cohort we had. There was a very wide range of writers but also just I think giving children something meaty enough, having a nice hook in to be able to get a good piece of writing out – I think sometimes as teachers we can be a bit dry and boring … and how we expect lovely writing to come out of something that’s a little bit flat so I think certainly something that grabs the children’s attention something that you know they’re going to get fired up about is going to produce much better writing than, you know, write a diary entry of Samuel Pepys. So I suppose when I’m planning it’s the needs of the children, it’s having that good AfL to know what it is that those children need to improve on and what those next steps are but also having an exciting input to get a good piece of writing out of it.</td>
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<th>JF: Where does that come from? Where does that understanding of what children need, what will hook them, where does that come from?</th>
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<td>T3: I think it comes from all sorts of things. A lot of the time it comes from the children themselves. So for example, one of my most successful pieces with that class that produced some wonderful writing – there are a couple of examples – one in particular – it came from a maths investigation and it was based on whodunit and they had to. My cake was stolen and they had to use clues to work out who the culprit was. But then we then went into reports, police reports, newspaper reports but then children can think ‘this is made up, this is a load of nonsense, this didn’t really happen’ but they were so involved in the maths and the science experiments linked to it as well, we had this whole ‘whodunit week’ the writing that came out of it was incredibly well thought out writing because they were associating and when they found out it was actually the deputy head that had stolen my cake you know it was very much getting them all engaged but you know that came, it started off in my head while planning it as very much a maths/but then in that first Monday’s lesson you could see where it could grow to and I think certainly, I like to keep my planning flexible enough to do that, I’m not going to push on through with something if you know it’s not working particularly well I think that’s something that comes with experience – being able to be confident enough to let something go, to do something instead.</td>
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| 10. Understanding the needs of the children |
| 21. Low child competence |
| 28. Structured support needed before autonomy |
| 12. Focus on transcriptional skills |

| 10. Understanding the needs of the children |
| 24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum |
| 23. High child motivation |

| 33. Examples of autonomy given to children |
| 24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum |
| 30. High teacher competence/experience |
JF: When you talk about experience, is that also, listening to your style of planning it’s very much based on what the children understand, based on what you think will engage them and that experience you talk about, does that allow you a bit more scope in terms of what the school allows? I mean, what was the school’s response to teacher’s planning in writing?

T3: Well I think certainly our executive HT – one of the reasons he employed me was to look at the curriculum as a whole so I know the curriculum inside out, I write the curriculum mapping so I think having that good understanding of the curriculum as a whole as a teacher knowing what it is from the beginning to the end of the year they (children) need to have under their belt is very important and that just takes a while especially this year with the new curriculum everyone is just finding their feet again but I do think that if you know it well enough you can see where they’re coming from and where they’re going to and you need to have taught quite a few different year groups to be able to learn that process – I think when you’re younger in your career you’ve just not done that as much you have a smaller experience of different year groups you don’t tend to see that.

JF: Were there any restrictions placed on teachers in terms of their teaching of writing? The picture coming across is that you understood the curriculum well enough that you could deliver these sessions but did you ever have a case of thinking ‘well the school is telling me I have to do this way’ certain expectations or…

T3: No, no urm but, I suppose partly I had that freedom because I wrote the curriculum for them so I thought, ‘I’ve written it so this is what we’re doing’ but I think also it was I mean, part of my role was writing the curriculum so I had lots of the teachers involved and there was lots of INSET days when we sat down together as a team and pulled it apart and decided that this is what we wanted for the school so there was lots of that kind of input and engagement from everybody, not just me, I don’t think there was any restrictions – I’m trying to think back if I’ve ever had any head restrict me in that way. I think if you know what those kids need and you go for it I can’t imagine any head ever going ‘no, can’t be doing that’.

JF: I mean it’s interesting because from what I’ve written down here, I’m looking with that question to look at the autonomy that you receive from the school – quite a bit – the competence that you feel, the attitudes you have and the follow up question which I guess you have touched upon quite a lot is that in the questionnaire you were asked about the autonomy that you perceive the school give you, so I suppose if I can summarise, you’ve said that regarding that that you had a large amount of autonomy – partly because you were actually the one who designed the curriculum…

T3: possibly but I think you know obviously when we did this we were looking at the old National Curriculum but we knew the new NC was on its way so as a school we were already stepping into that so that we were ahead of the game but it’s very much the same it has maybe moved on a little bit and pushed up a little bit more but you know, to be a good writer you need to have the tools and the skills and then you need to know how to apply them and then you need to know how to apply them effectively and start making those stylistic choices. I think that’s the same in any year group in any school anywhere really. So I suppose it’s hard for me to understand anywhere that would put restrictions on that.
**JF:** so that was about what goes through your mind when you’re planning – your thought process there but in terms of the actual teaching – same question but regarding teaching so what would go through your mind in terms of what is important, what you want to get across when you’re teaching writing?

**T3:** it very very much depends on what it is you’re doing I think. There are some things that I think you almost have to teach, you have to direct, you have to give the children, because this is a bit of knowledge that might be new and they don’t know it and you know, if you don’t know what an adverbial phrase is and you don’t know what parenthetical commas are you kind of have to teach them what that is in that, I suppose slightly more didactic teaching but I really enjoy teaching writing and I think I’m not worried about modelling writing in front of children and getting up and making those mistakes and I think some teachers do wobble a little bit with and I think that being a writer yourself in front of children is extremely important so I do try and do that in the classroom whether it’s a good or a bad piece of writing because sometimes I do a rubbish piece and they have to help me with it. But I think to see themselves as writers they need to see other people as writers first and then when that happens then that’s always a wonderful moment when they start, you know, getting it. And I think just being able to just tease things out getting children, especially in writing I’m all about nicking, you know you don’t make up new words, you nick stuff you borrow stuff from what you hear and getting them to think that’s ok. You’ve heard a phrase or a metaphor and that’s really good, I am going to put that down and store it up for next time – magpie, put it in my own writing because that’s what we do, that’s what people do and it’s ok to do that. And then you get to that stage of moving on and actually having all of that vocabulary in your toolbox that you can put into your writing again for choices rather than just ‘oh I’ve heard it, I’m just going to stick it in everywhere now’ because that’s the stage I am at to then making those choices this is the best thing to use’ so I suppose a lot of that goes through my head when I’m teaching but I think it’s also about that big thing of actually seeing themselves as writers and sharing each others writing, being able to look at each other’s and their own writing with a very critical eye as well – you know who really is a writer? I mean even when I’m writing a letter or an email I don’t just write it first time that’s it, you stop you proof read you check, you improve and that’s what everybody does day in day out in any piece you know even writing a text you stop and think has the subject changed back to something odd and getting kids to do that as part of their practise, you know it’s not just right I’ve done it, finished and I think that’s when you start developing good writers. I think and that’s what I try and do in my teaching.
JF: That’s fantastic, again, the idea of the question there was to explore bits of the questionnaire related to your support of their competence, which came through very strongly and your attitudes, which came through very strongly and you’re hinting at the autonomy that you give children — you talk about boosting their competence to the point that they can make their selections — is there anything else that you would want to talk about in terms of the autonomy that you give children within their writing?

T3: I think also giving children — and I probably don’t do this as much as I would like to and maybe that’s is where the restrictions of the curriculum come in. I think especially when you are looking at your 5 and your 6 (Year 5&6) that older key stage 2 where you really are trying to put together a portfolio of writing that they’re going to be judged on at the end of the school — I think perhaps if we gave children more opportunities to choose what they’re going to write, when they’re going to write rather than saying well this is what we’re studying so this is what we’re going to have a go at writing. I mean how often do you just give someone a piece of paper and a pen and go ‘do what you want’ you know which I’m sure would be absolutely chaotic and wonderful at the same time and perhaps giving just a little more free choice in that.

JF: Are there ways in which, taking the restrictions and the free choice as opposite ends of the spectrum, are there ways in which you can think that you look to find that middle ground where there are things that to be covered but there are elements of it that give the children autonomy?

T3: yeah I think that I lie to children all the time. I showed them a doctored photo of the school when I’d come in one morning and there was a UFO hovering overhead that I’d put in and obviously this had happened to me and then I gave them these secret files in envelopes that had all this different… and it was recounts, we were just learning about recounts you know there was newspaper cuttings in there, there was police reports in there, there was reports from the public in there was just all sorts of things all about UFOs you know but just all different kinds of recounts and I suppose I know particularly in that that they then chose to retell the story that I had started of telling them about me seeing the UFO in the morning in whatever way so some were very sort of, The Sun kind of headline you know and others went for a much more formal superintendents report on the matter and I think even wanted a letter out of the HT to me about you know seeing things in the playground you know and obviously going a bit mad so yeah I think it is possible … I’d probably like to be a bit more creative with that in order to do it I think that’s a tricky thing and it’s certainly not something that I’m an expert at but it’s certainly something that could and should be developed.

JF: You’ve answered to an extent, in fact you’ve covered this very much so but
again I’m wondering if there is anything else you want to add in terms of how you feel about your teaching of writing, I mean earlier you talked about, when you talked about what goes through your head when you’re planning, you talked a lot about, that relates to your views about the teaching of writing but in terms of your competence, particularly in writing, how do you feel about that?

T3: I like to think I’m alright at it. But I’d like to think that I’m an alright teacher full stop.

JF: The famous modest profession!

T3: I mean I enjoy teaching writing as oppose to geography you know I particularly love teaching poetry I love teaching poetry and getting terribly excited and bouncing off the walls when something like that comes up and I’d like to think I’m fairly competent but I don’t consider myself a particularly good writer but I just think we all can be just fairly competent writers – there’s nothing stopping anyone you know.

JF: I’m going to put the last two questions together because I think they probably relate. The first question was ‘can you tell me about the writing that the children in your class produced?’ and with that ‘to you, what is good writing?’

T3: Certainly that group in that year produced a whole range of writing – all sorts of genres, fiction, non-fiction and it was with the intention of going into Year 6 to have a very wide sort of portfolio of writing that they could take up with them, urm, what is good writing? I have two hats, I have my hat as a teacher but I also worked as an Islington moderator as well which meant that I went round to the schools and moderated people’s writing in Year 6 over the SATs so I have that moderator tick list in my head for all these things that they can do for putting a sub level on but then there’s also those moments of goosebumps and hair standing on the back of your neck and you just knowing that that’s beautiful and it could be you know a whole essay or it could be a simple line and I think it comes down to having an emotional response to writing because that’s what we do as readers as adults, we read books that we like that make us laugh or cry and we have a response to and when children have that emotional response to each other’s writing that’s when it gets exciting in the classroom. So what makes good writing? There’s that tick list of skills but then there’s that moment of pure beauty when you go ‘wow, that just made me get excited about it’ so yeah, I don’t know how helpful that was
Appendix 9.10  
*Interview Transcript 4 with initial codes*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>JF: Regarding the year that you taught Year 5, thinking about when you were planning, what went through your mind when you were planning writing lessons?</th>
<th>T4: It’s quite an open question. I suppose, as with all sorts of planning, what the objective is so what I want the children to know or have learnt or practiced by the end of the lesson – whether it’s a skills based lesson when I’m focussing on more grammar or sentence types and that sort of thing or whether it’s going to be a lesson where they’ve got those skills already and then to apply them to a situation that may be a piece of story writing or non-fiction – whatever it happens to be and then I think I would have the issue of differentiation and making that learning accessible for different groups of children with different needs and abilities whether it be SEN or the higher level that needs to be pushed. I’m trying to remember back. I had at the time a lower set of writers, mainly boys I was teaching, by the summer of that year 5 class I was teaching the lower attaining portion of that year group writing.</th>
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<td>JF: So they were streamed were they? They were split or did it just so happen that they were…</td>
<td>T4: … they were streamed yeah. So I was taking the –we switched midway, we switched at some point during the year so that my partner teacher was taking the top writing and I was taking the lower writing group and so planning for them was quite tricky – it was about engagement because a lot of them were turned off writing but I had more success through doing things like comic strips and story boarding and that sort of thing</td>
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<td>JF: So you had in your mind when you were planning that you had the objectives and you roughly split them into either skills or application but what would be the things that you would have to consider? There are the things you have to do – the objectives - but then you’ve also talked about the class and the engagement of the comic strips. What one would come first, if either and how would you marry the two?</td>
<td>T4: I think they’re both mutually as important because obviously we have things that we have to get through and things that they need to be taught and evidence that they can do or can’t do and it’s about trying to meet those targets in ways that are as engaging as possible for a group of children generally disengaged with writing so I’d always try to set an exciting context for them in which to use those skills so that they’d want to do it in the first place.</td>
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<td>JF: Where were those skills and where were those objectives from?</td>
<td>T4: National Curriculum objectives, previous years’ planning that was on the shared area and we looked at because the curriculum was changing? No it wasn’t changing yet…</td>
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JF: It was in transition I think

T4: Yeah it was in transition so a lot of Primary Resources (internet site) were useful for ideas about meeting the objective

3. Positive support

JF: And other than the NC, was there any expectation that you had to go to a particular place or do it a particular way with your planning?

