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Conformity, transgression or transformation? A study of the impact of oral storytelling in
three Warwickshire secondary schools

by

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Abstract

This study investigated the following question, 'What are the constraints and/or empowerments placed on the emotions and behaviour of young people from similar and different backgrounds?' To address this question I investigated whether storytelling could be used to explore narratives of conformity, transgression and transformation in young people's conversations. Data were obtained through an innovative research method I called "the storytelling space" in three Warwickshire schools (2013). Fairy tales were selected, from written and stable literary texts, for their emotional and behavioural themes relevant to young people's situation. Storytellers told tales orally over five subsequent weeks to six groups of four young people of mixed gender, ethnicity, academic ability and socio-economic background. Young people aged 12-14, led subsequent focus group conversations guided by a facilitator, which were recorded and transcribed.

To answer the questions posed above, storytelling was a valuable way to gather knowledge about young people's experiences. A range of conformative, transgressive and transformative associations were formed between the stories and the students' lives. The students discussed constraints placed on behaviour by legal and adult authority; raised transgressive concerns by refusing to accept fairy tales gender stereotypes; and discussed the transformation of emotion into socially appropriate displays. Education appeared to empower students where teachers were reactive to student needs, and seemed to disempower them when teachers were strict or used language which alienated pupils. Young people's behaviour appeared conformative to adult-figures yet students gained power and justified transgressive acts, such as stealing, via their emotions, such as jealousy.

A comparative analysis between schools demonstrated young people's responses to oral storytelling were shaped by social processes, such as wider legislation and class inequality. Some responses to story were connected to the reproduction of inequality in educational practices illustrated in the way that rural-mixed students discussed and questioned the stories, experienced positive student-teacher interactions and, engaged with after-school or beyond school, activities. These were factors which enriched the students' interpretations by providing additional experiences to relate to the stories. Some all-female and urban-mixed students had access to out-of-school experiences. The storytelling space offered those groups of young people flexible ways in which to broaden their perspectives, increase confidence and create friendships through the social discussion of story.

Storytelling appeared adaptable to student needs, therefore more empowering than constraining, because groups constructed knowledge from the stories in relation to their own experiences. They also identified that the contrasting opinions of others' were valid. There was more evidence of conformity, and transformation towards conformity, in student conversations than transgression. I conclude that there was a tendency in the discussions for young people to respond to storytelling with examples of conformative and transformative emotional and behavioural "norms" rather than transgressive acts.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Thesis topic

My thesis utilised individual and group discussions of oral storytelling as a means of providing insights into the emotional and behavioural dimensions of young people's lives. It explored the extent to which young people's emotional and behavioural responses to personal and social circumstances may be empowered or constrained by story. It also assessed storytelling, as a way of investigating young people's experiences of emotions and behavioural management. Demonstrating the concerns and issues faced by groups of similar and different young people could create more effective policy and practice to improve their lives and educational experiences. To do this I will investigate the ways in which young people, from similar and different social backgrounds, discussed oral storytelling in groups I led with them. I will scrutinise how students connected the stories to emotions, the management of emotions and behaviour, and broader social structural issues including legislative measures.

The students' conversations will be analysed by considering their responses to storytelling in relation to three story elements: conformative, transgressive and transformative.

Conformity questions to what extent story content encourages young people to follow established codes of socially approved behaviours. Transgression considers whether there is room for non-conformist action in opposition to the expectations of authority figures in the stories. Transformation observes the ways in which transformed characters and situations may provide guidelines for the transformation of personal emotions, behaviours or social transformation, such as class mobility. These elements allow me to

explore issues of empowerment and constraint on a broader scale. In particular, whether the stories act as a form of social control on young people's emotion and behaviour thereby restricting their potential agency to develop freely.

The choice of oral storytelling arose from personal interest. I regularly attended a monthly storytelling evening in an Edinburgh pub, The Waverley (Guid Crack Club). A guest speaker was announced but generally people turned up to share stories, songs and poems along a common theme. Sometimes storytellers used instruments such as the fiddle, harmonica or didgeridoo. One evening, a white man, with a South African accent, told a story about Nelson Mandela. It was the story of a man who overcame prejudice and abuse with dignity. The story was emotionally evocative. Reflecting on the social space that the performer created generated a number of thoughts. First, what a powerful medium story could be to evoke the emotions of listeners. The presence of a full house, month after month, indicated that storytelling was a tradition that spoke to people and brought them together. Second, storytelling created a social space where personal stories could be shared alongside tales of heroic quests or magical porridge pots.

1.2 Background

This thesis is an interdisciplinary study of oral storytelling that spans education and theatre, psychology, philosophy, childhood and youth studies, sociology, folklore, and literary studies. My study moves beyond the existing literature because it aims to incorporate the ideas of Zipes and Hochschild into a broader theoretical framework. A framework informed by the work of others, like Freire (2013) on education, Bourdieu (2005: 43-44) on habitus, and Plummer (1995a) on power, which I attempted to go

beyond by drawing upon the application of a practical 'storytelling space'. These theories, and the implications for the literature drawn together in my interdisciplinary approach will be considered in Chapter 2, the literature review. For now, it is worth noting that the analysis of the students' conversations enabled the practical examination of theories across disciplines regarding agency and structure.

Because this is a sociological thesis, there is no discussion present of the psychoanalytic analysis of fairy tales, particularly those influenced by Jung and Freud. Freudian and Jungian psychoanalysis both focus on the unconscious, utilising fairy tales to understand structures of the psyche: 'the human mind' (Colman 2015) and 'self' (Statt 1998). For instance, Von Frantz stated that,

In myths or legends, or any other more elaborate mythological material, we get at the basic patterns of the human psyche through an overlay of cultural material. But in fairy tales there is much less specific conscious material, and therefore they mirror the basic patterns of the psyche more clearly (1996: 1).

Bettelheim (1991: 199) also believed in the therapeutic use of stories as he proposed that children can figure out how to act based on mental experimentation through fantasy, 'if our fear of being devoured takes the tangible form of a witch,' argued Bettelheim (1991: 120), 'it can be gotten rid of by burning her in the oven!' While I agree that there are benefits to using story in therapeutic settings I argue with the implication that there are stable universal meanings to fairy tale elements. My research illustrates this through the unpredictable way young people formed connections to their own lives and other narrative forms.

Zipes (2006b: 20-22) has argued that young people are influenced by standards of socially approved behaviour as a result of internalising the morals, values and beliefs contained within fairy tales. Viewed in this way, the morals, values and beliefs of stories are form of social education. One aspect of Zipes' ideas I want to consider in relation to storytelling was whether storytelling narratives could be considered empowering or constraining. Zipes linked the behaviour of fairy tale characters to emancipatory or prohibitive ways of being.

Lack, deprivation, prohibition, and interdiction motivate people to look for signs of fulfilment and emancipation. In the wonder tales, those who are naive and simple are able to succeed because they are untainted and can recognize the wondrous signs. They have retained their belief in the miraculous condition of nature, revere nature in all its aspects. They have not been spoiled by conventionalism, power, or rationalism. In contrast to the humble characters, the villains are those who use words intentionally to exploit, control, transfix, incarcerate, and destroy for their benefit. They have no respect or consideration for nature and other human beings, and they actually seek to abuse magic by preventing change and causing everything to be transfixed according to their interests. Enchantment equals petrification.

Breaking the spell equals emancipation (Zipes 1991: xv).

At first glance Zipes' theories are about children's literature, yet he has also applied these ideas of empowerment or constraint to fairy tale and fantasy in different narrative forms, such as film (Zipes 1991, 2001c, 2009). My thesis, contextualised within debates surrounding the influence of different fairy tales forms, questions the extent to which

storytelling reveals whether young people negotiate the emotional and behavioural aspects of their lives in constrained and/or empowering ways.

The morals and lessons in fairy tales, and performed fairy tales, have the potential to affect young people's behaviour by providing them with examples of appropriate social conduct (SunWolf 1999: 51). In fairy tales "bad" little children meet horrific ends, while "good" little children are rewarded. This occurs even in contemporary non fairy tale texts such as *The Bunker Diary* (Brooks 2013). A civilising approach to stories offers an interesting way to perceive the interactions between structure and agency in the storytelling space. This approach asks, 'Do moralistic stories which contain lessons of obedience assert pressure on young people to conform?' (Duggan and Stotter 2005: 371-380, Zipes 1997: 81, 2006b: 69-70) If so, stories have a 'civilizing effect' (Zipes 2006b: 22).

Zipes (2006b: 22) suggested that young people have the agency to reject the influence of literature but opportunity to also question what he termed 'the civilizing process'. Zipes developed Elias' (2000: xii) work on from French *civilité* meaning 'civilized behaviour'. The civilizing process refers to the way in which 'Fairy tales and children's literature were written with the purpose of socializing children to meet definite normative expectations at home and in the public sphere' (Zipes 2006b: 9).

The concept of a 'civilizing effect', like socialisation, is a highly debated and contentious area. One issue is that minimal consideration is given to agency (Wrong 1961). For now, I wish to raise this issue in order to introduce one key idea that Zipes' work raises. Zipes is asserting on the one hand that young people lack emancipation/empowerment from adult control and on the other that the content and structure of fantasy, fairy tales and

storytelling has the potential to support critical thought and emancipation. Critical thought provides young people with alternative ways of thinking, and that makes social change possible by enabling young people to question processes of social education. This idea questions that stories help to foster social control on young people's emotions and behaviour.

One issue of empowering or constraining behaviour could be in what ways young people learn to communicate and manage their emotions. Social behaviour therefore has an emotional component. The one most relevant to this study is referred to in psychology as 'moral emotion' which refers to how standards of behaviour, including principles of "right" and "wrong", utilise feelings, such as shame and guilt, to inform moral actions (Tangney *et al.* 2007: 347). Moral emotions bridge the gap between individual's moral standards and behavioural action. Therefore, to understand the behavioural dimensions of young people's lives requires the inclusion of emotion, and emotional management. This also allows me to consider to what extent young people receive or question standards of expressing emotions from stories.

Social interactions require, to some extent, behaviour and emotions for others to interpret because social interactions involve the conformity of behaviour *and* emotion. Neglecting socially approved behaviours results, in some cases, offence and exclusion. Social interactions therefore involve conformity of behaviour *and* emotion. Conformity is apparent in the workplace. For example, the emotional training of flight attendants at Delta Airlines in the 1970s raised questions about the effects such training had on an individual's feelings. One study proposed that emotional training affected social interactions involving emotion outside the workplace (Hochschild 2012: 6-7, 17). Yet

Hochschild also acknowledged the role of agency. Flight attendants transformed their emotions, providing examples of how conformity, transgression and transformation interacted with emotional expression. For instance, conforming to the ethos that the customer is always right created transformative acts. Emotions were transformed in order to avoid insulting demanding customers (Hochschild 2012: 29).

Related to behavioural and emotional control, Article 29 of the UNCRC, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (unicef 2015: 9), acknowledges that the role of education is to shape a child's behaviour to that of their social environment. Article 29 states:

Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

The implication, to some extent, is that without education, young people would be unable to form and maintain relationships with others, which seems to suggest that education's primary purpose is more moral than economic.

One aspect to note from the diverse amount of literature in social psychology, sociology, and so on, is that conformity is not necessarily a "bad" thing. Some "negatives" around the pressure to conform involve anger, frustration and resentment; stifling the contribution of new ideas, and leading to transgression or a refusal to participate in group action. Some "positives" involve social acceptance, the achievement of personal and group goals through co-operation and the enjoyment of group activities (Pavitt 1998: 177, Nail *et al.* 2000: 454).

The extent to which individuals conform to and/or transgress the morals and lessons within other forms of stories is another highly contentious area (Campbell 2000: 276, Howe 2004: 184-185, Donelana *et al.* 2006: 68, Oatley and Djikic 2008: 9, Graham 2009: 160). Some fields emphasise social relationships, for instance Durkheim (2003: 64) wrote that 'we are moral beings only to the extent that we are social beings'. Durkheim argued that young people learn to understand the rules which preserve social relations through interactions with adult authority figures. Yet I would argue that adults are not the only resource that young people have to learn from: we also have to consider the role of storytelling, fairy tales, and other narrative forms.

That is not to say that all stories contain emotional or behavioural lessons. Rather, how young people interact with stories is part of a longstanding debate in social science between individual agency and the constraints of structure (Durkheim 1938: 10, Weber 1978: 4, Archer 1982: 460, Giddens 1984: 2, Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 133, Elder-Vass 2007: 328, Baert and da Silva 2010: 127). That is, how much freedom young people have from forces beyond their control, such as education, legislation, social class, gender and ethnicity, to name a few. So it was important to have a representative sample of young people from the Warwickshire area in order to draw comparisons between different genders and with different class and ethnic backgrounds. The differences and similarities of the three schools in the study allowed me to compare how a diverse range of young people responded to storytelling.

1.3 The storytelling space

To explore issues of empowerment and constraint I created a space for oral performance in three schools in Warwickshire with young people aged 12-14. I chose a subcategory of young people, aged 12 to 14, because they were experiencing a transitional period into their exam years, and then into further education and/or work.

Student-led discussion was initiated by oral performances of six fairy tales chosen to reflect the three different elements. In each school a storyteller performed one story a week, over five weeks, with the exception of two stories in week three. The stories were performed from memory and then the storyteller left the room. The pilot involved teachers and the storyteller in the discussion. After observing that teachers, and storytellers, could not resist active participation in student discussion, no teachers or storytellers were allowed to participate in the data collection stage. A storytelling space was thereby created for young people within the school but separate from it.

These oral storytelling sessions created what I call a 'storytelling space'. The storytelling space was in one sense a physical space within one library and two classrooms and involved a range of social interactions comprising of: the storyteller and audience; the storyteller's language and physical re-enactment of fairy tales; the storyteller's and audience's imaginations; individual and group interpretations of story; and the sharing of stories and personal experiences with the group. However, the storytelling space I sought to create was more than a physical space created to conduct research, or to listen to stories and then leave. It was a space outside the structures and restrictive "norms" of

the school. The groups collectively shared and discussed storytelling, linking the fairy tales to personal experiences and multiple narrative forms, such as literature, film and TV.

Following the oral performance of a fairy tale, young people were provided with a space in which to discuss the story. Storytelling has an immediate social aspect. Reading and then discussing a story at a book club is different from discussing a story following storytelling. One difference between reading and storytelling is performative. However, does experiencing the same performance enable individual and collective meaning-making? And does the same performance create multiple perspectives, which enrich a story's collective interpretation when shared? If so, how does a shared interpretation of text differ from one relating to storytelling?

Returning to the inspirations for this study, I hoped to create an engaging space for young people, one which potentially explored whether providing a space for adolescents to come together and listen to stories would impact them in "therapeutic" ways. Examples of this might be improving physical and mental well-being. However, the complexities of gaining access to young people outside education settings, and the lack of current knowledge on oral storytelling spaces – without aspects of reading, drama or writing – shifted the study to exploring the role of storytelling as a social practice. The storytelling space changed from an educational setting involving teachers to a storytelling space within a school, a space led by the conversations of young people, in order to explore what would be revealed about the emotional and behavioural dimensions of young people's lives.

I have summarised how that my research will address questions of empowerment and constraint through observing the effects of creating semi-autonomous oral storytelling spaces in three different schools. The research was conducted in this manner to: question whether stories act as a form of social control on young people's management of emotion and behaviour; to investigate how young people process experiences and issues in their lives; to explore how much freedom young people from a diverse range of social backgrounds have from structural forces beyond their control, such as education policy.

Storytelling is an immediate social form of story between a teller and an audience. The storytelling might hear and retell, or read and retell a story. Either way the audience's experience of performance is via viewing and listening. A large part of a young person's personal experiences are based at school, in a system reliant on reading and listening (to the teacher). Learning also involves observing experiments and viewing films related to topics on the curriculum. There are similarities and differences between education and storytelling but the one I wish to highlight concerns the way in which the audience, or class, relate differently to teaching and storytelling.

Storytelling is also informative but in a different way. For instance, there is collaboration between the storyteller and their audience. A 'willing suspension of disbelief' which Coleridge (1907: 5) argued, talking about poetry, directed the mind towards 'the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure'. Coleridge's words echo with Zipes' (1991: xv) 'breaking the spell' cited earlier. My interpretation is that the spell being referred to, by both men, is one of moving from inaction, and passivity to an awareness of being situated in the world and what that means. Education I would argue has a similar

goal to enable people to situate themselves in the world, what that means, what that involves, and what one is empowered to change.

Thus, research created a practical and conceptual space where young people's interactions with story were considered on a social level and across a range of social science and humanities disciplines, such as education, philosophy, sociology, folklore and literature studies.

1.4 Research questions

This thesis therefore investigates the following research question:

Can effective storytelling spaces be created in schools, as a means of using story to research how young people from different social backgrounds negotiate the emotional and behavioural dimensions of their lives, in either constraining or empowering ways?

This question is approached through six sub-questions.

1. Can oral storytelling spaces be set up within a secondary school to explore debates surrounding structure and agency, education and social background, socially approved standards of emotional expression or behaviour, and the potential 'civilising effects' of stories?
2. Are young people's responses to oral storytelling shaped by wider issues of inequality and diversity in their lives?
3. Does young people's agency interact with oral storytelling narrative in empowering or constraining ways?

4. What difference, if any, does an oral storytelling narrative make to the interpretation of story, when compared to other narrative forms?
5. Do young people's responses to emotions in the storytelling space disclose any "norms" and values concerning the management of emotion?
6. What are the wider uses of the storytelling space for research, and for informing the interdisciplinary literature surrounding storytelling?

1.5 Thesis structure

The chapters in this thesis seek to answer these research questions in the following ways. Chapter 2, the literature review chapter, reviews relevant storytelling literature situated within the context of the sociology of story. The aim of the literature review is to explain the theoretical framework of the thesis incorporating the ideas of Zipes and Hochschild into a broader theoretical framework. The literature review positions storytelling research in the diverse range of subject areas. This interdisciplinary framework provides the context for an investigation into the potential of storytelling to enhance our understanding of young people's lives through narratives of constraint or empowerment that arose during their interactions with fairy tales.

Chapter 3, the methods chapter, addresses sub-question one by explaining the design of an exploratory method which I have called 'the storytelling space'. This involved exposure to oral storytelling performances outside a classroom situation, with no teachers present, within three schools, followed by group discussion. I discuss why a subcategory of young people aged 12-14, from Warwickshire, were selected and the selection of the fairy tales (as defined in the literature review), themed around findings from the Stage One, pilot

study. I describe how focus groups were used to enable individual response and group debate and explain the selection of schools chosen to compare young people from different social backgrounds. I then outline the ethical considerations of working with young people. I also explain the ways in which the data were analysed in line with the research questions.

Chapters 4 to 7 present the analysis of the research data which was collected using storytelling methods. Chapter 4 builds on sub-question one by reflecting on young people's experience of the storytelling space within a school. It then addresses sub-question two, examining how young people, from similar and different backgrounds, related to storytelling. For example, addressing sub-question four, in what ways the students perceived storytelling when compared to literature, and whether they connected to storytelling in terms of prior expectations and experience, related to their social backgrounds, in the three different schools. Chapter 4 also addresses sub-question three by considering whether the storytelling space is a separate space within the school, and why this should matter. Did young people feel "safe" discussing issues that they had experienced, were experiencing or were concerned about?

The central theme of Chapter 5 is power. This addresses sub-question three. Potential issues of control, discipline and rationalisation are debated by examining how young people, from similar and different social backgrounds, linked oral storytelling to personal narratives which potentially enabled or constrained their agency and action. Chapter 5 debates whether stories have an inevitable 'civilizing effect'. Student perceptions of the storytelling elements of conformity, transgression and transformation, are explored to observe how the students positioned themselves in response to storytelling narratives.

Likewise, how were the students' personal narratives positioned in the context of wider networks of power such as legislation?

Chapter 6 examines how interpretations of emotions in the storytelling space arose in similar and contradictory ways. This addresses sub-question five. Considering emotion is relevant because emotions and behaviour appeared to be linked in the students' interpretation of storytelling. Links are drawn between educational guidelines and the way students interpreted oral storytelling. Tackling the potential implications of storytelling research to inform educational policy addresses sub-question five. I then consider the processes at work during group conflict before investigating how emotional expression in different contexts establishes links between storytelling and larger social structures and practices.

Chapter 7 explores storytelling as a narrative that arises from, and connects to, wider narratives in broader social practices and structures. How young people connected storytelling to a wide range of fiction and nonfiction narratives is considered, addressing sub-question four. Sub-questions one, two and three are again contemplated through the students' negotiations of conflicting notions of class, gender identity and ethics.

Chapter 8, the conclusion, summarises the findings of the data chapters and addresses sub-question six by evaluating the extent to which the storytelling space represents a contribution to original research, and the wider applications of this storytelling method as well as answering the main thesis question.

Chapter 2 Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the critical approach taken, which was utilising storytelling through means of a 'storytelling space' to investigate how young people from similar and different social backgrounds negotiate the emotional and behavioural dimensions of their lives, in constraining and/or empowering ways. The literature review positions storytelling research in the following subject areas, while acknowledging that this is not an exhaustive list: sociology, philosophy, education and theatre, folklore and literary studies, and childhood and youth studies. These subject areas allow an investigation into the potential of storytelling to enhance our understanding of young people's lives through their interaction with story. Interdisciplinary gaps when relevant to the main thesis question will be illustrated. The terms conformative, transgressive and transformative from the thesis title will be clarified.

Storytelling research occurs across numerous fields, not just in one well-defined area. The majority of the research is within educational and therapeutic contexts, with a focus on instructive, emotional or behavioural learning, which does not create a separate space from educational settings. Spaces are adult-led. Young people are guided to learn about or discuss educational, environmental and/or behavioural concepts (Casey *et al.* 2008, Phillips 2010, Curenton and Craig 2011), rather than empowered to enact their own processes of observation, exploration, experience and inquiry in order to make their own meanings. There is a lack of comparative analysis across gender, ethnicity, class and different educational settings, and there is a lack of oral methods without reading, writing

and drama. In addition, some areas of literary studies, for instance the work of Zipes which will be discussed in Section 2.3.4, remain theoretical rather than applied in interdisciplinary contexts in social situations with young people. I will be arguing that this thesis is well situated to address some of these gaps by utilising oral storytelling in three different school environments.

Chapter 2 consists of three sections. Section 2.2 defines storytelling and fairy tales. To set the critical agenda, Section 2.3 addresses three additional terms which arose from the literature: conformative, transgressive and transformative. These terms position my approach towards analysing the storytelling space. Section 2.2 briefly describes the oral storytelling landscape of the UK, then debates interdisciplinary gaps across the previously listed subject areas that the research is filling. The findings of the literature review are then summarised before proceeding to Chapter 3, the methods chapter.

2.2. Definitions

2.2.1 Oral storytelling

Reflecting on the research questions introduced in Chapter 1, defining storytelling is important to separate this study from a number of other studies which have not utilised oral methods yet are classified as “storytelling” research.

Benjamin, in his essay *The Storyteller*, imagined generations connected by narrative threads like a spider’s web.

One ties on to the next, as the great storytellers, particularly the Oriental ones, have always readily shown. In each of them there is a Scheherazade who thinks of a fresh story whenever her tale comes to a stop (2006: 371).

By connecting storytelling to written literature, Benjamin illustrated that there are different ways of communicating stories. In *Arabian Nights*, Scheherazade wove stories within stories to trick the king into sparing her life (Warner 2012: 2). Benjamin's definition evoked the "traditional" use of the word storytelling: it is romanticised and empowering. In addition, Benjamin wrote that excellent writers, and the same could be applied to storytellers, capture the sensory aspects of life, and such stories are instructive about life as 'a moral twines about a happening like ivy around a wall' (Benjamin 2006: 377-378). Thus written and told stories craft instructions for living around human experience. Or at least some stories do like fairy tales.

There are two key debates in the study of storytelling. First, 'What is the relationship between oral storytelling and written text?' Second, 'Should a modern definition of storytelling encompass different narrative forms?' Historical interactions between oral storytelling and written texts remain unclear. The first literary texts provided clues that stories were orally recited for thousands of years. *Cupid and Psyche*, often quoted as the first literary fairy tale, or myth, was written in AD 200 (Zipes 1999: 13, 2001a: 294). *Cupid* is linked to animal bridegroom tales (Warner 1995: 295). However, Egyptian stories such as *The Tale of Two Brothers* precede *Cupid* (Green 2011: 117, British Museum 2015).

Oral traditions predate Egyptian records. *Gilgamesh*, an epic Middle-Eastern poem, was first written around 2150-1400 BC. Presumably the poem was recited orally before this

(George 2000: xiv-xvi). Comparative phylogenetic analyses, using evolutionary and linguistic methods, suggest that *The Smith and the Devil* had oral origins around 3200-300 BC (Graça da Silva and Tehrani 2016: 9) – though their methods can be critiqued (Parfitt 2016). Literary fairy tales, Egyptian folklore and epic poems indicate that oral storytelling predates text, interacts with text and yet does not limit itself to one narrative form.

Calvino (1980: xv) defined folk tales as stories ‘from the oral tradition’ and fairy tales ‘a refined version’ orally inspired and modified by the writing process. What is classified as an oral or literary tale is not as simple as Calvino’s definition, because of complex interactions between orality and literature. For example, different renditions of *Arabian Nights* indicate that translators created new stories inspired from oral and literary traditions. *Aladdin* was a later addition to the tales told to Galland by Hanna Diab (Warner 1995: 24, 2012: 7-26, 76). More recently, three Norwegian-Sámi and two Norwegian oral and written variants have arisen in southern Norway (Helene and Skjelbred 2001: 54).

The history of storytelling remains unclear. What is known has been patched together through collections, historical records, archived recordings, biographies, paintings and current storytelling practices (Warner 1995: 25, 2014: 44-72, 170-171, Dupont 1999: 173-174, 179-185, Smith 2001: 121, Zipes 2001b: 845, Gold 2002, Zipes 2006a: 13, ATON 2009, Campbell 2011, FONC 2013). The majority of folklorists agree that fairy tales originated from oral traditions which were mediated through print (Zipes 2012: 114). Printing technology, and the vogue for collating and composing fairy tales, followed by new technologies, resulted in the spread and adaptation of oral and fairy tales (Dupont 1999: 204, Zipes 2001b: 851-852, Zipes 2002b: 128-129, Lazim 2008: 44). Fairy tale

adaptations have appeared in manga, literature, film, television, the internet, video games, radio, music, education and theatre, and so on. Such examples demonstrate the difficulties of separating orality from literature, and storytelling from other forms of narrative.

A modern definition of storytelling must encompass the way in which storytelling has adapted in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries because of changes in social, economic and political structures (Gottschall 2013: xvii). This definition acknowledges the complex historical interactions between oral and other narrative forms; changing technology and social contexts; and the performative qualities of storytelling.

A keyword electronic database search of the literature resulted in 71,380 papers that used the keywords “oral storytelling”. The majority involved life histories, reading, writing and drama-based research rather than storytelling. Therefore, a modern definition of “storytelling” has created a barrier to locating oral research. A working definition must acknowledge that other forms exist while reclaiming keywords for oral research purposes only. Any such terminology divide is artificial because storytelling interacts with other narrative forms so perhaps new words are required. Thus, while acknowledging that storytelling is more than its oral forms from this point onwards, the term storytelling is used for oral storytelling purposes only in this study. The terms “storytelling” and “oral storytelling” will be used to describe one person (the teller) telling a story from memory to a group of people (the audience). The term “narrative forms” will be used to encompass the richness of different narrative sources, such as film, TV, literature, music, media, education and the theatre, to name a few.

2.2.2 Fairy tales

Like storytelling, the definition of a fairy tale is debatable. The English term fairy tale stemmed from *les contes des fées*, tales of the fairies, coined by the French writer d'Aulnoy (Zipes 2012: 116). Many stories are classified as folk/fairy tales: from myths, legend and fables to “traditional” storytelling and literary texts. These various narratives are connected by something of the dramatic and magical rather than the presence of fairies (Fischer 1963: 237, Bottigheimer 2006: 57). A fairy tale could be defined as ‘addressing the wishes and needs of its audience through mythical themes of heroism, imperilment, and adventure’ (Mikics 2007: 116). Warner (2014: xvi-xxii, 20) defined a fairy tale as a short tale with oral and historical associations with the symbology of other stories. Thus, there is an historical element.

Fairy tales are full of magic, wonder and imagination. They transmit hope through happy endings and moral rewards. Yet what separates a fairy tale from other types of stories cannot be defined easily with words such as dramatic, magical and mythical. Other genres, such as fantasy, magic realism and science fiction, make use of the magical and fantastical. Such stories are not always modern versions of fairy tales. The answer may be found in the symbology of fairy stories, a combination of magical and well-established images that define the genre on a more complex level. When red apples, shoes and cloaks are mentioned, the reader, or listener, knows that something unusual is about to happen.

Fairy tale narratives which capture the transition between childhood and adulthood are very common, especially in Greek myths and Ovid. For example Ovid tells the tale of Icarus in *Metamorphosis* (Golding 2002: 242-243) the boy who flew too close to the sun

ignoring his father's warning. Some scholars argue that Ovid's *Metamorphoses* or Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, with their transformations and magic, have a fairy tale form (Bottigheimer 2014: 22, Zipes 1989: 126, 1999: 8, 13). In Apuleius' story, Meroe turned a neighbour into a frog, which links to well-known fairy tales such as *Frog King*, although the story is technically classified as a mythological text (Apuleius 2015). Scholars have argued that such texts have influenced fairy tales through their mythological content (Dupont 1999: 179-183, Bottigheimer 2006: 58, Gallagher 2009: 21, 26). The history of fairy tales, like storytelling, is probably the result of complex interactions between literature and historical oral and literacy processes. Many storytellers today source material from literature. While recognising the complexity and ambiguity of folk and fairy tales, in this thesis the term fairy tale is used to denote stories from literature, as opposed to oral forms.

Now that the terms storytelling and fairy tales have been elaborated on, the next section clarifies the terms conformative, transgressive and transformative.

2.2.3 Conformative, transgressive and transformative

The thesis explores ways in which storytelling might empower or oppress young people by analysing whether young people interpreted, reshaped, rejected or were influenced by narratives in the storytelling space. I chose to explore the social aspects of fairy tales by observing connections the students drew between storytelling, behaviour and emotions. Conversations were analysed considering three story elements: conformative, transgressive and transformative. These elements developed from the work of Zipes (1992: ix, 36) and were later informed by Freire (2013) and Plummer (1995a). Fairy tale

literature widely recognises that tales contain lessons about moral principles, ideologies, behavioural guidelines and models of identity (Lewis 1956: 310, Zipes 1983: 18, Estés 1996: 91, Tatar 1999: 27, Helene and Skjelbred 2001: 62).

2.2.3.1 Conformative

Conformity emphasises family bonds, community and the value of being part of something secure (Bauman 2001: 144, Scott and Marshall 2009a). Zipes (see Section 2.3.4) proposed that children's literature encouraged conformity to social "norms" and practices, a 'civilizing process' which benefited government, corporations and religious organisations by educating people to be skilled consumers who were also working commodities (Zipes 2009: 39-41, 43). One criticism of such a perspective, even in an era of mass communication, is that social "norms" and practices vary between nations, and even within similar geographical areas (Thompson 2007: 135-136, Dickens and Fontana 2013: 138).

Zipes work holds a central place in the thesis because he argued that the power dynamics of children's literature, and other narrative forms, has been part of a 'civilizing process' to educate children. The fairy tale genre, in particular, became part of a social literary discourse about the ways in which children were being educated so that they would understand the social codes of the time, such as values and manners (Zipes 2006b: 3).

Zipes wrote,

Perrault's tales and those of his associates assumed a unique and powerful role within the French socialization process. Moreover, they incorporated

standards of comportment for children and adults which have been adopted in our own time and are still of actual interest and concern (Z006b: 23).

Such standards he argued included the 'conduct, discipline, and punishment' of young people's behaviour towards social standards which

[D]enounced open forms of sexual behaviour, table manners, dress, and natural functioning as 'barbaric' and 'uncivilized.' [...] Restraint and renunciation of instinctual gratification were part of a socio-religious code which illuminated the proper way to shape human drives and ideas so that children would learn docilely to serve church and state (Zipes 2006b: 22).

However, while Italian and French writers during the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries used literary tales to 'express their critical sentiments about the civilizing process' (Zipes 2006b: 23) the stories also encouraged young people to submit to adult authority and conform to socially approved behaviour. Zipes wrote that West German writers

raised pertinent questions about the socio-political function of fairy tales [...] Essentially they reflect on and seek to understand how the messages in fairy tales tend to repress and constrain children rather than set them free to make their own choices. They assume that the Grimms' fairy tales have been fully accepted in all Western societies and have ostensibly been used or misused in furthering the development of human beings—to make them more functional within the capitalist system and to prescribe choice (Zipes 2006b: 60).

This aspect of limiting choice arose later in Zipes' work where he discussed how capitalism encouraged empowerment through the purchasing of goods. Zipes (2009: 14) said that 'children are basically empowered through the reading of the codes of their every-day activities to sell themselves on the market according to values established by the market'. So young people are also conforming to structurally approved behaviour: the buying and selling of products which enables capitalism to thrive.

Marx (2006, Holt 2015: 8-15) contended that people were born into social conditions not of their own making, which involved agency while people were also constrained by the choices given to them (Holt 2015: 20). Current economic and social research suggests that social mobility is limited and social inequality is widening (Clark *et al.* 2014, Atkinson 2015: 19-20, Clark and Cummins 2015). The young people in my study live in a capitalist system which is an economic system based on private ownership of the means of production. Marx thought that owners of factories, businesses and corporations profited by producing inequality, which they did by biasing the system against, and oppressing, the working-class. He believed that through education and personal development the working-class would realise that they had power to change things to create a fairer society for all individuals. Marx argued that that would happen through radical change (revolution) which the upper classes would try to repress by encouraging the working-class to conform to structures that benefited a few individuals and that reproduced inequality and discrimination (Holt 2015: 137). His work is relevant because it emphasised that people would only conform up to a point.

Freire (2013: 72) connected narrative to the 'banking' concept of education, which relates to student consumerism. In this scenario, the teacher is a storyteller and the student is a

listener. Freire stated that if the power dynamics of educational practices stifled critical engagement, and encouraged conformity over active engagement, then education could not inspire social change. Oppressive education structures only benefit those who know how to negotiate the system and think in certain ways. Thus, there are similarities between Freire's educational concepts and literature studies. Zipes (2006a: 87) and Freire (2013: 47, 53) wrote about the potential of narratives to influence individuals to conform or transgress the system.

From a fairy tale perspective, Perrault, the Brothers Grimm and Anderson have been criticised for reproducing conservative ideologies (Murphy 2000: 3-4, Tatar 1987: 31, Tatar 2004: xi-xiii, Zipes 1998: 11-14, Zipes 2004: 54). Warner wrote about the Brothers Grimm

The brothers claimed that they were reproducing the voice of immemorial tradition, but Wilhelm shaped and polished, cadenced and ornamented many of the best-known tales over the course of nearly fifty years; above all, he censored the stories' frankness about sex, but let the violent reprisals stand (Warner 2014: 60).

However, conformative narratives do not indicate that people conform to their ideologies. There are two perspectives to consider regarding conformity and fairy tales.

One perspective denotes that fairy tales captured social "norms", reflective of changing social contexts in a variety of ways. It has been acknowledged within folk and fairy tale literature that narratives have been edited over time. Ellis (1985) thoroughly examined how the Grimm brothers reinvented their tales to reflect the morals and values of the

time. For instance, the Grimms edited mother figures in *Snow White* and other tales, such as *Hansel and Gretel*, into stepmothers (Claxton-Oldfield 2000: 52, Zipes 2006a: 195). In the Grimms' first version of *Snow White* it was the mother who ate Snow's lungs and heart. In the second version, the mother became a stepmother to suit a younger readership (Tatar 1987: 143). The Disneyfication of fairy tales such as *Snow White* and *Cinderella* have sustained the image of the "evil" stepmother from a prior tradition of parent and step-parent figures in oral folk tales to suit the Disney company's idealised values as influenced by social standards (Disney 1937, 1950, Schickel 1986: 53, 72). This implies that fairy tales were rewritten according to social standards and movements which affected personal ideologies (Tatar 1987: 139, Zipes 2001b: 474).

Another perspective questions the value of analysing fairy tales from different social perspectives. Bottigheimer (1982: 141) argued that over the last one hundred years, the Grimms' tales have been found to be subversive, conservative, archetypal, universal, sexual, psychological and representative of different social and historical contexts. This brings different interpretations into question (Warner 1995: 163, Tatar 1992: 22-50) and signifies nothing about the interaction of tales with individuals' day-to-day lives, or how people read. For example, fantasy and desire are not always socially sanctioned. From this perspective reading could be considered as a secret or private act while storytelling is a social act. Yet while storytelling is social through the act of an audience listening to a story and sharing some interpretations, it also allows space for private fantasy and desire.

As noted in the summary of the literature in Section 2.3.4, conclusions cannot currently be drawn about the conformist influence of literature on young people. Wilson's research on the oral storytelling traditions of young people critiqued the view that young people

are 'insatiable consumers of a mass, populist culture' because stories can inspire transgression (1997: ix).

2.2.3.2 Transgressive

Conservative themes in stories could be said to serve a necessary function by promoting cohesion, common morals and values between people through narratives of consequences and rewards. The conservative effects of story depends on how people read or hear them because stories also challenge and subvert the status quo. Zipes identified fairy tales as a 'literature of subversion' providing alternative choices to individuals (1983: 107-109). Characters negotiating risky situations demonstrate the consequences of risk and choices. For example, the villagers risked everything when they refused to pay the Pied Piper of Hameln (Ashliman 2013).

Transgressive stories can facilitate personal liberation by challenging the "norms" inherent in other narratives (Berger and Quinney 2005: 6). Writers such as Carter and Tanith Lee have written stories with liberating or transformative qualities in response to women's conformity in fairy tales (Lee 1983, Carter 1995: 129-139, Armit 1997: 88). For example, Carter (1967: 1) wrote about female sexuality in *Magic Toy Shop* when Melanie observed her body in a state of sexual awakening.

For hours she stared at herself, naked, in the mirror of her wardrobe; she would follow with her finger the elegant structure of her rib-cage, where the heart fluttered under the flesh like a bird under a blanket.

Fairy tales might reinforce different social conditions or speak against oppression and marginalisation. The same story can take on different meanings according to the social and political landscape in which the story is being retold. Stories have a magical ability to retain stereotypes and social structures, or twist them around. Presser (2008), for example, discussed how criminals used stories of oppression to justify crime; and Wood (2001) argued that violence in heterosexual romantic relationships was either normalised or fought against through constraining and enabling narratives.

In earlier oral versions *Little Red Riding Hood* (LRRH) was a trickster because Red rescued herself by telling the wolf that she needed to relief herself outside. The wolf tied a piece of rope around one of her ankles, but Red tied it to a tree and escaped (Delarue 1989: 15). Red's escape was an empowering version of self-belief for women. Perrault (1995) removed this happy ending, creating a cautionary tale where red was eaten; the Brothers Grimm (1993: 135) added a hunter, removing women's power in deference to a male authority figure. There have been subsequent analyses and reworking of this story as agency, and social structures and practices have allowed this (Cross 1992, Zipes 1993, Warner 1995: 163, Tatar 1999: 3-9, Beckett 2002, 2014, 2009: 85-86). Feminist interpretations of further versions of LRRH addressed commentaries around women's roles in society (Orenstein 2003: 3, Teverson 2014: 4-5). Fairy tales have an ability to transform and adapt to social conditions.

[T]he unconscious of the fairy tale will shift and change with different societal pressures; the political functions of the fairy tale will be remade afresh by each new storyteller; and the story that is used to oppress and marginalise in one era can be used to liberate and protest in another (Teverson 2013: 7).

Fairy tale narratives, then, enact processes of constraint and liberation. I have cited a lot of examples from literature because my thesis focuses on the oral telling of fairy tales from oral and written origins. I am investigating the connection between performed fairy tales and young people's constraint or empowerment. Undoubtedly, narratives are accepted, negotiated and contested in complex and ambiguous ways. It is unclear whether the foundations of constraint and empowerment in day-to-day interactions arise from such fictional narratives, whether written or oral. And it is unclear if narratives capture the processes surrounding empowerment and conformity or are a part of those processes.

Polletta *et al.* (2011: 114) proposed that telling marginalised stories challenged 'the norms of disciplinary authority' and were heard in different ways by different groups of people. This addresses somewhat the empowering potential of storytelling, because it suggests that stories have varying persuasive power and that telling a story could reinforce inequality rather than challenge it. Marginalised stories, for instance, reinforce perspectives that certain people are marginalised. Just as transgressive narratives can generate social change, they are potentially transformative.

2.2.3.3 Transformative

Stories can transform something, even a person, into something extraordinary. For example, Khotso Sethuntsa, a South African healer, took advantage of oral tradition to weave myths about himself for his professional benefit (Wood 2010: 74). When fairy tales contain transformative elements, they are sometimes associated with social change or therapeutic uses (Frank 2010: 75, 107, Tatar 2010: 55). Zipes negotiated interactions

between conformity and transgression by considering the utopian and dystopian tendencies of stories and their potential for social change (Zipes 1983: 107-109, 2006a: 94, 106, Bannerman 2002).

To a certain extent, all the French writers of fairy tales, men and women, continued the “modernization” of an oral genre (Begun by Straparola and Basile) by institutionalizing it in literary form with utopian visions that emanated from their desire for better social conditions than they were experiencing in France at that time (Zipes 2007: 37).

In the above extract Zipes described how writer’s utilised fairy tales to comment on social conditions, however he also noted that utopian and alternative perspectives existed in the fairy tale genre. For example,

Hopes, wishes, and dreams were not always fulfilled in the early fairy tales for adults, but they tended to be fulfilled for young readers. The notion of the happy fairy-tale ending became an ideological notion mainly in the nineteenth century, and even then, many authors such as George MacDonald and Oscar Wilde explored the disappointment of hope and unhappiness in their fairy tales (Zipes 2006a: 100).

Thus fairy tales captured the possibility for transformation and social change by providing alternative actions and behaviours for young people to select, reject or ignore, but it is by no means guaranteed that hearing a fairy tale will have such an effect.

Warner suggested that fairy tales and their symbols could be sustained or transformed over time as a genre of protest (1995: 24, 163-165). In the realm of stories, characters are sometimes cloaked in hair, fur or feathers. Usually it is the female character that runs, disguised, from sexual advances. Such stories capture social themes reflective of behavioural expectations placed on woman when the stories were written (Warner 1995: 352-369). What is less certain from such examples is whether the virtuous lessons of fairy tales have had any influence on women's behaviour. If fairy tales, or any other narrative form, have influence on the *transformation* of structures and processes, how this process occurs could be an important aspect of social life.

Freire outlined education as a process for social change when education actively engaged structure *and* agency (2013: 47, 53). Actions which preserved or transformed social structures were 'systematic and deliberate' (2013: 179). However, although transformations occur in fairy tales, stories are not always transformative. Gottschall noted that story may not be anything other than a by-product of enjoyment (2013: 29); however, he doubted that stories were just for entertainment because story has played a large role in developing society 'through the shaping of beliefs, behaviours, ethics, culture and history' (2013: xvii).

In Cinderella birds plucked out the eyes of her stepsisters as punishment for their antisocial behaviour. It is a gruesome lesson coated in an entertaining smattering of violence, to warn the reader, or listener, that there are consequences for "bad" behaviour. Thus conservative ideologies which inform social relationships may be reinforced through entertainment. Because the brain engages, filtering and selecting from story content, their content can be read in ambiguous ways. Perhaps fairy tales

work in conformative, transgressive and transformative ways because their content can be read in ambiguous ways. Or perhaps all stories are ultimately conformative as a consequence of social interactive processes that are continuously challenging and creating new “norms”.

Alternative versions of the tale, which may at first appear subversive, conform to changing social attitudes. For instance, in *Into the Woods* (Sondheim 1987), Cinderella married then left the prince, reflecting changing social practices regarding women’s rights. The princes were allowed to participate in adultery without consequence, but Cinderella’s sisters lost their eyes. That is a harsher judgement on women’s behaviour than men’s, indicating that there are limits to transformations outwith and within fairy tales.

Tatar argued that tales are a constant negotiation between collective and social constructs (Tatar 1992: 230). Fairy tales are by-products of countless human choices. Narratives are negotiated through individuals, social structures and practices, such as education or the entertainment industry. Consider how versions of fairy tales, over the last 70 years, have highlighted different social themes. In LRRH, Red became a woman who fired pistols and chose whether or not to be a mother (Thurber 1940, Broumas 1977). She wore wolf skin coats and became a wolf herself (Dahl 1982: 36, Lee 1983). Young people cannot escape the contradictions of youth; they are captured between agency and adult authority. In Schimel’s version, Red was a young woman cooking: ‘crack the wolf and separate the whites – the large eyes, the long teeth – from the yolks’. At the end of the poem, Schimel suggested that Red was too young to be ‘cooking’ and should focus on her homework (1994: 130). Red is a figure of contradiction, like young people

today: strong in so many ways yet subjected to the judgements and paranoia of society to protect young people on different levels, such as those deemed vulnerable by gender and age (Cross 1992, Beckett 2002, Orenstein 2002, Blakley-Cartwright and Johnson 2011).

Research has claimed that stories have successfully transformed and decreased problem behaviours such as aggression, tantrums, inappropriate table manners, self-help skills and transitions (Lorimer *et al.* 2002, Kuoch and Mirenda 2003, Scattone *et al.* 2006). Scattone *et al.*'s (2006) study used stories as a behavioural intervention with three boys, 8 to 13 years of age, in the US. The boys were diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) which is a condition that affects social interaction, communication and behaviour to varying levels. The researchers developed stories with social content tailored towards the boys' individual behavioural requirements. For example, Billy isolated himself during play time, and walked away without responding when his peers tried to engage with him. A teacher was trained to read the story to Billy once a day before play time, for 16 days. The stories increased all three boys' social interactions with some limitations. For example, Billy's story instructed him to talk about things with his peers.

Billy was observed talking about Disney movies on several occasions, as his story instructed; however, he was not observed talking about the movies in the way the story suggested. For example, he often provided peers with a verbal list of his favorite movies without talking specifically about the movies themselves. Furthermore, he did not reciprocally ask peers to name their favourite movies (Scattone *et al.* 2006: 217).

Scattone *et al.*'s (2006) study illustrated that stories could initiate a change of behaviour up to a point. Tales of warning, and their symbols, might then teach young people about how to negotiate the social practices into which they are born (within limits). Do stories codify behaviour through a limiting of options? Plummer argued that intimate stories provided 'choices, constraints and controls' and vice versa (1995a: 16). However, the interpretation of stories is ambiguous and complex. Fairy tales whether written or spoken contain simple messages, hidden meanings, lessons and warnings. They are tales of transformation and transgression.

The discussion about conformity, transgression and transformation in Sections 2.2.3.1 to 2.2.3.2 indicated an overlap between conformative, transgressive and transformative elements. Stories are complex and ambiguous. Therefore, those elements were separated out for analysis purposes only in order to pick apart to some extent how storytelling narratives are contradictory, containing elements of constraint, empowerment and change.

This section proposed three narrative elements, conformative, transgressive and transformative, in order to explore the social aspects of fairy tales. The analysis chapters will connect these three terms to themes in student conversation involving empowerment and conformity, power and control, and inequality and diversity.

Section 2.3 will describe the oral storytelling landscape of the UK, then debate interdisciplinary gaps the research fills across sociology, philosophy, education and theatre, folklore and literary studies, and childhood and youth studies.

2.3 The interdisciplinary nature of storytelling research

2.3.1 The oral storytelling landscape of the UK

Contemporary storytelling emerges in many different spaces, such as cafes, libraries, pubs, schools, storytelling festivals and youth clubs. Storytelling is used in a variety of ways: by performers for entertainment; by parents reading to children (Frude and Killick 2011); and in therapeutic settings (Mehl-Madrona 2010, Perrow 2012, Grove 2013) and educational contexts (Paley 1990, Zipes 1995, Kelly 2011, Ingram and Streit 2015). Studies often use reading rather than performance.

The increase of storytelling across the UK since the 1980s has been termed a “revival”. To provide a brief history, some scholars propose that storytelling was adversely affected by the printing revolution from the medieval era (Eisenstein 2005: 14). It is difficult to be sure because the majority of printed texts before the eighteenth-century were theological and often in Latin. Only a small proportion of printed material were poems and stories available to the elite (Febvre and Martin 2010: 36, 287). There was a resurgence of interest in folklore and its applications during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, perhaps due to nostalgia for previous ways of living following the Industrial Revolution (Emerick 2014: 16). There was a resurgence of interest in storytelling post WW2 particularly for educational purposes. Initially, the 1988 National Curriculum supported the presence of performative storytelling in schools (Collins 1996: 3). The shrinking of the welfare state, alongside an increase in standardised testing, caused a gradual loss of unassessed arts programmes from schools under financial pressure (Wooster 2007: 31, Pakkar-Hull 2015b). Despite fears surrounding the threat of technology to storytelling

(Gold 2002: xvi, Benjamin 2006: 362), oral performance has survived through becoming a marketable commodity (Collins 1999: 3, Wilson 2006: 22).

The term “revival” is used to define tellers approaching storytelling as a profession rather than an oral culture (Mello 2005: 197, Wilson 2006: 22). Within some storytelling circles the “revival” is contested, as storytelling has always been around, particularly in small communities (Thomas 2012). Still, storytelling within the UK has expanded, indicating that it remains a socially valued activity, creating spaces which bring people together even during the digital age (Wilson 2014: 127, Hilbert 2015), for example through storytelling festivals (Scottish International Storytelling Festival 1989-2016, Beyond the Border 1994-2016 and Festival at the Edge 1999-2016).

Using storytelling as a method, I became part of a social storytelling movement positioning itself against increasing dependence on technology and web-based social practices and industrial and educational agendas with the potential to control and alienate rather than liberate or empower. Not all practices related to technology, business and education are undesirable; nevertheless, there is something about storytelling that is fundamental to what it means to be human (Gottschall 2013: 177).

Telling stories is an essential human activity that supports creativity and critical thinking and empowers coping mechanisms (see Section 2.3.5).

My research focused on three storytelling spaces within three schools: two classrooms and a library. Previous studies involving storytelling in schools often combined storytelling with reading, writing and drama skills. This section argues that adult-led storytelling methods are associated with the empowerment of creative and critical thinking and are

also used to encourage young people to conform to socially acceptable behaviour, for example through providing coping mechanisms based around emotional and behavioural strategies. Storytelling occurs extensively in educational settings, yet oral methods are being underutilised for research purposes (Collins 1999, Kelly 2011, Ingram and Dahmes 2014).

2.3.2 Sociology

2.3.2.1 Sociology of stories

Plummer (1995a: 8) focused on interactions which emerged around personal narrative, specifically intimate stories from Britain and the US. Intimate forms of narrative are one form of storytelling in society, storytelling is another. According to Plummer,

a sociology of stories would be concerned not with analysing the formal structures of stories/narratives, but with studying the social roles stories play: the ways they are produced, read, change, and so on. This means trying to answer the following research question: What social role does a particular instance of story-telling play in society? (Plummer 1995b: 334).

Therefore, asking 'What interactions occur between young people and storytelling?' is relevant to the sociology of stories. This thesis investigates whether storytelling can enhance our understanding of how young people, from similar and different social backgrounds, negotiate the emotional and behavioural dimensions of their lives.

Plummer maintained that stories were important tools for sociologists because of the way people use narratives for pleasure, and to communicate and to organise social interactions and social structures. He said,

Human beings are narrating animals and the societies we create are homes for our stories. We *create, appreciate* and *live* stories all our lives; they become our companions. We need stories in order to live. But we better be careful which stories we tell for stories have consequences. Yet although stories and narrative are often neglected in the orthodoxies of social analysis, they are usually critical to every stage of the human social research process. In the broadest terms we study the stories that people tell; we connect these stories to the wider stories of the world; and ultimately we represent them as our 'social science stories' (Plummer 2011: 1).

The stories Plummer talked about in the above extract do not limit stories to personal narratives collected in interviews but connect people's lives to 'wider stories of the world' such as existing economic or political conditions; and it is for these reasons that stories are useful for interdisciplinary study. An interdisciplinary study of narratives bridges the gaps between people's life stories, captured by written documents, and their social and political surroundings (Stanley 2013: 75). Stories should be considered alongside historical and broader economic or political social structures to understand stories contribution to people's lives and the structures they live in (Plummer 1995a: 21, 25, 179).

Plummer situated intimate stories within wider processes of power which determined which institutions, and groups of individuals, have control and regulatory power over

people's day-to-day narratives (1995a: 19-20, 26). Plummer considered how narratives and power dynamics interacted across multiple institutional and individual levels. For example, Plummer asked what prevents, or causes, intimate, sometimes traumatic, stories to be told or consumed.

Plummer discussed how groups heard stories in different ways according to their membership of particular groups. Through stories of HIV, Plummer linked personal experience to historical practices, places, processes and structures which gave voice to, or repressed, personal narrative (1995a: 22). Furthermore, Plummer considered narratives as 'joint actions' arising from human relationships (1995a: 335). In the interaction between storyteller and listener, the teller selects what to tell, and in what situations; the listener is actively engaged, dismissive or somewhere in between. Thus, processes of telling and meaning-making during storytelling involve individual and collective acts.

The sociology of stories has progressed to consider the role of written narratives, or documents, in shaping social life. Stanley (2013: 3-4) reflected that Plummer's work inspired sociologists to consider 'the creative, interpretive story-tellings of lives'. But Plummer focused on research-generated texts rather than the texts of everyday life such as 'diaries, letters, photos, tattoos'. His approach consisted of asking questions and generating texts to analyse (Stanley 2013: 4-5). Plummer's interest was in stories as 'social actions embedded in social worlds' (1995a: 17). He proposed that everyday life, through thoughts and feelings, prompted people to produce stories (1995a: 16). These stories influenced lived experience, creating new stories. Therefore, texts are part of social processes via the shaping of personal experience. There has been a biographical trend from diaries to media discussions. For example, what sexual stories are appropriate

for young homosexuals to share online on social networking sites has changed dramatically since the 1980s (Plummer 2001: 17, Ridder and Bauwel 2015).

My criticism of this field is that research has included orality in the form of personal experience, yet storytelling studies are noticeably absent. A keyword database search of IBSS, JSTOR and ASSI on the sociology of stories, storytelling and youth, indicated that studies involving young people, storytelling and the sociology of stories involved numerous different narrative forms (internet, digital, institutional), a wide age range (five to 27), and occurred in a number of physical and geographical locations: schools, websites, business and community spaces worldwide (De Ridder 2015, Andersen 2015, Theobald and Reynolds 2015, Hlalele and Brexa 2015).

Another criticism regards the applicability of Plummer's concepts to nations other than the UK and the US, including a lack of diverse ethnicities, ages and sexualities (Wedekind 2001:14). Plummer addressed the fact that social media and social movements differ geographically, and therefore that theoretical gaps existed in his study (1995a: 8). This thesis, though constrained geographically to one subsection of young people within the UK, succeeded in including young people of the same and different genders and similar and different ethnicities and classes.

Plummer aimed to encompass all story forms. He proposed that fictional worlds shaped personal narrative and were therefore important for understanding social life. For example, he referred to the popularity of fairy tale narratives as a response to shifting concepts of masculinity and femininity and a reflection of people's need to reconnect to concepts in the tales, such as what it means to be human (1995a: 38). Plummer cited the

popularity of popular psychology publications such as those by Estés (1996) and Moore and Gillette (1990). Such popular fairy tale books reinforce the view that although there are limits to the psychological interpretation of tales, fairy tales remain relevant to people's lives. And thus storytelling has a place within sociology, for the same reason.

2.3.2.2 Sociology of emotions

Zipes (2006b: 38) theories incorporated emotion in a limited way as his main focus was on behavioural management. As a result I wanted to incorporate emotion into my study. Researchers from numerous disciplines have been asking the same question for hundreds of years: 'How can emotion be defined and what role does it play?' (Higgs and Dulewicz 2002: 4, Goleman 2004: 44, Landy 2006: 81, 115, Kagan 2007: xi). The sociological study of emotions, such as shame and pride, and love and hate, has asked questions about how emotion is acquired, experienced, transformed and managed in people's lives (Scott and Marshall 2009d). Three models in the sociology of emotion indicate that 1) feelings are the result of the interaction between the body and its surroundings, 2) feelings are experienced and interpreted within an individual and 3) feelings are social constructions with different meanings in different countries (Scott and Marshall 2009b). Debates include, although it is not an extensive list: the extent to which emotions are socially constructed and/or socially organising (Hochschild 1998, Burkitt 2014), the gendering of emotion (Simon and Nath 2004, Erickson 2005, Shields *et al.* 2006) and how emotional expression differs because of ethnicity and other factors such as class or chronic illness (Skeggs 2009, Burkitt 2014, Ahmed 2010, Hoppe 2013).

Two important works in the sociology of emotions are Arlie Hochschild's *The Managed Heart* and the work of Thomas Scheff (1990, 2000: 96-97, 2011: 68-77), who proposed shame as an important social emotion because it is a response to the threatening and strengthening of social bonds. For more information about the sociology of emotions see Kemper (1990) and Turner and Stets (2006, 2015). Hochschild's theories will be considered alongside the storytelling space in Chapter 6 as part of my theoretical framework, and therefore I will now elaborate on her theories of emotional labour, and feeling and framing rules.

To incorporate emotion in my framework, I employed Hochschild's concept of emotional management in the analysis, thereby linking storytelling to Hochschild's theories for the first time. Hochschild wrote about emotional labour in the context of flight attendants at Delta Airlines in the 1970s. She scrutinised the work practices of Delta Airlines and concluded that customer service training taught individuals to manage their emotions. Hochschild termed this management of emotion in the workplace 'emotional labour'. Her definition of emotional labour was 'the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labour is sold for a wage and therefore has *exchange value*' (2012: 7).

Included in the concept of emotional labour were the terms feeling rules and framing rules. Feeling rules become apparent in social contexts when a gap is sensed between what an individual expects to feel and what is actually felt. Hochschild used the example of the happy bride on her wedding day. A bride is expected to be happy in the US, and therefore a stressed bride may manage her emotions to match people's expectations

(2012: 61). Emotional work is guided by feeling rules, which anticipate entitlements or obligations during social exchanges (2012: 56).

To incorporate emotion in my framework, I employed Hochschild's concept of emotional management in the analysis. Hochschild (2012: 265) proposed that a better model of social exchange could be developed by including emotion. She argued that a rounded model has to take into account personal agency and subversion.

A young businessman said to a flight attendant, "Why aren't you smiling?" She put her tray back on the food cart, looked him in the eye and said, "I'll tell you what. You smile first, then I'll smile." The businessman smiled at her. "Good," she replied. "Now freeze, and hold that for fifteen hours" (2012: 127).

Hochschild's *A Managed Heart* (2012) was full of examples of individual agency and transgression in which people acted against what she perceived to be the conservative forces of customer service training. Hochschild's work cautions against viewing emotional labour as a "normal" part of social structures. The examples that she used demonstrated how individuals were pressured by organisations to conform, and how they will resist conforming via their emotions. Through the interactions of agency and conformity, Hochschild's concept supports the idea of continuous interactions between the constraining effects of structure and the empowering effects of agency via the management of emotion.

Like fairy tales, feeling rules change depending on surrounding morals, values and beliefs. Rules can vary within a country, following guidelines learned and shared by others of the same age, ethnicity, gender, geographical locale, occupation, religion and social class

(2012: 262). For example, shyness is prized in Asia but not necessarily in the UK (Scott 2006). Zipes' work did not discuss emotional control as a key concern, so I used Hochschild's work as a way of exploring emotions connected to the performance of fairy tales.

The idea of moral emotions was raised in Chapter 1, Section 1.1, to bridge the gap between an individual's moral standards and their subsequent actions (Tangney *et al.* 2007: 347). Emotions can inform action related to a variety of moral standards within fairy tales via the interaction of an individual's feelings about those moral standards (their moral emotions). Conversations were analysed considering three story elements: conformative, transgressive and transformative (as described in Section 2.2.3). An individual's actions could potentially be conformative, transgressive and/or transformative in response to moral standards reinforced in fairy tales. An individual could also reject or ignore fairy tales as a source of moral standards. Observing how young people interpreted character motivations in the storytelling space, and shared personal stories, allowed me to connect emotions and behaviour to these three aspects of fairy tales (as will be discussed in Section 6.2, Chapter 6).

Feeling rules are connected to framing rules (Hochschild 1979: 566).

We understand feeling rules to be formed by framing rules: rules on what to feel are determined by rules on how one frames given situations. Framing rules are in turn informed by general phenomena such as gender ideologies or, even broader, commercialization (Tonkens 2012: 200).

Feeling and framing rules are processes which guide and manage Hochschild's theory of emotional labour. The strength of Hochschild's research was her consideration of the impacts customer service training had on emotion by making inferences about 'how society uses feeling' through employment (2012: 17). Hochschild's work convinced me that emotional management could be approached through qualitative methods, and that any discussion, or expression, of emotions in the storytelling space were important because action required emotional management in many situations.

Hochschild's theories have been applied to different workplaces (Hochschild 2012: 202, Pinsky and Levey 2015, Wharton 2009); academic fields (Bondi 2012); teaching (Yin *et al.* 2013); and political and family contexts (Hochschild 1997, Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2004, Hochschild and Machung 2012, Garth *et al.* 2014). Yet literature searches indicated that Hochschild's theories of emotion have not been previously linked to oral storytelling. Moreover, research about emotional labour in school contexts have been adult focused and work related, rather than associated with the experiences of young people. For example, Yin *et al.* (2013: 143) surveyed 1281 Chinese school teachers about their emotional labour strategies. Teachers who felt a consistency between how they felt and their emotional expression in the classroom felt higher levels of job satisfaction than teachers who took great effort to monitor their inner feelings and outward emotional expression. Unfortunately the study was quantitative and did not provide any examples of the teachers' experiences. Such a research focus on adult emotional labour indicates an interest in improving adult working conditions over student experience. But from my research experience perhaps that is due to structural limitations, such as access to certain

age groups, or school reluctance or time constraints to enable collaborations with researchers.

Nursing and psychology studies, however, have linked storytelling to emotion. Crogan *et al.* (2008) suggested that storytelling empowered coping mechanisms in cancer patients by decreasing anxiety. Yet the stories were life-history stories of cancer patients told by a nurse to seven participants over 12 weeks, not fairy tales. The study had a limited sample size: three people in the storytelling group and four in the control group (2008: 267-269).

Honos-Webb *et al.* (2006) noted, like Crogan *et al.* (2008), a significant decrease in anxiety levels following storytelling. Honos-Webb *et al.*'s (2006) study involved 69 US undergraduates. Undergraduates conducted journal writing or listened to a number of multicultural folk tales for 20 minutes a day over four days. The stories used were oral tales, folklore, literary folktales, religious tales, one urban legend and *The Christmas Truce* from historical records (2006: 96). In the writing group, students were asked to write about feelings regarding the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the US's attacks on Afghanistan (2006: 80-81). Anxiety decreased equally in response to this storytelling and writing therapy. Overall, Honos-Webb *et al.* (2006) agreed with Crogan *et al.* (2008) that stress and bereavement levels decreased in their test and control groups.

There were discrepancies and differences in both studies. Crogan *et al.* had an inadequate sample size, and Honos-Webb *et al.* a limited number of storytelling sessions. Research surrounding therapeutic storytelling has indicated that stories might aid the development of coping mechanisms. Therapeutic studies assume that listening to stories is healing, for instance via positive emotional implications, such as reducing anxiety, or by providing

individuals with the skills to manage, or control emotion. I will illustrate this using examples from two fairy tales used in my study.

Toy Princess (De Morgan 1987) was a fairy tale about the therapeutic implications of emotional expression. A princess was born in a kingdom where it was perceived as rude to express emotion, or to say anything but 'Yes', 'Certainly' and 'Just so'. The princess was different from everyone else, she felt and expressed her emotions and was reprimanded each time. As a result she became ill and her fairy godmother took her away to a kingdom where everyone was free to express their emotions. The fairy godmother replaced the princess with a toy princess who only said, 'Yes', 'Certainly' and 'Just so'. At the end of the story the fairy godmother informed the king of what she had done and gave the kingdom the option of keeping the toy princess or having their real princess returned. The kingdom chose the toy princess, and the real princess remained happily where she was. From one perspective *Toy Princess* was about the therapeutic benefits of emotional expression because when the princess was unable to express herself she became ill.

In contrast *Moon Bear* (Estés 1996: 380-381) was about the tools required to control emotion. A husband returned, traumatised from an unnamed Japanese War. His wife was happy about his return and prepared his favourite foods. But her husband was a changed man, he preferred to sleep outside in the woods and he kicked away the food his wife lovingly prepared. The wife goes to the village healer for advice. The healer offered to make a potion to cure the husband. All that is needed is one ingredient: a hair from the neck of the crescent moon bear who lives at the top of the mountain. The wife faced many challenges on her journey. She needed determination and patience to reach the bear's home and to request a hair from his neck. The wife overcame all of the challenges

in her path and returned to the healer. The healer threw the hair in the fire and told the woman to use what skills she learnt on her journey up the mountain to heal her husband: patience and determination.

Toy Princess and *Moon Bear* contained different messages regarding positive emotional states, which in *Toy Princess*, was the avoidance of repressing emotion, while *Moon Bear* provided guidance regarding emotional control. However it is an assumption that an audience listening to those two stories would automatically understand and use those lessons. Honos-Webb *et al.* (2006) and Crogan *et al.*'s (2008) studies appeared to reduce anxiety, but the causes of reduced anxiety could just as easily have been because they were provided with a space to relax rather than the moral content of the tales.

Then again the use of storytelling in therapeutic situations is well documented (Crogan *et al.* 2008, Dent-Brown and Wang 2006, Lawley and Tompkins 2000, Killick and Thomas 2007). Therapeutic storytelling interventions involving stories were crafted for specific patients rather than utilising folk and fairy tales, such as in the work of Honos-Webb *et al.* (2006). More research is therefore required into storytelling and emotion.

Section 2.3.5 summarised the lack of storytelling methods in the sociology of stories and emotion. My study provides a way to fill certain gaps in relation to storytelling, and add to the existing literature by incorporating fairy tales into the sociology of stories and considering storytelling in relation to Hochschild's theories of emotion. The storytelling space is distinctive from other studies because it: moves away from adultcentric studies of emotional management; incorporates emotion with the potential behavioural influences of stories; and includes a comparative analysis of three schools with students

of different genders, ethnic backgrounds and class. Stories are important interdisciplinary tools to observe the historical, economic, political, and social aspects of people's lives. It is important to consider young people's interactions with storytelling as a social act situated within wider contexts to gain a better understanding of the emotional and behavioural dimensions of young people's lives.

2.3.3 Fairy tales selected for the study and their rationale

Six fairy tales were performed to the students in my study. The stories were chosen for their emotional and behavioural content (see Chapter 3, Table 3.1); however, the tales also contain commentaries on class, gender and ethnicity. For now, I wish to briefly consider how the content of these fairy tales connects to social conditions, which will later aid the analysis.

Social conditions influence aspects of emotion, behaviour, class and gender enacted in storytelling. For instance, Wilson (1997) demonstrated that storytelling by adolescents differed geographically. Wilson (1997: 39) states, that 'we can see how the same story, told by different tellers, under different circumstances, can be radically changed in form, content and meaning'. In *The Vanishing Hitchhiker*, a hitchhiker was given a ride and sometimes left something behind, and it is later revealed that the hitchhiker had died a long time ago. When this story was told in the middle-class area of Gillingham, the story was changed and, instead, a married couple picked up an injured girl who returned to her house the next day to check on her welfare. When the story was told in a working-class area of Falmouth, a single man picked up an attractive woman and later handed her wallet to the police. In this variation, the police discovered the woman died years before

(Wilson 1997: 32-35, 38). Each version implied a different set of morals and values determined by the social contexts of the surrounding communities, which young people emulated in their storytelling.

The tales contain commentaries about class and class mobility (see Chapter 3, Table 3.2). Upper-class characters consist of kings, princes and princesses. Working-class characters are fishermen, servants, farmers and one frog. There are a few skilled workers, such as court advisers, one fairy godmother, a toy-maker, a healer and two witches who could be classed as herbalists. The majority of characters are split between upper and lower class. There is no upward mobility, with the exception of two magical creatures: a frog prince, and a witch who married a king. The frog, although a prince, progressed from a well to a palace and from being repulsive to being attractive. If he had transformed into a farmer, I doubt the king would have been so keen for him to marry his daughter. Thus, it was possible for the fallen upper class (the frog) to return to former glory; otherwise, magic would be required.

In terms of class, the stories conform to social conditions that remain of current relevance such as income and occupation; the world is divided into rich and poor, with only magical creatures moving upwards in the class structure and marrying the ruling classes.

Downward mobility is more common: two princesses married fishermen, one a farmer. Three characters remained in their birth class: the princess in *She-Bear*, the wife in *Moon Bear* and the *Frog King*. Compared to upward mobility, this is a ratio of 5:2 (not counting the frog twice). The fairy tales in this instance are not promoting the idea that upward social mobility is possible in income or occupation, which is important because of what the students say in their discussions of class in Chapter 7.