T4: Not really no, only in terms of making sure that – we had a planning proforma, a document sheet with different boxes that needed to be filled in, in the main to help structure our ideas and processes to make sure we were doing the same thing consistently across the school and I think that’s since changed. It has changed a couple of times while I was at the school to try and make it more user friendly and help guide our planning in a bit more of a practical way. So you’d have things like boxes for where the curriculum objectives would fit in, whether there were any cross-curricular links, things like the objective itself and the criteria that would need to be met during the lesson so how those children could be successful – any starters that you were going to do or what the main teaching input would be – what you might do mid-way through or at the end, if there were any guided groups that you had planned to focus on – you know I’m focusing on this group because I’ve noticed a weakness with this area or this group has got it and I need to push them on and then space for evaluation and reflection after if you wanted to go back and write notes on the week for the planning and then hand it to the coordinator to have a look at

JF: And how helpful or unhelpful was that (the proforma)?

T4: At one point we all found it highly unhelpful as someone brought in a planning format that they had from a previous school which they thought was brilliant and none of us liked then it took quite a lot of months to come back to it and put it on the drawing board as something that needed editing so then we edited it and went with a different format so yeah it’s one of those things / every school has a different way of planning I think the main ideas are – as long as it is helpful and as long as it’s consistent in the main across the school then if anyone comes in to look they know that the school has had an agreed policy on – it’s sort of that idea of non-negotiables really – every lesson has to have a clear objective it has to have criteria that is meaningful you know you have to show what the main teaching is and then you know how you might help those that get stuck , you might push on those that are finding it too easy – yeah I think having a planning frame is really really important and helpful to help you not miss bits out when you are thinking it through in advance and to have it there either on-screen or printed to refer back to throughout the week is you know really valuable so that you’re not clutching at straws thinking what do I do for this lesson well hang on I’ve already planned it I just need to have a little refresh so you can go back to it and tweak it – it’s useful to have it written down in the format when you can go back and day well actually it didn’t go so well or it’s looking like it’s not going to meet these objectives or we’ve moved on from that throughout the week so you know you go back and discuss with people and edit

19. Prescription from the school negative

JF: So by the end of the year when it was tweaked and adapted to suit the school, was it then helpful rather than unhelpful?
T4: Yeah, yeah I would say so.

JF: The questionnaires were trying to tap into how you felt the school gives you competence and autonomy and what’s interesting about this planning format that you talk about is the reason I asked if it was helpful or unhelpful is that it could be seen that a planning format like that gives you less autonomy but it could be seen that it supports your competence so I suppose in relation to the planning format and generally the approach of the school to the planning of writing, how did you feel that that balance was struck – did you feel that the school gave you autonomy and supported competence or were there tensions there?

T4: I think generally I’ve had autonomy – yeah I think there’s pros and cons really because you don’t want to get into a/ I don’t know, feel that you’re being restricted by having boxes to fill in. However, as long as the boxes are useful and what you are already thinking about then it is useful to structure how you’re thinking about your lesson. So I think it that sense it is useful I think it is about being fit for purpose but at the point where it is fit for purpose obviously it is very useful and helps your organisation.

JF: And other than the planning format then, what was your overall sense of the autonomy that the school gave and the way that they supported your competence?

T4: I think in a way it was almost too much autonomy because I remember at times feeling quite lost about what to do with those children and how to engage them. A lot of their levels were quite low and I didn’t really have the experience – I didn’t feel experienced enough to deal with children at the low end of the scale of ability who are more sort of key stage one level but in Year 5 so I did seek some advice and guidance from KS1 teachers who did meet with me and give me ideas – urm, I probably would have preferred more of that but I did have that once or twice which was helpful.

JF: So you would have preferred more advice from KS1 teachers? Is there anything else that you feel would have been helpful at that stage?

T4: Maybe some team teaching, which I had had a bit of the previous year with writing – when I was in year 6 I had a sort of an outstanding teacher come in and co-teach with me literacy lessons which was really helpful because it boosted my confidence and helped me see things that I’d maybe missed out that she picked up on and vice versa so we were a bit like a double act and we had that for a couple of months for a couple of lessons and that was really nice so I didn’t get that when I was teaching year 5 so and that was with an even trickier range of abilities and behaviours so I think I would have liked someone to come in to coach or team-teach with me it just would have been nice. Rather than coming in and observing, coming in and offering supportive guidance would’ve been nice.

JF: It’s interesting that you talk about personal professional development, it sounds like what you’re saying…

T4: …yeah definitely

JF: as opposed to, I mean were there any kind of schemes of teaching
writing that the school used – anything they bought in that had particular methods of teaching writing.

| T4: | Not really, not until the following year – the school bought into a phonics scheme but that year no. |
| JF: | And had there been that option what would have been your thoughts on professional development of your own teaching with team teaching as opposed to having a scheme that you followed for the teaching of writing? |
| T4: | I think the two can go hand in hand – you can follow a scheme but have someone come in and help you with it so I don't think the two things are completely different but I think I would have liked to have had more guidance and people coming in and having a look and then offering practical advice. |
| JF: | And do you feel that in particular about writing? |
| T4: | At that time I felt that way about the writing because of the group of children that I had – I felt slightly out of my depth compared with the maths which I didn't find too troublesome that was fine. |
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| JF: | Was that the case before and since with writing or was it that particular year? |
| T4: | yeah I think I just generally feel that way – I'm not sure whether other teachers feel similarly or if that's just a personal thing to do with my subject knowledge or my professional development but I've always loved writing but I seem to be more confident in maths some times although currently I think that's swinging back the other way again but for me it depends on the cohort of children I've got rather than what I know so I think it's more how I cater to individual needs more than 'I don't know what I'm doing' |
| JF: | That was about the planning side and I think there has actually been quite a lot of cross over so it might be that you don't have that much to add for the next question but in the same regard, during that year, what went through your mind in terms of the teaching of writing? |
| T4: | Yeah I guess that is a big cross over because I guess I am in the main thinking about getting them on board, engagement and thinking about what I would be doing or saying or showing them that would engage them enough to buy into the lessons so a lot of I don't know – trying to make it meaningful for them and giving them a lot of visuals, a lot of pictures, tried to be a lot |

| 40. Autonomy negative |
| 2. Prescription from school supportive |
| 37. Desire for more support |
| 11. Felt a lack of experience/competence with the needs of the children |
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JF: Can I clarify, do you mean you did do that or that you would have done if you could go back?

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JF: So there’s very much a sense that for the children the autonomy and competence were in a kind of spectrum. The more competent they were, the more autonomy they could have and vice versa but it was up to them to find out where they were on that line.

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JF: for that particular group?

T4: yeah

JF: a couple of questions left. The first is – can you tell me about the writing that the children in that class produced? And I’m not expecting the finer details because I recognise that it was a couple of years ago but can you remember any particular themes or patterns or characteristics of the writing they produced?

T4: A lot of them had issues with writing stamina where they would write a couple of lines and then tail off, you know ‘oh I don’t have any ideas’ or ‘I’ve said it all in two lines’ or ‘I don’t know where to go next’ that kind of thing or ‘well I’ve done you two lines so I’m done now – I don’t really want to do anymore’ – that was tricky to deal with, building up writing stamina also because there was such a diverse mix – I had children with English as an additional language (EAL) and a lot of additional learning needs their vocabulary wasn’t brilliant and their sentence structure wasn’t always clear. So there were children who had additional needs – even dyslexics – it made their writing quite difficult to read not just from the handwriting perspective and spelling – also the sentence structure didn’t really make a lot of sense – I found that quite hard to work on.

JF: And the overall actual composition of the writing – what they’d actually written? Were there any patterns there or anything you remember particularly?

T4: urm

JF: Did they struggle with story writing, were they creative?

T4: Yeah I’d say that that was one of the trickiest things because that involves more creativity – story writing so there was quite often the issue of sequencing where I would try to use things like storyboards with them and plan out what happens first, what happens next and does that make sense but when we gave them the skills and then let them free and said ‘right now you go and produce your writing’ it did quite often come out that they had an idea that maybe they ran away with and so their sentence structure went out the window and after all that teaching of, you know, capital letters and conjunctions and varying sentence openers, you would just get, ‘and then and then and then’ so a main characteristic was, well, they weren’t confident or competent enough to hold several different strands in their head so when they were let loose to do writing, they would have their idea, but their idea would overwhelm their confident structure of how to set it out.

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<thead>
<tr>
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<td>T4: umr, very open. Good writing is coherent, -so you can follow it along, it's meaningful –m you can understand it, it's engaging so it's actually thought about its reader and what would be interesting – it's grammatically accurate enough so it can be read as it's intended to be read.</td>
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<td>42. Focus on composition</td>
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<td>JF: Do any of those stand out for you as being more important?</td>
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<td>T4: I think it has to be interesting – I think you can allow for spelling mistakes and issues with some of the grammar – you know if you can read it at all then it has to be interesting but I think the spelling, grammar, you know the SPAG stuff comes a very close second – I know that people will probably disagree and say that you need the nuts and bolts before you can make it interesting – I guess a good piece of writing needs it all really.</td>
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<td>36. Balance of transcription and composition</td>
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Appendix 9.11
Interview Transcript 4 coded independently by a moderator

JF: Regarding the year that you taught Year 5, thinking about when you were planning, what went through your mind when you were planning writing lessons?

T4: It’s quite an open question. I suppose, as with all sorts of planning, what the objective is so what I want the children to know or have learnt or practiced by the end of the lesson – whether it’s a skills based lesson when I’m focussing on more grammar or sentence types and that sort of thing or whether it’s going to be a lesson where they’ve got those skills already and then to apply them to a situation that may be a piece of story writing or non-fiction whatever it happens to be and then I think I would have the issue of differentiation and making that learning accessible for different groups of children with different needs and abilities whether it be SEN or the higher level that needs to be pushed.