Therefore, fairy tales promote a clear set of power dynamics, which relates to Bourdieu's concept of habitus. Habitus differs from habit. Habits are individual behavioural patterns, which could be referred to as personality (James 1952: 109-113). Bourdieu defined habitus as

a system of dispositions, that is of permanent manners of being, seeing, acting and thinking, or a system of long-lasting (rather than permanent) schemes or schemata or structures of perception, conception and action [...] sometimes characterised as dispositional (2005: 43-44).

Habitus is an individual's adaptive perspective of "reality". An adaptable computer program learns new ways of working which differ from its basic coding. A person's habitus is conservative, yet adaptive, as social conditions change (Bourdieu 1990: 54-55).

Bourdieu (1984: 170) explored what determined the rituals and actions of everyday lives. Habitus does not determine people's thought and action; it constrains by ordering and changing the perception of practices. Transformations occur within limits. An example of this from my research is that when Felicity's grandmother received guests she laid out chocolate biscuits (transcript 20; from this point on transcripts will be indicated with a lowercase 't', e.g. t20). Which cognitive habits organise ritual? At some point, Felicity's grandmother decided to incorporate biscuits into a welcoming ritual. This habitus potentially arose from existing interactions that Felicity's grandmother observed in her family, such as offering food to visitors. In another family this habitus might not exist.

In relation to fairy tales, fictional tales are a part of social conditions that inform social practices surrounding story. The selective actions of creative practices across films, books,

and advertisements, to name a few mediums, influence what images of *Cinderella* continue to circulate (Disney 1950, Cox 2006, ghd® 2010, Slayton 2015). Certain organisational structures, such as publishers and advertisers, utilise fairy tale themes to sell a variety of products: books, films, TV series, or clothing or hair products. For example, the Adidas (2007) advertisement saw LRRH outrunning the wolf in a red pair of Adidas trainers, or the ghd® (2010) Cinderella advertisement sold haircare products by rescuing Cinderella's hair at the ball after it uncurled after midnight into an uncontrollable mess, apparently rescuable via hair straighteners.

My own interpretation of Bourdieu's concept of habitus includes fairy tales and storytelling as part of the social conditions which have created, sustained and transformed habitus over time. I will return to the concept of habitus in Chapter 6. There is also ethnicity and gender to consider. Ethnicity is almost completely lacking in the tales. I associate this with lower migration and immigration levels at the time the stories were written and/or told. The exception is *Moon Bear*, which originated in Japan, and the geographical setting of the story implied that the characters were Japanese. I will briefly return to the lack of ethnicity in the stories in Chapter 3, Section 3.3.3, and Chapter 7, Section 7.2.2. For now, this raises questions surrounding who has or lacks a voice in fairy tales, particularly if people of European origin are promoted above others.

There are similarities between Butler's (1988: 527) performativity and storytelling. Performativity is not the same as performance but Butler argued that gender was socially constructed rather than pre-ordained, obligatory performance being the way this happens.

Storytelling performances also re-enact gendered characteristics. Thus language and gesture is interpreted through tellers' enactments and listeners' interpretations in potentially gendered ways. Storytelling constructs a different physical space because it involves the performance of fictional narrative. However, Butler argued that gender construction was also fictional.

In the fairy tales of this study males typically acted free of constraints, as if social rules did not apply to them: a fisherman stole a selkie's pelt, a king tried to marry his daughter, kings locked up their daughters to decide who they would marry, and a husband ignored his wife. Women, however, reacted within constraints: the selkie married because her pelt was stolen (*MacCodram*); the ignored wife went on a quest for a magical ingredient to heal her husband (*Moon Bear*); a princess was forced to entertain a frog (*Frog King*); another princess escaped marriage to her father via a magical helper by transforming into a bear (*She-bear*); one was thrown out of the castle by her father (*Rooted Lover*), and the fairy godmother rescued a helpless princess from an unhappy situation when the king refused to act (*Toy Princess*).

Women's power and liberation is returned to them via marriage to the "right" partner, or the obtaining of a magical object, such as a pelt. The plough boy in *Rooted Lover* is an exception; he risked death, transforming into a poppy to win the love of the princess. The rules of story allowed the man to win the princess; however, she had to join him as a farmer. Therefore, the rules stretch so far, but no more.

Butler argues that gender expression is fictional as it is performativity constructed (2008: 34). Drag, for example, Butler said, revealed that gender identity can be performed but

not that it is always performed consciously (1993: 21, 2008: 186). However, the existence of a wide range of gender identities and expressions indicated the limits of oversimplifying gender in terms of gender expression. Butler considered gender identity and expression to be a process – a series of acts or a script shaped by the illusion of external performance:

a script may be enacted in various ways, and just as the play requires text and interpretation, so the gendered body acts its part in a culturally restricted corporeal space and enacts interpretations within the confines of already existing directives (Butler 1988: 527).

Actions, gestures and behaviours are observed, reproduced and internalised during social interactions. Some actions and gestures are normalised, creating a number of expected gendered behaviours (Lloyd 2009: 44).

Butler (1999: 179) wrote that a gender narrative is sustained by ‘the tacit collective agreement to perform, produce, and sustain discrete and polar genders’. So gender was a ‘fiction’ that was ‘obscured by the credibility of those productions – and the punishments that attend not agreeing to believe in them’. Gender is then a fictionalised narrative that creates itself, performing on the subjects rather than the other way around (Butler 1999: 179). Gendered actions and gestures are therefore artificial in their existence, unstable, and can be reproduced or resisted. I will analyse the students’ discussions of gender conformity in Chapter 5.

Power relations connected to the performance of class, gender and ethnicity seem important when comparing literature and storytelling. A book is social on many levels:

there are author-social, author-reader, reader-social environments. Plus reader-reader interactions in places like book groups, and the reader as an author themselves. Books are also commodities that are published to sell. The entertainment industry further promotes consumer merchandise connected to books and stories, for example, paraphernalia and attractions connected to *Harry Potter* (Rowling 2014), such as the Warner Brothers Studio, London.

For now, I want to highlight that the story content was important, and connected to social conditions and philosophical concepts such as habitus and gender performativity in conformist ways. There were also elements of transgression: children were abandoned by their parents, and a princess married a farmer. Transformation also occurred: children became selkies, a man a flower, and a prince a frog (and vice versa). Hence, the story contents also connect to the key ideas of conformity, transgression and transformation throughout the thesis.

The difference between literature and storytelling is that a book is an object and oral story is not (Zipes 2009: 40, Herschend and Rogan 2014). One of the fundamental differences between reading and storytelling is that storytelling re-enacts story through a shared live performance. Does this mean that storytelling is more participative than reading? I will summarise what the students' conversations revealed about the differences and similarities between literature and storytelling in Chapter 4.

2.3.4 Folklore and literary studies

Performance-centred folklore studies have explored some of the performance and social aspects of storytelling, from the personalities and performances of individual storytellers

to storytelling as a ritual within social and historical contexts (Dégh 1989, Dundas 1999, MacDonald 1999, Beech *et al.* 2007, Carr and Meek 2013, Boerdahl 2015).

Folklore acknowledges orality, while literary theory does not often include storytelling or orality. One exception is how narratives form meaning: in narratology, how and why text functions (Barry 2009: 214-215). This connects to Plummer's concept of storytelling as an important social process.

Literary theory has examined distinctions and similarities between oral and written literature (Yolen 2000: 21-26, Davidson and Chaudhri 2006, Jones and Schacker 2012) and has analysed fairy tales from language, psychological, feminist, Marxist, multicultural and even criminological perspectives (Propp 1968, Bottigheimer 1989: 195, 229, 237, 220, Estés 1996, Kast 1996, Leeming 1997, Tatar 1987, Yassif 2009). However, these are areas that remain theoretical rather than applied (Sarland 2005: 44) because that is not what literature theory does. So an interdisciplinary approach can consider the distinctions between oral and other narrative forms with a more applied approach.

Zipes filled an important gap between folklore and literary studies by creating a social and historical analysis of fairy tales (Haase 2002: 128-129). In the context of historical and social change, texts could be viewed as a part of changing ideological constructs (Watkins 2005: 50). Social interactions are crafted by collective relationships involving fictional stories because collective ideologies are carried and shaped by text. Because of the complexities of these interactions, texts can contain a combination of conflicting ideologies (Sarland 2005: 30).

Zipes proposed that children's literature exerted power on young people to conform to social "norms" and practices. Zipes described how writers actively commented on social structure through their writing.

Both Straparola and Basile were astute observers of how the civilizing process functioned and was being corroded in the different Italian principalities through wars, family conflicts, and transformation of trade and commerce in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They were apparently drawn to the fairy tale because it offered them a mode of writing, a narrative strategy and discourse, to address their concerns about the deformation of the civilizing process and the transmission of norms of behaviour that involved the management of behaviour and self-restraint (2006b: 21).

Children's literature – and other forms of fairy tales in the entertainment industry, such as animated films – carried authority. Publishing structures, and historically and socially changing ideologies, control story content. Therefore, literature written and promoted by adults encourage young people to submit to adult authority and conform to socially approved behaviour.

Zipes utilised two volumes of work by Elias on French *civilité* meaning 'civilized behaviour' (Zipes 1983: 20, Elias 2000: xii). Elias's (2000) civilising process involved a detailed history of manners and self-control from the Middle Ages to the early twentieth-century. For instance, French was spoken in sixteenth-century German courts because the German language was considered 'rude and barbarous' (Elias 2000: 12).

French spread from the courts to the upper layer of the bourgeoisie. All *honnêtes gens* (decent people), all people of “consequence” spoke it. To speak French was the symbol of all the upper classes (Elias 2000: 11).

In the eighteenth-century the French court was a model for etiquette and behaviour in other countries, especially Britain (Dunning and Mennell 2003: 195). This benefited the upper classes by reproducing inequality, as only those who could negotiate complex codes of socially appropriate behaviour could navigate certain social circles.

Socially approved standards of behaviour changed during the Renaissance as individuals placed social pressure on one another to conduct themselves in certain ways.

Not abruptly but very gradually the code of behaviour became stricter and the degree of consideration expected of others became greater. The sense of what to do and what not to do in order not to offend or shock others became subtler (Elias 2000: 69)

Groups of people in the German and French courts adopted increasingly high standards of self-restraint in respect of natural functions and bodily behaviour, such as using a fork when eating.

So why does one really need a fork? Why is it “barbaric” and “uncivilized” to put food into one’s mouth by hand from one’s own plate? Because it is distasteful to dirty one’s fingers, or at least to be seen in society with dirty fingers (Elias 2000: 107)

Elias discussed how working-class people were gradually controlled by codes of manners as more refined forms of interpersonal behaviour were developed.

Elias (2000: 67) argued that people's expectations increased because of 'embarrassment' and 'shame' under the gaze of others; Erasmus, for example, wrote *De civilitate morum puerilium* (on civility in boys) a book with instructions about appropriate manners. The book was reprinted more than 30 times (Elias 2000: 47). Elias used examples from Erasmus' text to argue,

The increased tendency of people to observe themselves and others is one sign of how the whole question of behaviour was now taking on a different character: people moulded themselves and others more deliberately than in the Middle Ages (Elias 2000: 68).

People's psychology shifted under specific standards of emotional control. Elias cited one horrific example of the ritual burning of cats to illustrate that emotional and behavioural "norms" change over time.

Someone who wished to gratify his or her pleasure in the manner of the sixteenth century by burning cats would be seen today as "abnormal", simply because normal conditioning in our stage of civilization restrains the pleasure in such actions through anxiety instilled as self-control (Elias 2000: 171-172).

Zipes employed Elias to demonstrate that children's literature, by the mid-seventeenth century, cultivated shame and anxiety to encourage children's conformity to social standards (Zipes 1983: 29-57, 2006b: 37). This occurred because adults who did not

comply, or lost their self-control and acted impulsively under acute emotional pressure, had to contend with social failure and quite often the loss of their position (Elias 2000: 373-374).

My aim was to incorporate the ideas of Zipes and Hochschild into a broader theoretical framework informed by the work of others, such as Freire on education, Bourdieu on habitus, and Plummer on power, which I attempted to go beyond by drawing upon the application of a practical 'storytelling space'. The work of Zipes concentrated on the influence of children's literature, fairy tales and fantasy genres on young people's behaviour. Note: Zipes proposed that fairy tales had a 'civilizing effect' which engaged critical thought and alternative ways of thinking, and which could lead to social change that could improve everyone's quality of life. Thus, young people were guided towards processes of observation, exploration, experience and inquiry to form their own meanings, and to ways of thinking which supported self-empowerment leading to social change through a demand for improvements in social conditions. Zipes' complete body of work acknowledged that young people have to negotiate the interactions between empowering and constraining forces in their lives. Zipes wrote,

Whether a child resists or participates in the transfer of capital, it is only through the capitalist market and the civilizing process of globalization that he or she can form a habitus and determine his or her private and social identity. While a child is bound to reproduce his or her parents' orientations in the domain of consumption, the changed objective conditions of capitalist production and consumption lead children to experiment and act in ways that

lead to a thinking and compartment that also may differentiate from their parents (Zipes 2009: 24).

Zipes' position appears to be that young people are constrained by the choices open to them. My research took Zipes' ideas further by exploring issues of empowerment and constraint that arose from the students' interpretation of stories. I observed whether students connected storytelling to issues of empowerment and constraint in their lives, including other narrative forms, such as TV and music, and broader social structures and processes, such as social class. Zipes' (2006b: 38) theories incorporated emotion, be it in a limited way, by briefly mentioning shame and anxiety because his main focus was on behavioural management.

French vogues were influential in the spread and popularity of fairy tales, and in the introduction of these stories to British children. A thriving fairy tale culture existed in the seventeenth-century, which led to the creation of children's fairy tales and children's literature as a genre; and children's fairy tale literature (Zipes 1999: 13). The Grimm brothers rewrote tales to suit nineteenth-century German morals and values (see *Snow White* in Section 2.2.3.1). This indicated that pressure was being exerted on children by adults through literature.

Zipes argued that commodification manipulated story to benefit 'state and private industry' (1983: 17). If the popularity of fairy tales and the rise of children's literature as a genre led to the commercial use of fairy tales in many different forms, the commercialisation of fairy tales raises questions about whether the entertainment industry exploits individuals through the globalisation of goods and services (Zipes 2009:

3). Putting branding and company philosophies aside, Zipes was not implying that fairy tales were being used by organisations to consciously manipulate people's behaviour. A company's first priority is to make a profit. Disney is an obvious example, but also Hallmark, producers of fairy tale-like romance movies, and consumer products like gifts and greetings cards, and books which link to other products that tie into books that become films.

Zipes argued that the influence of the fairy tale genre was visible through the way that fairy tales reinforced conformity. Perrault's tales for example contain

an earnest and moral purpose to influence stringent standards of comportment that were intended to regulate and limit the nature of children's development and regulate the sexual relations and social comportment of young adults (Zipes 2006b: 32).

Perrault rewrote the oral version of LRRH. In the original, Red tricked the wolf, whereas in Perrault's version, Red was eaten by the wolf (Zipes 1993: 91). Zipes alleged that Perrault altered stories to fit moral standards of behaviour, thereby shaping young people's morals and values to conform to adult-approved standards of behaviour. He proposed that fantasy and fairy tale genres in other narrative forms, such as film, would also comment on behaviour. Films that retell fairy tales from different perspectives for example

The flaws of the films reveal the misunderstandings about women's subjectivity and the need to continue to address the violation of women's equal rights to live as they desire. It is through the imagining and images of

the Little Red Riding Hood tale that possibilities for recreating the story and real social conditions are manifested (Zipes 2001c: 157).

Any suggestion that children's literature had, or continues to exert, an influence on the socialisation of children is complex and not without its problems. Wrong (1961) wrote an important critique of socialisation. He criticised socialisation for overemphasising structural influences and thereby portraying individuals, particularly young people, as the passive recipients of social influence (Ritzer 2007: 4559). Merton, in contrast, viewed socialisation as a process requiring conflict between the objectives of social structures, such as education, and an individual's personal objectives. In Merton's model, individuals have the ability to conform or protest when other objectives conflict with their own (Merton 1938: 676). However, Parsons saw socialisation as an advantage to individuals (Parsons 1956: 36).

One of the largest criticisms of the concept of socialisation is the assumption that it is a process that socialises young people towards positive or negative outcomes. Socialisation is not necessarily a "bad" thing. The Rights of the Child (unicef 2015) lists 'respect' as an important quality for education under Article 29. Respect towards others is considered an important life skill because it supports cooperative and sociable behaviours that are considered beneficial to the creation of a stable social environment. If it exists, socialisation is not a process in the traditional sense, for it cannot be defined as a clear series of actions or steps towards a certain goal. A contemporary definition of socialisation acknowledges different layers of influence being enacted at individual and social levels (Ritzer 2007: 4558).

It is worth questioning whether the mass-mediation of fairy tales is used to manipulate or liberate individuals or whether such control has any influence at all. Zipes (2009: 39-41) asked whether fairy tales are overly consumerised and utilised by industry, the media, to reinforce certain values in our society and whether stories can be used to inspire social change. To illustrate fairy tales in the context of French social and political history, and their influence on British literature, Zipes proposed that fairy tales conveyed part of 'a human struggle to form and maintain a civilizing process' (2011: 1). In other words, that fairy tales play a role in the social construction of behaviour (1983, 2006a, 2012). Zipes identified that writers employed fairy tales to critique the civilising process, and did so 'with the belief that social change is still possible' (2006b: 171). And also that storytelling could be used to promote political and ideological values through supporting 'social conscience' (Zipes 2004: 59). Zipes (2001: 543) organised stories under 38 subheadings such as 'Rewards and Punishments for Good and Bad Little Girls'. Young girls with admirable characters were rewarded, while stepsisters, ugly in looks and manners, were punished. For example, one of the first literary fairy tales for children, *Aurore and Aimée*, promoted a young woman's virtues while demonstrating that such virtues served men, for a prince agreed to marry Aurore because of her honesty (Zipes 2001a: 543, 571).

Zipes's evidence is convincing regarding the 'civilising' content of fairy tales but a gap remains between a fairy tale's potential to inform a young person's behaviour and the actual influence a story can have. A gap my research sets out to address while being aware of the limitations of the study to deal with every aspect of the subject area.

Teverson positioned Zipes' concepts within Marxist cultural theory because of the subversive power struggles within Zipes' arguments (2013: 127). Zipes was not explicitly

using Marxist analysis, but his work appears to have been influenced by a number of German and Marxist philosophers and sociologists: Norbert Elias, Ernst Bloch, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer. Speaking about Bloch, Zipes said that hope in fairy tales made them important and relevant to people's lives. For example, characters such as the small hero in *Tom Thumb* provided encouragement (Fivebooks.com 2010).

Zipes has been critiqued for viewing fairy tales in excessively utopian and anti-authoritarian ways. He questioned whether stories could make a difference against the dominating forces of 'control, discipline and rationalization' (2006b: 171), while proposing that fairy tales 'illuminate the way to overcome oppression' (2008a: 1). Teverson gave voice to Zipes' counter argument: that the liberating potential of stories could not occur in all conditions because a story's potential can be 'obscured or misdirected' by those in authority (Teverson 2013: 127, 134). A story may hold liberating potential, but whether that influences an individual is a challenging question in the study of fairy tales that is yet to be answered.

The above ideas connect to this thesis, which addresses whether effective storytelling spaces can be created in schools to research how young people from different social backgrounds negotiate the emotional and behavioural dimensions of their lives, in constraining or empowering ways. What agency do young people have in their interactions with literature? Critical theory emphasizes that there is not just one reading of a story possible (Adair 1992: 23, Tyson 2011: 16), and my study offers a way to observe how young people from similar and different backgrounds interpret the same fairy tales following a storytelling performance.

Zipes' early work does not appear to consider agency against literary influence in depth (1997: 58, 2002b:4). His later work considers agency under the constraints of adult authority and structural influence, which is connected to stories via the entertainment industry. Zipes (2009: 14-22) reflected on children as active socio-economic participants and knowledgeable consumers. Socio-economic conditions involve how economic processes such as consumerism affect society by creating social "norms" (Becker 1974: 1063). Socio-economic background is known to affect educational attainment (OECD 2013: 33-39). Young people are knowledgeable consumers; however, the danger of a capitalist system is that the entertainment industry, through literature and associated marketed products, predisposes young people to view themselves and others as marketable commodities (Zipes 2009: 14). This might threaten the role of education to encourage critical thinking and/or social and moral skills, or it might not.

There is a tendency in Zipes' arguments towards adult authority, where parents, teachers, and librarians influence young people's reading habits, and structural influences, such as education and the entertainment industries, have further constraining effects. However, Zipes appears optimistic about the power of storytelling traditions to counteract the top-down influence of the publishing and film industry by supporting the development of social conscience and critical thinking (Zipes 2004: 10, 59, Gottschall 2012: 199, Wilson 2014: 138). I suggested in the introduction, Chapter 1, that young people have the agency to reject the influence of literature. Zipes (1995: 18) wrote, "if the substance and forms of the classical structures do not hold up to their questioning' then 'it may be time to create new devices, strategies, and structures to deal with particular topics and issues that interest them.'

As yet, these theories have not been investigated through practical applications, other than through critical literacy research (see Section 2.3.5) which has demonstrated that more than one reading of a story is possible. Literary theory has focused on content deconstruction, the decline of authorial intention, the reader as interpreter, and the limits of various interpretations. Thus, analysis of the constraining and empowering aspects of fairy tales remains largely theoretical. Some interesting studies have compared text and agency, such as cognitive and emotional engagement, with fiction (Nikolajeva 2014), or how stories could engage environmental responsibility (Bigger and Webb 2010) or moral agency (Sainsbury 2015). Furthermore, work has been published concerning the agency of young people in Victorian literature (Gubar 2009: 39-41, Reynolds 2007).

To recap this section, before summarising the relevant storytelling literature, the literature suggests that fairy tales have the potential to inspire social change. At the same time, Zipes questioned whether stories can make a difference against dominating forces of adult authority and social structures. Such contradictions illustrate that interactions between young people's agency and texts are complex and multi-layered. Literature-based studies have focused on reading and interpreting text rather than storytelling. Even agency is focused on text interpretations of agency in fairy tales rather than on observing the interaction between fairy tales and young people. My thesis considers the practical interaction of fairy tales with young people's agency to consider the way storytelling interacts with the emotional and behavioural dimensions of young people's lives.

2.3.5 Education and drama

The pervasiveness of storytelling in different social spaces makes it appealing for interdisciplinary study. Stories, including fairy tales, are a part of social structures for more than entertainment purposes: they are educational and therapeutic. The use of storytelling in therapeutic situations is well documented (Lawley and Tompkins 2000, Killick and Thomas 2007, Crogan *et al.* 2008, Dent-Brown and Wang 2006, Banks 2012). Storytelling is used practically in health care and education (LeBron *et al.* 2014, Dale *et al.* 2016). For example, in a health-care context, Banks-Wallace (2002: 414, 420) proposed that historical context, social values and a storytelling environment influenced story formation. The health concerns of African Americans indicated that previous and coexisting social and political conditions framed their health narratives. Such findings corresponded with Zipes' thoughts about how fairy tale narratives indicate previous and coexisting social and political conditions. The Banks-Wallace (2002) study, however, utilised life history narratives rather than fictional ones.

Stories could be viewed as interactively constructed 'social performances', constrained and enabled by power dynamics (Polletta *et al.* 2011: 110). Polletta described how the criminal justice system did not support or recognise the different experiences of women asylum applicants to the UK. System limitations create social, political and legal barriers for applicants who wish to disclose and have their stories told and recognised. An uneven distribution of rights to enter the country has occurred because women's narratives are expected to match the conventions of institutional structures (Cowan *et al.* 2009: 218). Conventions that have been organised around restricted hierarchies of power (Polletta *et al.* 2011: 115).

The use of oral storytelling has been neglected in qualitative studies when considering individual's stories as social performances in relation to small- and large-scale social contexts (Banks-Wallace 2002, Polletta *et al.* 2011: 110). In education there is a long history of telling stories to improve literacy skills (McKeough 2008, Coulter *et al.* 2007: 105). Education focuses on a number of different areas, such as literacy (Kelly 2011, Carter-Black 2013), maths or science engagement (Casey *et al.* 2008: 42, 36-37, Dahlstrom 2014: 13615), special needs (Grove 2015, Preece and Zhao 2015) and applied storytelling, which works with learning targets, or focuses on intervening in a social problem through applied storytelling techniques. Drama-based education involves young people as critical, social actors adopting fictional roles to explore social issues (Neelands 2000:51, Hull and Readman 2007: 215).

Storytelling is associated with learning social skills, whether emotional or behavioural. Studies have been framed as emotional or behavioural interventions. Curenton and Craig (2011) compared share-reading to storytelling with 33 mother-child pairings in the US. Mothers were asked to read the same story, *Peter's Chair*, about a boy struggling with a sibling's arrival. Mothers then told a personal experience about getting in trouble for doing something. Conversations with children aged 3-5 were recorded, transcribed and analysed. As prosocial behaviours, such as cooperation, self-control and responsibility, increased in oral storytelling, antisocial behaviours, such as not listening or hitting, decreased (2011: 128, 133, 144, 146). Previous work by Bird and Reese (2006: 127) also found that explaining negative emotions increased children's prosocial skills. Research tended to be adult- rather than child-led, with adults making meaning of children's behaviour rather than the young people themselves.

Storytelling studies without reading or drama elements were rare in the literature. One exception was the comparison of storytelling to film at a summer camp with 135 young people. Crain (*et al.* 1983) and his colleagues compared watching cartoons (*Popeye*), or a trivial story (*Bullet Bob*), to performing *Juniper Tree* or *Goose Girl* (Grimm and Grimm 2014: 148, 283). Six-to-11-year-olds exposed to *Popeye* or *Bullet Bob* were more eager to return to active play than those who listened to a fairy story. Those subjected to fairy tales were observed being more reflective and preferring to play alone. Crain concluded that this was because 'these stories touched on their inner concerns' (Crain *et al.* 1983: 17).

A gap exists in storytelling research because the majority of storytelling work is situated within educational settings and is adult-led with mixed approaches. Storytelling works well in combination with other methods, so the study of orality has been overlooked while life histories, reading, writing and drama-based research has thrived (Collins 1999, Mello 2001: 3, Kelly 2011, Ingram and Dahmes 2014). Some exceptions are the work of Paley (1990), Egan (1995, 1997), Wilson (1997), Mello (2001), Kelly (2011), Lewis (2011) and Ingram and Dahmes (2014). In addition my study proposes a theoretical framework which incorporates ideas from Zipes and Hochschild. I use some of their theories as a way to approach issues surrounding empowerment and conformity in order to investigate how young people from similar and different social backgrounds negotiated emotions and behaviour in the storytelling space.

The most relevant storytelling studies in relation to this thesis are those of Mello (2001), and Ingram (2015). Mello (2001) introduced storytelling sessions in a US classroom with 11 young people aged 10-12. Sessions included multicultural myths, folk and fairy tales,

epics, legends and fables, and occurred twice a month over one school year (2001: 554-555). Like my study, the students related the stories to their own experiences and other narratives such as films, video games and TV (Mello 2001: 5-6). However, protocol questions set by the researcher/storyteller controlled sessions; they were not student-led. If young people lack agency in their own processes of meaning-making, can such spaces inform us about their interactions with story outside the research space?

The students in Mello's class linked stories' images and settings to different social perceptions and theories. Stories told contrasting viewpoints and the young people's dialogue, adjusted to reflect different perspectives over time. Mello referred to this as a change in social consciousness (2001: 9, 10). Mello's work built on previous studies of student perceptions of gender roles in the Brothers Grimm's tales (Westland 1993, Trousdale 1995, Trousdale and McMillan 2003). The gender of the listener, and character, affected the story's interpretation and meaning. Male characters were perceived to hold authority through being male. Females experienced a number of relationships and caretaking roles. One question Mello asked was, 'Can women exercise power and still be nice?' Mello concluded that group discussion indicated that there was a gender difference. Students perceived heroes to be strong, while heroines demonstrated physical endurance, problem-solving, effort and kindness (2001: 551).

Mello criticised previous studies for focusing on white upper- to upper-middle-class private secondary schools and using texts from Western literary traditions. A strength of her work is that she took into account youth from working- and lower-middle-class backgrounds, and multicultural texts, and her research occurred across a school year.

Mello had a feminist-literary focus rather than an interdisciplinary one. She took account

of multicultural fairy tales, which I did not, yet did not gather student experiences of reading and media habits, which I did.

Returning to Zipes, some of his theories about the critical and community-forming aspects of storytelling have been tested through the Neighborhood Bridges Program, from this point referred to as Bridges. Bridges involved over 40 teachers and teaching artists in schools across Minneapolis. Highly trained teaching artists worked with a teacher and groups of approximately 20 to 30 young people, aged 8 to 13, in their classroom from autumn to spring. Throughout the year, students' individual and group storytelling and drama skills were encouraged, including the students' ability to question story from their own experiences (Neighbourhood Bridges 2015, Parfitt 2014, Ingram 2015).

Bridges has been assessed since 2010 to ensure critical literacy targets are met which enable young people to actively engage with texts from a critical perspective and be aware of 'how social and power relations, identities and knowledge are constructed' in texts (Lewis 2006: 374). Thus literacy is not just about reading ability; becoming critically literate means developing abilities in analysing, critiquing, and questioning messages inherent within a text (Tompkins 2010: 11).

From 2010 to 2015, 67 classrooms were assessed through the Bridges programme. The results indicated that there were statistically significant increases in the level of the following skills from the autumn to the spring term: creative writing; knowledge of theatre vocabulary; meaning-making; and the ability to use acting/writing to transform stories (Lewis *et al.* 2011, Ingram 2011: 34, Ingram and Dahmes 2014, Ingram and Streit

2015a). The breadth of Bridges' work was impressive. Its methods, while interesting, created adult- and teacher-led spaces within the classroom and with some adult–student collaboration.

The exploration of evidence in Section 2.3.5 shows, the majority of storytelling work is situated within educational and adult-led studies. In most educational/therapeutic contexts, young people are guided to certain concepts rather than empowered in their own process of making-meaning, and there is a lack of separation from reading, writing and drama. Storytelling or orality is seen as a foundation for literacy: reading, writing and critical thinking. But research has also looked at how storytelling empowers coping mechanisms (emotional) and behavioural strategies in special needs education and encourages socially acceptable behaviours in young people (Preece and Zhao 2015).

My study created an area for oral storytelling methods, including student-led dialogue, which the participating students considered separate from its educational context (see Chapter 4, Section 4.5.5). Three different educational settings allowed comparisons to be drawn across gender, ethnicity and class.

2.3.6 Childhood and youth studies

Childhood and youth studies is a multidisciplinary area covering issues from birth to 18 years. Subjects include education, sociology, psychology, health, and welfare and social policy, and the impact of family, class, gender, location, education, narrative, power and ethnicity on identity. Ideas about one concept of youth, or an “ideal” childhood, have been discredited. Childhood is a construction which differs geographically, historically and politically (Leccardi and Ruspini 2006, Pressler 2010: 24, Kehily 2013, Lesko and Talbut

2012, White and Wyn 2012, Wyn and Cahill 2015, Wyness 2015). This brief section will focus on identity and power.

Concepts of identity, within youth studies, range from relatively fixed to adaptable (Stokes *et al.* 2015: 259, 260). Davies *et al.* (2001: 167-182) described the self as performance through four metaphors, which is relevant to my research. These metaphors considered the resourcefulness of young people under constraints (seesaw); how settings, systems and services supported development (frog); and the ability to critique options (tourist). The fourth, the performer, referred to social interactions and structures which formed “norms” (also termed scripts, positions or storylines). Students are positioned in relation to the education system and the relationships that exist within it.

Social relationships, such as class, are subject to structural practices. Bowles and Gintis (1976: 129) said,

The initiation of youth into the economic system is further facilitated by a series of institutions, including the family and the educational system, that are more immediately related to the formation of personality and consciousness. Education works primarily through the institutional relations to which students are subjected. Thus schooling fosters and rewards the development of certain capacities and the expression of certain needs, while thwarting and penalizing others. Through these institutional relationships, the educational system tailors the self-concepts, aspirations, and social class identifications of individuals to the requirements of the social division of labor.

Bowles and Gintis (1976: 120-122, 141) described how the economic status of parents was the best indicator of their children's economic success, rather than effort at school or educational achievement. They argued that schools were not about producing skills or knowledge that directly corresponded to those needed on the job. They said instead that education has a hidden curriculum which reproduces social inequality.

By attuning young people to a set of social relationships similar to those of the workplace, schooling attempts to gear the development of personal needs to its requirements [...] The differential socialization patterns of school attended by students of different social classes do not arise by accident. Rather, they reflect the fact that the educational objectives and expectations of administrators, teachers, and parents (as well as the responsiveness of students to various patterns of teaching and control) differ for students of different social classes (Bowles and Gintis 1976: 132).

Bowles and Gintis (1976: 239) viewed education as oppressive because it reinforces the dominant ideology; which under capitalism is to produce better, self-supervising workers, and a more productive environment by creating more innovative thinkers to create new products and sustain the capitalist system. Their theories were critiqued by Cole (2006: 35) for lacking space for transgression; although critical theory argues that there is space within such a system to resist it through critical awareness (Gottesman 2016: 84). Bowles and Gintis (2006: 21) later acknowledged that there was room for transgression as schools could be 'sites of social practice'.

Social relationships are subject to structural practices and school guidelines regulate conduct between students and teachers. Students improvise using learned scripts across numerous social interactions: student–student, student–teacher and student–parent, each with expected “norms” of socially approved behaviour (Ritzer 2007: 4558). Scripts interact with desires, beliefs, emotions and behaviours within and outside the school, the home and the community, and so on, producing improvised performances.

Davis *et al.*'s four metaphors questioned the tendency of researchers to form simplified assumptions about young people, their experiences and their agency. In addition, transition theory discusses how young people ‘navigate’ changes in their lives (Jones 2009: 170). Storytelling might support transitions as a positive intervention by enabling young people to reflect on transitions, and as a research method to aid understanding of their lives.

As an intervention, storytelling and performance have been used as research tools to support critical thought. Phillips (2010: 363-376) explored storytelling workshops in a classroom of Australian five-to-six-year-olds. Workshops involved listening to multicultural folktales alongside additional information. When a Cherokee folk tale was told about hunting and living with nature, information was shared about the actions of global charities against poaching.

The researcher acknowledged that the workshops were an adult-led space, especially in terms of citizenship. Obstacles were created by school and governmental structures when an attempt was made to position young people as citizens. For instance, when the class created a petition, the school principal placed limits on it and a response from the

Minister's environmental department limited the children's citizenship. The petition was not recognised by government because of how it was formatted (Phillips 2010: 369-370). Phillips asked whether children learn established political practices or whether such practices should shift in response to its citizens. Imposing barriers or limitations to citizenship is a form of marginalisation (2010: 374).

Similar issues of identity, citizenship and power apply to the UK. There is a lack of consultation with young people as future citizens, which contradicts the UNCRC (unicef 2015), which states that every child should be encouraged to respect the rights of others. During 2016's National Curriculum changes, 50 young people were consulted, compared to thousands of teachers (DoE 2013b: 4). This dichotomy highlights the need for educators and researchers to select methods that provide insights into the experiences of youth. The case studies I have used illustrate how storytelling is viewed as a tool to empower children, yet limitations exist in power structures determining children's engagement with school and governmental politics. Ways in which inequalities of power impact, and influence, young people's identities demonstrate the importance of youth studies to shaping policy and structural change.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the gaps across the following interdisciplinary subjects related to storytelling: sociology, philosophy, education and theatre, folklore and literary studies, and childhood and youth studies. It has highlighted a scarcity of research involving oral storytelling without additional reading, writing or drama elements. Research spaces within previous education environments were adult-led, with little space for student-led

discussion and, therefore, student agency. Most research failed to compare different subgroups of young people in terms of gender, ethnicity and class within the same study. Literary theory does not practically consider whether stories interact with the emotional and behavioural dimensions of young people's lives.

This research project seeks to address some of these gaps in the literature by exploring oral storytelling in three different school environments and by creating a space within education that was student-led where conflicting perspectives were valid and validated by their peers. The young people in the three schools were from both similar and different social backgrounds, enabling a comparison between educational settings on the basis of gender, ethnicity and class. In addition, information about young people's expectations and experience of the space and their previous reading habits was gathered via interviews.

Examining student dialogue in the storytelling space offers a way to examine current theories about the sociology of story, feeling and framing rules, the civilising potential of stories, and performativity and habitus. These subject areas allow an investigation into the potential of storytelling to enhance our understanding of the emotional and behavioural dimensions of similar and different young people's lives through their interaction with story. Storytelling and understanding young people's empowerments and constraints challenges is important to inform the current understanding of equality, in terms of whether social structures and practices are meeting the needs of students with a wide range of backgrounds.

In this thesis I aim to address comparative analysis gaps in the literature across gender, ethnicity, class and different educational settings. In the introduction and literature review I put forward some ideas and issues surrounding whether young people's emotions and behaviour were empowered or constrained by story. I also proposed a theoretical framework incorporating ideas from Zipes and Hochschild as a way to approach the issues surrounding empowerment and conformity, in order to investigate how young people from similar and different social backgrounds negotiated emotions and behaviour. My aim was to incorporate the ideas of Zipes and Hochschild into a broader theoretical framework. A framework informed by the work of others, like Freire on education, Bourdieu on habitus, and Plummer on power, which I attempted to go beyond by drawing upon the application of a practical 'storytelling space'.

Chapter 2, the literature review, situated the thesis in an interdisciplinary context.

Chapter 3, the methods chapter, explains how the storytelling space was designed and how the students' conversations were analysed. Chapters 4 to 5, the data chapters, then analyse and discuss how young people related the storytelling to their lives, and what this suggests about how emotion, behaviour and broader social processes and structures form the perspective of young people.

Chapter 3 Investigating young people's responses through the creation of an innovative Storytelling Space

3.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters situated this study in an interdisciplinary context with the purpose of exploring whether young people's discussions following storytelling signify how they negotiate similar and different dimensions of their lives. Throughout the chapter, I will discuss why the study required an exploratory approach. The purpose of this chapter is to explain how the storytelling space was designed and how student conversations were analysed. Section 3.2 describes the design of the storytelling space, before outlining what occurred during Stage One, the pilot study, of the research to assess the method, and what adjustments were required before Stage Two (data collection). Section 3.3 outlines participant, school and fairy tale selection. Section 3.4 outlines ethical considerations and Section 3.5 data processing and analysis.

3.2 The design of the storytelling space

My study was set up to explore whether storytelling would reveal insights into young people's experiences. To elaborate on the debate around the empowering and constraining effects of storytelling, set out in Chapter 1, my initial reasoning for using storytelling was that the students would relate personal stories to fairy tales, revealing insights into their emotional and behavioural experiences in potentially beneficial ways. As an example, literature provided me with a space of hope and comfort growing up: I identified with characters like me, explored emotions in imaginary contexts and found freedom from adult restrictions. Divinyi (1995) investigated group discussion with

adolescents using storytelling as an intervention technique. After years working as a professional counsellor with women, who had histories of abuse and abandonment, Divinyi believed that stories were

a powerful intervention method which allows the therapist to utilize a virtually limitless range of material to guide and direct clients through the healing process. It is also a tool which often allows new information to be presented in such a way as to by-pass deeply entrenched psychological defenses (Divinyi 1995: 28).

My ideas progressed from the setting up of the storytelling space, originally intended as an exploratory action, to consider the wider aspects of empowerment and constraints on young people's lives. During data analysis, further questions were formed and refined around the terms conformative, transgressive and transformative (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3).

This study explored the possibilities that storytelling research might provide insights into young people's lives, as experienced within and beyond the education system.

Consequently, if the storytelling space gives voice to issues and transitions young people have experienced, are experiencing or are concerned about, such information can better inform youth policy and practice.

Plummer called for sociology to consider how stories are symbolic, meaningful *and* a part of social processes. He observed how people tell stories and create meaning. Moreover, he believed that 'the worlds we craft mesh and flow, but remain emergent: never fixed, always indeterminate, ceaselessly contested' (Plummer 1995a: 20). Plummer suggested,

in the above quote, that the social world is constantly changing through the interaction of people and their stories. Likewise, that narrative must be part of meaning-making in order to make sense of the world. This concept of a changing, narrative world has been supported in sociology by Ricœur's concept of narrative identity and subsequent work on the self as actively narrated by stories. In other words, an individual constructs their sense of self through a process of meaning-making, which involves interaction between agency and narrative (Ricœur 1990: 52, Coffey 2002: 294, Truc 2011: 150).

Connected to this, an important aspect of narrative is that it is a social act. As Fine (2002: 230) stated, 'without shared and communicated culture, sustained collective action is impossible'. Plummer proposed that stories were social. Moreover, he introduced behaviour and emotions into a social, storied context by saying, 'We work and worry, pray and play, love and hate; and all the time we are telling stories about our pasts, our presents and our futures' (Plummer 1995a: 19-20). Plummer's words suggest that emotions and actions are told, heard, understood and processed through the social interactions of narratives. Interaction constructs an individual's understanding of "reality", even though different people's accounts, of a storytelling event, for example, are likely to differ.

Realist perspectives, in sociology, describe how the world exists independent of human interpretation. As Archer (2000: 43) said, inflation affects fixed income, for example by decreasing an individual's spare income, regardless of that individual's understanding of how inflation affects them. "Reality" is thus interpreted in different ways, which means that the world is understood through people's interpretations and the subjective meanings that are imposed on objects, events and behaviour (May 2011: 12). Society is

not an entity in itself but comprised of human action. Variable institutions, practices or beliefs arise from human interactions and what it means to be human (Mellor 2004).

A realist perspective acknowledges that narrative methods do not result in an understanding of “reality” but instead people’s interpretations of “reality”. The epistemological stance of this study touches on realism, while acknowledging the limitations of such a perspective. Limitations of realist methods include overlooking the wider picture, because realism indicates ‘people’s consciousness’ as reflective of their living conditions, such as whether desires and needs are met, or not met, within social structures (May 2011: 20).

To relate an interactionist perspective to storytelling I investigated whether young people connecting storytelling to behaviours and emotions in their lives would reveal processes of empowerment and constraint on their social actions. Empowerment and constraint arises through conflict. For example, at an individual level conflicts exist between the needs of employers, and the availability of social mobility and fulfilment and opportunity for individuals (Waller 2011: 114-116). At an individual level, in an educational context, one-to-one student–teacher relationships may impact educational experience. On a broader level, wider influences impact on the social and political contexts of schooling and therefore how a person is educated. Individual and broader-scale factors may have similar and difference effects on the educational experiences of young people across different geographical areas. For instance, the differences between the ways in which the government informs education policy and practice in empowering and constraining ways, and the ways in which there is regional autonomy to create different educational processes (Burgess and Parker 1999: 181).

A background in environmental science and creative writing informed the use of storytelling as a methodology, and led me to propose an interdisciplinary thesis across humanities (literature, philosophy, theatre studies) and the social sciences (sociology, education). Such fields demonstrate the importance of narrative and its potential uses. Honos-Webb and SunWolf's (2006) study, which showed that listening to fairy tales reduced anxiety in college students after 9/11, is relevant here. There was plenty of interest in the research in narratives and fairy tales, but a lack of research with an oral storytelling focus. Relevant research might have been obscured because "storytelling" was used to mean stories in general. As explained in Chapter 1, this meant that research involving oral narrative was obscured when filtering through the large number of studies using the term storytelling.

The method was also exploratory, working with the complexities of narrative. Law (2004) wrote about a concept of mess in social science research. For example, while income distributions and CO₂ emissions are measurable, 'the world is also textured in quite different ways' that are not easily quantifiable (Law 2004: 2). Law effectively argued that mess needs to be considered in the research process. Through the practice of storytelling, Wilson proposed, mess and meaning-making both occur.

I am using "mess" in storytelling here to primarily describe a range of multiplicities (multiplicities of forms, of media, of perspectives, of truths, of meanings, of texts, of relationships) and also storytelling's temporary nature, whereby stories resist definition and documentation. Stories live in the moment. One might even say that they perform the moment and then are

gone, only to reconstruct themselves and reappear for the new moment, the new context (Wilson 2014: 126).

Another example of “mess” is that web-based technologies have brought different contexts to people’s “narrative lives”. Internet access availability, for instance, has become another measure of inequality (Ragnedda and Muschert 2013).

In addition to taking a narrative, exploratory, direction, this research was positioned within education. There is an established body of work in storytelling for educational purposes; however, as shown in the literature review, this is focused on reading, writing and performance. As Greenhalgh and Hurwitz (Greenhalgh 2001: 819) proposed, if we are to understand ‘the precise benefits of storytelling as an educational tool’ then oral and social aspects need to be taken into consideration. A lack of oral studies in the literature therefore led to the formation of the main thesis question:

Can effective storytelling spaces be created in schools, as a means of using story to research how young people from different social backgrounds negotiate the emotional and behavioural dimensions of their lives, in constraining or empowering ways?

The study was conducted in three secondary schools in Warwickshire in order to perform a comparative analysis. Young people were given the opportunity to discuss fairy tales following a storytelling performance. The exploratory framework of this study required a qualitative approach. The method was designed to explore whether storytelling provided a way to understand the perceptions of young people and identify their needs. As such, a qualitative method involving storytelling allowed flexibility to generate ideas for

improvements and captured interesting social aspects of the ways in which young people interpret, discuss, retell and use story. Thus, a qualitative method was effective for answering the research questions and leaving space for new questions to arise.

So far, Section 3.2 has introduced how this study took an oral, narrative, realist and qualitative approach. Now Sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 will describe what occurred during Stage One of the research, and what adjustments were required before Stage Two (data collection).

3.2.1 Stage One study

Stage One was a pilot study set up to assess what would happen in a space involving storytelling and young people. The original aim of the thesis was to explore how providing a space for young people to come together and listen to stories would impact them from a therapeutic perspective. Interpretation of the data generated from Stage One led me down an alternative route to consider the type of space created by storytelling. The following extract is taken from the start of one of the storytelling sessions:

Some of my stories have music in, in which case having my fiddle or a squeeze box is kind of a good thing. And also if you fall asleep, then I can wake you up, by suddenly playing loud noises on the violin... If I fall asleep, I can wake myself up by suddenly playing loud noises (t1).

The extract above captures something of the humour and the relaxed atmosphere of the space that was being created in each school. Mike O'Connor kindly volunteered his storytelling services for Stage One. We went into a school in south-west England for five

weeks in March and April 2012 to explore whether storytelling stimulated group discussion. This involved six British-White students, four girls and two boys, aged 12 to 14, in a classroom, with two teachers, Mike O'Connor, and myself. To emphasise that the storytelling space was different from the spaces in which usual school activities took place, the classroom was rearranged. Chairs were pulled around a couple of desks pushed together. Mike sat at the same level as the students, and biscuits were provided by the teachers.

Each session began with Mike introducing a couple of stories. As he told the stories he would find ways to include his audience. For example,

Once, there was a forest, at the end of the world. And leading into that forest was a track way, and beside the track way there was a cottage, and in the cottage lived a woodsman. And the woodsman lived there with his [counts the young people in the room] one, two, three, four, five children (t1).

Each storytelling session was an hour long. Two related stories were told and then discussed in the group. Stories were selected after a discussion with Mike (see Section 3.2).

I introduced myself to the students in week one, and said, 'When you're listening to the story, I want you to think about what you like about it, and what kind of messages you see in it, and how it relates to your everyday life. And then talk about whatever you want afterwards' (t1). Group discussions were audio recorded. The recordings were transcribed, and a thematic analysis carried out, which contributed to the story selection in Stage Two (see Section 3.2).

The storytelling groups, or sessions, were somewhere between focus groups and a social space. Storytelling groups were appropriate for a number of reasons. They allowed observation of verbal interaction so that what occurred in the social space, after a performance, could be explored narratively. A group setting allowed conversation to happen, as far as possible, without intrusion and provided an accurate data set in the form of transcripts to be re-analysed, as required, rather than relying on memory or observation notes, which are less inaccurate methods (Brinkman and Kvale 2015: 206).

During Stage One, the format of an oral story followed by group discussion worked well. On the other hand, the teachers' presence, and that of the storyteller, interfered with discussion and production of meaning, because they were seen as authority figures in the groups. This interfered when I (RES) asked a question, as shown in the following extract:

RES Have you been seeing things outside of school, that remind you of
 the stories, over these past weeks?

Dana I haven't

Teacher But you have linked things that we did in school, that we did, to
 do with the stories. I heard you did it. I heard you in class

Dana Yeah

RES What did you say? Do you remember?

Dana No

Teacher You were talking about, I believe, the girl who looked into the tree.

Into the mirror?

Dana When?

Teacher Sat here. When you were talking about the Isles of Scilly?

Dana I wasn't sat there

Teacher You were, was that you, then, Ann? Was that Dana, maybe, or maybe

I'm muddling up the classes (t2)

In this extract from week four, the teacher recalled something that Dana did not. The conversation was prevented from moving on, and being student-led, by the teacher's questions.

Stage One provided an estimate of how much data each session produced and what was realistic for the timescale of the study. The final project was originally expected to last ten weeks, with eight to ten groups. The average number of groups, in a qualitative study, depends on a researcher's aims but ranges between ten and 15 groups (Bryman 2008: 477). Weeks were used rather than consecutive days as Smyth (1998: 176) acknowledged that longer trials get the best results. Likewise, Reynolds (1990: 84) used a similar format: one-and-a-half-to-two-hour sessions, one day a week over ten weeks. Sessions one hour long worked well. An hour, including storytelling, was suitable to allow for discussion. One could argue that debate may continue beyond the end stage of a "normal" conversation (Kitzinger 2004: 271); however; the students were used to classes lasting about an hour, so in this way discussion was part of a familiar structure that they were comfortable with.

It proved unfeasible to fit ten consecutive weeks of storytelling into a school term. The students had field trips, school breaks and other commitments to take into account. As a result, the number of weeks were reduced to five. Six groups in three schools provided approximately 13 hours of interviews and 25 hours of group discussion. This provided a significant amount of rich, qualitative data to analyse. A 'thematical saturation point', where the same ideas were being raised in response to the same story, was not reached (Bryman 2008: 416). Instead, the data achieved sufficient focused conversation, and depth, in order to make valid arguments. The amount of data were sufficient for an exploratory study and provided more examples than could be used.

The Stage One study allowed alterations to be made before data collection (Stage Two).

This will now be discussed.

3.2.2 Stage Two study: the storytelling space

Before the storytelling sessions, teachers were provided with guidelines for selecting participants to ensure a wider mix of gender, class, academic ability and ethnicity; introductory and follow-up interviews were conducted; the teachers were not allowed to be present during group discussion, and the storyteller also left the room. Introductory interviews created a space for introductions and time to get to know each student. follow-up interviews allowed questions to be asked and the students' perception of the storytelling space to be explored. Again, the storytelling sessions occurred one hour a week, over five subsequent weeks. This format worked flexibly with the school term and student availability (in school hours or as part of an after-school programme).

Participation and willingness to talk were aided by the relationship between young people and the facilitator. Trained storytellers, rather than a researcher, could create a more relaxed space for young people's discussions if the storyteller were adequately trained to redirect questions about the stories and storytelling techniques. A storyteller, while also in a position of authority, may be viewed as more of an impartial outsider than a researcher. As such, this may benefit the research if adequate training was provided. Bridges used teaching assistants (storytellers) in classroom situations while assessing critical literacy. In an assessment of all the transcripts from autumn 2013 to autumn 2014, I proposed to Dr Ingram that the storytellers were not consistent in their approach. Group discussions which generated more student talk, happened when an opening question was asked and the group were given time to discuss their own questions and answers; and also when set questions were repeated a few times, often utilising the students' own language (Ingram 2015b).

For example, one student said, 'It was kind of similar to *Cinderella*, like how the stepmother didn't want her there.' Responding to this, a storyteller asked, 'Going back to idea of the stepmother, why do stories have evil stepmothers?' This wording could be construed as challenging or instructive. In this instance, it led the conversation very directly towards discussion of "evil" stepmothers. The question could have been phrased differently to leave discussion more open by repeating the student's words, such as, '[W]hy didn't the stepmother want her there?' (Ingram 2015b). This is worth considering in future storytelling research.

Stage Two took place in three schools in Warwickshire with groups of eight students. Each group was split into two groups of four for the group discussion (six groups in total).

Groups of six to ten people are ideal, to allow for in-depth conversation while making transcription less demanding (Cronin 2013: 235). The schools were named according to geographical location and the gender of the students: urban all-female, rural-mixed and urban-mixed. Three storytellers were recruited – English and theatre studies students from the University of Warwick. Each school received Alex, Michelle or Miriam as a storyteller. One exception was at the urban-mixed school, where Michelle was unable to continue because of other work commitments. Therefore, all three storytellers went into the rural-mixed school: Michelle (weeks one to three), Alex (week four) and Miriam (week five).

3.2.3 Introductory interviews

Before the storytelling sessions began, interviews were conducted with all 24 students. This provided the opportunity to emphasise that each student's presence was important to the research. Non-attendance had been a problem in the Stage One study (see Section 3.3).

The reasons for conducting an initial interview were (a) to introduce myself; (b) to distribute another copy of the consent forms; (c) to inform pupils of what was expected of them in sessions, that the study was interested in their opinion, and was a space where there were no wrong answers or ideas; (d) to get to know them as individuals, in terms of what was important to them in and out of school, and what students expected hearing a storyteller would be like; and (e) to gather background information such as gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sibling relationships and parents' professions. This was a semi-structured interview approach, in that the young people were considered as partners in

the research. The importance of attendance was stressed. During the interview, I talked around the questions in an informal way, which led to more insight into the students' lives (Holstein and Gubrium 1997: 116). For a list of interview questions see Appendix 1.

3.2.4 Storytelling groups

It was important to enable the students to explore story on their terms as Zipes (1995: 18) proposed that young people's critical questioning of story would generate 'power', 'autonomy' and 'self-certainty'. A semi-autonomous space was designed towards these aims. The space was semi-autonomous for two main reasons. First, the spaces were geographically located within three schools in Warwickshire: the spaces were authorised by headteachers, and other teachers within the schools; the three storytellers were adults from Warwick University; also the students knew that I was from the university and at times referred to my presence by calling me 'Miss'. Therefore the spaces transmitted adult authority by being established and authorised via the structures of the school, by the presence of external adults, and by being physically located within a classroom or a school library.

Second, the students controlled what was discussed in relation to nine set questions. Going off-topic was encouraged in order to observe young people's interactions with the stories. Thus the storytelling spaces differed from the school, because they were an area in which to enjoy story and in which the students could delve into their own processes of meaning-making out-with the standardised education system.

In two of the schools, the storytelling space was a classroom (rural-mixed, urban-mixed); the other school designated a space in the school library (all-female). In each instance,

chairs were pulled round in a semi-circle facing the storyteller's seat. The storyteller performed a fifteen-minute story then left the room. The storyteller leaving the room did not disrupt the relationship between the story and the students. As McManimon discovered in her research on storytelling and drama, who told the story was no longer important because the students had taken ownership of that story (2014: 235, 242, 246). The storyteller's role was to deliver the fairy tale then leave. The group then discussed the story. The purpose of this was to avoid adult-led discussion, but this decision was also made because of time restrictions. Future studies could involve storyteller training so that the storyteller could remain in the researcher's place.

The same stories were told over five weeks in the same order (see Section 3.2), excluding week three, when Miriam overlooked that the storytelling session contained two contrasting stories (*She-Bear* and *Frog King*). As a result, the rural-mixed school did not hear *She-Bear*. Group discussion about *Frog King* filled the remaining 45 minutes.

Discussions were facilitated by a list of nine questions which will be referred to as Q1 to Q9 in the thesis (see Appendix 1). These questions were intended to be a starting point, allowing the students' conversations to proceed in unexpected directions, according to their own agency. The researcher remained present to prompt or ask for clarification, but was not too obtrusive, so that the conversation was student-led (May 1991: 94). The questions guided conversation but students were allowed off-topic (Marvasti 2004: 23). Creating a space where the students could talk off-topic resulted in more insight into young people's lives and what they were interested in, as random conversations led to deeper conversations surrounding suicide, loss and love (t9, t26, t2).

Researcher presence in the sessions aided transcription. As a facilitator, the researcher was also able to jot down, in the field notes, what dynamics were like within the groups. This involved recording visual observations, such as how the students responded to the presence of the researcher or the storyteller, to get a sense of how the group atmosphere might change during five weeks of storytelling (Silverman 1997: 142). Body language, facial expression, tone and gestures were also noted because they indicated words that were important to the speakers (Gee 1991: 9).

3.2.5 Follow-up interviews

The follow-up interviews were a chance to see what the 24 students felt they had learned, if anything, from the experience across the three schools. Questions such as 'Was the experience different from what you expected?' were asked (see Appendix 1 for a list of questions). They also allowed the researcher to ask additional questions about anything that was unclear in the transcripts, and to ensure that each student was not concerned about anything raised in the sessions (Miles and Huberman 1994: 296, Bryman 2008: 437-469). This was also accounted for under ethical considerations (Section 3.3). The follow-up sessions provided invaluable material about the students' storytelling experience that would probably been lost if an attempt had been made to obtain it later. For example, when an email was sent to Felicity, to ask whether she would mind responding to some further questions (to clarify whether she had a stepmother, and what contact she had with her father) she did not respond.

3.3 Participants, selection of site and stories

The catchment area of the three schools suggested that students came from lower-than-average to higher-than-average income households, and identified themselves as African, British-Asian, British-mixed, British-White, Eurasian, Iranian and Punjabi (See Section 4.2, Chapter 4). The majority of students did not disclose any religious affiliation (14) or were of no particular faith (5): the remaining five students were agnostic-atheist, atheist, Christian, and Islamic.

While quantitative methodology focuses on variable selection and their control, the qualitative methodology of this study focused on 'illumination, understanding, and extrapolation to similar situations' (Golafshani 2003: 597, Bogdan and Biklen 1998, 600). In this type of study there were many factors which may have worked against, or in conjunction with, the story outside the classroom. The students were not prohibited from talking about the story outside the group. This would have been an unfair and difficult request. In addition, I wanted to see whether students shared and reflected on the story with others, in what circumstances, and how the story was received. Circumstances of any such interaction were of interest and added further depth to the study.

During, and following, the storytelling performance, each person's process of meaning-making occurred on individual or social levels as the group interacted. For instance, opinions and life stories could be withheld or shared in response to those of others. The students brought narrative experience to the sessions. They were already acquainted with different forms of stories, which they had heard from various sources. Contextual variables to consider, which potentially shaped the outcomes, included the stories

themselves, the storytellers' interpretation and performance, storytelling group questions and the storytelling space, as well as individual perspectives, interaction among the students, student mood or confidence, and the role of the researcher. These sat alongside wider narratives which the students were aware of that interacted with the groups' process of meaning-making (for instance, literature, TV, films, video games, music, media, education and the internet). It is also worth mentioning student life-experience and surrounding environments within and outside the school, both at home and in a broader social context (Mead cited in Morgan 2010: 161). Some of these variables were mentioned in the introductory chapter of this study.

3.3.1 Participants

The study involved a subcategory of young people aged 12 to 14. This is an interesting age group because these youths were discussing future decisions about further education or work while legally classified as children (see Section 5.2.2, in Chapter 5, and 7.3.2, in Chapter 7). Although the period from 12 to 19 years of age is not necessarily a time of turmoil, as traditionally assumed, it is a transitional period from youth to participation into further education or work (Coleman 2011: 10, Jones 2009: 9). Storytelling was a valuable way to gather knowledge about young people's experiences about this transitional period.

This subset of young people, aged 12-14, shared generational experiences with other young people in the UK who were maturing in post-9/11, neo-liberal times, the majority with internet access, during a period of recession and austerity. I chose a subcategory of young people, aged 12 to 14, because they were experiencing a transitional period into

their exam years, and then into further education and/or work. These educational, historical and technological reference points possibly framed the perspectives of these 24 students in similar ways to other young people of the same generation within the UK. However, these 24 students' experiences were also constrained by their shared geographical area and are not representative of young people in general.

While public perceptions of youth as presented in the media may be historically, and currently, negative, young people are more responsible than previous generations a decade before due to a marked decrease in overall drugs, alcohol and tobacco use in 11 to 15 year olds since 2000 (National Statistics 2012, HSCIC 2015). Easton related this decrease to academic pressures in an uncertain job market.

When I ask them to suggest why they don't behave like that, a number of theories emerge. One is that they are all too busy to rebel. A couple of the students say that the uncertainties of a job market, where employers routinely reject all but the best graduates, mean studies cannot be neglected (Easton 2013).

Young people have also been given a voice. Easton (2013) said, 'New technology gives young people an opportunity to engage with wider society on equal terms. Teenagers are free to participate, protest and petition online.' Young people potentially face pressure from many different sources. These may include peers, and societal and family expectations, as well as the stresses of achieving academically and choosing a career. Spear (2000: 418) described the transitional period between education and employment as critical in terms of biological, cognitive, psychological, social and environmental

processes, exploratory behaviour and experimentation. The boundary between education and further education or work can be an exciting and indeed an uncertain and confusing time, a period of transition and change.

The terms 'young people' and 'students' are used in this study rather than 'adolescence' or 'childhood'. The notion of youth is a contested issue. Bourdieu said that 'youth is just a word' which can be viewed as a social construction that is dependent on moral, political and social concerns, which are continuously changing (1992: 1-2). Words such as childhood and adulthood are labels used by policymakers, health-care professionals and the media. Therefore, I will be using the term 'young people' in my thesis to describe a life stage between the ages of 12 and 14, while acknowledging the limitations of a single concept of youth (Jones 2009: 11, Dyson and Jeffrey 2008). I will also use the term 'students' while acknowledging that the word fails to capture the diversity of the young people in this study (see Appendix 2 for a summary of all the young people in this study).

The varied demographics of the three schools enabled comparisons to be drawn about how young people from different social backgrounds responded in similar and different ways to storytelling in terms of gender, class and ethnicity. As the UK has a long multicultural history, there was an argument for seeking to ensure that samples were demographically representative (Papadopoulos 2006). An unrepresentative sample is biased, over-representing some groups and under-representing others. In this study, under-representation would mean that the group participants were not representative of the different ethnicities and classes present in the school. In Stage Two, despite requesting more random selection during the interview, I discovered that the students from the rural-mixed school were all British-White and part of a creative writing group,

and that the students at the all-female school were in the same English class. The students from the urban-mixed school were more randomly selected across the year group. Despite this unforeseen situation, the demographic mix of the students was representative of each school in terms of ethnicity (See Section 4.3, Chapter 4), but the same was not certain for academic ability and social class because of the difficulties of defining and obtaining such information.

Students at the urban-mixed school identified themselves as African, British-Asian, British-mixed, Iranian and Punjabi, with two Islamic students (see Chapter 4, Table 4.1). The remaining students did not disclose any religious affiliation. The urban-mixed school was situated within an area of social and economic deprivation. The all-female school (see Table 4.2) had a lower diversity figure of about 25% and was in a catchment area with a lower-than-average income but higher than that at the urban-mixed school. Students were British-Asian, Eurasian and British-White, with one atheist student and three non-religious ones. All the rural-mixed students (see Table 4.3) were British-White, one was Christian, one agnostic-atheist and one non-religious. The remainder did not disclose their beliefs. The catchment area of the rural-mixed school had higher-than-average income and employment levels. The differences and similarities of these three schools allowed me to compare how a diverse range of young people responded to storytelling.

3.3.2 School access

For Stage One, local schools were contacted and asked whether their students would be interested in free storytelling sessions, alongside participating in a research project. I was contacted by one school and arranged a meeting with two teachers. I introduced myself

and described a general interest in the students' response to storytelling. Any concerns that the teachers had were addressed, such as the content of the consent forms. The teachers were happy with the information that was provided and welcomed the study as part of their after-school programme. Copies of the consent forms were given, to be handed out before the researcher's arrival at the school, and a copy of the CRB (now a DBS) check was taken.

For Stage Two, the research was described to the widening participation officer, Paul Whitehouse (Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies, University of Warwick). He provided contacts at three schools in Warwickshire and called ahead to each school to recommend me. The schools were informed of a general interest in the students' response to storytelling such as 'how students related stories to their lives'. Dates were then arranged for interviews and storytelling groups. Consent forms and more detailed requirements were emailed regarding participant selection. Teachers requested volunteers from their class and then nominated suitable pupils within the general guidelines (Cronin 2013: 233). The guidelines were that there should be two girls and two boys of mixed ethnicity and academic ability in each session.

Access was negotiated with the rural-mixed school. They requested that an entire class sit in for the storytelling sessions, then left the room. We arranged that the teacher, storyteller and other students would go into another classroom to discuss the storytelling while the group participants remained behind.

3.3.3 Story choice

The stories were connected to the research questions because fairy tales that contained emotional narratives and moral or behavioural lessons were selected (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 describes some general themes which led to the selection of each story. For example, *She-Bear* involved grief at the death of the queen and parental control when the king told his daughter he was going to marry her, which raised questions of morality and attraction in student conversations (t18, t23). Frantz (1995: 55) proposed that people instinctively know the meanings a story holds for us. He used *The Monk and the Samurai* fable to illustrate how moralistic stories hold shared meanings that are easily interpretable by others. Yet interpretation can differ between individuals and groups of people: in the community, nationally and between countries.

Table 3.1. Stage Two story selection

<i>Week</i>	<i>Story</i>	<i>Story themes</i>
1	<i>MacCodram and His Wife</i> (MacIntyre 2013)	Loss, grief, dishonesty, stealing
2	<i>The Crescent Moon Bear</i> (Estés 1996: 346)	Anger, violence, patience, empathy, seeking help

3	<i>Frog King</i> (Grimm and Grimm 1975: 17) and <i>She-Bear</i> (Basile 1893: 181)	Breaking promises, parental control, attraction Grief, parental control, attraction
4	<i>The Rooted Lover</i> (Housman 1987: 317)	Attraction, sacrifice for love, parental control
5	<i>A Toy Princess</i> (De Morgan 1987: 163)	Emotional expression, belonging, attraction

For Stage One, the research needs were discussed regarding behaviour and emotion with storyteller Mike O'Connor. Therapeutic practices recognise that stories can be particularly effective when it is the 'right story told to the right person(s) at the right time in the right way' (Frantz 1995: 47). So the story choice was important. O'Connor, as he told his tales, was using familiar, sometimes uncomfortable, symbols within a story, such as the devil, with his red eyes, and his 'ghosts, and ghouls and goblins' (*The Wrestlers of Carn Kenidjack*, t3).

O'Connor suggested stories from his vast repertory around emotional and behavioural themes. We settled on ten stories with themes of growth, attraction, social behaviour, sibling rivalry, coping with death and loss, age issues, mental health, learning difficulties,

illness and deformity, decision-making and good judgement. The stories were told over five weeks as follows:

1. *Davy and the King of Fishes and How the Gipsies got their Music* (t1)
2. *Dark Haired Lassie and Mermaid of Zennor* (sacred-texts.com 2015)
3. *Granddad and the Wheelbarrow, Granddad and the Eagle's Nest, Half a Blanket, Piskie Laden and Green Lotion* (t3)
4. *The Seeker for Wisdom and Truth* (t4)
5. *The Story of Tom the Tinner* (O'Connor 2010: 72-74), *The Wrestlers of Carn Kenidjack* (84-85) and *King Gradlon of Brittany and Saint Corentin* (t5).

In contrast, the Stage Two stories were picked following a thematic analysis of Stage One. The following categories emerged from the students' conversations: initiation, belonging, transformations, ways of dealing with anger, decision-making or judgement, gender, jealousy, self-preservation, endurance, love or attraction, coping with loss or violence, socially accepted behaviour and generosity. From these 14 themes, five themes were selected that frequently occurred in folk tales: anger, violence, attraction, loss and belonging. A number of other themes were also present in the stories. I discovered strong emotional themes of anger, violence, attraction, loss and belonging were repeated during my background reading of historical and contemporary fairy tales. Emotional themes were found, for example, in the collections of Grimm and Grimm (1996), Lang (2013), Opie and Opie (1974) and Perrault (1901) and in more recent fairy tale anthologies such

as Carter's *Bloody Chamber* (1995), the *Snow White, Blood Red* anthology series (Datlow and Windling 1999) and *Portsmouth Fairy Tales for Grown Ups* (Ditner 2014).

I later noted themes of conformity, transgression and transformation in the stories. Table 3.2 summarises the main ways in which I perceived the stories to be empowering or constraining related to these three themes. The majority of the stories are conformative to social mobility, as previously mentioned in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3 with stable or a loss of social status. In terms of the characters' relationships to authority figures characters tended to position authority figures in positions of trust. These figure were approached for advice, or were obeyed. So through characters' actions towards authority figures the stories indicated the value of seeking help from others, which is empowering in the sense that asking for support requires a certain amount of vulnerability. Seeking help is also constraining because individuals can appear reliant on authority figures for their well-being. For example, the king neglected his children in *MacCodram*, and the fisherman found the selkie's pelt but hid it, and lied to her about knowing its whereabouts placing the woman and the children in a position of subordination to male figures. Thus some aspects of conforming could be viewed as cautions against unquestioningly accepting conformity. The children had a right to demand better care from their father, the woman had a right to be respected by her future husband, and issues around these topics arose in the students' conversations in response to the story (see Sections 6.2.1, Chapter 6, and 7.2.3, Chapter 7).

The stories were constraining in the sense that they promoted a typical gender and class division of labour. Women's roles were to marry, reproduce and care for the family.