I’m trying to remember back. I had at the time a lower set of writers, mainly boys I was teaching, by the summer of that year 5 class I was teaching the lower attaining portion of that year group writing.

JF: So they were streamed were they? They were split or did it just so happen that they were…

T4: … they were streamed yeah. So I was taking the – we switched midway, we switched at some point during the year so that my partner teacher was taking the top writing and I was taking the lower writing group and so planning for them was quite tricky – it was about engagement because a lot of them were turned off writing but I had more success through doing things like comic strips and story boarding and that sort of thing.

JF: So you had in your mind when you were planning that you had the objectives and you roughly split them into either skills or application but what would be the things that you would have to consider?

There are the things you have to do – the objectives - but then you’ve also talked about the class and the engagement of the comic strips. What one would come first, if either and how would you marry the two?

T4: I think they’re both mutually as important because obviously we have things that we have to get through and things that they need to be taught and evidence that they can do or can’t do and it’s about trying to meet those targets in ways that are as engaging as possible for a group of children generally disengaged with writing so I’d always try to set an exciting context for them in which to use those skills so that they’d want to do it in the first place.

JF: Where were those skills and where were those objectives from?

T4: National Curriculum objectives, previous years’ planning that was on the shared area and we looked at because the curriculum was changing? No it wasn’t changing yet…

JF: It was in transition I think

T4: Yeah it was in transition so a lot of Primary Resources (internet site) were useful for ideas about meeting the objective.

JF: And other than the NC, was there any expectation that you had to go to a particular place or do it a particular way with your planning?

T4: Not really no, only in terms of making sure that – we had a planning proforma, a document sheet with different boxes that needed to be filled in, in the main to help structure our ideas and processes to make sure we were doing the same thing consistently across the school and I think that’s since changed. It has changed a couple of times while I was at the school to try and make it more user friendly and help guide our planning in a bit more of a practical way. So you’d have things like boxes for where the curriculum objectives would fit in, whether there were any cross-curricular links, things like
the objective itself and the criteria that would need to be met during the lesson so how those children could be successful – any starters that you were going to do or what the main teaching input would be – what you might do mid-way through or at the end, if there were any guided groups that you had planned to focus on – you know I’m focusing on this group because I’ve noticed a weakness with this area or this group has got it and I need to push them on and then space for evaluation and reflection after if you wanted to go back and write notes on the week for the planning and then hand it to the coordinator to have a look at

JF: And how helpful or unhelpful was that (the proforma)?

T4: At one point we all found it highly unhelpful as someone brought in a planning format that they had from a previous school which they thought was brilliant and none of us liked then it took quite a lot of months to come back to it and put it on the drawing board as something that needed editing so then we edited it and went with a different format so yeah it’s one of those things / every school has a different way of planning I think the main ideas are – as long as it is helpful and as long as it’s consistent in the main across the school then if anyone comes in to look they know that the school has had an agreed policy on – it’s sort of that idea of non-negotiables really – every lesson has to have a clear objective it has to have criteria that is meaningful you know you have to show what the main teaching is and then you know how you might help those that get stuck , you might push on those that are finding it too easy – yeah I think having a planning frame is really, really important and helpful to help you not miss bits out when you are thinking it through in advance and to have it there either on-screen or printed to refer back to throughout the week is you know really valuable so that you’re not clutching at straws thinking what do I do for this lesson well hang on I’ve already planned it I just need to have a little refresh so you can go back to it and tweak it – it’s useful to have it written down in the format when you can go back and day well actually it didn’t go so well or it’s looking like it’s not going to meet these objectives or we’ve moved on from that throughout the week so you know you go back and discuss with people and edit.

JF: So by the end of the year when it was tweaked and adapted to suit the school, was it then helpful rather than unhelpful?
T4: Yeah, yeah I would say so.

JF: The questionnaires were trying to tap into how you felt the school gives you competence and autonomy and what’s interesting about this planning format that you talk about is the reason I asked if it was helpful or unhelpful is that it could be seen that a planning format like that gives you less autonomy but it could be seen that it supports your competence so I suppose in relation to the planning format and generally the approach of the school to the planning of writing, how did you feel that that balance was struck – did you feel that the school gave you autonomy and supported competence or were there tensions there?

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JF: That’s tricky for a Year 5 teacher - it sounds like a lot to be dealing with

T4: For a lower attaining Year 5 class, I’m not saying I’d generally expect that of Year 5 – I’d be quite worried if that was across the board of Year 5.

JF: OK last question – and it may either be the easiest or the most difficult – what is good writing?

T4: um, very open. Good writing is coherent, -so you can follow it along, it’s meaningful –m you can understand it, it’s engaging so it’s actually thought about its reader and what would be interesting – it’s grammatically accurate enough so it can be read as it’s intended to be read.

JF: Do any of those stand out for you as being more important?
T4: I think it has to be interesting – I think you can allow for spelling mistakes and issues with some of the grammar – you know if you can read it at all then it has to be interesting but I think the spelling, grammar, you know the SPAG stuff comes a very close second – I know that people will probably disagree and say that you need the nuts and bolts before you can make it interesting – I guess a good piece of writing needs it all really 42 & 36
Appendix 9.12

An example of an early draft thematic map.

Mixed attitudes towards teacher autonomy and prescription

2. Prescription from school supportive
4. Autonomy from school as neutral
11. Autonomy from school as supportive
19. Prescription from the school negative
9. Prescription from the school neutral
40. Autonomy negative
37. Desire for more support
39. Balance of prescription and autonomy

Influences on pedagogy

1. Influence of NLS (features of text type/genre)
12. Focus on transcriptional skills
17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure / inclusion of features (success criteria)
34. Start from curriculum objective
35. Grammar as a skill
36. Balance of transcription and composition

Tensions in the provision of autonomy and competence for children

7. Desire to provide children with autonomy / ownership
16. Structured support given to children
20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding / autonomy and free choice
21. Low child competence
22. Low child motivation
23. High child motivation
24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum
28. Structured support needed before autonomy
33. Examples of autonomy given to children
26. Child behaviour

Concepts of competent pedagogy teacher competence

5. Using other areas of English curriculum
27. Joint composing / shared writing
32. Sharing ideas

Confidence and enjoyment as distinct from competence?

8. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing
15. Enjoys composing with class
30. High teacher competence / experience / confidence

Contested nature of what competence looks like

6. Focus on summative assessment and levels
10. Understanding the needs of the children
29. Writer voice
31. Knowledge of the curriculum
18. Formative assessment

Contested nature of what support for competence looks like

3. Positive support
14. Support synonymous with assessment
25. Feeling of support from the school
Appendix 9.13

Interview transcript 1 marked for inductive and deductive themes

| JF: Can you tell me what goes through your mind when you’re planning writing? |
|---|---|
| P1: Urm, so I pick the genre, we have kind of a medium term plan where we are given the option of four genres so we pick either instructions or narratives—we pick one of those... urm... processes—thinking about what the children have done previously, whether they’ve got much experience of that genre and whether they’ve written it before we’ve got examples to look at urm so kind of I know we have to start by identifying features within that genre so thinking about if it’s instructions, what needs to be in instructions and kind of eliminating you know story language and the things that won’t be in there so reading lots of examples kind of emersion in that genre. Urm and then thinking then what I can link it to in the curriculum so what our topic is so actually what, could they write instructions about something that is relevant to what we’ve learned maybe in science or kind of cross curricular links in that sense... urm... |
| JF: When you talk about the four genres, tell me more about that. You say you’ve got four genres. |
| P1: Yeah so well to choose from each term—cos we do like a writing cycle of four lessons. |
| JF: OK |
| P1: so it would be genre emersion, planning, drafting and then, yeah, genre emersion planning, drafting, editing so they’re like redrafting. So I know there is going to be four lessons per genre of writing so instructions, you know recounts, stories—they are all the different genres... |
| JF: And there are four lessons for each? |
P1: yeah, for each one in a term.

JF: And what are the four lessons?

P1: so it would be the genre emersion, finding features, the planning second lesson then third lesson is the writing the first draft and then it would be marked and they’d redraft and improve and up level is the fourth lesson.

JF: OK

P1: so that’s kind of how it works.

JF: And how do you come up with the ideas for those?

P1: Urm… so yeah try and base it as much as I can on the topic that we’re working on so if we’re doing space for example we would try and link it to make it relevant to what we’re doing in other subjects.

JF: And how did the four lessons come about?

P1: That was something that was given to us by the English coordinator at this school.

JF: And how does that go with you?

P1: Urm, it’s different. To what we were doing the previous three years that I’ve been here. Because we were following very much the National Literacy the old style but focussing on more… so if we were doing narrative we’d be told exactly what kind of narrative. It is historical so we were given more kind of objectives to meet. There would be a lot more kind of genre emersion, maybe a drama lesson and then there would be a reading lesson incorporated into that so there was a lot more… we weren’t restricted to four lessons, we were allowed to choose maybe three weeks if we...


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<td>JF: So that's how it used to be?</td>
<td>P1: Yeah</td>
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<td>JF: Up until this year?</td>
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<td>P1: Yeah, so the new SLT, all of them are brand new this year so they introduced the four lesson cycle.</td>
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<td>JF: So, has there been any difference in how you feel about teaching writing from this year compared to last year?</td>
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<td>P1: Yeah, I think it was quite a big change. So obviously I had spent three years doing what I had done previously. So I've looked at my plans from last year that I was happy with and happy how they went and trying to kind of condense them down I found quite difficult like particularly with the genre emersion. Urm, trying to get you know, drama in there, getting the subject knowledge – finding the features I found a lot to try and cram into one lesson. But I think the way I've tried to find my way around that is to do more in the other subjects. So if I knew we were doing instructions and we were doing it about something to do with science I'd make sure we were doing a science lesson where we were using instructions.</td>
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<td>JF: And thinking about last year, when you were asked to plan writing last year, what would you be thinking then? Were you more comfortable because you'd done two years of it?</td>
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P1: I think so and the objectives are very much given to you so the national strategies you’d have a whole list so speaking and listening objectives, reading objectives, writing objectives, and you knew over say over two or three weeks you’d have to cover all those so you’d take those objectives and put them into your daily plan and you’d say right I can cover those on that lesson cos we’ll do the drama there we’ll do that and it kind of

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JF: So it was up to you where…

P1: … Yeah, how we did it. Whereas even though it’s kind of it was still prescriptive it was kind of up to us how long we spent on it. Whereas this year it was four lessons – it’s got to be…

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<td>11. Understanding the needs of the children</td>
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JF: And why has that been done do you think?

P1: Urm, to get more genres of writing fitted in to each term. I think. To try and make sure the children are getting a variety of genres over a term so not spending too long on the actual writing lesson not writing you know not spending too long on doing things like drama you know reading.

| 6. Autonomy from school as neutral                            | A | 1 |

JF: And what’s your feeling on that?

P1: I think in some ways I think it has helped doing a lot more writing – I think generally because there’s not as much engagement in regards to drama and like the things that these kids in particular need, you know the stimulus they need something that they’ve experienced to be able to write a significant amount so it’s kind of been more writing but maybe not as much because there’s not been that extensive amount of input at the beginning of when you’ve changed genres.

| 7. Using other areas of English curriculum                    | - | 2 |

JF: And for the four years that you’ve been teaching, has there been any feeling of frustration, have you been happy, you know,
you've mentioned a couple of times – I'd like to be spending time – you said that last year you got to spend a bit longer if you thought that that was needed…

P1: Yeah

JF: In general, what's your feeling on that?

P1: I think that maybe a balance between the two, like I felt that it was better the fact that the children were writing more frequently (this year) in lessons cos they you know, in four lessons they would have two long pieces written so that could have been one or two weeks (last year) whereas it was more drawn out. I think a balance between the two cos I still think you need to use your teacher judgement about how much input your children need. If, you know, they've written instructions four or five times during the year and you get to the sixth time and you think right, I know we know the features you know I'm going to recap it really quickly and then go straight in that's fine but you really have to know your children so you need that little bit more freedom to be able to decide as a professional.

JF: And in terms of that freedom, you feel that you did have that freedom and you don't or? What's your feeling on how that's been?

7.00

P1: Yeah, not so much this year it's been… there's been a lot of pressure on getting the children into their routine of it being right feature finding, planning, drafting, editing, you know getting them
into that routine so it’s been very kind of you know regimented this year which I understand, you know changing things quite a lot – they want children to get used to a new way of doing it.

JF: Why are they doing that do you think?

P1: To get more pieces of writing in the books. Also so there’s more writing opportunities – more writing opportunities for the children.

JF: Why do you think they are doing that?

P1: Because I think writing in the school is generally what is below age expectations so I think there has been a big focus in regards Ofsted and SIP visits that writing needs to be addressed as the biggest area that the school needs to focus on.

JF: How has that impacted you do you think?

P1: Yeah, I think it was difficult to change it at first but I’ve seen the impact, I mean children have made progress so you know, the evidence is there that actually to some extent it is working for them.

JF: OK so we’ve talked about the planning side a little bit. Sorry if there are any bits that seem like I am repeating. What’s your experience of writing? Tell me about you - When you came to teach writing, what were your feelings about it?

P1: I think it is the hardest thing to teach because there are so many elements to it and I never felt confident particularly myself with writing I’ve always been – you know I did maths and sciences A-levels and things and music degrees so I’ve never really like enjoyed it but I think it’s the most difficult because there are so many different elements – you’ve got grammar, punctuation, spelling, you’ve got then actual content you’ve got tenses, sentence structure, it’s just so much in it and every child has got

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just completely different problems – yeah it’s been the most challenging particularly when you’ve got in your class a range of maybe three or four years – you know some of them below and some of them above – yeah it’s hard.

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<th>JF: And when you talk about that challenge, what can you do about that? do you feel that you’ve had support – has there been support there?</th>
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<td>P1: Yeah definitely, I mean each class generally has an additional adult so you know you’ve got your TA so if you wanted them maybe to work particularly with the children who are struggling with full stops you could say, “as they’re writing, I want you to focus on and remind children about full stops.” So you can kind of group them with the particular areas you are focusing on so you can have a group then and your TA can have a group. Then that’s at least 8 children being focussed on in that lesson and you can rotate and in that way, if lessons always go to plan, you know if you have that adult all the time, you know they can be taken away or not in – there are just so many things that happen. In an ideal world you’d have your groups and then everyday you would have different groups so you’d get to see them all during the week.</td>
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<th>JF: In terms of your own feelings about writing though, can you tell me what has either supported you or not supported you – you know are there any things that you can think of that have helped you or similarly things where you feel ‘I needed more help’?</th>
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<td>P1: I don’t know I just think that the internet is such a valuable resource. That’s where I go to you know ‘I’m going to teach recounts… right examples of recounts’ and I’ll make sure I’ve read and I’ll find, you know, things that people have already done – looking at what is already out there and then adapting it.</td>
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| JF: What helps you to adapt it? |

9. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing

| C | 4 |

11. Understanding the needs of the children

| C | 4 |

13. Focus on transcriptional skills
| P1: | JF: What was your feeling from your training and your early teaching about the support you got with teaching writing? | 11. Understanding the needs of the children | C | 4 |
| P1: | I think the training... I’m trying to remember about writing I think the only thing I can really think of that was you know really beneficial that really stuck with me was like a book list and then we did different ways of teaching about books and using like non-fiction and using stories and stories from other cultures and things like that and actually that's been the most valuable that I've brought here because you know I've got a genre 'ok we're doing story settings in an historical context... oo I remember that book, alright we'll look at that book' and I've kind of used that as the stimulus. | 14. Unhelpful input | - | - |
| P1: | Yeah, I think just kind of examples of children’s writing that we sat down and unpicked. | 3. Positive support | C | 1 |
| JF: | And in terms of things that you feel, 'I could have done with more of', is there anything? | 1. Influence of NLS | A | 2 |
| P1: | yeah, particularly focussing on – I know levels are going out – but kind of the same thing because we’re still using levels now just sitting down and seeing, ‘look what does a 3c writer actually look like’ what would that be, what would a 2b writer be. Just kind of having that understanding of ‘this is 2b because they’ve used you know, they’ve got first person, there’s some full stops – there’s not | 6 Focus on summative assessment and levels | C | 4 |
all full stops... no, you know, exactly what it is to be that level.

JF: So you think that would have been useful early on?

P1: yeah

JF: And when did you get that kind of support?

P1: Everything was NQT year.

JF: tell me about the NQT year in terms of your writing support?

P1: We had weekly sessions and they were generally maths and English so we looked at levelling, we looked at things like APS, we looked at again, more books, we looked at how to plan for books for the different genres of writing and things like that so that was – you know the NQT year was what made me really understand about how to plan – I felt like in PGCE we learned all the, what's it called – the research all behind everything but actually the practicals of teaching – that's what the NQT kind of showed you what to do essentially.

JF: So you've talked about the planning and you've talked about your background with writing a little bit and how you feel about teaching writing but when you're actually in front of the children and you are teaching writing, how do you feel at that point?

P1: (long pause) It depends what kind of lesson it is. I tend to enjoy the actual composing – like coming up with their first drafts because we spend a lot of time thinking of our plans, you know 'ok we've done our plans, let's think about that' then we do the shared
write where they'll sit with their WBs on the carpet and we'll think 'right let's think of that first sentence' because it's always the same and I feel the same, they've got a blank page and it's always like the getting started that they find the hardest so we kind of construct together 'right opening paragraph ok right I'm going to take that away right let's go to our tables and you write yours now remember the things that we need to include', focus on success criteria and that kind of thing. Getting their ideas and putting it all together because I think lots of – some teachers prewrite like models that they are going to show them – I do that sometimes – I just think that sometimes it's more beneficial for them, particularly the class I've had this year who cannot just sit and listen to you to write you know they have to and they're like, 'oh' and normally their ideas are better than mine. So showing them how to put those ideas and kind of how to construct it in a way that's like coherent, that makes sense and especially then you will get a lot of the high ability children who are like, 'oh, well, I've got a really sophisticated sentence' and the lows are like, 'yeah I really like that,' and I'm like 'right, you repeat that now and you can change it so it's at their level' then they've actually used each other to gain ideas and things.

| 11. Understanding the needs of the children | C | 4 |
| 16. Structured support given to children | B | 3 |
| 17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure / inclusion of features (success criteria) | - | 2 |

JF: So that's the bit you feel most comfortable with?

P1: yeah
JF: And how much of the teaching is – you know I’m not asking for a percentage but you’ve talked a lot about the sequence of different bits of the writing process that you cover – how much of your teaching of writing is that bit would you say?

P1: I’d say I wouldn’t get them sat down for any longer than 20 minutes.

JF: But in terms of let’s say a two-week sequence of being in school, how many lessons are like the one you just described?

P1: so, that would maybe be once a week.

JF: Once a week?

P1: yeah, at the most.

JF: Ok and what’s your feeling on that?

P1: That would just be writing on its own. We try to do one lesson a week in curriculum, in history or geography or science where we do the same thing for a piece of writing so I guess it could be about two

JF: Why is it that you find that bit the most comfortable do you think?

P1: I don’t know I guess I feel that that is where the children are most involved and that’s when you see how much they have actually taken on board from the genre emersion and whether they’ve understood the planning and how it’s kind of reflected in what they produce.

| 7. Desire to provide children with more autonomy | 1. Influence of NLS | 19. Formative assessment |
JF: I'm quite interested in when you say 'the children are involved' what do you mean?

P1: That it's their ideas that I've helped them to construct and then they've got them there you know even though I take it away because otherwise they would just copy what I'd just written and that's not the point of it so we've done it together then I take it away and they go away and they you know either remember things we've done or they change it slightly – things like that just means that it's theirs rather than they just sit their watch me, right. I'm going to write this sentence, oh that's a good sentence, oh I need a capital you know I think it is important to think aloud but I think that you can do that with their ideas.

7. Desire to provide children with more autonomy
20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding/autonomy and free choice

JF: So their ideas, during the other stages of the sequence of lessons, whose ideas are they? Are they their ideas, your ideas?

P1: No, I would have given them the examples to like find the features of – so I would have chosen those and the plans, I would have decided what they were planning so you know if it was instructions on how to build something, I would have decided on that so this was the point where now it's their turn and to make theirs really individual.

1. Influence of NLS
16. Structured support given to children
7. Desire to provide children with more autonomy/ownership

9.54
## Interview transcript 2 marked for inductive and deductive themes

### JF: In relation to the year that you were teaching Year 5, what went through your mind when you were planning writing lessons?

T2: making it relevant to them. They were quite a low attaining group in general and they just didn’t enjoy writing – I got the obligatory groan each time so it was always thinking about what was relevant to them, trying to link it to/ at the time the way we planned we had to go thematically so you had to link it to your topic that was coming up or a book that had been advised to us so it was always trying to make it relevant to them.

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### JF: So there was a theme you were following…

T2: yeah so what we did when we were doing WW2 we were reading Goodnight Mr Tom (GMT) – they were really engaged in that and we just tried to put / to make it as engaging as possible so we made sure that they were if they were Tom in GMT and they were writing a recount about that they kind of had more of a purpose to it.

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### JF: and you say you were trying to make it relevant to them but you had the theme and the topic laid down for you. Was there ever an issue there? What did you do in your planning if they were ever in conflict?

T2: The way we tried to do it was that during our topic we would do something called a KWL so what you know, what you want to know and what you learn so we always knew what they wanted to know before that and then we tried to fit that theme and that purpose trying to link it together. Obviously that’s not always the case – sometime you have to do what’s set out for you. But we tried our best to see what areas they were interested in and see if we could gear it that way so they were all fascinated with evacuation which worked very well with GMT but then they were very interested in the battlefields as well so we took a small bit where he gets a letter and we built it from there so we could try and go off in different tangents to suit them the best we could.

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### JF: ok and you know when you say that there are obviously
things that you have to do, when you are approaching planning, tell me about that so what process do you go through when you’re planning your writing lessons?

T2: I just have to think back because it’s slightly different now. The way it’s laid out is that we have a cycle so you go through 4 (it’s now 6) but it was 4 cycles at the time where you start by immersing them completely in the genre, so you’re looking at – so if you’re doing recount you’re looking at different types of letters, if you’re doing a newspaper you’re looking at newspapers from that time then you’re able to model it the next session and they do like a first draft and then third is that they edit then fourth they pull it all together. So it’s very clear how you have to plan it and how they can improve upon their writing. It’s very a step ladder approach – they produce a final piece… so the planning in that sense, what you need to include, is very prescriptive but how you go about that – the hook to your lesson – is very much up to the teacher and how you want to engage them and knowing your children.

JF: OK so there are certain bits that were laid down for you as you said and other things that you were using what you knew about what the children’s interests were…

T2: and then hopefully that topic as well would link in quite well with that.