Males fought wars. The upper classes ran the kingdom and got the working classes to do

other labours such as the frog in *Frog King* who fetched the ball from the well. At that point in the story the princess perceived the frog to be beneath her, it was only later when he revealed himself to be a prince. In *Toy Princess*, there was also one shop owner who was a learned wizard not a hard working member of the lower classes. Women were described as beautiful, young, caring, and with suitable or unsuitable manners. They were expected to do as they were told, even marry their father if he decided that was appropriate. Yet while the stories constrained females into gendered roles they also empowering in the sense that women chose their husbands. Men were depicted in powerful positions, such as kings, or as strong, such as the prince with the walrus-mustachios. Thus the stories contained constraining narratives in terms of class, gender, social mobility, and authority figures.

In addition, ethnicity was almost completely lacking in the stories. Body types depicted as beautiful were tall and lean. Other physical characteristics like eye and hair colour was mainly straight and blond, rarely red or brown, and never curly.

Table 3.2. Four empowering and constraining themes in the fairy tales of this study

<i>Theme/Story</i>	<i>MacCodram</i>	<i>Moon Bear</i>	<i>Frog King</i>	<i>She-bear</i>	<i>Rooted Lover</i>	<i>Toy Princess</i>
<i>Social mobility</i>	Selkie (princess) married a fisherman. Witch married the king.	Husband and wife married within same social class.	Frog prince married the princess.	Princess married a prince.	Princess married a farmer.	Princess married a fisherman.
<i>Relationships with authority figures</i>	King ignored the well-being of his children. Jealous step-mother placed children under a curse. The selkie trusted that the fisherman told the truth about her “lost” pelt when he had stolen it.	The wife went to the village healer for advice. The healer threw the hair into the fire, typical of trickster figures, but the healer has taught her a lesson in doing so.	The king made the princess keep her promise and she complied.	The king ordered his daughter to marry him. She ran away. The princess sought help from a wise woman. The prince requested that the princess care for him when he was ill and she complied.	The farmer went to a wise woman for advice. The King ordered the princess to marry the prince. The King locked the princess in her room for three days. Then threw her out dressed in rags as a punishment.	Everyone in the kingdom informed the princess to control her emotions and behaviour. With the King’s and the kingdom’s permission the princess leaves to live in a place of her choosing.
<i>Division of labour</i>	The King remarried to have a wife to look after the children. The fisherman worked and the wife tended the home and the	Wife in traditional homemaker and carer role. Husband was a soldier.	The frog, not the princess, laboured to fetch the golden ball from the well.	The King wanted to produce an heir by marrying his daughter. The princess, in bear form, took a care giver role: cooking and feeding the	Prince of a neighbouring country arrived to propose to the princess. The class hierarchy was farmers, gardeners, maids, princess	The princess was instructed to do nothing. The fisherman’s wife mended the clothes, her husband fixed his net, and their son took over

	children.			prince.	and king.	same working-class labour.
Theme/Story	MacCodram	Moon Bear	Frog King	She-bear	Rooted Lover	Toy Princess
Descriptions of gender and ethnicity	Based in Scotland. Characters were described with brown eyes and 'long and straight' hair. The selkie pelts were described as a reddish or golden brown colour. The fisherman was not described.	Story set in Japan. No description of ethnicity, except through the food the wife prepares. The husband was described as angry and frightening, the wife as caring.	Frog was described as 'disgusting', 'stupid' and 'ugly'. When he transformed into the prince he was 'young' and 'handsome'. The princess was only described as 'the youngest princess'.	Princess described by her beauty. The Italian, French, Spanish, and German princesses were described as ugly, or with unsuitable manners, for example, one was 'cold and frozen'.	The farmer was described with black eyes, red hair, rough hands and sunburnt skin. The princess had golden hair. She was beautiful and sang beautifully. The prince was described as tall and handsome, with 'a pair of splendid mustachios' like 'walrus-tusks'.	The queen was described as 'good and beautiful', and her daughter as 'pretty' and 'naughty', with blue eyes. As the princess grew she was described as 'tall and straight as an alder'.

3.3.4 The relevancy of the stories: social context, gender, class and ethnicity

Regarding the six stories selected for Stage Two, one could ask what significance palaces and princesses have for young people living in contemporary urban and rural areas? Folk tales told by O'Connor in Stage One alluded to local places and landscapes. At the same time, there was an acceptance by the group that these stories were based in real, yet fictional, places. I will quote how O'Connor introduced the stories in week one, because he captured the social history of the stories he was going to tell.

What I am going to try and do here is tell you stories that are, pretty much, the way they came out of the bucket. These stories won't have been standing still throughout time. They do evolve. Because language evolves, and culture evolves. So the words I use to speak to you are different from the words that someone would have been using in Victorian England, or Elizabethan England, or Chaucerian England, or even, you know, earlier on I would have had to be speaking in Middle English or Cornish, wouldn't I? So the words change because storytelling is essentially a social activity. The sort of stories we're talking about now are the sort of stories that would have been told, principally, by grandmothers to their grandchildren, around a fire, okay? Dad's out working in the fields. Mum's probably helping him in the field or is busy having yet another baby, because that's the sort of cultural situation we were in back in the eighteenth, nineteenth century, in working-class people. So the only person that's around is grandma.

The idea that only grandma would be telling tales around the fire is an overly nostalgic portrayal (see Chapter 2, Section 2.1). People told stories as they worked and in their

restricted leisure time (Warner 1995: 22). The main point is that storytelling was and is a social activity that changes over time because of social context, which might be related to language, class or broader social structures such as changing work situations through the industrialisation period. Thus, storytelling is an adaptable social activity.

Fairy tales also invite the listener to suspend disbelief and embrace the bizarre and magical. In the story *Davy and the King of Fishes*, Davy saved the life of the fish king. At the end of the story the king returned to save Davy from an unfavourable deal with the devil. The story was set in Padstow, a Cornish town with a history as a fishing port. The stories in Stage Two were set in a variety of generic locations such as towns, castles, cottages, forests, the sea, mountains and gardens. These are places that the listener could attach to a familiar image in their mind even in Warwickshire, a landlocked area unconnected to the sea. As Ryan said, he could relate to the story because 'it's on the coast by the sea'. When Lucy exclaimed, 'We live in the Midlands!' Ryan responded, 'Yeah, but we go on holidays to places like the sea, we can move' (t6). Geographical location can change; it is, in some cases, a choice we make not to go to the sea or to live by it. Ryan's words about the sea supported the notion that young people living in contemporary urban and rural areas could connect their experience to the stories despite the presence of different settings.

What is more, as previously mentioned (Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3), the stories contained gender, class and ethnic depictions determined by social influences in Europe at the time they were written or transcribed – with the exception of *Moon Bear*. Storytellers, such as David Campbell, and critical writers such as Jack Zipes, Joseph Campbell and Bill Moyers, have commented on the rich social and nationalistic elements of fairy tales (Campbell and Moyers 1988, Warner 1995: 21, Zipes 1983: 29, 2006:22, 2012a, Campbell 2011: 36, 80). For

example, the fairy tales in this study represented a mixture of different social positions (the poor fisherman and the rich king); gender stereotypes (the beautiful princesses, the handsome prince); and a sense of ethnicity in the contrast between the local and “the other” (the village healer and the bear that lived on the mountain).

Overall gender behaviour, in the selected fairy tales, conformed to European expectations of what is masculine and what is feminine, and therefore gender inequality (Holmes 2007: 27, Woodward 2004: 5). Despite ending with marriages, *Rooted Lover* and *Toy Princess* could be viewed as exceptions because the stories questioned the way in which individuals are expected to behave and conform to society and where that boundary should lie. For example, there were relationships across class, such as the one between the gardener and the princess in *Rooted Lover*, and the princess and the fisherman’s son in *Toy Princess*. Yet in both stories the princess gave up her wealth to marry a person of another social class, reinforcing the idea that although this was possible the women sacrificed financial security to do so.

Moreover, the stories related to the research questions because they contained examples of conformity, transgression and transformation, and empowerment. I wondered whether conflicts in the stories regarding behavioural and emotional expression, gender or class would enable the students to reflect on situations in their lives, such as how they decided to act and what the consequences were. For example, in *Toy Princess* the princess is expected to suppress all emotion and to be polite, conforming to the conventions of her kingdom (De Morgan 1987). Lucy associated the kingdom’s conventions with social awareness: ‘I think it’s not about politeness, it’s about being stressed about how you come across, and they [the kingdom’s subjects] get so worked up out of fear of being impolite, they don’t say anything’

(t10). In the story, the less people spoke, the more polite they seemed, so no one would be offended. Lucy compared the kingdom's social relationships to themes of control, discipline and rationalisation, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Thus far, Chapter 3 has explained the design and implementation of the research, including the participants and story choice. The information covered so far enables me to define the storytelling space as an exploratory method, involving exposure to oral storytelling performances followed by discussion within three schools. The space went beyond of a classroom situation as no teachers were present enabling discussion to be student-led. Section 3.3 will clarify further considerations, such as ethics, willingness to participate and dominant speakers, before Section 3.4 discusses data analysis.

3.4 Further considerations of group work

3.4.1 Ethical considerations

As interventions go, I find stories to be relatively high impact, low risk, parsimonious, and user-friendly. (Frantz 1995: 48)

There are obvious ethical issues with any study of this type. I hoped that being exposed to storytelling in a research context would impact on the young people's lives in a fun and educational way. The students had the opportunity to be part of a research project, to learn new stories, share interpretations and potentially learn from one another, and about themselves, as they reflected on the stories and the experience. Care was taken to consider any undesirable effects the study might have. It was important to assure students, parents and teachers that any research materials gathered would be treated confidentially and with compassion and respect. Ethical procedures were discussed with each school, staff were

consulted at the University of Warwick and an ethical approval form was completed. Stage One provided the opportunity to test whether the ethical procedure was sufficient for the students, the school and the research. The feedback from the teachers was that any concerns they would have raised were answered and they felt confident about the study's motivations.

In the introductory interview, the students were informed that all names – of the students, teachers and the school – would be changed to protect confidentiality (Kaiser 2012: 457). The research consent form (see Appendix 3) set out the project details, including an option to withdraw from taking part at any time, how data would be collected and that confidentiality procedures would be adhered to (Marzano 2013: 70). Consent forms were provided to the schools to be signed by the students and their parents. Not all the parents signed the forms, but the students and the school granted permission for the study. A DBS, a criminal record check, was obtained to ensure that it was suitable for me to work with young people, and each school took a copy for their records. Recordings were taken during the introductory interviews of the researcher explaining how the recordings would be used and anonymised. There was a problem with the teachers forwarding two consent forms from the Stage One study so a decision was made not to use any of the relevant students' data.

As there was some difficulty collecting consent forms from the Stage One study, during Stage Two consent forms were obtained by providing the teacher with an advanced copy, handing the students another copy in the introductory interview while recording verbal consent, and asking the remaining students to sign their forms at the end of the fifth week if they had not returned the previous two copies.

It was taken into account that sensitive topics might arise while listening to a story. To avoid placing any participant in an uncomfortable situation, the students were not asked to disclose anything they felt uncomfortable sharing. I hoped that by collaborating and developing a relationship with the students we could learn from one another as the sessions progressed. The introductory interview provided the opportunity to get to know pupils and explain the support systems in place, such as counselling, if they felt the need to talk. I was also there for them to talk to outside the project confidentially if they had concerns. If students had any concerns they were free to withdraw at any time. The follow-up interview was another opportunity to check whether they would like to talk to me or other support within or outside the school. No issues of this kind arose. Ryan missed week two because of a funeral. Ryan shared with the group that he had been at his grandfather's funeral, but did not share any further information, and his privacy was respected.

It was important to create a supportive environment in the groups by setting out some ground rules. The rules of the storytelling space, though they were not called "rules", were such that it was acceptable to disagree with each another, but important to respect everyone's opinions, giving space for others to speak without bullying or verbal abuse. Data were gathered by asking the students to discuss their thoughts and feelings around a list of group questions (see Appendix 1). The students took the lead in all other ways in terms of what they found important to raise in the storytelling groups.

3.4.2 Willingness to participate

The willingness of students to participate was a potential limitation. Abma (2000 cited in Haigh and Hardy 2011: 409) suggested that environment and approach were important to encourage students to feel at ease enough to participate. Absence was high in the Stage One

study, mostly due to sickness. In the Stage Two study, the importance of student input and attendance was stressed in the introductory interviews, and this resulted in higher attendance (see Table 3.3).

Stage One attendance was patchy, with numbers dwindling near the end due to a virus, an award day, and a school field trip. Stage Two attendance was almost complete. Rebecca and Bo had doctor's appointments (week one), Ryan attended a funeral (week two), Mary and Peter were sick (week three), Peter was again absent due to sickness in (week four). Similarly there was some patchy attendance in the final interviews. From the all-female school Heidi chose not to attend her final interview. At the rural-mixed Dawn, Rebecca and Ryan forgot to attend. Rescheduling was attempted but the students chose to opt out. Therefore the urban-mixed follow-up interviews were held on the same day as the final storytelling session to avoid non-attendance issues.

Table 3.3. Student attendance during Stage One and Stage Two

<i>Week of study</i>	<i>Stage One attendance</i> <i>(6 students)</i>	<i>Stage Two attendance</i> <i>(24 students)</i>
1	5	22
2	4	23
3	6	22
4	2	23

5

1

24

3.4.3 Dominant members of the group

There are potential difficulties with storytelling groups, for example there may be a dominant speaker. At the outset, there was a possibility that students' voices would be repressed if they did not wish to share an opinion with the group. The facilitator's role was carefully thought out prior to commencing (Cronin 2013: 229); their role was to intervene at times and say, 'Thank you, X. Now, Y, what do you think about what X has said?' At times, as the facilitator, I asked an individual directly what they thought, or if the student disagreed with what was being said they were asked to elaborate, for example by asking, 'What do you think? Why do you disagree; how do you see it differently?'

The idea was to create a supportive atmosphere in which the students would feel able to talk and discuss things openly. Some groups tried to reach a consensus rather than debate in broader terms what they believed as individuals. Strategies were developed for this, such as making it clear from the start that individuals did not have to agree, but they did need to listen and discuss. If a group was reaching a consensus, the facilitator would ask, 'Does anyone disagree about any of the points raised, and why?' (Bryman 2008: 480-481). If someone shared something personal, the facilitator might ask for more detail. The students could choose whether or not to respond to the facilitator's question. For example, David shared with the group that his sister had died. When I asked, 'What happened? Do you mind telling me?' David declined. I responded, 'You don't have to.' His decision was respected, and the discussion moved on (t26).

3.5 Narrative analysis and data processing

3.5.1 Transcription

The research was gathered over a period of two months (five weeks at each school). I transcribed the interviews and group work to ensure consistency. What the students were saying was more important than other aspects of speech. The emphasis of the research was on group conversation and meaning-making. Therefore, unnecessary words, such as 'er' and 'um', were replaced with commas. When words were omitted or unclear, this was marked by brackets [indicating what was missing]. In the quotations throughout this study, missing speech has been summarised by [...] for ease of reading (Braun and Clarke 2013: 163, King and Horrocks 2010: 146-149). Laughter, or the tone of the speaker, was indicated where appropriate for interpretation (Peräkylä 1997: 201). Care was taken to make copies of the audio files after each session. Despite this, one recording for week three was mislabelled and mislaid (urban-mixed school, group one).

3.5.2 Thematic analysis

From the initial study it was concluded that the research would be best supported through narrative analysis, similar to the thematic labelling by Michaels in her study of children's narratives and literacy (1981: 423). As mentioned in Section 3.1, qualitative research was used to obtain richness and depth rather than reducing elements down to their parts, as is the tendency with quantitative analysis. In this way, the research space was brought to life by its participants, as different viewpoints were presented (Koch 1998: 1186, 1188).

Furthermore, narratives are chronological, meaningful and social. So using narrative was a

way of creating meaning and order while also offering insights into the world and people's experience (Hinchman and Hinchman 1997: xvi).

Text analysis software (such as SPSS, LIWC or MAXQDA) was considered to automatically compare and look for patterns in the thematic and symbolic content of the transcripts (IBM 2015, LIWC 2015, MaxQDA 2015). It was decided that it would be too expensive and impractical, in terms of exploring the data in a qualitative way. Instead, a thematic approach was used that involved identifying recurrent topics within the data set (Pope *et al.* 2007: 96). Themes were coded manually, using NVivo software to separate speech into categories and search for patterns (Strauss and Corbin 2004: 303). Thematic analysis has been criticised for a lack of transparency because of its flexible nature (Pope *et al.* 2007: 97). Conversely, such flexibility captures ambiguity and the complexity of narratives, which is appropriate to this study (Baumeister and Newman cited in Elliott 2005: 98).

Grouping the students' discussions by thematic themes allowed the work to be framed around what was important to the students and captured the storytelling space from their perspective. A qualitative method allowed the flexibility to shift the focus of the research questions according to what new themes arose during group discussion. Analysis went beyond deductive and inductive approaches; for example, topics which arose surrounding emotion were used to inform Chapter 6. Then Hochschild's theories of 'gift exchange' and 'feeling rules' were applied to the storytelling space.

By allowing young people to share their own stories with one another, rather than imposing an adult-centric approach, a view into the world of young people as they experience it was created. During the analysis stage I was often exposed to new forms of narrative through YouTube videos, music lyrics and social media. At the same time, recurrent themes could be

identified by reflecting on my own life history. For instance, the students discussed worries about exam results and job availability, things which I had also experienced.

Using a qualitative, thematic approach allowed an exploration of whether young people related to stories in terms of the emotion and behavioural dimensions of their lives in constraining and empowering ways. There are limits to understanding the storytelling space through narrative methods. Notably, in the study young people talked over each other and interrupted thoughts, and power dynamics emerged in the groups. Despite this, the study created rich and absorbing data. This indicated that oral storytelling created a space in ways which can enhance our understanding of young people from a variety of backgrounds. The methods were selected to empower and give voice to young people. A social, explorative approach allowed for the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful “reality”, as such, is contingent upon human practices (Crotty 1998 cited in Golafshani 2003: 603) that are constructed through the interaction of people and their world, which connects to the epistemological stance of this study; I am influenced by my science and creative writing background and so take a realist perspective.

So far, Chapter 3 has explained the design and implementation of the research, including the participants and story choice (Sections 3.2 to 3.3). Section 3.4 set out further considerations, such as ethics, willingness to participate and dominant speakers. The first part of Section 3.5 acknowledged the reasons for choosing to work with transcription and narrative analysis. The remainder of Section 3.5 introduces the concept of sharing conversations before concluding the chapter.

3.5.3 Sharing conversations

During thematic coding of the transcripts, it was noted that students shared information about events and experiences in their personal lives. This occurred during discussion of the story following the storytelling performance. Topics arose in indirect ways from the storytelling, for example suicide arose from a random discussion about actor Colin Morgan (t23). Group two in the all-female school related the king in *She-Bear* to him. The king wanted to marry his daughter and 'was treating people horribly'. Ava said that she would not care if Colin was horrible 'Cause he's good-looking.' Olive challenged Ava's comment using Hitler as an example. Felicity, in group one, overheard part of the conversation about Hitler, and began to speak about Hitler's death within her group (t18), namely that Hitler shot himself. Felicity said, 'You don't feel the pain, it takes about five seconds, but this takes about one. It would hurt but you'd be dead.' The topic of conversation then turned to suicide. This prompted Heidi to share with the group that her uncle had committed suicide. Paris said that her uncle had also tried to kill himself (t18).

Sharing conversations, like the example just given, involved the narration of a sequence of events as a consequence of young people's discussions in the storytelling space. The terms 'shared' and 'conversation' were used to indicate that students were in dialogue with one another through a group process of meaning-making. Sharing conversations included the following four elements: personal, relationships, emotions and response (see Figure 3.1). This is a redefinition of my initial findings (Parfitt 2014). Where a number of individuals raised all four elements in group collaboration this was not counted. Thus, one individual had to mention the categories personal, relationships, emotions and response for the conversation to be counted as a sharing conversation. More than one sharing conversation

could occur in close proximity, but all four elements were considered before a conversation was counted.

Personal and relationships were similar categories, where the speaker included themselves (personal) and others (relationships) in the conversation, even if inferred. For example, Heidi said, 'It's harsh when parents split up because then they try and make up rumours about each other, and then they try to get the child to stay with either one or the other.' This is a generalised statement; however, in the same transcript Heidi indicated that her parents split up at some point, 'My dad ran away and he was away for us' (t16). Therefore, Heidi was talking about a *relationship* (father–daughter) from *personal* experience (temporary separation). Note that if this personal information was not known, this conversation would not have been counted as a sharing conversation.

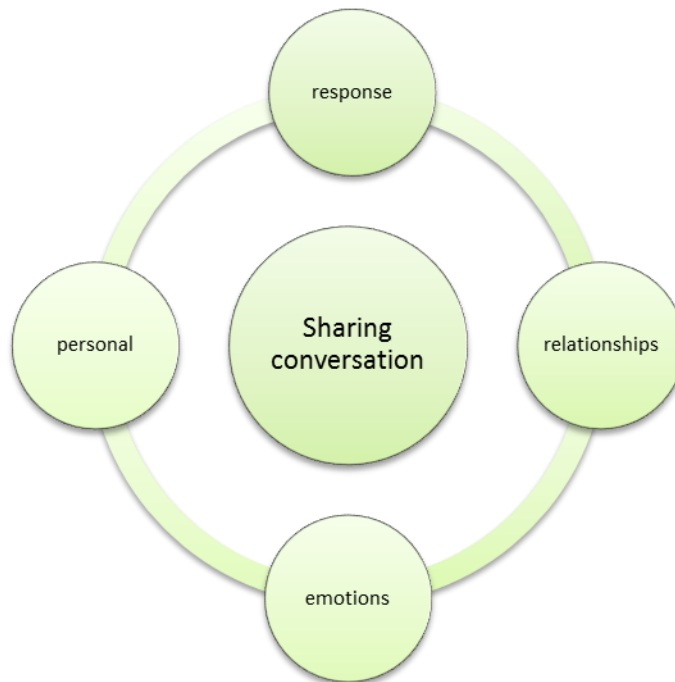


Figure 3.1. A visual representation of the four elements of a sharing conversation

The classification of emotions and feelings is a contested issue. Emotions and feelings were not separated in this study, and included states of mind such as sympathy, because feelings could be indicative of a complex emotional response. For a summary of the sociology of emotion see Turner and Stets (2006). *Emotions* arose in at least four different ways in the groups. First, if an emotion was named, i.e. anger. Second, if the students shared emotional reactions in response to a story. For example, all groups were annoyed by the husband's treatment of his wife in *Moon Bear*. He ignored or acted aggressively towards her. Third, if the group had an emotive argument about gender, class, or life- experiences. Lastly, emotion could also be implied. For instance, during a conversation about the Woolwich attack, where a man was beheaded with a machete (Morrison *et al.* 2013), Bo said, 'Mum always tells me be careful when you go out, and then like you don't really notice. He didn't even do anything. He was just walking along. It was a normal day for him' (t35). Bo's words, in the context of the surrounding conversation, communicated fear (of terrorism) and sympathy with the deceased.

Response referred to something shared within the space in response to another group member, or the facilitator. This could be in reply to a randomly generated thought, or a continued conversation. Sometimes this was obvious, for instance when Amy asked Peter a question about his mum's business. Peter responded, 'I'm not going to say this one. Just in case by one in a million chance someone hears it, someone's recording this right now'. Peter then changed his mind and summarised how his mum came up with, and funded, a business investment but her partner 'didn't do much work' and 'took all the money' (t7). This is classed as a response to another member of the group. This category can also include

narratives of home life if personal in content and/or meaningful to the student, including family history. For example, Peter, for example, mentioned that his grandmother had a child with a man but they never married because 'he went to war, and when he came back he didn't love her anymore, and then he left her and went away'. This was in response to Lucy, who wanted to know why Peter's mentioned his grandmother in connection with the story *Moon Bear* (t7). The sharing of his grandmother's story might not have occurred without this discourse between Amy and Peter.

Sharing conversations were labelled and filtered, to ensure each one involved all four elements. This resulted in a pattern in the data which showed that conversations in the gender-mixed schools fluctuated, whereas, conversations at the all-female school remained consistent (see Figure 4.2, Chapter 4). This will be discussed more in Section 4.5.2, Chapter 4.

3.6 Conclusion

Chapter 3 aimed to explain how the storytelling space was designed and how the students' conversations were analysed. This chapter facilitated the definition of the storytelling space as an exploratory method, involving exposure to oral storytelling performances followed by discussion within three schools. The space went beyond of a classroom situation as no teachers were present enabling discussion to be student-led.

The main research question was approached using an exploratory, innovative and interdisciplinary method called the storytelling space, which involved oral storytelling in three secondary schools. The conversations of six groups of young people, aged 12-14, were recorded and analysed preceding oral storytelling. The demographic mix of the students was reasonably representative of three secondary schools in Warwickshire in terms of academic

ability, ethnicity and social class. The idea was to create a supportive atmosphere in which the students would feel able to talk and discuss things openly.

Some limited use of qualitative methods was adopted, such as calculating the number of sharing conversations. The advantage of transcription was that it enabled later counting of how often different narrative forms arose in conversation (see Figure 5.1, Chapter 5). The research was gathered over a period of two months (five weeks) and thematically analysed using NVivo. Themes arose during the analysis of the data from the students' conversations and were then considered in relation to the research questions and other theories such as the conformative, transgressive and transgressive aspects of stories.

The following four chapters analyse and discuss how young people from similar and different backgrounds related storytelling to their lives and whether this enhanced my understanding of the similar and different ways in which they negotiated the emotional and behavioural dimensions of their lives, including broader social processes and structures. Chapter 4 reflects on the students' experiences of the storytelling space; how the students related to storytelling in terms of prior expectations and experience; how the school and storytelling spaces differed; and on whether the storytelling space became a "safe" space where issues and transitions could be discussed.

Chapter 5 explores the ways in which storytelling narratives potentially enable or constrain young people's agency. The chapter questions the assumption that stories have an inevitable 'civilising effect'. Student perceptions of conformity, transgression and transformation are explored to observe how the students position themselves in response to storytelling narratives (Section 5.2). Likewise, how are the students' personal narratives positioned in the context of wider networks of power such as legislation? (Section 5.3).

Chapter 6 examines how interpretations of emotions in the storytelling space arose in similar and contradictory ways (Section 6.2). This addresses sub-question four. Considering emotion is relevant because emotions and behaviour appear linked in the students' interpretation of storytelling. Links are drawn between educational guidelines and the way students interpreted oral storytelling. Tackling the potential implications of storytelling research to inform educational policy addresses sub-question five. I then consider the processes at work during group conflict (Section 6.3), before investigating how emotional expression in different contexts establishes links between storytelling and larger social structures and practices (Section 6.4).

Chapter 7 explores storytelling as a narrative that arises from, and connects to, wider narratives in broader social practices and structures. How young people connect storytelling to a wide range of fiction and nonfiction narratives is considered (Section 7.2), addressing sub-question three. Sub-questions one, two and three are again contemplated through the students' negotiations of conflicting notions of class, gender identity and ethics (Sections 7.3).

Chapter 4 Young people's expectations and experience of the storytelling space

There was anticipation and curiosity on the students' faces as they waited outside the class room where Mike was tuning his fiddle. The sound of his fiddle was a signal that a special space was being created: where potions bestowed second sight, and selkies naively discarded their pelts on beaches (Parfitt 2013)

4.1 Introduction

The following four analysis chapters explore the storytelling space as a research method and investigate whether storytelling methods can be used to understand the experiences of young people from similar and different social backgrounds. Young people's expectations and experience help to address the main thesis question by indicating how effective the storytelling space was in terms of creating a "safe" space which allowed young people to talk about their lives. This chapter also explores students' experiences of storytelling to further define the storytelling space, which involves elaborating on the content of sharing conversations and their potential triggers. This will provide the necessary foundations to explore issues of empowerment and constraint in the following analysis chapters.

Chapter 4, Section 4.2, gives a brief overview of the three schools for comparative purposes, including the students' expectations of storytelling to compare to student experience.

Section 4.3 addresses sub-question two by examining how young people responded to storytelling in similar ways, such as comparing student perspectives on the similarities and differences between oral storytelling and literature in order to substantiate that storytelling can be utilised to critique Zipes theories of the 'civilizing effect' of children's literature.

Section 4.4 builds on sub-question two by reflecting on young people’s varied experiences of the storytelling space and relating responses to their expectations and similar and different social backgrounds, including education. Section 4.5 considers sub-question three: was the storytelling space perceived as a separate space within the school? And why should this matter? This will allow a further definition of the storytelling space through the students’ experiences.

4.2 A summary of the three schools

4.2.1 Urban-mixed school

The urban-mixed school was the most demographically diverse of the three schools in this study (see Table 4.1). An Ofsted (2007) report confirmed that the school catchment area was one of ‘significant social and economic deprivation’, with a higher-than-average proportion of learning, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. A large proportion of students were from ‘minority ethnic backgrounds’. Parental roles included skilled administrative work, a self-employed electrician and four homemakers. There was one unemployed parent.

Table 4.1 Urban-mixed school demographic information

Group	Student Name	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Religion	Parent Profession	Siblings
1	Aisha	F	13	British-mixed (Jamaican, African, Irish)	Undisclosed	Unemployed	5
	Dylan	M	14	Punjab	Undisclosed	Car manufacturing, electrician and plumber	2
	Khan	M	13	British-Asian/Punjab	Undisclosed	Retail assistant, fork lift driver	1
	Bo	F	14	British-mixed	Muslim	Homemaker, car manufacturing (stepdad)	1
2	Maru	F	13	British-Asian (Pakistan)	Undisclosed	Homemaker, taxi driver	7
	David	M	14	African	Undisclosed	University work, community work	6
	Jamal	M	14	Iranian/Persian	None	Homemaker, food services manager	2
	Amir	F	13	African	Muslim	Homemaker, assistant manager	2

Throughout this chapter, unless otherwise indicated, all information was gathered from the students' introductory and follow-up interviews (2013). The students gave a mixed report of the urban-mixed school, which indicated that it had undergone a number of improvements. Jamal said he disliked 'things that can happen' in school. He elaborated this as 'fights, bullying and everything'. However, discussing a recent newcomer, Jamal also said, 'Usually what would happen is he would get bullied for the first few weeks, but he didn't. He found friends straight away.' The school appeared to be improving. Khan said

It's improved a lot since a couple of years ago. They used to tell you to do something, then walk off and come back half hour later saying you're doing it wrong, when you didn't understand in the first place. Telling you off doesn't help you at all, if you don't know what you've been told off for. There are only a few teachers like that, the rest of them really help you.

Other students also mentioned a mix of 'helpful' and 'non-helpful' teachers. Therefore, the students in this study felt a mixture of support and lack of support in the urban-mixed school.

4.2.1.1 Expectations at the urban-mixed school

The students' expectations were mixed: David, Aisha and Maru were uncertain what to expect; Khan and Dylan thought the focus group work would involve writing. Amir, Bo, David and Jamal talked about how meanings and values were communicated through stories, like 'when something goes wrong but turns out good in the end' (Amir). Jamal hoped that the genre of the stories would be fantasy; Amir and Bo mentioned fairy tales. Bo expected the

stories to be 'fairy tales I already know' while Amir anticipated 'Ones that have a happy ending, like Disney.'

The majority of the students had previously experienced reading rather than oral storytelling at home or school. Amir, Jamal, Khan, Maru, Bo and Dylan had been read to at home, while Aisha and David had not. These experiences may have framed their expectations that the stories would be read. Many of the students' experiences of story were linked to families reading or telling stories to one another. Dylan had lots of things read to him as a child by his mother and teachers.

He was reading the *Book Thief* at school and enjoyed comics. *Little Red Riding Hood* was read to Maru by her older sister. She in turn read picture books such as *That's Not My Monster* to her younger siblings. So where the parents are busy, and the family is larger, siblings could step into a storied role in the household.

Students at the urban-mixed and all-female school talked about storytelling in a number of contexts, including fantasy, reading, writing and oral storytelling (introductory interviews 2013). Remarkably, Khan (urban-mixed) and Peter (rural-mixed) were the *only* two students to mention what could be considered traditional oral storytelling. Khan said, 'I expected storytelling you'd be sat in a circle and listen.' Peter also mentioned a circle, but also reading, 'Group reading maybe. I'm not sure quite what to expect. They did it back in time when they didn't have a telly, used to tell stories, around the camp fire. It's mainly, I don't know, I guess it's the start to most horror movies [laughs].'

4.2.2 All-female school

An Education Adviser report for 2009 stated a diversity figure of around 25% for the all-female school. From my observations, this was representative of demographics of my participants (see Table 4.2). The school was located in an urban area with lower-than-average incomes (Ofsted 2007). Parents' jobs included a specialist army trainer, management roles and one home carer, and there was one unemployed parent, and three homemakers.

Ofsted (2007) praised the school for innovative teaching methods, pastoral care and students' 'positive behaviour' towards classwork. The students gave a mixed report in terms of teacher support. While Mary said, 'It was different in primary school; we didn't have teachers who used to go, "Get up, get out".' Olive said, 'They all treat us equally and [bullying] it's in other groups, but we don't seem to have much. Some teachers can cut you. Some teachers are too enthusiastic about things.' Overall, the school's environment was viewed as supportive as the school had many good teachers; there were personal tutors based in the school offering pastoral support; the school worked with each student to set personal learning targets; and students were encouraged to join clubs and participate in after-school activities, such as The Duke of Edinburgh Award. Ava said, 'I'm proud to say that I go to this school' (t22).

Table 4.2 All-female school demographic information

Student							
Group	Name	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Religion	Parent Profession	Siblings
1	Ava	F	14	British-White	Undisclosed	Homemaker, travel agent	2
	Belle	F	14	British-White	Undisclosed	Home carer, unemployed	8
	Olive	F	14	Euroasian (Singapore-German)	Undisclosed	Homemaker, chef	2
	Holly	F	14	British-White	Undisclosed	Bakery assistant manager, coach driver	1
2	Mary	F	13	British-Asian (Bangladesh)	Atheist	Teacher, army (stepdad)	1
	Heidi	F	14	British-White	None	Residential care, manager car industry	2
	Paris	F	13	British-White	None	Hair stylist, truck driver	1
	Felicity	F	14	British-White	None	School administrator, unknown	3

4.2.2.1 Expectations at the all-female school

The majority of the students – Ava, Felicity, Heidi, Holly, Mary and Paris – related storytelling to literature; Belle did not know what to expect; and two students, Olive and Ava, related storytelling to its oral sense. Olive’s parents used to ‘make up stories’. Ava related storytelling to memories of nursery school and reading *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet* in class. Her expectation of the storytelling was that it would be thrilling; she said, ‘Some storytellers are really good at *that*, making it sound really scary.’

The students at this school preferred reading realistic and young-adult fiction (see Appendix 2). All group members had been read to at some point by their parents, with the exception of Belle, who enjoyed watching soaps with her sister. Therefore, they expected the stories to be read. Paris anticipated age-appropriate stories, ‘Kind of our age stuff.’ Olive expected ‘real-life’ stories. Mary related storytelling to audio tapes and fairy tales her mother read.

I found that the students at the all-female school related their experience of anticipating storytelling in a greater number of ways than at the urban-mixed school. Students at the all-female school had broader access to story at home than students at the urban-mixed school

perhaps as a result of family economic background which enabled access to a broader range of fairy tales and the time for parents to read to their children to students who attended the all-female school.

4.2.3 Rural-mixed school

This school was the least demographically mixed, in terms of ethnicity (see Table 4.3). An Ofsted (2007) report stated that ethnicity levels were well below average. Parents' jobs indicated a mix of social class; this was also reflected in the wide catchment area of the school, which had higher-than-average-income and employment levels. In contrast to the other schools, all the students' parents worked and none were homemakers (Office for National Statistics 2011).

Table 4.3 Rural-mixed school demographic information

Group	Student Name	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Religion	Parent Profession	Siblings
1	Mark	M	13	British-White	Agnostic-atheist	School governor, car mechanic	1
	Millie	F	14	British-White	Christian	Teacher, optician's supervisor	2
	Rebecca	F	13	British-White	None	Receptionist, social work supervisor	3
	Dawn	F	14	British-White	Undisclosed	Sales assistant, car manufacturing	1
2	Amy	F	12	British-White	Undisclosed	Administration, painter and decorator	1
	Lucy	F	13	British-White	Undisclosed	Teacher, lecturer	1
	Peter	M	13	British-White	Agnostic	Florist, engineer	3
	Ryan	M	13	British-White	Undisclosed	Tax office administration, retail assistant	1

The students were positive about their relationship to the school. The facilities were a large part of this. For example, Mark enjoyed the use of computer programmes which allowed the creation of 3D models, the woodwork room for metal casting, and design and technology lessons, when he made a clock and a letter rack. The school provided many after-school clubs, for activities from sports to creative writing. The provision of a school bus service

allowed students who lived further away to participate. It was generally agreed by the students that the school was a supportive environment. A number of students travelled long distances to this school because of its good reputation. Millie said, 'They always help us to exceed our targets no matter what level we are.' So, for instance, a C-student might receive extra one-to-one time in lessons to help them reach a higher grade.

4.2.3.1 Expectations at the rural-mixed school

Lucy, Millie, Rebecca and Ryan did not know what to expect from the storytelling. Rebecca and Lucy were excited. Amy, Dawn, Mark and Peter expected the stories to be read – a common expectation across all three schools. They did this in slightly different ways. For example, Lucy mentioned *Aesop's Fables* and Greek myths, but expected modern stories, while Peter mentioned classic fairy tales such as *Cinderella*. Mark and Peter were the only students at this school to mention oral storytelling, which means that out of all 24 students only five anticipated or mentioned oral storytelling in their initial interviews, and this was usually mentioned in relation to someone reading from a book. For instance, Mark said, 'I've seen people do it from memory. I've seen people do it from books.'

For the rural-mixed students, reading and telling stories formed part of special relationships such as parent–child, sibling–sibling, grandparent–grandchild, and step-parent–stepchild. This is a generation that appears to have been read to rather than told stories, with a few exceptions, such as Olive, whose parents made up stories, Khan whose mother told stories from memory and Amy's grandparents, who shared stories from their lives.

To summarise, the students from each of the three schools were from a variety of different backgrounds. The urban-mixed school was ethnically diverse and in an area of social and

economic deprivation; thus, a number of parents were homemakers or unemployed. The school was gradually improving despite significant levels of learning, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The all-female school was in an area with lower-than-average incomes, with a diversity figure of 25%, and was praised for its supportive environment. Again, a number of parents were homemakers or unemployed. The rural-mixed school was the least ethnically diverse, and parents had higher-than-average incomes and employment levels. Students travelled longer distances specifically to go to the school because of its excellent reputation, as illustrated by an extensive after-school programme. None of the parents were homemakers or unemployed.

It has been shown that the students brought prior experience of many narrative forms into the storytelling space. Previous narrative knowledge provided individuals with the narrative experience to further contextualise stories, empowering them to enact their own processes of observation, exploration, experience and inquiry in order to draw their own meanings from the fairy tales. For instance, studies have indicated that background knowledge is an indicator of the ability to learn new information, and academic achievement, as well as motivation and learning strategies which support learning (Karbach *et al.* 2013: 50, Murayama *et al.* 2013: 1487, Dochy *et al.* 1999: 347).

The students' experience of stories at home and school created expectations that the stories would be read. Now Section 4.3 will examine how these students responded to storytelling.

4.3 Storytelling compared to literature

Storytelling spaces were situated within three schools in two classrooms and a library.

However, a separate area from the school was created by moving the furniture and engaging

the students to lead their own conversations (which will be further discussed in Section 4.5). The students' conversations revealed that they related to storytelling in a number of similar and contradictory ways.

Q9 was designed to prompt the students to compare storytelling with literature (see Appendix 1). There was some confusion over whether storytelling denoted someone reading or speaking from memory.

Peter [Reads Q9]. So how is a fairy tale different from a story?

Lucy No

Amy No, it's like, how is it different from having a story told from off the top of your head? Rather than been read from a book

Peter When someone is reading from a book it's got more detail and it's basically a picture in your head (t7)

Amy, Peter and Lucy compared being read a story, rather than reading by themselves, to performance. This occurred at all three schools. As noted in Chapter 4, Section 4.1, reading experience informed expectation. Student experiences previously involved being read to; being told a story from memory did not meet their expectations (see Appendix 1).

There were similarities and differences between reading a story, being read to and watching a performance. Literature was discussed as a fixed text with storytelling perceived as fluid and changeable.

Olive If someone tells you a story, it's their imagination, if you tell your story you can image whatever you want, whenever you want

Ava I know, I said, if someone reads a story to you it's from a book, reading it to you so they can't make it their own cause it's already been written. So they can't change it from what it is down on that paper (t22)

Reading was less flexible, storytelling more imaginative. As Olive said, with storytelling, 'you can image whatever you want'. Dawn said, 'When they don't have a book, they can, if they forget a bit, they can just, what's it called?' Mark responded, 'Improvise.' Text was seen as a fixed structure, while storytelling was compared with improvisation. The fluidity of storytelling was mentioned 30 times in student conversations (t7, t13, t16, t17, t22, t24, t25, t30). The majority were at the all-female (15) and rural-mixed (13) schools. Ava repeated the idea that literature was fixed in another week, 'When it's read you have to go by what it says, you can't change it otherwise it won't make sense' (t24).

However, student perspectives differed regarding story flexibility. Reading could be performed like storytelling, which accords with Dupont's (1999: 183) view that '[a] story is not a fixed text'. Mary and Felicity considered the role of the reader in comparison to a performer.

Mary They say it in their own words

Felicity They don't just copy it

Mary They don't just [tone becomes monotonous] read it from a book and just read it from a book. [speaks normally] They can add their own tone to it (t16)

A performer brings the text to life whether reading or performing. Thus reading and storytelling were both considered to be performances. Mark said, about reading, 'They're

giving their interp – every experience of story is different’ (t13). The narrator’s tone becomes an important aspect of performing a different experience at each telling.

Millie talked about the gestures Miriam used: ‘She takes on this element in the, her body language and stuff. She seems as entranced in it as we are. And as soon as she finishes you see her back to normal again.’ Mark said, ‘She’s not waving her arms around. When the wife cooks she gets a bowl out, you know. You can tell it’s a bowl [Mark cupped his hands together]’ (t12).

In contrast, unaccompanied reading retained a fixed quality. Although in general storytelling was described as more improvisational, Peter pointed out that literature is flexible in the sense that ‘there’s many different versions of *Cinderella*, like *Roald Dahl*, he changed it and made the ugly stepsisters, cut their heads off or something’ (t7, Dahl 1984: 5). Peter noted an exception to literature being fixed, because different versions of written fairy tales exist.

Stories transform into different versions, and a storyteller is free to improvise. While Peter described books as ‘precise and accurate’, he also said, ‘I can make the characters look and sound as I want’ when reading (t10). Thus, books acted as a precise guide, but visualising characters was enacted by Peter as a reader. Reading and performance were therefore filtered through a narrator and reinterpreted again, using the imagination of the reader or listener like a self-narrator would. The storyteller was compared to a ‘narrator’, as in a pantomime, play or novel, guiding the audience through the story by Rebecca and Mark (t12). The storyteller framed the story for the audience. For example, Lucy described storytelling as ‘analytic’ (t7). It is interesting to consider storytelling as an analytic performance by the storyteller. However, author-intent is no longer considered important in literature studies (Adair 1992: 23, 26). Just as readers interpret the text and make it their

own, storyteller-intent will not necessarily translate to audience experience. However, narration did effect enjoyment of the performance (see Section 4.2). For example, voice was important.

When a story is read aloud, characters voices are distinguished by ‘tone of voice’ said Amy, ‘but if you read it from a piece of paper or a book sometimes, it’s one tone of voice’ (t8).

Amy said, ‘One tone of voice, that is really annoying.’ Peter demonstrated:

[...] maybe they think the book’s dull and they’re reading it to you [bored tone] she, had, a, blue, dress. Or if they are reading it from the top of their head, [animated tone] they had a blue dress sparkling with sapphires and diamonds! (t7).

For Amy and Ryan, it was easier to distinguish characters during a performance because of the storyteller’s voice. In a book ‘Maybe you might not know who’s speaking straight away, if it’s saying something then said so and so you might be confused by who said what,’ Amy said. Ryan agreed, ‘You can tell which character’s which, but if you are reading, sometimes you can get confused.’ Lucy joked, ‘I think that’s what speech marks are for’ (t8). However, gesture and storyteller voice made a difference to the students’ experience of the story.

The biggest differences between literature and storytelling were spatial and motivational. Performances occurred during a set moment in time. Ava commented, ‘A book’s like that thick [pause] and that story’s about five minutes. Imagine how long it would take to read a book that thick, they include so much unreaded detail in there.’ Holly agreed, ‘It takes out boring things that aren’t relevant’ (t23). Unlike a book, a storyteller can change their pace while interacting with their audience. In the pilot project, O’Connor introduced an

interactive element. Each time he said ‘ghosts and ghouls and goblins, and even [pause]’ this prompted the audience to chorus, ‘Old Nick himself’, which is an alternative name for the devil (t5).

The students enjoyed sharing the storytelling experience. Millie said, ‘Storytelling is more of a group atmosphere, it’s more communicative, it all brings us together’ (t12). Comparing the social aspects of storytelling with reading, Peter said, ‘The storyteller has personality’ whereas ‘reading a book it’s just a blank page [...] it’s a bit lonely’ (t7). Fourteen out of 24 students enjoyed the social aspects of school most; this reinforced the importance of social activities to these young people. The students saw the storytelling space as distinctive because of the storyteller’s personality and interpretation of the story, their interaction with the audience, and subsequent group discussion. Reading can also be perceived as a collective experience; 15 of 24 students had experienced social reading in various locations and with different people: nursery or primary school (2), a library (1), with teachers (5) and with family (12).

Reading required a larger investment of time, motivation and effort. Khan preferred storytelling because, ‘I hate reading, last time I read a book was year six.’ Khan said, ‘I hate reading, it’s hard’ (t31). Khan appeared to need motivation in order to want to read.

Khan I only read a comic book

Dylan I’ve read a hundred pages of *Assassins Creed*

Khan Cause we know what it’s about, cause we’ve played it

Dylan I bet if you had that book though, *Assassins Creed*, you’d read it

Khan I would read that book, I'll buy it off you, how much? (t32)

Khan was willing to read comics and a book associated with *Assassins Creed*. He was motivated enough to offer to buy the book from Dylan, who was unwilling. Previously, Ava described books as 'thick', detailed and longer to read, thus requiring concentration. An advantage of reading, groups discussed, was that the same page could be reread if they were confused, which was not possible during a performance. A reader can set the pace through detailed text like *Lord of the Rings*. Dawn said, 'It's nice to read it yourself because then you can read it at different paces.' Millie responded, 'Yeah, cause I had *Lord of the Rings* read to me, I actually read it out loud to other people and it took ages. I'd rather read it myself, like *The Hunger Games*' (t13). So literature allowed the students to control the pace, while storytelling was in the control of the storyteller, who ideally responded to their audience.

Student preference differed between storytelling and reading. 'I like reading,' Dylan said, 'cause you get the image properly in your head' (t31). The same was applied to storytelling by Millie: 'in storytelling the words stay with you a bit like images, they stick in your head' (t14). Millie, however, also said, 'Reading them, they're not as in your head' which suggested that she found it easier to visualise while listening to a story (t14).

The students were asked whether they preferred storytelling to being read, or reading, a story. Storytelling was favoured by 19 out of 24 students. All eight students at the all-female school preferred the story to be told; six of eight chose storytelling at the rural-mixed school and five of eight students at the urban-mixed school chose storytelling over reading. Responses at the urban-mixed and rural-mixed schools were more varied than at the all-female school but the majority of students selected storytelling.

Storytelling was also related to via geography, history and technology. For instance, despite Warwickshire being a landlocked county, the students related to the setting of *MacCodram*, where a fisherman stole a selkie's skin from the beach. Ryan said that he could connect to the story because 'it's on the coast by the sea'. When Lucy exclaimed, 'We live in the Midlands!' Ryan responded, 'Yeah, but we go on holidays to places like the sea, we can move' (t6). Geographical location can change. It is, in some cases, a choice; five of the students' families migrated to Warwickshire for work.

The settings of the stories were Scotland, Japan, France and the UK. Millie talked about how she enjoyed 'experiencing different cultures and seeing how they varied in plot development and characterisation, country to country'. Students discussed geography at all three schools: urban-mixed (8), all-female (4) and rural-mixed (18). Students at the rural-mixed school linked stories to places they had been to on holiday or their parents travelled to for work: Australia, Denmark, Majorca and Scotland (t11, t15). At the urban-mixed school, few holidays were mentioned outside the UK (Africa by David, presumably to visit family, t26), but the stories were connected to geographical places via the news, for instance in response to a doll losing her head in *Toy Princess*, Jamal mentioned a beheading in Saudi Arabia (t30, t35). At the all-female school, no holidays were connected to the story, but a school trip to Spain was mentioned (t22).

The story *Moon Bear* led to discussions about the historical period in which it was set. In *Moon Bear*, when a husband returned traumatised from an unnamed Japanese war, his wife went on a quest to heal him. On a healer's bequest she fetched a hair from the moon bear's neck. Amy, Peter, Lucy and Ryan's group (in the rural-mixed school) discussed when *Moon Bear* was set. The guesses, mostly by Peter, included medieval times, WW1, WW2, an

unknown Japanese war and the eighteenth-century (t7). Thus, multiple possibilities were created for the time period when the story was set. The group did not reach a set conclusion other than that the tale was in the past during a war involving Japan. Despite this discussion, the students in this group identified with the story's location and historical setting. All schools mentioned history about the same number of times: urban-mixed (8), all-female (5) and rural-mixed (9). Their comments involved the changing status of women and people's living conditions (t7, t8, t11, t12, t13, t9, t20, t26, t32, t34).

The students also brought contemporary viewpoints, often through technology, to their critical interpretation. This could be classed as socio-economic interpretation. For example, the predominance of mobile phone technology led to the following conversation.

Khan Wouldn't you get like— you could call the police, he's searched my house, go away

Dylan How are you meant to call the police? You probably haven't even got a phone

Khan Probably do have a mobile

Dylan You're a seal! How's a seal got a phone?

Aisha They could have a phone

Khan Yeah they could have a waterproof one, yeah! Waterproof phone, that's the answer!

Dylan Then how do they press the buttons?

Khan They head-butt the button to send it (t31)

Storytelling was related to technology across the groups: urban-mixed (6), all-female (8) and rural-mixed (3). References to technology in the students' interpretations reveal something about how previous experience, such as technological knowledge, may feed into meaning-making and critical thinking. The rural-mixed (2) mentioned technology less than the urban-mixed (6) and all-female (8) schools. Students at the urban-mixed school appeared attached to their phones and games consoles, indicated by these items being confiscated as punishment by their parents. Students at the all-female school discussed losing iPods and mobiles in shops, parks, buses and swimming pools. This showed a rather different attitude, perhaps indicating that things would be replaced by parents (t18). Holly said, 'If I lost my phone my mum would be more devastated than me cause she pays for it' (t23).

The group of 12-to-14-year-olds, born in 1998 and 1999, are part of a generation that has grown up with technology. The PlayStation, for example, was introduced in 1995, and Xbox in 2001 (PlayStationmuseum.com 2014, Goss 2011). This link to technology can be illustrated through Peter's comment about *Moon Bear*: 'It's clearly before PlayStation, and tellies. Otherwise a bit of TV might calm him down' (t7). The prevalence of affordable mobile technology has affected the students' interpretation, which suggests that a consumerist viewpoint can influence interpretation, as the students cited various electronic products in their discussions of the fairy tales, such as portable media players, mobile phones, games consoles and weaponry (t7, t20, t23, t31, t34).

Different students had different needs regarding reading speeds and inclinations towards reading and storytelling. Millie and Dylan preferred reading. Bo and Aisha did not comment. Amir, Amy, Ava, Belle, David, Dawn, Heidi, Holly, Felicity, Jamal, Khan, Olive, Paris, Peter,

Mary, Maru, Millie, Mark and Rebecca preferred storytelling. However, sometimes preferences were conditional. Lucy considered the difference critically:

it depends, I think if you'd heard the story before it's better to be told it cause then you get a different version, but if you've never heard the story before it's probably better to be read it so that you get the story (t8).

Lucy's dyslexia affected her perspective. It was easier for her to read a story in the first instance. Lucy, Rebecca and Dawn's inclinations were conditional (t8, t12). Peter, Millie, Lucy, Olive and Holly sometimes favoured reading. One reason was comprehension; another was story content.

Holly If someone read you *Perks of Being a Wallflower*

Olive I'd be like, no, ugh

Holly I'd rather read the book myself cause I cried

Olive I cried too, don't worry

Ava Why?

Olive It's really emotional (t22)

Holly and Olive felt an emotional connection to the story and preferred to experience that privately. Holly's and Olive's reaction was an example of personal inclinations influencing public and private displays of emotion. Storytelling will be connected to emotion in Chapter 6; however, this example indicated that space existed for expressing, or naming, emotion in the storytelling space.

Social aspects of storytelling and literature were also compared. Bo compared reading to storytelling by talking about the social space surrounding the performance. She said,

It would be really awkward, if someone read it to you all the time, you wouldn't know where to look. Like, stare at them, look around. Then if I looked around I'd feel rude. But then if I stared at them, I'd feel rude (t34).

When asked what the difference was between reading and storytelling, Bo said 'other people', and Millie said, 'Stories bring people together' (t15). The students felt that there were spaces where it was appropriate for someone to read or perform, such as at school or home, but Bo suggested not 'all the time' otherwise it might be 'awkward'. Millie said, 'Reading it is slightly more private if you get what I mean, but then um [...] But then storytelling is more of a group atmosphere, it's more communative [communicative], it all brings us together' (t12). So reading and storytelling were acts of communication which created a different sense of space.

Comparing storytelling with reading in isolation, Maru said that storytelling aided understanding, 'It's easier [...] Cause you understand it more than you read it yourself' (t30). Storytelling also aided understanding, and story retention, for Jamal and David. Jamal said,

I think having it read to you would be better cause sometimes when I read books, I don't like reading books cause I read the book, and I just forget what I read, the last whole line, or the last whole page. I forget too quickly but I can remember things from years ago and not remember why, just do. I don't know if it's because either I don't like reading or I don't enjoy it. Read to you, you can just sit there and listen to yourself (t30).

David said, 'yeah', agreeing with Jamal's words. In the extract above, Jamal was not engaged with literature; he did not 'like' or 'enjoy' reading and as a result forgot pages. I found Jamal to be a deep thinker. He enjoyed thinking about philosophical questions (see Appendix 2). Reading did not engage Jamal, yet when a story was read Jamal talked about listening to himself, as if he found a different level of engagement, connecting to his sense of identity through listening.

Storytelling was also perceived as complex and ambiguous. Individuals found multiple meanings within a story. The students were aware that stories had moral and ethical meanings. For example, Dawn talked about stories having 'morals to them'; Mark said that the purpose of fantasy was to explain 'how things can and can't happen'. The contradictory nature of stories was also apparent. Amy said, 'The way people interpret is different to you, that's a different way of thinking, different perspectives.' Contradictory perspectives became apparent as the students compared ideas and opinions. At times, talking resulted in contrasting opinions (which will be discussed in Section 4.4.2).

Storytelling and reading were linked to education. When Amir, David, Jamal and Maru discussed storytelling, Jamal referred to literature as educative.

Amir It's better because someone's reading to you they put more expression
 into it

Jamal It's not better, but it's what you prefer, cause reading a story yourself is
 better for yourself [...] it helps you with your English (t27)

Jamal described reading a text as beneficial to language skills, potentially reading, writing and communicating. Groups analysed storytelling as if it was a written text.

Millie I'm going to add another question in, what imagery and metaphors can you see within this piece of creative writing?

Mark It's not a piece of creative writing, it's a story that's been told, if it was a piece of creative writing somebody would have written it

Millie It's creative writing because somebody probably writ it (t14)

Millie requested that her group interpret performance as if it was a text. Educational focus on critical literacy in the National Curriculum might have influenced Millie's interpretation of storytelling. English GCSE objectives from the DoE (2013: 4, 6) stated that 40-45% of a student's mark was assessed by their ability to

[a]nalyse the language, form and structure used by a writer to create meanings and effects, using relevant subject terminology where appropriate

Guidelines included narratives such as plays, poetry, literature, fiction and drama. When Millie used the terminology 'imagery and metaphors', this indicated that she was responding to storytelling in the same way she had learned to interpret different narratives at school. This demonstrated conformity to educative "norms": the rationalisation and interpretation of text to DoE standards. I will discuss education-interpretation links in Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1.

Section 4.3 explored the similarities and differences between reading a story, being read to and watching a performance. The relationship between text and storytelling was complex and contradictory. Overall, there were more similarities between storytelling and literature than differences. Fairy tales have been rewritten and re-performed numerous times, but text, while fixed, was also considered changeable. Texts and storytelling were also adaptable

to teller's and listeners' imaginations and emotions. Narration was another similarity; stories were narrated to readers or listeners through an author's or teller's perspective. Literature and storytelling were reinterpreted from text, or spoken word, by a listener or reader. Thus, both mediums relied on engagement and interpretation. These similarities indicate that storytelling can be utilised to critique Zipes theories of the 'civilizing effect' of children's literature.

There were three main differences between literature and storytelling. First, storytelling occurred within a set time and social space, while reading took longer. Texts allowed rereading but a live performance did not. Text was typically communicated on a one-to-one level, but social reading was not (see Section 4.3), while storytelling always created a group atmosphere. Second, reading was perceived to take effort, which required motivation, while storytelling was more engaging even for reluctant readers. Third, text was associated with education, indicating that the presence of storytelling was perceived as something that would not be found in a regular classroom.

The main differences between storytelling and reading arose regarding student preferences to read alone or experience story in a group space. This appeared to be dependent on reading ability. Enjoyment of the storyteller's performance and group discussion was preferred by some students, such as David and Khan, while others, such as Lucy, preferred the understanding that came through first reading a text.

So far, storytelling and literature appear more adaptable to individual student needs than empowering or constraining. The storytelling space offered young people a diverse range of ways in which to connect their own lives to story. Answering sub-question two, about whether young people's responses to oral storytelling were shaped by wider issues of

inequality and diversity in their lives, requires a deeper comparison of how the students' social backgrounds may have affected their responses.

Section 4.4 considers in more detail how young people's prior expectations, experience and socio-economic conditions caused them to relate to storytelling in similar and different ways.

4.4 Differences between young people's experience of the storytelling space

This section compares the aspects mentioned in Section 4.2 in relation to the similar and different backgrounds of the students across the three schools. There were differences in the way each school group responded to storytelling which might be, in part, a result of social, economic, ethnic and gendered influences.

There were also different educational standards between schools that may have influenced story interaction alongside other socio-economic factors. For example, Ofsted (2014) rated the rural- and urban-mixed schools 'outstanding' for teacher quality, pupil achievement and pupil behaviour. The urban-mixed school had made a rapid improvement since their last Ofsted report (2012) and were recognised for inspiring and engaging pupils. The rural-mixed school has had a consistent high level of teaching and student pastoral care. The all-female school received a 'good' Ofsted (2014) ranking recognising the high level of pastoral care the school provides pupils, and good teaching levels, particularly from Teaching Assistants working with students with learning difficulties and from disadvantaged backgrounds to help them reach their target grades.

4.4.1 In what ways did the urban-mixed school differ?

In the follow-up interviews, I asked each student to reflect on their experience of the storytelling space. Aisha and Maru felt confident about sharing their opinions within the group. Aisha said, 'It was good, you get confident to speak.' Aisha felt that she had increased in confidence over the weeks. She had retold the stories to her little sister at home. I observed during the sessions that both girls appeared more comfortable in their body language, and eye contact, and spoke more by the final week. The transcripts confirmed this. Comparing week one to week five, the number of times Aisha and Maru spoke almost doubled: Aisha 22 to 57 times, and Bo from 18 to 35 times (t31, t35).

However, the above figures might not be the result of increased confidence but of increased familiarity with the space and what was expected of them. I compared Aisha's and Maru's perceptions of increased confidence alongside the content of their dialogue. In week one, Maru spoke in short phrases, only elaborating when the researcher was present.

Maru It reminds me of Cinderella

RES In what way does it remind you of Cinderella?

Maru Cause she had to go back before twelve and then she [the fisherman's wife] went in a hurry as well (t31)

This differed from the final week, when Maru commented on a princess who fell in love with her stepbrother.

Maru But that's just like, someone that you like, treats you like a brother or sister, you're getting married to them

Amir Yeah, but they're not real brothers and sisters

Maru Yeah, but they treated each other like brothers and sisters

David Yeah, right, they have manners

Maru Okay, but you don't (t35)

In the final week, Maru expressed her opinion despite disagreement from the group, and without prompts from the researcher. This might be reflective of the increased confidence Maru felt she experienced.

Aisha's responses also lengthened. In week one, Aisha laughed or gave short replies when prompted. For example, when Khan said that seals 'probably do have a mobile', Aisha agreed, 'They could have a phone' (t31). By week five, Aisha's responses were longer and more detailed. At one point she had a conversation with others about her family origins. Aisha's parents came to the UK from Jamaica; her granddad, and other family, lived there and spoke Patois her grandmother was half-Indian; and her cousins were Irish, and she had 'gypsy' blood from that side of the family (t35).

From observations over five weeks, it could be seen that the students in the urban-mixed school underwent the biggest physical transformation. In week one, the students were dispersed across the classroom; they sat with closed expressions and defensive body postures, such as crossed arms; the students avoided the storyteller's gaze. When I decided to change the layout of the classroom, moving the chairs into a semi-circle at the front, there was reluctance. By the final week, the same students were moving tables, pulling chairs around and sitting with open anticipation (Urban-mixed school 2013). Their comments about

increased confidence and enjoyment of the space (Section 4.2) indicate that providing them with a space in which their opinions were valid made a difference to them.

4.4.2 In what ways did the all-female school differ?

Regarding group dynamics, tensions and contrasting opinions were present during conversation in the rural- and urban-mixed schools that were not present at the all-female school. Contradictory perspectives became apparent as the students compared ideas and opinions for instance, Paris thought that men should 'have the main job' while women 'clean the house'. Mary disagreed, 'that's not good, don't just want to clean all day' (t17). The all-female (37) and rural-mixed (36) schools had twice the contrasting opinions of the urban-mixed school (12).

The majority of the students at the all-female school were confident and chatty. They knew each other from shared lessons. When I asked the students whether they were friends with others in their group, Mary clarified, 'Not so much with Paris. We've become more friends, doing this, and we are in a group together in English as well. I'm friends with Felicity and Heidi more, but me and Paris are friends now.' Paris agreed that she had become friends with Mary over the course of the research. The storytelling space created the possibility for new friendships to form.

Another difference between the all-female and the other schools was that social reading experiences were evenly distributed between educational settings and family. However, stories were only read by mothers in the home in the all-female school but involved other relationships in the other schools (parents, grandparents, siblings). Was the novelty of

hearing a male the attraction as opposed to text being a barrier? The presence of Alex at the all-female school made a difference.

Felicity I like his face

Heidi His eyes are really blue, I love guys with blue eyes

Paris I like his jeans [group laughs] (t18)

The girls teased one another about finding him attractive (t19, t22, t23). Ava responded to teasing by saying, 'Everybody in the class thinks he's good-looking so you can't say that it's just me' (t19). Heidi reflected on my presence: 'If she's in a relationship with him she's going to find this awkward' (t18).

Debates in sociological research vary between proposing that single-gender classrooms are an advantage, a disadvantage, or make no difference to the educational attainment of male or female students (Mael *et al.* 2004, Bigler *et al.* 2014, Harker 2000). Coleman (summarised in Streitmatter 1999: 36) argued that,

Boys and girls together distract each other. Whether this distraction takes the form of dressing to impress the other gender, competition for teacher time and attention, or sexual harassment, there is no question that distractions exist

Single-gender education has been considered a solution to reduce the distractions proposed above and to narrow gender inequalities in various ways, such as to encourage girls to pursue engineering and science degrees (Mael *et al.* 2005). There is also concern over boys' attainment. A report from EACEA (2010: 13) showed that across 38 countries in Europe males fall behind in school, repeat school years, and leave school earlier than females.

However, from a social perspective single-gender education may contribute in reinforcing gender stereotypes, and fail to prepare students for the world outside of school (Fabes *et al.* 2015).

Female students lived experiences of a single-gendered maths classes indicated a more positive social experience than expressed by male students (Simpson and Che 2016: 11). Contrary to a number of suggestions that single-gender classrooms may encourage male and female educational attainment due to lack of distraction by the opposite sex, the research suggests that single-sex schools are an advantage to girls, not boys (Jackson 2002: 46). Or alternatively, that there is no difference between educational achievement when comparing single- or mixed-gender schools (Harker 2000: 216). Psychological analysis doing a single- and mixed-gender comparison between 1.6 million students in 21 nations confirmed that overall there is no learning advantage to single-sex classrooms (Pahlke *et al.* 2014: 1064).

For the students in the rural-mixed school, the storytelling space was a place for cooperative discussion and friendship-forming, where gender played some role in influencing group discussion and in the storyteller–audience interaction.

4.4.3 In what ways did the rural-mixed school differ?

Students in the rural-mixed and all-female schools mentioned issues regarding student-teacher interactions. Heidi achieved a 4A in English and said, ‘I was expecting better.’ She explained that the teacher said it was the way the essay was structured. There was a gap between Heidi’s understanding and teacher feedback: ‘He’ll only put if you want that level you’ve got to include, and there’s some words up there are really hard to do.’ Khan said, ‘I hate geography, it’s crap,’ mentioning that the teacher ‘always has a go at everyone’. Dylan

responded, 'You should try harder,' and Khan said, 'I do try, that's why it's annoying, the classes are shocking' (t31). Thus, for some students at the urban-mixed and all-female schools, there were issues regarding assignment feedback, and negative student-teacher interactions, such as the teacher that Khan said, had 'a go at everyone'. Such tensions between some students and teachers did not appear to happen at the rural-mixed school, perhaps because of the similar socio-economic backgrounds of students (see Section 4.2.3).

Students at the rural-mixed school discussed the performance aspects of the story 17 times compared to 7 and 9 times at the urban-mixed and all-female schools. They described storytelling as an 'improvised' and lived experience, enhanced by interaction and ways of telling a story. Mark said, 'If you miss a bit in storytelling you can't go back and look at it again' (t12) and Rebecca said, 'your experiences are being told back to you' (t14).

Performance involved: storyteller technique (perspective, imagination, improvisation, interaction), voice (volume, tone, descriptive language), body (acting, expression, hand and facial gestures) and familiar narrative techniques, such as cliff-hangers (t7, t9, t12, t13, t14). They are familiar because, as Section 4.1 illustrated, young people brought similar and different prior experiences of story into the storytelling space. Students at the rural-mixed school were part of a creative writing group and responded differently when asked to define storytelling.

I got the impression that students at rural-mixed school did not need this space as much as the urban-mixed school did. They had alternatives – many after-school clubs to choose from, and were confident expressing themselves in the space. For example, at the start of one session, Millie was eating an ice cream; they generally brought sweets to share around. I wrote in my research journal about the atmosphere of the group:

At the end of this session the students were relaxed. They started to do 'planking' across the tables [...] Sam did a posture, which reminded me of the child posture in yoga, on the floor with his bum up in the air, then lay on the floor. Millie started to strum a ukulele that was at the back of the class room. [...] When their teacher returned, I could see from her amused expression that this was how the group usually acted (Parfitt 2013).

So the students from the rural-mixed school were comfortable in the storytelling sessions; they discussed technical aspects of the storytelling, such as performance, in more detail and ignored a topic such as grades. All of these things appear to be linked to their educational and socio-economic environment, which differed from the other schools.

Overall, across the three schools, the students' experience of the storytelling space was a positive one. They felt they gained something in terms of confidence, friendship, expressing opinions and listening to the opinions of others in the space. However, I cannot say that this is indicative of a 'civilizing process'. The way the discussions were conducted, as the students shared and listened to each other's opinions could be linked to a 'civilizing process' which supports their negotiation of social interactions. However, to some extent middle-class behaviours, such as self-restraint, could also be considered repressive through stifling personal expression.

The way the discussions were conducted, as the students shared and listened to each other's opinions, could be linked to a 'civilizing process'. I previously summarised Elias concepts of *civilité *, that Zipes applied to fairy tales in Chapter 2, Section 2.3.4. Zipes (1983: 29) explained how class standards of etiquette and behaviour could be transmitted through fairy tales 'to set standards for civilisation'. Adult and socially approved standards of behaviour.

Tabboni (2001: 17) argued that Elias reconstructed the ways in which increasingly civilised individuals felt the difference between enjoying ‘the advantages of “civilization” and the desire to be free of it and meet instinctual needs’. Tabboni (2001: 17) wrote,

Social norms, on the other hand, cannot demand of individuals the continual self-control that makes a ‘civilized’ person of them unless they give the possibilities compatible with this ‘civilization’ of satisfying at least partially personal instincts and spontaneity. The more a person has to control him/herself in work time, the greater will be the need for breaking out.

Civilisation processes connect to wider debates around the reality of human “nature” and the extent to which it needs to be controlled, and the extent to which it can be altered (Dewey 2002: 1-2, 106, Rogoff 2003: 13-17, Wilson 2004: 196). Throughout the thesis I will utilise the students’ interactions with storytelling to question whether connections exist between fairy tales and young people’s behaviour and emotions. To question if how the students shared and listened to each other’s opinions could be linked to a ‘civilizing process’.