JF: The idea of that question was to explore aspects of the Q that were looking at how you feel that you have autonomy from the school in planning writing, how you feel about your competence and your attitudes towards writing… the follow up question that you can add to if you think that you haven’t covered it is, ‘in the questionnaire you are asked about the autonomy you perceive the school give you regarding the teaching of writing – is there anything that you would add in relation to that?’

T2: I feel like we’re prescriptive because we need to make sure that they cover a lot of genres so for example, at the moment we’re having to do playscripts and then we know that we come onto something else but we can move those genres around so, while we have to cover everything, if there’s something in the news or something hard-hitting going on then we can make sure that they have the best piece of writing – we can move those genres around, you just follow that cycle so there is that

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</table>
Autonomy in there, you can suit your planning to which genre as long as it's all covered but it is laid out basically for you – it’s up to you how you tweak it and then things like what you actually put into that letter or to whatever you want to teach – it’s very much up to you – you are given creative control over that or the children obviously give you ideas or stimulus depending on what they come up with themselves so no I don’t have to teach a letter on WW2, it could have been on anything.

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<tr>
<th>Curriculum</th>
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<tr>
<td>11. Autonomy from</td>
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<td>school as supportive</td>
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<td>2. Prescription</td>
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JF: and what do you think that the school does to support your competence in the teaching of writing?

T2: I was an NQT at the time so I was very nervous about writing cos it’s that moment when you have to do it on the board off the bat with your back to them for a longer period of time than in like maths but our school is very good – our deputy now, she is in charge of literacy and the training that we get is just brilliant so I felt quite confidently trained by the time I got here (year 3 of career)

| 8. Fragile confidence | C | 4 |
| specifically in      |   |   |
| teaching writing     |   |   |

JF: Tell me about the training a little bit...

T2: I know that we’ve kind of feeding up we do L&Pete?? So we’re looking through how you do your actions through it.

| 2. Prescription      | A | 1 |
| from school          |   |   |
| supportive           |   |   |

JF: what’s that sorry L and?

T2: Alan Pete, yeah he uses actions to link with words so you tell a story and they get to write it – I think it’s meant to be visual and things like that. We have – obviously the planning is fantastic, the flipcharts that we use and things like that. We’re given training on how children feel competent in their own writing so quick tricks of giving them different colour pens to help them write certain sentences in one and another sentence in another so using stars or dots to help them with full stops – it’s like lots of little things that can make that writing really interesting for them and that really helps when we’re modelling because they’re excited about getting back rather than dreading

| 3. Positive support  | C | 1 |
| 16. Structured       | B | 3 |
| support given to     |   |   |
| children             |   |   |

JF: And when you talk about the flipcharts – are those given to you or are those – when you talk about the ‘fantastic flipcharts’

T2: So we have templates – so while again it’s that – the school is very good at balancing between being quite prescriptive and you not having to panic about having nothing but you put everything onto it if that makes sense so there is a cycle that you follow and those flipcharts have that but what you put as

| 2. Prescription      | A | 1 |
| from school          |   |   |
| supportive           |   |   |

| 23. High child       | B | 3 |
| motivation           |   |   |

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| 2. Prescription      | A | 1 |
| from school          |   |   |
| supportive           |   |   |

| 23. High child       | B | 3 |
| motivation           |   |   |
your 'hook' is up to you, so you don’t start with one blank screen in front of you and it’s nice as well because it triggers your memory ‘oh god, I’ve got to put the vocabulary bit in there, I’ve got to do this, it works quite well.'

JF: OK thank you, so that aspect is looking at the planning side of things but what about the actual teaching side so ‘what went through your mind when you were actually teaching writing lessons to that class’? You’ve talked I guess about that feeling of having your back to them and writing on a blank board but what else would go through your mind when you were teaching writing lessons?

T2: Originally, like I said, a panic because they’re not quiet, they shout things out and I learnt to just embrace that and it be part of my teaching so I realised that I needed to have the best model for them to do the best piece of work, particularly for the lowers so I used to write my plan out first and put them on post-it notes – I still do that now- and pop them next to my board and then I can start writing - they think I’m looking at the board but I’m checking that I know where I am going with it. And I made sure I left gaps so if I wanted to use an adjective I know they’re going to shout out because I’m going to be thinking aloud as I write it – that it’s an opportunity for them to shout out at the right time and you get loads of ideas that way. So I made it less quiet and using their voices in the right way but that took a lot of wrong lessons to figure out that that’s how I wanted to have it in my planning to make sure that their writing is engaging and they felt like they had personalised my model – they could magpie my ideas and they’ve got a starting point for themselves so it worked quite well in the end. Once we got into the swing of it, after Christmas it was all fine but up to that point it was a lot of shouting out until we figured it out.

JF: So if that’s the competence side of things about how you felt about how well you were delivering the writing lessons, what did you feel in terms of your autonomy with delivering writing lessons?

T2: what do you mean, like what/how I wrote?

JF: well, how you approached it when you had the class in front of you. You’ve talked about the planning – there was some autonomy in terms of how you did it, there were some things laid down about the things that needed to be covered. How did that translate to the actual teaching?

T2: obviously sometimes what I planned was not always what they want and I learned to just go with it in the end – that the...
bits that were better were when they had more input into it and I found that as long as I knew what I needed to include because there's certain SPAG that you have to include in our extended writing as long as I made sure I modelled that very clearly in their writing it was always really good on their tables but all the other bits that came from them it made their writing better as well so just going with them and knowing that their words are sometimes better than the word that you thought up that morning writing it out and it's quite nice that they seem to magpie those ideas so the ideas that they had heard in one lesson and they liked one word that one child used, they'd use it in the next lesson so they were listening to their friends and I didn't have to do anywhere near as much talking and sometimes we had them up at the board writing their sentences so it was a mish-mash of my writing and theirs so – it was actually quite a lot of autonomy because it became something that changed throughout that lesson.

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<tr>
<th>17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure / inclusion of features (success criteria)</th>
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<tr>
<td>16. Structured support given to children</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Desire to provide children with autonomy / ownership</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding / autonomy and free choice</td>
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JF: So you felt that you had the plan there and you had an idea about how it would link to a topic, you had what the content needed to be that was included but having that basis meant that you could then go with where the children were going...

T2: and that was always better writing because they felt that they were interested in that topic so they were going to write better about it and because we'd done it all together and we tweaked bits or I'd made mistakes and they'd corrected me it felt like it was more of a journey rather than 'this is how you do it' kind of like in maths sometimes – you teach them a skill and they do it, in writing it was more of a team – it was me and them.

| 7. Desire to provide children with autonomy / ownership | B | 3 |
| 27. Joint composing / shared writing | - | 2 |

JF: A similar follow up question I guess because I think you have talked about the autonomy you gave the children but actually, is there anything more you want to say about the autonomy you perceive you give the children in writing? You've touched on it a little bit

T2: I think it's a case of, I know it sounds awful, but manipulate the fact that they can't have that complete autonomy. I've not let it that they can just write what they've wanted – I've guided it with questioning and when they've talked to their talk partners, then I've listened in and I'm like I really like that idea and I want that idea to shine so I've used that in my writing so they do have autonomy and they can talk about their ideas can go whichever way but it's just very careful the way you pick them out to make sure you get the piece that you want so that they'll write the right piece.

<p>| 20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding / autonomy and free choice | B | 3 |
| 17. Pedagogy influenced by | - | 2 |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>JF: What does ‘the right piece’ mean?</th>
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<tr>
<td>T2: I guess to that genre.</td>
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<td>JF: OK</td>
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<td>T2: so if we’re writing a newspaper article about being in the trenches it would be of that rather than maybe some of them have a tendency to go off piste don’t they I guess it’s a bit harder in that it’s a bit more constrictive but in story writing if we’re doing a fairy tale you can see sometimes they go off and particularly the boys they’re into x-box and games aren’t they and all of a sudden you’re in a video game and it’s hard not to crush that creativity because it’s actually a great idea it’s just it’s not within that genre that you are trying to teach so it’s a bit of a balance because particularly with boys you don’t want to crush their confidence I’m just thankful that they’re writing.</td>
<td>1. Influence of NLS 20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding /autonomy and free choice</td>
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<td>JF: So you talk about one way in which you kind of listen in on talk partners and use that for the class model. Are there any other things that you can think of that you do to allow those children autonomy as oppose to free choice so yeah I’d agree with you that giving them free reign may be bedlam but is there anything else that you can think that you do to allow children some element of autonomy within the writing lessons?</td>
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<td>T2: [a few seconds pause] I guess we do a lot of like picking up the right vocabulary and things like that so they magpie words they choose all those words and then it’s just a case of them being able to not just using the words that I have used they have a bank of things that they’ve come up by themselves or sometimes we have pictures up around the room and they go around and they write on them and come up with their own ideas and then you pull it apart so I want to see that setting – you’ve got a picture of a castle and then you pull their words apart so I but it’s all very the same but different it’s all very much trying to guide them with their questioning to make sure that they can create a word bank of things but the way you do it is different ways each time.</td>
<td>16. Structured support given to children 27. Joint composing /shared writing</td>
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<td>JF: How do you feel about your teaching of writing, thinking</td>
<td>7. Desire to provide children with autonomy /ownership</td>
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T2: [now] a lot better than I did then. How did I feel about my writing? I realise that it takes a lot of focus from the teacher you need to know what you want to write to make sure that they get the best from it and it’s not just a case of knowing that you’ve planned a lesson and you’re going to write a letter or you’re going to write a newspaper article you have to know what you want them to have in it to give them the best so there’s a lot of planning involved even if you want to create that autonomy in the class where they’re going to pull out all these ideas – there’s a lot of forethought.

JF: So during that year when you were with that year 5 class what did you think about your competence with writing?

T2: I think that it was a bit of a journey – in September it was probably the topic I dreaded teaching and then by the end of it and it still is now it’s something that I love teaching and that’s just because we’ve figured out different ways of doing it over the year.

JF: Thinking about that class again, can you tell me about the writing that the children in that class produced?

T2: Oh my gosh…

JF: Any kind of themes,?

T2: yes, in particular they were very good at story writing, they had amazing imagination quite often – it sounds awful trying to reign it in – I had to make sure that their stories followed a pattern and there was a problem and things like that because they just had so many ideas that they wanted to cram in.

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<th>Topic</th>
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<td>8. Fragile confidence specifically in teaching writing</td>
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<td>15. Enjoys composing with class</td>
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<td>20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding / autonomy and free choice</td>
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<td>17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure / inclusion of features (success criteria)</td>
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<td>7. Desire to provide children with autonomy / ownership</td>
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<td>7. Desire to provide children with</td>
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writing was really good / instructions and explanations that worked really well but they only worked well if they had done it first – if they had done something practically so that first hand experience so when we did Brazil with chocolate their writing was / their writing was to persuade you to go to Brazil was absolutely brilliant but to explain how chocolate was made – they struggled with that because they went straight from the cocoa bean to the chocolate bar and then when we did – what else did we do we did oh we did making a sword for instruction writing for Beowulf and for the Saxons they made the sword first and that writing was much better than the Brazil even though we did that earlier just because them doing something practical always helped them write the non-fiction things better.

JF: And in terms of the detail of the writing that they did, what do you remember about – you’ve talked about the content of it and the overall genre but in terms of the detail of the writing they did were there any kind of things that you remember, things that they found tricky, things they were strong at

T2: My class in particular, they loved using the ‘right’ vocabulary so they would hone in on certain things so we’d been talking about the cocoa bean and we were using the machete they will use that language – they want to make sure that you aware that they know it and they want to use it - we do SFA as reading scheme so there were always words up on that word wall [points to a word wall]

JF: What’s SFA?