The storytelling space created an arena in which performance, communicating and listening to others took centre stage; confidence and friendships are more complex issues.

Storytelling was a social activity, creating three main relationships in the storytelling space: storyteller–listeners, listener–listener, and listener–researcher, with multiple additional story roles in the household (parent–child, sibling–sibling, grandparent–grandchild and step-parent–stepchild).

Sections 4.2 to 4.4 expanded on the definition of the storytelling space, reflecting on young people’s varied experiences. The storytelling space was previously defined as an exploratory

method, involving exposure to oral storytelling performances followed by discussion within three schools, outside a classroom situation. As no teachers were present, discussion was student-led.

Utilising the students' experiences, the storytelling space was initiated by physically altering the classroom, or library, and the storyteller's performance. One feature of the storytelling space was that each story was communicated via the personality of the storyteller, their voice and expression, and the feelings they expressed to an audience. It was a living experience that would not be repeated again in exactly the same way.

Another feature of the storytelling space was that the audience discussed the story from a variety of expectations, experiences and socio-economic backgrounds that they brought to the room. This variety enabled contrasting perspectives to be shared, arising in interpretive similarities and differences, between the three schools but also within groups.

One last feature was that the space offered young people a flexible range of ways in which to connect their own lives to story. Therefore, the space broadened perspectives, increased confidence, and created friendships through the social discussion of story.

The three schools enabled comparisons between how young people from different educational, ethnic, class and gender backgrounds responded to storytelling. Section 4.2 considered student expectations, Section 4.3 experience, and Section 4.4 how experience differed between the three schools. However, they did not consider whether the storytelling space was separate from the schools.

4.5 A storytelling space that is distinct from the classroom

Whether young people felt secure discussing issues that they had experienced, were experiencing or were concerned about was important for two reasons. Firstly, feelings of security influenced the usefulness of the method used to provide insights into the lives of young people in an open and transparent way. Secondly, such insights may then differ from those gained using adult-centric methods of data collection such as surveys, interviewing or focus groups without an element of storytelling, and agency. To consider what young people shared during group conversation, Section 4.3 will analyse what the transcripts revealed about the content of sharing conversations, and what triggered such conversations.

4.5.1 The four aspects of a conversation

Sharing conversations as defined in Section 3.5.3, Chapter 3 were the narration of a sequence of events that included four elements: emotions, personal, relationships and response. This was an expansion on initial findings (Parfitt 2014). These conversations were a measure of how “safe” young people felt to share by indicating young people’s experience of the storytelling space. I defined a sharing conversation through how they shared personal stories in response to others. The interactive element was an important one, sharing conversations were those in which a personal story was shared in response to others in the group, or the facilitator, and the story had to involve the speaker’s presence, the presence of others, and emotions. NVivo coding of 29 transcripts resulted in 221 sharing conversations (see Figure 4.1). These were an unexpected output of the research.

Students from the urban-mixed school had a total of 77 conversations, rural-mixed, 105 and all-female, 39. There were peaks of sharing conversations in the gender-mixed schools in

weeks two and four. As one recording was mislaid (week 3, urban-mixed school) the data set was incomplete. Observing the total of sharing conversations in the urban-mixed school (in green in Figure 4.1), I propose that the dip in week three should be higher, situating it between the rural-mixed and the all-female schools (red and blue lines respectively). If this was a fair representation, this would indicate that the most sharing occurred at the rural-mixed school, followed by the urban-mixed and all-female.

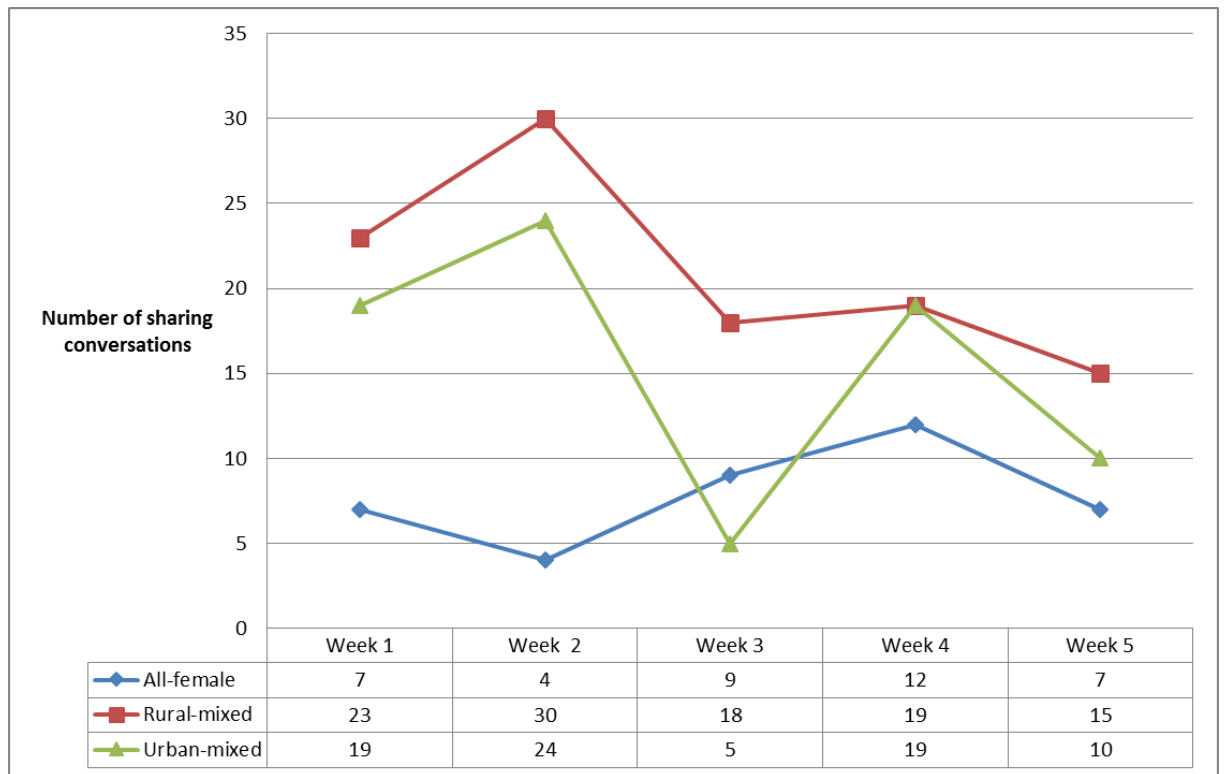


Figure 4.1 Sharing conversations at three schools in Warwickshire

4.5.2 Patterns of sharing: a comparison of three schools in Warwickshire

Observe how the gender-mixed schools (in red and green lines respectively) fluctuate above the all-female school. In addition, weeks two and four show a peak of sharing conversations in the gender-mixed schools. What might have happened, or have been lacking, in the all-female school which might account for this pattern? It may not be the differences between

the schools that cause this pattern but the composition of the groups which are not representative of all young people in the UK and thus limit the conclusions that I can draw about the reasons for the differences between sharing conversations across the three schools.

The pattern was not caused by the most talkative students. The most talkative students were Bo, Holly, Jamal, Mark, Mary and Peter while the top six sharers were Millie (34), Bo (23), Jamal (21), Dawn (19), Dylan and Peter (both 15). This did not indicate whether sharing was or was not related to talking frequency. However, the top six sharers were at the urban-mixed (3) and rural-mixed schools (3), not at the all-female school (2). This suggested that talkativeness did not influence where the most sharing conversations occurred. Why is this? Were the most conversations triggered by the research space, including a researcher presence? Perhaps different storytellers made a difference? Or perhaps single-gender conversations lacked depth compared to the gender-mixed schools? I will now look at these three possible reasons.

4.5.3 The research space versus group discussion

Possible triggers were established for each sharing conversation to assess how the research space, or group discussion, may have affected conversation. First, the effect of the focus group questions was considered, which resulted in 78 conversations (35% of the total). The questions which triggered the most conversations were

Q5 'Can you relate the story to your life in any way?' (16 times)

Q2 'What images, things, or events in the story do you like or dislike, and why?'

(16 times)

Q4 'What would you do if you were in the same situation as one of the characters?' (15 times)

The questions were designed to explore how the students related to the story. Because of how the students responded to these three questions, it appeared that the research questions partially influenced content discussion.

Researcher presence triggered 34 sharing conversations (15%) but the majority of them (49% or 109 instances) were the result of social interaction in the groups. When this work was shared in a presentation to the Bridges Program Director, Maria Asp, she reflected,

It just seems right on that the social trigger is where the learning happens. That's because everything that we know about true critical pedagogy is that learning is relational, that when they're in a space where they're knowledge is valued, and their experiences, if it's family or whatever, are seen as valuable sources, as opposed to another author or something, that's where they show their greatest compassion and understanding for each other (Asp 2014).

As I will argue in Section 4.5.6 social interaction appeared to be the cause of 49% of sharing conversations. Breaking this down further, the most common triggers were discussion among students in the focus groups (56 times, 51%), followed by instances when one person stated an opinion, often at random, which led the discussion in a direction conducive to sharing (34 times, 31%).

However, these three possible triggers (focus group questions, researcher presence and social interactions) did not acknowledge the role or gender of the storyteller. Engagement

with the story and storyteller, or gender mixes in the groups, might be a factor which influenced discussion.

4.5.4 The storyteller versus gender

Conversational themes differed between the three schools. In week four, students from the all-female school were distracted by a quiz book, and talked about common interests such as films and celebrities. They appeared to have had fewer sharing conversations because they were not engaged in discussing the story (t18, t24). In week two, the all-female groups were engaged with discussing the story. However, group one focused on alternative ways the husband in the story could have acted rather than connecting the story to, and sharing, personal experience. Group members were annoyed about the dismissive actions of the husband towards his wife: sleeping outdoors, ignoring her, kicking away food she prepared and shouting 'Go away!' For example, Felicity said she was annoyed by 'how a man can treat a woman like that' (t17). This subject was returned to five separate times. It was not until I prompted them to return to Q5 that Heidi related the above conversation to her own experiences.

Me and my cousin argue all the time. It's almost like she tries to give me a life lesson on what I should and shouldn't do [...] at the end of the day, I said, my life's different to yours. I'll try things that I want to try (t17)

Group two discussed the husband's behaviour four times. For example, Olive said,

If I was the lady I would divorce that man, cause he's not even trying so why should I try? Why should she climb up a mountain only to make her relationship successful when they could do it just like that (t22)

Group two quickly skimmed over focus group questions Q4 to Q7, talking about subjects such as Felicity's school trip to Spain, and English grades (t22). Perhaps the all-female groups were able to discuss the husband's behaviour in depth because of the lack of a male presence.

In contrast, the other schools had more in-depth conversations. In week four, students in the urban-mixed school talked about family relationships, the consequences of actions, responsibilities and discipline in the home (t29, t34). Those from the rural-mixed school debated sacrificing things for love, and strong work ethics, such as the sacrifices required to succeed in terms of employment, and monetary reward (t9, t14). In week two, the students in the urban-mixed school discussed experiences of bullying, perseverance, asking for help, and compassion and other emotions in the story (t27, t32). Those from the rural-mixed school talked about the complexity of relationships, including family roles in the home, disapproval of the way the husband treated his wife, and what happens when you try to help people (t7, t12).

Thus, it appears that a combination of engagement with discussing the story, and a lack of mixed genders, affected the presence of sharing in the groups. These were not the only possible influences. The storytelling space contained a variety of complex factors, the story being one of them, and any future research should be adapted to account for this. There is, for example, the possibility that engagement was linked to performance. Another reason why a peak in sharing may have occurred at the urban-mixed school, may be the introduction of two new storytellers. The students at the urban-mixed school may have found the new storytellers, Alex (week four) and Miriam (week five), novel, causing a peak of

sharing in week four. Yet this did not explain the similar increase in sharing in the other schools in week four or the peak in week two.

The effect of performance did not rule out whether the students were more engaged with one story than another. In the follow-up interviews, the students were asked what their favourite story had been (Figure 4.2). Amir liked *Rooted Lover* and *MacCodram* so both were counted, and four students missed their interviews. Students in the urban-mixed school preferred *Rooted Lover* and the rural-mixed, *Moon Bear*; however, the all-female preferences were split. That was another indication that the girls did not engage with the stories in conversation, resulting in fewer sharing conversations.

School	<i>MacCodram</i>	<i>Moon Bear</i>	<i>Frog/She-Bear</i>	<i>Rooted Lover</i>	<i>Toy Princess</i>
All-female	3	0	1 (SB)	2	1
Urban-mixed	2	0	0	5	2
Rural-mixed	1	4	0	0	0

Figure 4.2 Student story preferences indicated in the follow-up interviews (2013)

4.5.5 Contrasting conversations between students at the single-sex and gender-mixed schools

This section will observe the conversations that occurred in greater detail across the three schools to uncover reasons why the all-female school differed.

In the urban-mixed school, there was teasing between the boys and girls. Responses to the stories were challenged and there were conversations about the details of stories. For example, there was a disagreement about the bear's colour.

Khan Umhum, it's black

Dylan It's white

Khan It's a white bear then

Aisha She said black bear

Dylan Then how come his hair was white?

Bo Oh. It was white along the neck

Khan The neck, yeah (t32)

Conversations about story details did not delve into the meanings of the stories. Students in the urban-mixed school expressed contrasting opinions only 12 times compared to those in the all-female (37) and rural-mixed (36) schools. The groups differed in the urban-mixed school. Group Two consisting of Amir, Jamal, David and Maru produced more contrasting opinions (9:3) than group one. There was a lot of teasing and banter between genders in group one.

The rural-mixed school students discussed technique and questioned the actions of the characters by considering the effects those characters had on the lives and feelings of other characters (see Chapter 6). There were also differences between the dynamics of the groups in the rural-mixed school. Dawn, Mark, Millie and Rebecca's group was more argumentative (22: 14). Mark and the girls constantly questioned each other. Personalities differed; Millie said that she and Mark had not previously got along, and Rebecca walked out for a couple of minutes in week two because of Mark (see Section 6.2, Chapter 6). Competition between male and female students may have led to deeper discussion of the stories and more sharing.

Finally, the all-female school students discussed surface details of the stories and also explored the technical differences between storytelling and literature. For example, why the plot unfolded the way it did and how they related to the story. More cooperation occurred, as there was no competition between the genders for space ownership. Yet this meant that they got sidetracked by what Mary called 'girly talk' (t19). To summarise, a mixed-gender environment was more conducive to sharing because mixed groups tended to regulate themselves more, answered the questions and challenged one another to give deeper answers.

Overall, Section 4.5 indicated that the social space the students created was more important than considering the research space: 49% of sharing conversations were triggered by social interactions between the students. This indicates that the space was experienced as a separate space from the school, where a teacher figure would control discussion. Group conversation further supported this; some of the students appreciated the storytelling space as a separate space to lessons. David said, 'I like sitting there and relaxing for, ten minutes'

(t27) and 'I don't like my English lesson right now, I prefer coming here' (follow-up interview 2013). David's words demonstrated that he preferred the storytelling space to lessons. Khan also disassociated the storytelling space from the school. He mentioned listening to music in class, and tensions between him and his teachers. 'I hate all teachers,' he said, 'they always have a go at me' (t31). On the other hand, Khan enjoyed the storytelling space because he got to 'do something else' not just 'listen' (follow-up interview 2013). Thus, the storytelling space was accepted as a space within the school and one with its own rules and expectations.

The researcher triggered sharing only 15% of the time, indicating that this was therefore a student-led space. Gender differences between the schools also seemed important. A mixed-gender environment was more conducive to sharing through engagement with discussing the stories. What has not been mentioned so far, which further consideration of the triggers of sharing conversations enables me to consider, is whether the students trusted the space to share their issues and concerns.

4.5.6 Potential triggers of sharing conversations

This section analyses what the transcripts revealed about what triggered sharing. Sharing conversations appeared to be occurring in response to group discussions and not the storytelling method. NVivo coding of 29 transcripts resulted in 221 sharing conversations. These were an unexpected output of the research as the method was not designed around the idea of sharing. As a result, there was no control group to illustrate what would have happened in the absence of storytelling. This, however, provides a starting point for future research, which could include a control group, trained storytellers and a longitudinal study.

All 221 sharing conversations were examined to establish what was triggering each instance. A number of factors were considered, such as the story, the storyteller's interpretation or performance, and the group questions, or another aspect of the research method. The following factors might also have played a role in the students' response: the researcher; social interaction within the group; the school environment; individual characteristics such as personality; demographic information; and life history.

To illustrate how conversational triggers were considered, I will use the example of Bo, talking about anger management at the urban-mixed school.

Bo It's not really going to help, it's going to make everything ten times worse. If you get angry at every little thing. I think sometimes people get angry. There when she needed help I think sometimes you need to go to somebody for help, to help them and give them advice, but sometimes you don't otherwise that makes it worse

RES You've obviously thought about this quite a bit. Has it helped you deal with your anger?

Bo Yeah, I had to talk to somebody. That helped me deal with [abrupt halt] (t32).

There are a number of things which may have prompted Bo to speak. First, did someone ask Bo a direct question or impart information which prompted her to disclose in return? Second, did Bo say something before this example which showed a continuous thought process from her previous statement to this one? Third, did the group questions or researcher presence direct group discussion?

Khan spoke before Bo. He said, 'When I argue with my little brother, we fight.' Therefore, Bo's response could be a reference to the conflict between Khan and his brother. However, this did not start her chain of thought. Bo previously said, 'Because I end up in an [...] argument' before saying "and it's not really going to help." Thus, Bo was continuing a previous thought.

A number of questions I asked the group, as facilitator, made them discuss anger prior to this. I said, 'You've all mentioned anger briefly, so what does the story make you think about anger?' and 'Maybe you can think about times when you felt angry and how you responded.' The word 'anger' was used because Aisha said the following, when asked to summarise the story in her own words, 'I would say it's about a woman. Her husband came back from war and every time she goes to give him the food he kicks it away. He always gets angry at her.' Bo's comment appeared to be in direct response to the facilitator picking up Aisha's use of the word 'anger' in her summary of the story. In doing so I was reminding the group of the instructions they had been given: to take their time discussing the questions and to provide examples. In this instance, the storytelling space could be said to have triggered the conversation, in terms of the social interaction between the facilitator and the students, when discussing the story.

4.5.7 Transitions revealed through sharing conversations

One of the questions asked at the beginning of this chapter was: is the storytelling space a separate space within the school, and if so, why this should matter? I wanted to create a "safe" place through storytelling where the students felt comfortable enough to talk. If the storytelling space created a comfortable, and enjoyable, way to gather information about

issues that young people had experienced, were experiencing or were concerned about, this should be reflected in conversations throughout the six focus groups.

Sharing conversations revealed that students discussed a number of transitions in the storytelling space. The most predominant themes were the negotiation of relationships (between siblings and parents) and an awareness of constraints (such as school rules, subject selection for GCSEs and the difficulty of finding employment). For example, at the all-female school, Felicity's and Heidi's fathers had left home. Felicity did not elaborate, but Heidi said that her dad returned (t16). Jamal, at the urban-mixed school, also mentioned absent fathers.

You know what dads are like and that, having a kid and running off, getting divorced and everything, that's what they want. My dad was the most honest man. He's the person I'm, looking up to (t29).

In the literature review, I criticised a narrow concept of youth because young people are not separate from the world but a part of it through many narrative forms: education, TV, news, the internet and literature, to name a few. Across the groups, there was an awareness of danger. Mostly this was related to news items, and sometimes to educational safety campaigns. For example, Mark said, 'I don't take sweets from strange people. Stranger danger' (t12).

The students discussed stories of violence and terrorism: the London riots, 9/11 and the Woolwich attack, in which a man was beheaded with a machete and footage was available on YouTube (Morrison *et al.* 2013). The students knew the story in enough detail to summarise what the attacker said,

Dylan 'Sorry, women, you have to see this, but the women in my country see this all the time'

Bo 'We see this all the time.' And then he's like, 'Our people are coming over to your country. You need to leave your country cause of the government aren't helping you,' or something like that (t35)

When Bo described the Woolwich attack, she reflected, 'They're making a bad impression, on that religion, and my friend's the same religion, and she was like, they hate us' (t35).

When I asked the students whether they were worried about terrorism, the response was as follows:

Khan Yeah, I don't get hassled, I don't care [imitates an exploding bomb] next

Dylan I don't care

Bo It is scary cause obviously it's real, if you read about it

Khan 9/11 was the worst, ten years ago

Dylan I don't read about it. I don't care

Khan 9/11, that was really bad

RES Do you know why that happened?

Dylan Yeah, extremists

Aisha I thought it was just for religion. To make a point

Dylan Nah, not for a point, just saying, you know

Khan To make a point in history (t35)

Other transitional themes included “adult” responsibilities. Dylan cared for his younger siblings. He dressed and fed them, as his father worked the nightshift and his mother had a disability (t34). This demonstrated that not all the young people’s backgrounds and experiences were the same. Therefore, how they responded to the stories differed. What is interesting is that such a variety of topics and experiences resulted from the storytelling space, including sexuality (t30), class (t14) and decision-making (t28). For example, Jamal said,

my brother asked me to drive his car [...] He wanted me to have the experience, know what it’s like [...] my mum and dad never said don’t. They said just think carefully if you’re going to do it [...] I was scared. I didn’t know how to drive. So I didn’t [...] If I did it was just going to go wrong (t28).

As Jamal recounted this story in a disjointed fashion, I reordered his narrative to make it more logical to follow. What the storytelling space demonstrated, through rich, descriptive data, was that storytelling is a valuable way to appreciate that young people’s experiences are very varied.

Perhaps looking at young people in terms of transitions is erroneous, because young people are already a part of the world, not separate from it. Another area of concern for the groups involved the pressure of exams and finding a job. For example, Heidi and Paris shared the fact that their uncles committed suicide with the group (t19). The death of Heidi’s uncle was work related, resulting from guilt over a redundancy. What happened to Paris’s uncle was unclear, but she was aware of the pressure of educational goals on young people. Paris said,

'I think, in, the future people will be, killing themselves because school, life is going to get too hard [...] Cause it's hard now, school's hard now, I find it really hard' (t20).

Another extract from a conversation captured concerns about job availability.

Heidi [...] a lot of people who came from other countries, who, from human rights, have turned around and said you can't say certain things to them cause they can report it, cause you're basically doing it against their, what would you say, language or religion or whatever

Mary It's silly cause there's all these teenagers saying that they're taking all our jobs and stuff, but if you ask a seventeen-year-old, do you want to work in Tesco's? No

This brief selection, from a wealth of data, indicated that the young people in this study worried about the future. They expressed concerns about suicide, terrorism, responsibilities and decision-making. They faced transitions related to relationships, exams and work. These subjects suggested that storytelling created a "safe" space. Therefore, the storytelling space can further be defined as a "safe" space and a valuable way to gather knowledge about young people's experiences.

Research conducted with storytelling in schools is important because it has the potential to provide valuable insights that can help to inform policy and practice. For example, these young people's concerns indicated that students required more customised support to provide them with coping strategies while studying for exams, agency to select the subjects they enjoy, to look for full-time employment, or to access funding to proceed to further study.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter began to explore issues of empowerment and constraint raised in the thesis by asking, 'How do the students experience storytelling narratives?' and 'How can the storytelling space be defined in their words?' The aim of Chapter 4 was to explore the students' experiences of oral storytelling in three secondary schools in Warwickshire. Section 4.2 built on sub-question one by reflecting on young people's expectations in the three schools. Young people were familiar with narrative through previous experiences, leading to the interpretation of fairy tales in geographical, historical, technological and social ways. Individuals associated the stories with life-experiences, implying that learning through story is possible, or at least that forming connections between stories and "reality" is possible. Their experience of stories at home and school also created expectations that the stories would be read.

Section 4.3 addressed sub-question 2 by considering how young people, from different backgrounds, related differently to storytelling. The students from each of the three schools were from a variety of different backgrounds from lower- to higher-than-average incomes (see Figures 4.1 to 4.3). Young people's responses to oral storytelling revealed that the social and performance aspects were important in creating an enjoyable experience. Section 4.3 revealed that oral storytelling and literature had more similarities than differences. The most important similarity was that storytelling was interpreted like text, implying that education influenced young people's thinking. The main differences between storytelling and literature included the social experience of storytelling: the experience was engaging, even for reluctant readers; storytelling and discussion took less time than reading and created a group atmosphere. Text was also associated with education, while storytelling created a

student-led space. Comparing storytelling and literature, story appeared to be more adaptable to student needs rather than empowering or constraining. The similarities between storytelling and literature indicated that storytelling can be utilised to critique Zipes theories of the 'civilizing effect' of children's literature.

In Section 4.4, focus groups and interviews revealed that these young people took away a number of things from the storytelling space: the experience of listening and responding to others' opinions, improved confidence and new friendships. Storytelling was a social activity involving multiple reading-and-telling relationships within, and outside, the school. The research suggested that the students' experience of the storytelling space was complex and multi-layered because of differences and similarities across the students' social and socio-economic backgrounds.

Section 4.5 addressed sub-question one and concluded that young people viewed the storytelling space as a separate space within the school, and also as a social space rather than a research space. Sharing was influenced by a mixed-gender environment. Mixed groups regulated themselves, answered the questions and challenged one another to give deeper answers. The broad range of topics discussed openly and honestly in sharing conversations, in the groups, suggested that young people felt "safe" discussing issues that they had experienced, were experiencing or were concerned about. The wider applications of this, addressed sub-question six, by implying that storytelling was a valuable way to gather knowledge about young people's experiences.

In response to this chapter, the storytelling space can be redefined as an exploratory method, involving exposure to oral storytelling performances followed by student-led

discussion within three schools, outside a classroom situation. The space was initiated by the storyteller's performance and physically altering the room.

The stories were communicated via the physical and vocal expression of the storyteller. It was a living experience that would not be repeated again in exactly the same way. The audience discussed the story from a variety of expectations, experiences and socio-economic backgrounds that they brought to the room. This variety enabled contrasting perspectives to be shared, arising in interpretive similarities and differences between the three schools but also within groups.

The space offered young people a flexible range of ways in which to connect their own lives to story. Thus, the space broadened perspectives, increased confidence, created friendships through the social discussion of story, and also resulted in rich descriptive data which could be used to explore young people's experiences from similar and different social backgrounds.

Now that the storytelling space has been thoroughly defined, the next chapter, Chapter 5, will critique the 'civilising effect' of stories by considering power dynamics in relation to the storytelling space. Young people's agency is considered alongside constraining and empowering structures, and its relationship to them, through analysing student conversation. Such consideration includes looking at how storytelling was compared to literature, discussions of conformative, transgressive and transformative elements across narrative forms, and how stories were repurposed in group conversation.

Chapter 5 Conformity, transgression and transformation enacting processes of power in the storytelling space

5.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 addresses the main thesis question by observing the extent to which the students negotiated the behavioural elements of the fairy tales in conformative, transgressive or transformative ways. This chapter answers sub-question three by connecting storytelling to wider social contexts and other narrative forms through the students' words.

Chapter 5 considers elements of conformity, transgression and transformation linked to power in the students' conversations. In what ways does the storytelling narrative empower or control young people; and how are their stories positioned in the context of wider networks of power? Section 5.2 explores conformative, transgressive and transformative elements across different narrative forms in order to debate the assumption that stories have a 'civilising effect'. To debate the 'civilizing effect' of stories, Section 5.3 considers how young people use fairy tales in a social context. At the end of this chapter, I will draw some provisional conclusions about the 'civilising effect' of the storytelling space. Chapter 6 follows that up by linking emotion to behaviour in relation to the students' interpretation of emotion in the storytelling space.

5.2 Conformative, transgressive and transformative elements

Young people's discussions of fairy tales, following oral storytelling, suggested that interactions existed between conformative, transgressive and transformative elements. Chapter 5 focuses on these three elements, but there is a greater range of elements within stories that young people might select from, reject or ignore. Zipes proposed that fairy tales,

as socially constructed narratives, placed pressure on young people to conform to standards of social behaviour. He described this as a ‘civilizing effect’ as it involved the internalisation of emotional and behavioural “norms” (Zipes 1983: 171, 2006: 21, Elias 2000: xii).

Zipes also stated in an interview that ‘fairy tales reflect the conditions, ideas, tastes, and values of the societies in which they were created’ (Bannerman 2002). For example, people are dissuaded from instant gratification by social structures such as education, a similar social “lesson” portrayed in many fairy tales. The princess received a delayed reward by keeping her promises. The education system also trains young people to study for delayed future rewards: a good job with good pay (t14, see Section 7.3.1, Chapter 7).

The ways in which young people made, or resisted, associations between storytelling and their experiences, and critiqued the conformative aspects of story, such as gender and civic morals, such as keeping promises, allows me to question the assumption that stories have a civilising effect. To demonstrate this, Section 5.2 illustrates how young people engaged with and criticised story utilising conformative, transgressive and transformative elements. First, conformity will be illustrated, in Section 5.2.1, with reference to the band One Direction, and gender expression in the film *Mary Poppins*.

5.2.1 Conformity to social narratives: One Direction

This section will discuss conversations of conformity in response to Q8 (see Appendix 2). In *Rooted Lover*, a princess who fell in love with a farmer was thrown out of the castle by her father. In cautionary fairy tales, disobedience, in the form of curiosity and stubbornness, is generally met with discipline (Tatar 1992: 25). Therefore, fairy tales entertain, scare and attempt to control young people by rationalising conformity to social standards of

behaviour. Some fairy tales do this by indicating that rebellion is met with punishment.

When young people are cautioned in this way, fairy tales appear to be more instructional than entertaining.

In response to Q8, Lucy decided conformative was 'if you like One Direction'. One Direction are an English-Irish pop boy band. The following excerpt indicates the group's response.

Ryan That's a really bad example

Lucy No, that's conformist cause loads of people like One Direction

Ryan That's non-conformist cause no one likes them

Amy Or if you're a boy and you like football, that's conformist

Ryan Yeah

Amy If you don't like it that's non-conformatist

Lucy Yeah, if you're a girl and you like pink and if you're a boy and you like blue, that's conformist

Amy Yeah

Lucy But if you're a boy and you like pink that's not

Ryan Stereotypical

Lucy Yeah, I know, I don't believe that I just think that's what conformative means (t8)

Lucy's One Direction comment led to a discussion around how conformity was gendered. Amy proposed that boys liked football and the colour blue and that girls liked pink. Ryan categorised that as 'stereotypical'. This raised a number of issues surrounding conformity. What is conformity? Is it, as Lucy states, liking, or adopting, a preference for something, such as music, that the majority of people enjoy? Is conformity gendered? This is an interesting discussion by the students showing that they have different definitions of what conformity entails. What lies behind this conversation is not a conversation about conformity to One Direction itself but to gender "norms", such as boys liking blue, which the group are aware is stereotypical, and not a true representation of themselves. Lucy mentioned that a boy could like pink and Lucy considered that to be nonconformative.

Another issue of conformity is the tendency to assume universal ways of behaving. Hundreds of thousands of fairy tales exist globally, in different nations. Asking questions about conformity to fairy tales involves asking 'What tales, in what narrative forms, were young people exposed to?', and 'Did young people from similar and different social backgrounds give any indication in during group conversation that they conformed or resisted fairy tales?' The way young people read and critiqued stories was key to answering these questions.

This section is more about how the stories triggered discussion of conformity rather than about the stories themselves and their effects. Yet the conversations arose from Q8, which asked, 'What conformist/non-conformist elements are there in the story?' Relating this conversation to the main thesis question, about the constraints on these young people's choices, conformity did not appear to be a constraint but a choice. Boys could choose to like pink and individuals could listen to One Direction or not. The students appeared to be aware that their choices would be judged as Lucy and Ryan disagreed on whether liking One

Direction was conformist or not. They had a difference of opinion. If one considers the judgement or acceptance of choices as a form of social control this is an aspect of social interaction that the students were negotiating. Lucy, Ryan and Amy were aware that not everyone will agree with the choices they make, and Lucy herself judged people for liking One Direction. However, conformity while it did not need to be followed, when it came to taste in music or favourite colour, was given negative connotations more than positive ones in the students' discussion.

Lucy equated liking One Direction with being conformative. The tone of her voice expressed dislike of the band and using One Direction as an example of conformity suggested that most of her peers liked their music and a certain amount of pressure existed to be a part of the band's fan base. Lucy's example indicated that she had resisted conforming to her peers' musical taste. Conformity was related to the expectations of a group, organisation or leader in the literature review (Scott and Marshall 2009a). What was conformative differed between individuals, although it was understood as determined by the collective. Ryan's and Lucy's opinions, in the rural-mixed school, differed over whether the majority of people liked One Direction. They constructed different versions of "reality" based on experience. Interpretations of conformity differed between schools, groups and individuals. For example, in the urban-mixed school, Dylan was unsure what 'conformative' meant. I asked, 'If you're in a school and you are expected to conform, what do you think that might mean?' Khan responded, 'You've got to do something. To follow the rules' (t31).

I asked the group to expand on Khan's idea of school rules. Using Khan's terminology, I said, 'You don't just have rules in a school, you also have rules outside the school.' This resulted in two different reactions from the group. First, Khan linked conformity to video games such as

FIFA: a football game based on sports association rules. Conformity in that instance meant cooperation with the rules of a game. To play with others, Khan had learned to conform to the rules of wider social practices. Social games could not occur globally without rules of cooperation.

The second association with conformity was moralistic. Aisha associated rules outside the school with 'not killing'. Aisha's moral angle connected conformity to social morals, values and beliefs supported by institutions such as the ethics of religion, legislation. Aisha's and Khan's examples linked conformity, through institutional rules, to social order and cooperation. Rules define the outcomes of breaking them, such as penalty shots. Legal rules, while specific to each case, also provide deterrents in the form of penalties. Rules in student conversation were controls which set limits, established boundaries and created cooperation and order, even if those boundaries could be broken through acts of transgression.

Students in each school addressed similarities and differences in their interpretations of conformity. In the urban-mixed school, groups discussed perseverance and social behaviour arose in relation to Q8, 'What conformist/non-conformist elements are there in the story?' Perseverance included actions such as working hard towards a goal. Referring to the wife in *Moon Bear* who climbed a mountain, Bo said, 'Like in life. She had to carry on going through it' (t32). Individuals related to working hard in different ways. In group one, Bo compared the difficulty of reaching a goal and the persistence required to achieve this to learning the guitar; Khan, related the same thing to *Assassin's Creed* (t32). In group two, although Amir related the story to persistence, she could not think of an example connected to her life. Yet when Jamal said, 'Don't stop, cause she didn't stop going up the mountain' Amir responded,

'Don't give up' (t27). Thus, both groups linked the woman's journey up the mountain in *Moon Bear* to attitudes of perseverance.