T2: It’s called Success For All it’s a reading scheme that kind of streams across the whole school [children organised by ability rather than age (in theory a struggling Year 6 child could be in a group with Year 2 children)] but each book has a particular word bank – they have to learn vocabulary and because that’s up in most rooms anything that we were doing – particularly in my
<table>
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<th>children</th>
<th>23. High child motivation</th>
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<td>17. Pedagogy influenced by predetermined structure / inclusion of features (success criteria)</td>
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<tr>
<th>JF: And you talked about spelling and punctuation and grammar, was there anything that you remember from that group in terms of those things?</th>
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<tr>
<td>T2: yeah, their sentences always started with 'and' and particularly that low to low-middle that was something we had to get out of it like they didn’t know how to actually form a sentence so before we could really start enjoying our writing we had to kind of focus on that structural writing but that was something that they struggled on particularly with like the lowers / I think it’s because they have ideas as well they just want to go ‘and and and’ but ‘you need a full stop’ once that happened we were really able to go off and explore and use that vocabulary that the highers were using and we shared our ideas they were then able to get it in as well.</td>
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<th>JF: Final question then, what is good writing?</th>
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<td>T2: Voice. I think if you have got a voice, it doesn’t matter if there are a load of simple sentences I think as long as your author voice comes through and that’s something that the school is really focussing on this year is that authorship because our school is getting better and better – the quality of the writing is getting better but now it’s looking at that voice and a few of my children really had it in that year but they were always the highers. In this class some of the lowers have really good voice – I love listening to their work it’s not necessarily always perfectly structured but I can really tell, they’ve got a humour in it and I think that’s what’s important.</td>
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<th>28. Structured support needed before autonomy</th>
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Appendix 9.15

*Interview transcript 3 marked for inductive and deductive themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JF: Regarding the year you taught Year 5, thinking about when you were planning, what goes through your mind when you’re planning a writing lesson?</th>
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<td><strong>T3:</strong> It very much depends on the class and the children involved. That particular group, writing was certainly something that we needed to improve upon. And it was lots of different strands within that that needed to be improved. So there was very much an aspect of spelling and handwriting and sentence structuring so there was lots of nuts and bolts of writing that we needed to get fixed first and that was probably because lots of the children English was possibly their not just second language but third or fourth cos that’s the sort of cohort we had. There was a very wide range of writers but also just I think giving children something meaty enough, having a nice hook in to be able to get a good piece of writing out – I think sometimes as teachers we can be a bit dry and boring… and how we expect lovely writing to come out of something that’s a little bit flat so I think certainly something that grabs the children’s attention something that you know they’re going to get fired up about is going to produce much better writing than, you know, write a diary entry of Samuel Pepys. So I suppose when I’m planning it’s the needs of the children, it’s having that good AfL to know what it is that those children need to improve on and what those next steps are but also having an exciting input to get a good piece of writing out of it.</td>
<td>10. Understanding the needs of the children</td>
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<td>21. Low child competence</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td></td>
<td>28. Structured support needed before autonomy</td>
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<td>12. Focus on transcriptional skills</td>
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<td>21. Low child competence</td>
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<td>24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum</td>
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<td>23. High child motivation</td>
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<td>10. Understanding the needs of the children</td>
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<td>24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum</td>
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<tr>
<th>JF: Where does that come from? Where does that understanding of what children need, what will hook them, where does that come from?</th>
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<td><strong>T3:</strong> I think it comes from all sorts of things. A lot of the time it comes from the children themselves. So for example, one of my most successful pieces with that class that produced some wonderful writing – there are a couple of examples – one in particular – it came from a maths investigation and it was based on whodunit and they had to. My cake was stolen and they had to use clues to work out who the culprit was. But then we then went into reports, police reports, newspaper reports but then children can think ‘this is made up, this is a load of nonsense, this didn’t really happen’ but they were so involved in the maths and the science experiments linked to it as well, we had this whole ‘whodunit week’ the writing that came out of it was incredibly well thought out writing because they were associating and when they found out it was actually the deputy head that had stolen my cake you know it was very much getting them all engaged but you know that.</td>
<td>33. Examples of autonomy given to children</td>
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<td>24. Desire for broad/relevant curriculum</td>
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<td>30. High teacher</td>
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came, it started off in my head while planning it as very much a maths/ but then in that first Monday’s lesson you could see where it could grow to and I think certainly, I like to keep my planning flexible enough to do that, I’m not going to push on through with something if you know it’s not working particularly well I think that’s something that comes with experience – being able to be confident enough to let something go, to do something instead.

JF: When you talk about experience, is that also, listening to your style of planning it’s very much based on what the children understand, based on what you think will engage them and that experience you talk about, does that allow you a bit more scope in terms of what the school allows? I mean, what was the school’s response to teacher’s planning in writing?

T3: Well I think certainly our executive HT – one of the reasons he employed me was to look at the curriculum as a whole so I know the curriculum inside out, I write the curriculum mapping so I think having that good understanding of the curriculum as a whole as a teacher knowing what it is from the beginning to the end of the year they (children) need to have under their belt is very important and that just takes a while especially this year with the new curriculum everyone is just finding their feet again but I do think that if you know it well enough you can see where they’re coming from and where they’re going to and you need to have taught quite a few different year groups to be able to learn that process – I think when you’re younger in your career you’ve just not done that as much you have a smaller experience of different year groups you don’t tend to see that.

JF: Were there any restrictions placed on teachers in terms of their teaching of writing? The picture coming across is that you understood the curriculum well enough that you could deliver these sessions but did you ever have a case of thinking ‘well the school is telling me I have to do this way’ certain expectations or…

T3: No, no urm but, I suppose partly I had that freedom because I wrote the curriculum for them so I thought, ‘I’ve written it so this is what we’re doing’ but I think also it was I mean, part of my role was writing the curriculum so I had lots of the teachers involved and there was lots of INSET days when we sat down together as a team and pulled it apart and decided that this is what we wanted for the school so there was lots of that kind of input and engagement from everybody, not just me. I don’t think there was any restrictions - I’m trying to think back if I’ve ever had any head restrict me
in that way. I think if you know what those kids need and you go for it, I can’t imagine any head ever going no, can’t be doing that.

JF: I mean it’s interesting because from what I’ve written down here, I’m looking with that question to look at the autonomy that you receive from the school – quite a bit – the competence that you feel, the attitudes you have and the follow up question which I guess you have touched upon quite a lot is that in the questionnaire you were asked about the autonomy that you perceive the school give you, so I suppose if I can summarise, you’ve said that regarding that that you had a large amount of autonomy – partly because you were actually the one who designed the curriculum...

T3: possibly but I think you know obviously when we did this we were looking at the old National Curriculum but we knew the new NC was on its way so as a school we were already stepping into that so that we were ahead of the game but it’s very much the same. It has maybe moved on a little bit and pushed up a little bit more but you know, to be a good writer you need to have the tools and the skills and then you need to know how to apply them and then you need to know how to apply them effectively and start making those stylistic choices. I think that’s the same in any year group in any school anywhere really. So I suppose it’s hard for me to understand anywhere that would put restrictions on that.

JF: so that was about what goes through your mind when you’re planning – your thought process there but in terms of the actual teaching – same question but regarding teaching so what would go through your mind in terms of what is important, what you want to get across when you’re teaching writing?

T3: it very very much depends on what it is you’re doing I think. There are some things that I think you almost have to teach, you have to direct, you have to give the children, because this is a bit of knowledge that might be new and they don’t know it and you know, if you don’t know what an adverbial phrase is and you don’t know what parenthetic commas are you kind of have to teach them what that is in that, I suppose slightly more didactic teaching but I really enjoy teaching writing and I think I’m not worried about modelling writing in front of children and getting up and making those mistakes and I think some teachers do wobble a little bit with and I think that being a writer yourself in front of children is extremely important so I do try and do that in the classroom whether it’s a good or a bad piece of writing because sometimes I do a rubbish piece and they have to help me with it. But...
think to see themselves as writers they need to see other people as writers first and then when that happens then that’s always a wonderful moment when they start, you know, getting it. And I think just being able to just tease things out getting children, especially in writing I’m all about nicking, you know you don’t make up new words, you nick stuff you borrow stuff from what you hear and getting them to think that’s ok. You’ve heard a phrase or a metaphor and that’s really good, I am going to put that down and store it up for next time – magpie, put it in my own writing because that’s what we do, that’s what people do and it’s ok to do that. And then you get to that stage of moving on and actually having all of that vocabulary in your toolbox that you can put into your writing again for choices rather than just ‘oh I’ve heard it, I’m just going to stick it in everywhere now’ because that’s the stage I am at to then making those choices ‘this is the best thing to use’. So I suppose a lot of that goes through my head when I’m teaching but I think it’s also about that big thing of actually seeing themselves as writers and sharing each others writing, being able to look at each other’s and their own writing with a very critical eye as well – you know who really is a writer? I mean even when I’m writing a letter or an email I don’t just write it first time that’s it, you stop you proof read you check, you improve and that’s what everybody does in any piece you know even writing a text you stop and think has the subject changed back to something odd and getting kids to do that as part of their practice, you know it’s not just right I’ve done it finished and I think that’s when you start developing good writers. I think and that’s what I try and do in my teaching.

JF: That’s fantastic, again, the idea of the question there was to explore bits of the questionnaire related to your support of their competence, which came through very strongly and your attitudes, which came through very strongly and you’re hinting at the autonomy that you give children – you talk about boosting their competence to the point that they can make their selections – is there anything else that you would want to talk about in terms of the autonomy that you give children within their writing?

T3: I think also giving children – and I probably don’t do this as much as I would like to and maybe that’s is where the restrictions of the curriculum come in. I think especially when you are looking at your 5 and your 6 (Year 5&6) that older key stage 2 where you really are trying to put together a portfolio of writing that they’re going to be judged on at the end of the school – I think perhaps if we gave children more opportunities to choose what they’re going to write, when they’re going

| 28. Structured support needed before autonomy | B | 3 |
| 29. Writer voice | D | 2 |
| 20. Balance between supporting and over-scaffolding /autonomy and free choice | B | 3 |
| 29. Writer voice | D | 2 |
| 7. Desire to provide children with autonomy /ownership | B | 3 |
| 7. Desire to provide children with autonomy /ownership | B | 3 |
| 6 Focus on summative assessment and levels | C | 4 |
| 7. Desire to provide children with autonomy /ownership | B | 3 |
| 20. Balance between | B | 3 |
to write rather than saying well this is what we're studying so this is what we're going to have a go at writing, I mean how often do you just give someone a piece of paper and a pen and go 'do what you want', you know which I'm sure would be absolutely chaotic and wonderful at the same time and perhaps giving just a little more free choice in that.

JF: Are there ways in which, taking the restrictions and the free choice as opposite ends of the spectrum, are there ways in which you can think that you look to find that middle ground where there are things that to be covered but there are elements of it that give the children autonomy?

T3: yeah I think that I lie to children all the time. I showed them a doctored photo of the school when I'd come in one morning and there was a UFO hovering overhead that I'd put in and obviously this had happened to me and then I gave them these secret files in envelopes that had all this different ... and it was recounts, we were just learning about recounts you know there was newspaper cuttings in there, there was police reports in there, there was reports from the public in there was just all sorts of things all about UFOs you know but just all different kinds of recounts and I suppose I know particularly in that that they then chose to retell the story that I had started telling them about me seeing the UFO in the morning in whatever way so some were very sort of, The Sun kind of headline you know and others went for a much more formal superintendents report on the matter and I think even wanted a letter out of the HT to me about you know seeing things in the playground you know and obviously going a bit mad so yeah I think it is possible... I'd probably like to be a bit more creative with that in order to do it I think that's a tricky thing and it's certainly not something that I'm an expert at but it's certainly something that could and should be developed.

JF: You've answered to an extent, in fact you've covered this very much so but again I'm wondering if there is anything else you want to add in terms of how you feel about your teaching of writing, I mean earlier you talked about, when you talked about what goes through your head when you're planning, you talked a lot about, that relates to your views about the teaching of writing but in terms of your competence, particularly in writing, how do you feel about that?

T3: I like to think I'm alright at it. But I'd like to think that I'm an alright teacher full stop.
JF: The famous modest profession!

T3: I mean I enjoy teaching writing as oppose to geography, you know. I particularly love teaching poetry. I love teaching poetry and getting terribly excited and bouncing off the walls when something like that comes up and I’d like to think I’m fairly competent but I don’t consider myself a particularly good writer but I just think we all can be just fairly competent writers — there’s nothing stopping anyone you know.

INTERUPTION AND NEED TO FINISH V SOON

JF: I’m going to put the last two questions together because I think they probably relate. The first question was ‘can you tell me about the writing that the children in your class produced?’ and with that ‘to you, what is good writing?’

T3: Certainly that group in that year produced a whole range of writing — all sorts of genres, fiction, non-fiction and it was with the intention of going into Year 6 to have a very wide sort of portfolio of writing that they could take up with them, urm, what is good writing? I have two hats. I have my hat as a teacher but I also worked as an Islington moderator as well which meant that I went round to the schools and moderated people’s writing in Year 6 over the SATs so I have that moderator tick list in my head for all these things that they can do for putting a sub level on but then there’s also those moments of goose bumps and hair standing on the back of your neck and you just knowing that that’s beautiful and it could be you know a whole essay or it could be a simple line and I think it comes down to having an emotional response to writing because that’s what we do as readers as adults, we read books that we like that make us laugh or cry and we have a response to and when children have that emotional response to each other’s writing that’s when it gets exciting in the classroom. So what makes good writing? There’s that tick list of skills but then there’s that moment of pure beauty when you go ‘wow, that just made me get excited about it’, so yeah, I don’t know how helpful that was.
Appendix 9.16

*Interview transcript 4 marked for inductive and deductive themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JF: Regarding the year that you taught Year 5, thinking about when you were planning, what went through your mind when you were planning writing lessons?</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>I</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T4: It’s quite an open question. I suppose, as with all sorts of planning, what the objective is so what I want the children to know or have learnt or practiced by the end of the lesson – whether it’s a skills based lesson when I’m focussing on more grammar or sentence types and that sort of thing or whether it’s going to be a lesson where they’ve got those skills already and then to apply them to a situation that may be a piece of story writing or non-fiction – whatever it happens to be and then I think I would have the issue of differentiation and making that learning accessible for different groups of children with different needs and abilities whether it be SEN or the higher level that needs to be pushed. I’m trying to remember back. I had at the time a lower set of writers, mainly boys I was teaching, by the summer of that year 5 class I was teaching the lower attaining portion of that year group writing.</td>
<td>34. Start from curriculum objective</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>35. Grammar as a skill</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Balance of transcription and composition</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Understanding the needs of the children</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>JF: So they were streamed were they? They were split or did it just so happen that they were…</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T4: … they were streamed yeah. So I was taking the – we switched midway, we switched at some point during the year so that my partner teacher was taking the top writing and I was taking the lower writing group and so planning for them was quite tricky – it was about engagement because a lot of them were turned off writing but I had more success through doing things like comic strips and story boarding and that sort of thing</td>
<td>37. Desire for more support</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Understanding the needs of the children</td>
<td>C</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>JF: So you had in your mind when you were planning that you had the objectives and you roughly split them into either skills or application but what would be the things that you would have to consider? There are the things you have to do – the objectives - but then you’ve also talked about the class and the engagement of the comic strips. What one would come first, if either and how would you marry the two?</th>
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<tr>
<td>T4: I think they’re both mutually as important because obviously we have things that we have to get through and things that they need to be taught and evidence that they can do or can’t do and it’s about trying to meet those targets in ways that are as engaging as possible for a group of children generally disengaged with writing so I’d always try to set an exciting context for them in which to use those skills so that they’d want to do it in the first place.</td>
<td>36. Balance of transcription and composition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Grammar as a skill</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Start from curriculum objective</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Focus on transcriptional</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JF: Where were those skills and where were those objectives from?</td>
<td>T4: National Curriculum objectives, previous years’ planning that was on the shared area and we looked at because the curriculum was changing? No it wasn’t changing yet...</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: It was in transition I think</td>
<td>T4: Yeah it was in transition so a lot of Primary Resources (internet site) were useful for ideas about meeting the objective</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: And other than the NC, was there any expectation that you had to go to a particular place or do it a particular way with your planning?</td>
<td>T4: Not really no, only in terms of making sure that – we had a planning proforma, a document sheet with different boxes that needed to be filled in, in the main to help structure our ideas and processes to make sure we were doing the same thing consistently across the school and I think that’s since changed. It has changed a couple of times while I was at the school to try and make it more user friendly and help guide our planning in a bit more of a practical way. So you’d have things like boxes for where the curriculum objectives would fit in, whether there were any cross-curricular links, things like the objective itself and the criteria that would need to be met during the lesson so how those children could be successful – any starters that you were going to do or what the main teaching input would be – what you might do mid-way through or at the end, if there were any guided groups that you had planned to focus on – you know I’m focusing on this group because I’ve noticed a weakness with this area or this group has got it and I need to push them on and then space for evaluation and reflection after if you wanted to go back and write notes on the week for the planning and then hand it to the coordinator to have a look at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4: At one point we all found it highly unhelpful as someone brought in a planning format that they had from a previous school which they thought was brilliant and none of us liked then it took quite a lot of months to come back to it and put it on the drawing board as something that needed editing so then we edited it and went with a different format so yeah it’s one of those things / every school has a different way of planning I think the main ideas are – as long as it is helpful and as long as it’s consistent in the main across the school then if anyone comes in to look they know that the school has had an agreed policy on – it’s sort of that idea of non-negotiables really – every lesson has to have a clear objective it has to have criteria that is meaningful you know you have to show what the main teaching is and then you know how you might help those that get stuck , you might push on those that are finding it too easy – yeah I think having a planning frame is really, really</td>
<td>10. Prescription from the school negative</td>
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<tr>
<td>JF: And how helpful or unhelpful was that (the proforma)?</td>
<td>T4:</td>
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<tr>
<td>T4:</td>
<td>39. Balance of prescription and autonomy</td>
</tr>
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Important and helpful to help you not miss bits out when you are thinking it through in advance and to have it there either on-screen or printed to refer back to throughout the week is you know really valuable so that you’re not clutching at straws thinking what do I do for this lesson well hang on I’ve already planned it I just need to have a little refresh so you can go back to it and tweak it – it’s useful to have it written down in the format when you can go back and day well actually it didn’t go so well or it’s looking like it’s not going to meet these objectives or we’ve moved on from that throughout the week so you know you go back and discuss with people and edit.

JF: So by the end of the year when it was tweaked and adapted to suit the school, was it then helpful rather than unhelpful?

T4: Yeah, yeah I would say so.

JF: The questionnaires were trying to tap into how you felt the school gives you competence and autonomy and what’s interesting about this planning format that you talk about is the reason I asked if it was helpful or unhelpful is that it could be seen that a planning format like that gives you less autonomy but it could be seen that it supports your competence so I suppose in relation to the planning format and generally the approach of the school to the planning of writing, how did you feel that that balance was struck – did you feel that the school gave you autonomy and supported competence or were there tensions there?

T4: I think generally I’ve had autonomy – yeah I think there’s pros and cons really because you don’t want to get into a/ I don’t know, feel that you’re being restricted by having boxes to fill in. However, as long as the boxes are useful and what you are already thinking about then it is useful to structure how you’re thinking about your lesson. So I think it that sense it is useful I think it is about being fit for purpose but at the point where it is fit for purpose obviously it is very useful and helps your organisation.

JF: And other than the planning format then, what was your overall sense of the autonomy that the school gave and the way that they supported your competence?

T4: I think in a way it was almost too much autonomy because I remember at times feeling quite lost about what to do with those children and how to engage them. A lot of their levels were quite low and I didn’t really have the experience – I didn’t feel experienced enough to deal with children at that low end of the scale of ability who are more sort of key stage one level but in Year 5 so I did seek some advice and guidance from KS1 teachers who did meet with me and give me ideas – urn I probably would have preferred more of that but I did have that once or twice which was helpful.

JF: So you would have preferred more advice from KS1 teachers?
Is there anything else that you feel would have been helpful at that stage?

T4: Maybe some team teaching, which I had had a bit of the previous year with writing – when I was in year 6 I had a sort of an outstanding teacher come in and co-teach with me literacy lessons which was really helpful because it boosted my confidence and helped me see things that I’d maybe missed out that she picked up on and vice versa so we were a bit like a double act and we had that for a couple of months for a couple of lessons and that was really nice so I didn’t get that when I was teaching year 5 so and that was with an even trickier range of abilities and behaviours so I think I would have liked someone to come in to coach or team-teach with me it just would have been nice. Rather than coming in and observing, coming in and offering supportive guidance would’ve been nice.

JF: It’s interesting that you talk about personal professional development, it sounds like what you’re saying…

T4: …yeah definitely

JF: as opposed to, I mean were there any kind of schemes of teaching writing that the school used – anything they bought in that had particular methods of teaching writing.

T4: Not really, not until the following year – the school bought into a phonics scheme but that year no.

JF: And had there been that option what would have been your thoughts on professional development of your own teaching with team teaching as opposed to having a scheme that you followed for the teaching of writing?

T4: I think the two can go hand in hand – you can follow a scheme but have someone come in and help you with it so I don’t think the two things are completely different but I think I would have liked to have had more guidance and people coming in and having a look and then offering practical advice.

JF: And do you feel that in particular about writing?

T4: At that time I felt that way about the writing because of the group of children that I had – I felt slightly out of my depth compared with the maths which I didn’t find too troublesome that was fine.

JF: Why wasn’t the maths as troublesome?

T4: I think because I was confident that I could cater for their different abilities and needs with the knowledge that I had, not that my maths knowledge is particularly amazing or better than anything else but I think there’s something about the logical nature of teaching in maths, even though I’ve always preferred English I find...
the teaching of maths to be more straightforward and more easily
differentiated because there are rights and wrongs and you can
group things by the number of digits or by the difficulty of the
problem whereas I find literacy a bit more – the writing is a bit of a
grey area really and more of a spectrum rather than discrete – you
can do this but you can’t do that.

JF: Was that the case before and since with writing or was it that
particular year?

T4: yeah I think I just generally feel that way – I’m not sure whether
other teachers feel similarly or if that’s just a personal thing to do
with my subject knowledge or my professional development but I’ve
always loved writing but I seem to be more confident in maths some
times although currently I think that that’s swinging back the other
way again but for me it depends on the cohort of children I’ve got
rather than what I know so I think it’s more how I cater to individual
needs more than ‘I don’t know what I’m doing’

8. Fragile confidence specifically in
writing

T4: Yeah I guess that is a big cross over because I guess I am in
the main thinking about getting them on board, engagement and
thinking about what I would be doing or saying or showing them
that would engage them enough to buy into the lessons so a lot of I
don’t know – trying to make it meaningful for them and giving them
a lot of visuals, a lot of pictures, tried to be a lot less of me talking
and more of me showing them things and them trying things out – I
used a lot of video clips but short ones for those with short attention
spans so I found that I did a lot of visual literacy with pictures and
video clips to help with them planning their ideas out and with
things like story writing I did a lot of retelling to build up their skills
rather than them having to make up from scratch and them having
to really really lacking ideas and feeling really uncomfortable and
thrown in at the deep end so we did a lot of rehearsing through
retelling and videos

JF: That was about the planning side and I think there has actually
been quite a lot of cross over so it might be that you don’t have that
much to add for the next question but in the same regard, during
that year, what went through your mind in terms of the teaching of
writing?

T4: Yeah I guess that is a big cross over because I guess I am in
the main thinking about getting them on board, engagement and
thinking about what I would be doing or saying or showing them
that would engage them enough to buy into the lessons so a lot of I
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rather than them having to make up from scratch and them having
to really really lacking ideas and feeling really uncomfortable and
thrown in at the deep end so we did a lot of rehearsing through
retelling and videos

JF: The questions in the questionnaire that that relates to refers to
the competence that you perceive that you give the children and I
get that sense coming through from some of the things you’ve
talked about so the way that you use videos and pictures as ways
of getting them in – what about autonomy as well because they
were the two strands of the questionnaire – there was competence
and autonomy so if all of the things that you’ve just discussed were
supporting the children’s competence, is there anything that you
can think of that you did to support their autonomy?

T4: I’m just trying to think back that long ago and I would’ve
probably given them options, to an extent, of things that they could

20. Balance between
write about – if they were writing a story I would have said you can either do/ set it here or here or your main character can be like this or like that and expose them to a number of different options and have them choose so that they didn’t feel that it was being forced down their throats

JF: Can I clarify, do you mean you did do that or that you would have done if you could go back?

T4: I did do that, as much as possible – obviously there are occasions when you can’t but if I could, I would. Or if there was something that I needed them to do then I might and did give them a range of planning formats so that if they wanted to plan something in a different way – it was easier for a child to say well I’m going to do it with pictures and write words underneath for a storyboard rather than doing a page of planning then if it was going to lead to a good level of writing then I would have got them to do that instead

JF: It’s quite interesting to hear you talk about giving them a range of choices and not free choice and I think that’s one of the misconceptions about autonomy – you know, it’s not saying it’s a free choice – you’re saying that you’re supporting their competence by giving them video clips…

T4: More giving them a choice of scaffold... you know, I kind of link autonomy to confidence I suppose where if you need / if you want your hand held you can have this one or I guess if you feel confident then you have the autonomy to choose that ‘I don’t want what you are offering me, I’m going to do it this way.’ As long as you’re meeting that objective

JF: So there’s very much a sense that for the children the autonomy and competence were in a kind of spectrum. The more competent they were, the more autonomy they could have and vice versa but it was up to them to find out where they were on that line

T4: Yeah, you know, autonomy with guidance – sometimes heavy guidance

JF: for that particular group?

T4: yeah

JF: a couple of questions left. The first is – can you tell me about the writing that the children in that class produced? And I’m not expecting the finer details because I recognise that it was a couple of years ago but can you remember any particular themes or patterns or characteristics of the writing they produced?
T4: A lot of them had issues with writing stamina where they would write a couple of lines and then tail off, you know ‘oh I don’t have any ideas’ or ‘I’ve said it all in two lines’ or ‘I don’t know where to go next’ that kind of thing or ‘well I’ve done you two lines so I’m done now – I don’t really want to do anymore’ – that was tricky to deal with. Building up writing stamina also because there was such a diverse mix – I had children with English as an additional language (EAL) and a lot of additional learning needs their vocabulary wasn’t brilliant and their sentence structure wasn’t always clear. So there were children who had additional needs – even dyslexics – it made their writing quite difficult to read not just from the handwriting perspective and spelling – also the sentence structure didn’t really make a lot of sense. I found that quite hard to work on.

JF: And the overall actual composition of the writing – what they’d actually written? Were there any patterns there or anything you remember particularly?

T4: umm

JF: Did they struggle with story writing, were they creative?

T4: Yeah I’d say that was one of the trickiest things because that involves more creativity – story writing so there was quite often the issue of sequencing where I would try to use things like storyboards with them and plan out what happens first, what happens next and does that make sense but when we gave them the skills and then let them free and said ‘right now you go and produce your writing’ it did quite often come out that they had an idea that maybe they ran away with an and their sentence structure went out the window and after all that teaching of, you know, capital letters and conjunctions and varying sentence openers, you would just get ‘and then and then and then’ so a main characteristic was, well they weren’t confident or competent enough to hold several different strands in their head so when they were let loose to do writing, they would have their idea, but their idea would overwhelm their confident structure of how to set it out.

JF: It sounds familiar of the younger year groups a little bit – that idea of having either the composition or the transcription but the idea of bringing them both together is quite a challenge.

T4: Being a competent writer where you can internalise what you need to do, so it’s not like another cognitive burden – they hadn’t yet got that so they needed support to remember to do the basics so once you stepped back, the basics would go out the window.

JF: That’s tricky for a Year 5 teacher – it sounds like a lot to be dealing with.

T4: For a lower attaining Year 5 class, I’m not saying I’d generally expect that of Year 5 – I’d be quite worried if that was across the
JF: OK last question – and it may either be the easiest or the most difficult – what is good writing?

T4: um, very open. Good writing is coherent, so you can follow it along, it’s meaningful – m you can understand it, it’s engaging so it’s actually thought about its reader and what would be interesting – it’s grammatically accurate enough so it can be read as it’s intended to be read.

42. Focus on composition

JF: Do any of those stand out for you as being more important?

T4: I think it has to be interesting – I think you can allow for spelling mistakes and issues with some of the grammar – you know if you can read it at all then it has to be interesting but I think the spelling, grammar, you know the SPAG stuff comes a very close second – I know that people will probably disagree and say that you need the nuts and bolts before you can make it interesting – I guess a good piece of writing needs it all really

36. Balance of transcription and composition
Appendix 9.17

Writing samples scoring 0 on the Voice Intensity Rating scale
My best day at school was when I went to the beautiful wonder beach but it took a bit long to go there. I played with the sand and made a sand castle. Then I swam in the sea. Next I looked to my friends and play with them. She said "Come and playing in the park. After that I bought an ice cream and ate it. Then I played a football. My team won the game 5-3. Then it was time to go home. Finally we went home.
The Worst Day Ever at School

It had been 2 weeks since it was today when I went to school. I was so tired then I went to sleep. Then I woke up and saw the teacher just looking at me. And then I got a detention. Furthermore there was this guy—his name was Brock and any he threw a little rock at my head so I can get another detention and I did get a detention just then. It was playtime and I wanted in a girl then she started crying and I got another detention then school finished so I stayed to do my detentions. Then I went home as well as detentions I was
One day in school I played Bros and Xbox one I played dramas ball in ultimate tennis with people and I played online with other people in my Xbox one I played infamous second son I unlocked different powers strong power, massive power and invisible power. Next we watched the film transformers dark of the moon here to be acting prime young. We are in dragon ball Z ultimate tennis but then I tried my hardest to beat him because people health is very long like a million. Also I beat kata in zk14. While he beat me I said he's very difficult to beat because he pick John nelson and I picked the rock I played in human on him so I done a cage and won.
Appendix 9.18

Writing samples scoring 1 on the Voice Intensity Rating scale
# The Worst Day Ever at School

- **Day was the worst day of my life.**
- I was the last one at the bus and had to walk a long distance.
- When the school bus got stuck in a second, it was stuck for ever.
- The teachers were boring and people were sleeping.
- We were bringing others by calling. It was better than lessons.
- We were running and playing.
- I had a plan to make the teachers mad and burn them with them.
The Worst Day Ever at School

Tom was at school but he wasn't in a good mood. Tom was on traffic light yellow and his teacher said to him "I think like you." Said Miss Wraggs. "I know, replied Tom. I don't know what's the matter with me." "Well, Tom, I am not letting you on green but yes," said Tom very weirdly. "I am giving you a 2-hour detention. No buts in my class. She boomed."
Appendix 9.19

Writing samples scoring 2 on the Voice Intensity Rating scale
Johnny entered the hall. Everybody stared at him. He entered room to the classroom and put his bag down and sat down at his desk. Jon and Leonardo looked at him. A fat little short woman slammed the door open, and a ruler in her hand, everybody sat up straight. This was the beginning of a school day.

The lady was in her middle ages with her blue glasses at the end of her sharp nose then finally she spoke. Today we will not do English or math. We are just going to have a celebration because it is the end of the school year. Don't just stare at me. Say something. She screamed in a loud voice that blew every bodies ears. Her name was Mrs. Tromalt. She is so but now it is Ms. Tromalt because her husband died. (Oh dear).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Worst Day Ever at School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I went to school the other day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was very sad, I had no play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reason of that was because I was in trouble.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After that it became even worse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That was the worst day ever.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I got detention for no good reason.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But that was the worst day of the season.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some played with a Ginger on the door, I was blamed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am also being blamed I was blamed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I also took a picture and put my face on it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So happy, suprise my heart split.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That was the worst day ever.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 9.20

Writing samples scoring 3 on the Voice Intensity Rating scale
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Best Day Ever at School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At the school gates, I found a $50 note. Good luck, I guess. When it was time for literacy, a UFO came and blasted the building and abducted the teacher. Perfect timing! And when it was lunch, I went to football and made four epic tackles in a row, and scored 3 goals for my team. Perfection. Later, lunch, we were supposed to do some work, but since the teacher was abducted, we didn't know what to do. In the end, we just played in the classroom and I got to read a good book. After school, I went to Scrabble club and I got a double word and a triple letter score, all in one row. Maybe a bit too perfect.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Worst Day Ever at School

It was the worst day I ever had.

Ever, and I mean it. It all started in the morning. Peter was crying as usual, Leon was standing around and me, sitting in my chair waiting for the teacher.

"Being a little goody boy are you, Brat?" Malcolm had just entered the room. Although he was very short, he could intimidate anybody that got in his way, even the 14 year olds. He was the school's bully. That was why I hated him. Also, he could make people like the girls play with him with sloppy excuses and asking for forgiveness which the girls thought was cute. He also had a gang around him called the Big Bang Slams which was basically what they did.
The Worst Day Ever at School

From the moment I walked through the door my hands were shaking. Also, because I’d woken up late that morning everything could go wrong. Giggles and whispers echoed like a never-ending clown and they spun round in my head like coggs. Nothing was me that day! Every time my teacher was talking I couldn’t concentrate.

It was either someone teasing me, memories of the glowing and glittering white dust in the corner of the room. Part of a bad day or not just what happens to you but letting something you’ve seen pass by. I saw boys surrounding a girl, calling names, push her in the corner and leave her crying. Why didn’t I help? I suppose I thought I would get teased.

Then at lunch I could barely eat even though my stomach was dying for food. I stirred my pasta around my head like a giant tornado. Sitting alone like a lonely, a bully shoved past me and next I knew water had splitt down.