These conversations were more focused on the stories and their 'civilizing' implications. Social behaviours were labelled 'life rules' (t31, t32) in the urban-mixed school and involved 'rules' (t26, t31, t32) and morals such as 'don't kill' and values such as respect and loyalty (t26, t27, t28, t31). Conformity was linked by both groups to wider social rules and figures of authority. For example, when Jamal said 'life rules', a subsequent question uncovered a number of connections.

RES What things are expected of you?

Jamal Loyalty

David Respect, don't lie

RES Loyalty to?

Jamal The king and queen, respect to your parents

Amir Elders

David No smoking, and all that

Jamal It's not laws, kind of like the rules of life (t26)

Their words created a picture of what was important to their lives. The urban-mixed school was situated in an area with lower-than-average income, and was mixed in terms of parent employment and student ethnicity (see Table 4.1). The overall demographic of the groups reflected higher levels of working-class backgrounds than at the other two schools. The

following themes were of importance: loyalty, respect, lying, manners and making or breaking promises (t28, t30). There was a lack of topic variation between groups at the urban-mixed school.

Their limited discussion around these topics might have been related to a lack of confidence in answering a question with the word 'conformative' in it. The groups skipped Q8 three times out of five (t29, t34, t35). Dylan and Khan, from group one, skipped Q8 twice (t34, t35) and attempted to skip the question again in week two. Khan said, 'I can't even remember what it meant.' Dylan suggested, 'Skip that.' However, Bo answered the question (t32). This resulted in a lack of depth surrounding conformity compared to the other schools.

In the rural-mixed school, students discussed 'traditional elements', or 'rules of a story' (t7, t9-10, t12-15, t26), and social behaviour in terms of lessons or morals (t6, t10-13). They also discussed contradictions to conformative elements in the stories, for instance how the 'girl goes after the boy' in *Rooted Lover* contrasted with her role of a 'stereotypical' beautiful princess (t12). The groups discussed different topics. Group one discussed class when they noted that a princess marrying a plough boy went against traditional notions of princesses marrying princes (t14).

Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3 demonstrated that there was a lack of upward mobility in the fairy tales in this study (also see Chapter 3, Table 3.2). There was a higher incidence of social status loss associated with financial loss, compared to increased social status associated with financial gain. In *Rooted Lover* when the princess wanted to marry the ploughboy she was disowned. All six groups disliked that the king 'disowned' his daughter (t9, t14, t19, t24, t29, t34). Group one, at the rural-mixed school, discussed that the story differed from the

traditional notions of princesses marrying princes. Their conversation proposed some reasons why from the King's perspective.

Mark He [the ploughboy] can't really be a king but their offspring can be rulers, so everyone's winning

Res So why do you think the king doesn't want?

Mark His children will be half royalty

Dawn Because he thinks he's not

Reb Probably because he's not up to the standard

Dawn The job, yeah

Millie It would be the talk of the world, not just the talk of the town man.
We're talking not just national but global rumours and he doesn't want to bear that kind of burden

Dawn It puts a bad name on the family

Millie Have that kind of thing passing down generations, ha, ha, ha, you're grandma married a peasant boy (t14)

The main reason given for the king wanting his daughter to marry a prince was to produce suitable offspring to rule the kingdom. Through the students' words I can connect this idea to Elias concepts of social behaviours being effected by shame (2000: 67). The students were aware that the king was ashamed to have his daughter associated with a ploughboy who was 'not up to the standard'. The king might fear a diminishing effect on his social status

from a daughter marrying below her own class. Mark also made the comment that the ploughboy cannot marry into a position of power as he is not royal. The working-class man cannot rule the kingdom and should know his place. This concept was reinforced through *Rooted Lover* by the king's response to his daughter's choice of marriage. However, the story was also transgressive as the princess married the ploughboy. The students' conversation was situated in the past, so I asked, 'How have things changed today?'

Millie Well look at Kate and Wills, not that Kate's a peasant

Dawn She's not a princess

Reb She's not royal

RES So what do you guys think of Will and Kate?

Reb I think they're a very cute couple

Millie I think they're the sweetest couple literarily they make couple of the year every single year

Mark And everyone's fine with it (t14)

Dawn, Mark, Millie and Rebecca's words demonstrate that there has been some social change, although Kate Middleton was privately educated, due to family trust funds, and being upper-middle class (Warde 2013: 9). There has been some social change which allows the upper-middle class to marry royalty at the same time preserving a certain social status through the upper classes marrying. Prince Charles' wives, Princess Diana and Camilla Parker Bowles, were also members of the aristocracy who had inherited titles (Brandreth 2007: 105,

Brown 2007: 32–33). The students' discussed how they perceived the marriage of Kate and William.

Dawn [N]obody criticises them because Kate went to university and didn't become a princess. Everybody was happy [...] But then in that situation [in the story] they would have criticised the princess for marrying a peasant

Reb It was so stereotypical of, he weren't, if you weren't this person then you weren't allowed to have family (t14)

Rather than mentioning Kate's wealth Dawn referred to her education so education becomes a part of social status. When the story was written in 1894 (Housman 1987) women were expected to marry and the majority had no opportunity to attend universities. For example, the first higher education college opened for women in London in 1849 and privileged women would have first attended (Bloomsbury Project 2015). Kate was considered educated and this added to her social status. In this way changing women's rights and access to education became a part of the group's conversation about class.

Status is not just about family ancestry, or wealth, education is a new form of social currency. Sancho (2016: 141) argued, 'The middle-class social currency of merit serves to conceal the privilege derived from economic capital and social origin'. This connects to the concept of Bowles and Gintis' (1976: 101) hidden curriculum. On the surface education appears to reward academic ability and hard work, but some individuals have more resources towards education due to wealth and the social status they were born into. These things privilege them to succeed over others.

Liechty (2003: 256) argued that researchers should move beyond the question of ‘what is class?’ to ‘What does class do?’. The students’ words suggest that conformity to class structures in the stories were reinforced through punishments and rewards. In the students’ discussion of class they saw those stereotypes as out-of-date, and other conversations about working hard to obtain grades for future employment suggested that they perceived the education system to be merit-based (t14, t17, t22, t31, t32, follow-up interviews 2013). For example, Rebecca said, ‘If I keep on working hard then it should pay off in the future’ (t14).

All the students were British-White at the rural-mixed school. If the group had been more ethnically diverse perhaps a student among them would have questioned that education was merit-based. The students’ comments about education being merit-based remained unchallenged. When I informed the group that Diana wasn’t a princess they responded,

Dawn Yeah, I think now people have learnt to accept that change

Millie Yes I think they have. There’s less of a gap between the upper classes
and the middle classes

Reb I think they understand it more, I think it’s better

Millie Compared to Victorian times it’s much much better, cause before it
was, industrialists, and then the upper upper rich. The rich are really
rich and the poor are really poor (t14)

The students interpreted the stories from the context of previous social conditions and how those conditions had transformed, but the students conformed to what I call a current educational narrative because their conversation indicated that they had the same

opportunities as others if they worked hard. An attitude that is also a social narrative that benefits the upper classes through the labour of others.

Group two discussed gendered aspects of social behaviour. These were linked to ‘traditional elements’ of stories. For instance, Lucy said,

I think that families in stories are a lot more traditional. The wife is there to look after the children and keep the house rather than now, where it’s not so much that, the house is there, not just to be housewife (t6).

The area in which the rural-mixed school was situated had a wider catchment area, with higher-than-average income and employment levels. The students were British-White and part of a creative writing group. All these factors could have resulted in similarities between both groups. The students at the rural-mixed school questioned and analysed stories in greater detail than the other groups. For example, group two at the urban-mixed school either skipped or gave a minimal answer to Q6, about the meaning of the story. The topics mentioned at the urban-mixed school focused on the prohibition of certain actions: to respect animals, and avoid bullying, remarrying or having children without thinking of the consequences (t26); to be loyal, determined and kind (t27); Jamal said, ‘don’t judge a frog by his skin’ (t28); and the group skipped Q6 in weeks four and five (t29, t30). In contrast, group one, at the rural-mixed school, answered the question every time with a variety of answers focused on behaviour: they noted that characters repeated cycles of “wrong” behaviour (t11); that experience could be gained from suffering (t12); that “good” things happened when promises were kept (t13); sacrifice and hard work was required to reach goals (t14); and that making the “right” choices was difficult (t15).

Therefore, education, influenced by social background, such as class, influenced the students' interpretation of story. Comparing the urban-mixed to the rural-mixed school, the latter school had been provided with the tools and confidence to enable a more detailed response.

At the all-female school, the students discussed themes of gender conformity, laws and social behaviour in terms of morals, emotions and actions (t14, t17, t19-21, t24-25). Morals involved keeping promises to frog princes and not stealing selkie pelts. The group referred to manners in *Toy Princess*: the princess's lack of freedom 'to show any emotion' (t25) and her restraint in not screaming and jumping on the sofa in front of parents (t19, t21, t24).

The groups discussed different topics. Group one discussed conforming to the "rules" of authority figures. For example, parents in stories chose who the princess married (t19). In the students' lives, this was connected to spaces involving adult authority. Asking for parental permission to have friends over, for example, was different to what might happen in the homes of authority figures; 'You can't just walk into her palace,' Heidi said, referring to the queen (t19). Group two mentioned 'typical fairy tale rules'. For example, Olive said that a story had to contain a 'baddy' to create conflict (t21).

Similar to the rural-mixed school, students at the all-female school shared conversational themes. The groups also deviated from one another. Q8 was only skipped in week three in the all-female school (t18), which was less than at the urban-mixed school but more than at the rural-mixed school. The area in which the all-female school was located was urban and had lower-than-average parental incomes. The school was more diverse than the rural-mixed school, but less so than the urban-mixed; it had British-Asian, Eurasian and British-White students. The students got distracted discussing the stories, while mixed-gender

schools had the influence of both genders to keep conversation on point, but discussed more conformative topics than students in the urban-mixed school, which could be a result of their different social and economic backgrounds.

To summarise, the three schools differed regarding what was discussed in response to conformity. Young people from similar and different social backgrounds associated conformity in the stories with a variety of social behaviours and rules: from parental authority to compliance with the law. These findings suggest that the 'rules of a story' (t7, t9-10, t12-15) were connected by the students to 'life rules' (t31, t32) where adults are held to have a higher degree of authority, power and knowledge. Such narrative processes, connecting story to life, favours the role of age authority and those who already possess power whether through political systems or other organisations, such as teachers in schools.

The urban-mixed students appeared more constrained: they focused on rules that could be related to their everyday experience. Students in the other two schools talked about life rules and the rules of story, with the rural school being more empowered. The social aspect of the storytelling space, as well as the school environment, differed between schools.

Conversations moved in different directions depending on the connections individuals made between their own experiences and the stories. Connections between conformity and the stories appeared to be constrained at the urban-mixed school and empowered at the other two, creating more varied responses.

Social behaviours were discussed in different ways within groups. Students discussions at the rural-mixed school focused on the agency of characters, and their motivations, rather than discussing authority figures. Yet, as previously mentioned, there was an overall deference to authority figures in the stories and in the students' conversations. Gender also

arose in the all-female and rural-mixed schools, and was most prominent in the all-female school. I will use an example related to *Mary Poppins* (Disney 1964) to illustrate how students related a film to gender conformity in the storytelling space.

5.2.1.1 Gender conformity: ‘practically perfect in every way’

The young people in my study were knowledgeable about films (see Figure 7.1, Chapter 7).

Two stories were associated with *Mary Poppins* (Stevenson 2002): in *MacCodram* a fisherman stole a selkie’s skin and offered to take care of her; in *Moon Bear* a husband returned from war, kicked away the food that his wife prepared and ignored all attempts to approach him. Comparing the two stories, Mary noted that in fairy tales, male figures ‘always want things to go their way’. However, the woman’s needs, to be reunited with her skin or acknowledged by her husband, were ignored. Felicity and Mary compared those women to *Mary Poppins*, an image of unobtainable perfectionism. Felicity said,

I think men are all the same because this one, he’s been mean by keeping the seal skin [...] and the other one is turning her away. But he’s [MacCodram] trying to make her stay with him [...] And woman just fit perfect (t17).

Mary responded, ‘I know, like in *Mary Poppins* [...] “practically perfect in every way”.’ Felicity and Mary recognised that in some of the stories women were pressured to conform to what male figures wanted them to do. This seemed an important topic in the all-female school as the group began passionately talking over one another.

Responding to Q8, Mary said, ‘I reckon the non-conformative was probably the way the husband treated the wife. It wasn’t very nice.’ Mary’s expectation, indicated by these words, was that there were standards regarding how a husband should treat his wife. Mary said,

‘The wife was conformative because she—’; Heidi completed the sentence, saying, ‘cared for him’ (t17). Heidi’s and Mary’s words express an understanding of a gender difference. The men’s actions did not conform but the women’s did. Yet this is a matter of interpretation; the students referred to the caring responsibility of both partners at a later point (I will return to concepts of femininity and masculinity in Section 7.3, Chapter 7).

Felicity, Mary and Heidi’s conversation about gender conformity demonstrated the complexity of interactions between conformity and transgression in fairy tales. Nurturing may be a “norm”, but that is not always the case as concepts of womanhood, manhood and relationships undergo historical shifts (for debate on this area see Brah and Phoenix 2004). To what degree masculine and feminine traits are socially learned or innate involves complex and contradictory perspectives (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.3).

I have been employing gender to illustrate that conservative representations of gender were criticised by the students. I am debating that stories, as Zipes (2006b: 20-22) proposed, have any influence on behaviour when considering the influences of large-scale social structures, including education, religion or industry. The role of stories interacting with culture is more complicated than Zipes seems to imply. This point will be further elaborated on in the conclusion, Chapter 8.

However, there were rare instances when individuals in the groups indicated that behavioural learning had occurred through storytelling. Millie said,

Something reminded me of *The Crescent Moon Bear*, because I didn’t know whether to pick up a sock. A dirty sock. It was mine, in my bedroom floor, and I didn’t know whether to pick it up so I thought... you know what, that wife she

went to all that trouble to get that bear for her husband. The least I can do is pick up a sock and put it in the washing machine. I normally am quite good like that and I do laundry and stuff but this one time I couldn't be bothered and now it's, [sings] yes you can! (t13).

This was a clear indication of a story influencing Millie's behaviour – a glimpse of the moment when story and agency interacted. Millie saw a dirty sock and thought about picking it up. For whatever reason, that moment triggered a memory of an incident in *Moon Bear* when the wife went on a quest to fetch a hair from a bear's neck to cure her husband. The exact association between Millie and whom she was doing the action for is unclear. Did she pick the sock up for herself? Did she associate the emotional connection between husband and wife with her relationship to her parents? If Millie's recollection is to be believed, she remembered *Moon Bear* and used her agency to interact with the story in a way which influenced her behaviour in an empowering way. It was empowering because her retelling of the incident was indicative that this was a 'yes you can' experience for her. It was a more complex action than a top-down process that the terms control, discipline and rationalisation suggest. If the 'civilising effect' is comparable to picking up a dirty sock, Millie's action implied that storytelling has civilising potential by empowering agency. The example of Millie's sock suggests that action interacted with intention through processes of reflection, agency, motivation and perspective-taking.

The students' words implied that the expected or ideal "norm" of relationships was to be treated well by a partner. The husband at the start of *Moon Bear* was not responding to his wife, which went against the students' relationship "norms". Millie picked up her sock, associating her action with the wife's actions in *Moon Bear*.

It is difficult to know when actions are the result of behavioural choice or of conformity. However, the use of an individual's agency to choose to do or not do something for another person was a choice. Conformity takes social relationships into account. For example, reflecting on *Moon Bear*, Dawn talked about continuing to try and help her sister in different situations:

my sister was going to be late for school and I was trying to help her by getting her shoes and she threw them at me cause she got really annoyed because I was helping her. And she didn't want me to help her cause apparently it was slowing her down, and in her way. And I was only trying to help. But I didn't kick off, I thought, okay, let's be patient with her cause she's going to be late for school, and it was fine (t13).

Dawn mentioned helping her sister a number of times; this was followed by a negative sibling reaction (t12, t13). Dawn's persistence might have been influenced by her conformity to internalised family values, encouraged in the home by her parents, and by story, as Dawn actively sought patience, like the woman in *Moon Bear*.

Family values, whether ideological or political, among the students may have differed. In a scenario in which governmental, institutional and professional ethics and civic morals regulate social relations, certain values become "norms" on a wider social scale. For example, legislation and enforcement of it persecute certain social values, such as dishonesty, while supporting others, such as honesty. The *Frog King* led to a conversation about promises. Keeping promises was broadly discussed across all groups.

5.2.1.2 Social values: keeping and breaking promises

Felicity repeated the following idea three times, indicating how important it was: 'Keep your promises, and if you can't keep promises don't make promises' (t18). Heidi said, 'Only once, I promised my friend something but then because, me and my mum and my dad had other plans I couldn't do it.' Heidi said she then 'made it up' to her friend. Paris agreed that it was important to 'make up' for a broken promise. Felicity, Heidi and Paris appeared to have internalised the idea that breaking a promise was a serious thing. In the story, the king reinforced that message by making his daughter keep her promise. In *Frog King*, the princess made promises to a frog when he fetched her golden ball from the well. When the princess kept those promises, the frog transformed into a prince. The ending reinforced the notion that good things happen to people who keep promises; note, however, that it was her father who held the princess to that promise.

Lucy described the ending as 'like a prize for keeping your promise'. Lucy questioned the idea that the princess deserved a reward; 'She didn't really keep her promise,' Lucy said, and 'almost killed' the frog, throwing him 'against the wall'. Ryan connected promise-keeping to trust and the breaking of a social contract between people. He said, 'it's an important thing to learn, a lesson of life, cause you don't want to lose friends and family over lying and not keeping your promises' (t8). The students associated social values with social consequences.

Codes of conduct within stories supported actions such as moral cooperation. Lucy said that *Moon Bear* 'was about choices' while *Frog King* was 'about promises' (t8). It is clear from their conversations that young people are not passive consumers of stories. They critique and question them, yet they also live their lives within constraints set by authority figures. Authority figures might be a family member, a teacher or a medical practitioner. The wife's

actions in *Moon Bear* were influenced by the community healer, representing an authority figure in the community. To what extent is there room for non-conformative action in opposition to the expectations of authority figures?

Promises are not always kept and “right” choices are not always made in stories, as illustrated in *Frog King*. When the princess tried to break her promise to the frog, her father insisted that she conformed. Then she was rewarded, conservatively, by marriage to the Frog King. How to act was not a choice because the princess was situated within a social hierarchy. The story suggested that interactions existed between processes of action and conformity, agency and control, and cooperation and exploitation but that young people, or princesses at least, had little choice but to conform to control and exploitation.

The moral of the story did not mean that promises were never broken. Interactions existed in the student conversations between agency and cooperation surrounding whether to make or break promises. Jamal shared a promise he had chosen to break.

I promised my little brother that I'll play with him in the garden, play football with him but I didn't. That's the worst it can get. He got angry though. Really angry [...] I was tired. Really tired [...] I just wanted to stay in, watch TV (t28).

Jamal appeared to break his promise to prioritise what he wanted to do. I asked how Jamal felt in response to his brother's anger. Jamal replied, 'He just had to deal with it, cause he knew I was tired' (t28). Jamal's response indicated that breaking a promise to play football with a sibling was not important. Jamal knew that his brother would be annoyed but would 'deal with it'. Jamal said the message of *Frog King* was 'keep your promises' but breaking his promise to his brother indicated that he did not always comply with this social expectation

(t28). That promises were broken suggested people choose to conform while considering the consequences for themselves and their relationships with others.

The promise in *Frog King* was compared with *She-Bear*. The story began with a dying queen asking the king to make a promise.

One day, before her death bed, she call her king over, and say, promise me, you have loved me so long, when I die you shall not remarry otherwise I will cast a curse upon you. And the king was so sad, at her death bed he promised his wife that he would not remarry (t28).

The storyteller, Michelle, told the story but excluded one important feature. The king promised his wife not to remarry *unless* he could find a wife more beautiful than her (t23).

The storytellers Miriam and Alex included that part. Michelle's omission was an important one because the king kept his promise by attempting to marry his daughter. Amir, who heard Michelle's version, thought the king would receive a curse if he remarried anyone. Amir said that 'the king didn't keep his promise and wanted to marry' his daughter (t28).

This raised the same issue of conformity again: who determines what the rules of "socially acceptable" behaviour are? Does the responsibility fall on the collective, the majority, as Lucy and Ryan discussed in relation to One Direction, or on figures of authority, such as storytellers, kings, healers or parents? Power and figures of authority will be discussed more in Section 5.2.2.

The National Curriculum states that the aim of English studies is to ensure 'pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually'. Emphasis was placed on the skills required to participate fully 'as a member of society' (DoE 2014).

This concept of education involves similar issues to socialisation: young people are not the passive recipients of education or social influence, yet an active role underplays power imbalances. Ritzer (2007: 4559) argued that socialisation was assumed to be a process of influence, which underplayed the role of power imbalances, class and inequality. Regardless of how rare or common the influence of stories might be, fairy tales appeared to have potential influence on young people, as demonstrated by Millie's sock and Dawn's patience.

To summarise Section 5.2.1, conformity in the students' conversations raised questions such as 'To what extent are the stories conformist?' and 'To what extent is there room for non-conformative action in opposition to the expectations of authority figures?' Conforming to rules of wider social practices took many forms, such as leisure activities and complying with legislation. Promises were related to social consequences, the breaking of a social contract of morals and values between people. Authority figures in the stories potentially reinforced gender conformity and conservative behaviour towards authority figures in "reality". Despite that, conformity differed between individuals and groups. Millie's sock and Dawn's patience indicated that stories might inform people how to act, involving reflection, agency, motivation and perspective-taking. This implied that a 'civilising effect' could occur through storytelling and literature, given that the two narrative forms had more similarities than differences (see Section 4.3). However, agency had a role to play as promises were not always kept, demonstrating that the moral lessons in stories did not directly cause action. Section 5.3.2 discusses resistance and critical awareness through the transgressive elements of stories. Section 5.3.3 then addresses transformative elements in student conversation.

5.2.2 Transgressing adult authority

Stories play social roles, maintaining ‘dominant orders’ while simultaneously providing channels of resistance or transformation (Plummer 1995: 25). Some strands of psychology and sociology proposed that the influences of institutional power can be counteracted, or reinforced, by society through a wealth of interacting narratives within communities –social, economic, educational and national – that reproduce existing power structures such as class (Sullivan 2001: 893, Doob 2013: 38). The sociology of narrative, for example, looks at the way interacting narratives become social action (Aronsson 2015: 218).

Fairy tales constitute a genre that has the potential to challenge conventional thinking. The story *She-Bear* (Basile 1983) was chosen for its provocative content. After the death of his wife, a father informs his daughter that she has to marry him in order to produce an heir. In the urban-mixed school, when Michelle told the part of the story in which the father asked his daughter to marry him, there was a noticeable silence. Amir looked towards me for an appropriate reaction. She whispered, ‘That’s wrong!’ (t28). I and some others laughed and the story continued.

In the schools that heard *She-Bear*, the students clearly expressed that a father wanting to marry his daughter was ‘disgusting’ and ‘wrong’ (t28). A clear power dynamic was also apparent to Felicity and Holly at the all-female school. Felicity said, ‘I don’t think you could talk your dad out from marrying him cause, he’s much bigger than you, and he can do anything’ (t18). Holly said that she would go to the police if her father tried to marry her but doubted that she would be believed (t23). In terms of power dynamics, Felicity and Holly both mentioned the authority of a father figure, a father’s physical attributes, his power, and seeking out another source of authority for help. Yet if there is doubt that approaching

another authority for assistance would help, this undermines the agency of a young person. No other avenues of support, such as the NSPCC, were mentioned by the young people in this study.

There are differences between young people and adults in terms of authority and physical attributes. But it should not be forgotten that young people have agency. All the students that heard *She-Bear* said that it was wrong or that they would not marry their dad. The students took a conservative moral approach, implying that this breached acceptable conduct even though the order was coming from a parental figure who was also a king, a figure of authority. However, their refusal to marry a parental figure was also transgressive in the sense of breaking “norms” in ways that young people are not expected to endorse. If fairy tales support transgression, how was the princess’s agency shown in *She-Bear* as a possible conduit for transgressive behaviour?

In the story, the daughter transformed herself into a bear. At first glance this seems to be an empowering action. In the original story ‘an old woman, who used to bring her cosmetics’ saw her plight and offered help (Basile 1983). In the storyteller’s versions, Michelle stated that an old female servant offered a piece of wood to the princess which would ‘save’ her from the marriage by transforming her into a bear (t28). Alex described a ‘haggard old lady’ who had previously brought the princess cosmetics and had not talked to her much. The lady offered the wood, with the instructions, ‘All you need to do is take this piece of wood, put it in your mouth.’ Alex added, ‘Who’d want to marry a bear?’ causing the students to laugh. Magical helpers were instructional when the princess was in emotional turmoil and needed guidance.

When certain plots dominate, space is created for transgression. When I asked what fairy tales the students knew, they listed many Disneyfied forms: *Aladdin*, *Cinderella*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Rapunzel*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Little Mermaid*, *Lady and the Tramp* and *Lion King* (introductory interviews 2013). This indicated conformity in the fairy tales that these 24 students had been exposed to. I cannot claim that my study was representative of all young people aged 12 to 14 in the UK. However, coding of the 29 transcripts suggested that Disney films were not predominant in conversation when considering them against non-Disney films (see Figure 5.1). A difference of 4% is not a significant difference, although a percentage of 52% to 48% may indicate Disney's current monopoly on fairy tales.

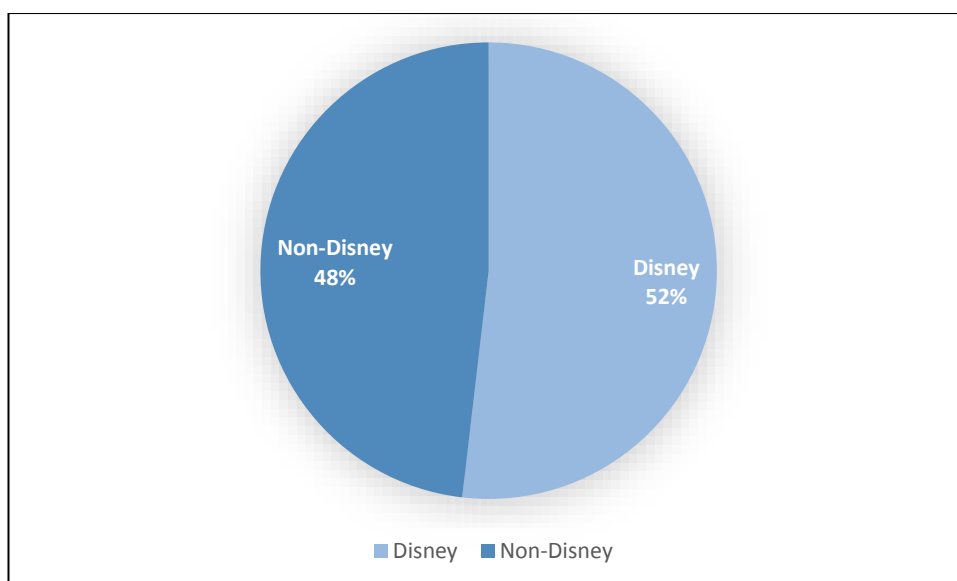


Figure 5.1 Disney versus non-Disney films coded from 29 transcripts, or 25 hours, of student discussion

Assuming that Disney has supremacy over the fairy tale genre leads to strong claims, such as Disney has influence over young people (Bryman 2004: 173, Armet and Lennox 2007: 1, Zipes 2009: 10). Actually it is true that Disney has influence surely, but what kind and how

much? Disney does not limit itself to films, a variety of consumer merchandising has sustained its position as a globally influential company (Schickel 1986: 162-165, Zipes 2009: 128, Giroux and Lennox 2010: 159). Disney narratives have also changed, for example Frozen (see Section 7.2.1), be it subtly, so that the Disney company does not just influence but is influenced by social “norms”.

At one time, Disney may have dominated the fairy tale genre; however, Disney is currently one of many entertainment industries in the world under competitive pressure from others (Viacom Inc., Time Warner Inc., Twenty-First Century Fox, CBS and Comcast). My findings suggest that the widespread popularity of Disney films are matched by other film sources. These findings lead to the next point, that competing narrative interactions exist simultaneously.

The father–daughter, adult–child interactions that Basile captured in *She-Bear* reflect interactions between children and adults. Legislation has been introduced to protect young people; however, debates remain surrounding how much agency young people have and how much they should have.

She-Bear's plot, although provocative, had a conformative ending. No incest occurred. The transformed daughter was returned to womanly form by a prince, whom she married. Did it matter that this was a husband of her own choosing? The basic message of the ending is that princesses should marry. Even by turning into a bear, the princess did not transgress the social structure of marriage. Thus, the story suggests that transgression has limits.

In her introductory interview (2013), Ava discussed confusion over teachers' comments to 'be quiet' and to 'speak up'.

there's loads of pressure on me to make sure that I don't, not, really, I don't know how to say, how to word it like, not too shouty-outy, but if I'm too quiet then the teacher's like, well you don't put your hand up enough so, the attitude's not very good if you don't, what's that word, give. It's really annoying.

Ava expressed confusion over conflicting requirements to be quiet and participate. Ava's tone, and choice of the word 'annoying', indicated confusion and frustration. Other conversations illustrated the students' negotiations of conformity and transgression in the stories. The students enjoyed transgressive aspects that challenged expectations. For example, the princess in *Rooted Lover* sacrificed wealth and status to marry a farmer.

Lucy [...] she gets disowned

Amy Doesn't normally happen

[...]

Lucy I thought it was going to be, they got married and they lived in a brilliant castle [indistinct]

Amy But it wasn't

RES You thought she'd marry who?

Lucy I knew that she'd marry the flower boy but I thought they might, live in the castle and be king and queen, rather than live as farmers

Amy That doesn't normally happen

[...]

Lucy The princess didn't conform did she

Amy She didn't do what was expected (t9)

Amy agreed with Lucy that princesses did not usually run away from princes, and wealth, to marry a farmer. When Lucy said that the princess did not conform, Amy realised that it was not 'expected'. They recognised that the princess's choice was atypical of fairy tales and transgressive of the expected class structure.

Fairy tales can subvert social structures, like *Jack in the Beanstalk* where Jack defies parental authority and makes his own way in the world by climbing a beanstalk and returning with great wealth. However, the same story also reinforces existing capitalist structures. Jack is a working-class boy, obtaining his fortune through stealing from the giants. At first his motivations are driven by need in order to escape poverty Jack steals a bag of gold. The gold runs out and he re-climbs the beanstalk and steals a goose that lays golden eggs which is symbolic of employment (Brothers 2015). Here the story takes what I consider to be a transgressive and moralistic twist, potentially a subversive one against a capitalist system. Out of boredom and greed Jack climbs the beanstalk again and is chased down the beanstalk by the giant. The giant's descent is a warning that hoarding wealth is harmful to other members in society. This theme is further highlighted in Henson's (2001) film where Jack is a business man, with little time for anything else but work and money to the detriment of those around him.

Group members perceived different things in *Rooted Lover*. Ryan saw a traditional ending, in that, 'it's just a typical love story and there wasn't a twist on it, apart from he gets turned into a flower [...] Being turned into a flower is original.' Amy agreed, 'Just slightly different.'

The story transgressed “norms” by transgressing expectations and adding original touches. The students recognised that transgression had limits. Like *She-Bear*, *Rooted Lover* was not entirely transgressive. The princess refused one marriage and married into a different class, but she still married. In addition, discussion provided the students with an opportunity to compare the story from different perspectives and seek out such contradictions in the stories.

Zipes described fairy tales and storytelling as a medium that could be used to challenge and subvert the status quo by speaking against potentially alienating influences (Zipes 2004: 16-17). So he did not just say that fairy tales encouraged conformity. Neither did he mean to imply that transgressive thinking always results in action or that storytelling always causes transgression.

The above examples suggest that transgressions in the stories reinforce “norms” rather than encouraging conformity. *Jack and the Beanstalk* contained a transgressive twist but in general the story was conformative to a capitalist class system where the working-class work for the benefit of the upper classes. Thus transgressive elements in stories do not always result in action because the stories can reinforce “norms”. What I am saying about Ava, in the next example, is slightly different because Ava was told by her teachers to conform her behaviour to the requirements of the classroom.

In her follow-up interview (2013), after five weeks of storytelling, Ava reiterated the interactions existing between herself and the authority of the school.

I think they could give us opportunity to decide our future, some things you're forced to do a lot of the time. You are forced to take, if you are in the top set for

something like French for example, you're supported to take that even though you may not want to do that later in life. You don't really have the choice. They say, 'If you are in the set now I think you should be in it next year.' They don't really help you. You might really struggle with the other exams because you're concentrating on that, when you don't really want to be doing it (2013).

That Ava used the words 'forced to take' is informative about the power relations between Ava's agency and teacher authority. Ava appeared to be disempowered; she took French despite wanting to concentrate on other subjects. The system, from Ava's perspective, encouraged 'top set' subjects rather than what she considered beneficial for her 'future'. When students are told that grades determine their future, does this affect their thinking and act as an obstruction to choice? Ava's transgressive thinking did not appear to lead to action. Ava commented there was no 'choice'. Rather than challenge the status quo, Ava's words captured her disempowerment. The selection of optional subjects was not described as a choice. The words 'they could give us opportunity to decide' demonstrated this. Although Ava's choice was in her own hands, she could not see this because of structures of authority in the school.

Thus, despite possibilities existing between school expectations and choice, Ava talked about conforming, not transgression.

Sometimes, if I'll, suggest something I'll get told off for it, but then they'll, put me down a mark for attitude to learning because, they call it, not participating. They've told me to shut up, basically. I have to be a bit in the middle now (follow-up interview 2013).

Ava conformed her behaviour to what the school required. Nevertheless, storytelling could help reinforce a sense of injustice if not action, as Ava expressed frustration through her words and tone that she was confused about how to contribute to class discussion because when she remained quiet she was told to participate, and when she participated she was told to 'shut up'.

In *Learning to Labour*, Willis discussed how young working-class young men in the 1970s rebelled against the education system which set them up to fail and then blamed them for that failure. The young men responded with their own counter culture that built up their sense of identity and self-esteem while they ridiculed education and considered it irrelevant to their needs (1977: 170-171). Willis argued that by rebelling young working-class men were helping to reproduce their subsequent working-class roles in the labour market. Their transgression maintained and reproduced the social order.

Around forty years later, my research suggested that this is still the case. Ava's comments were reflective of a subordinate position. This is a complex debate which involves interaction between education and society, agency, and individual and collective experiences of the world. My research implied that conversations were reproducing aspects of broader scale social systems, such as conforming to expectations of the education system and teachers as authority figures. Yet while the students reproduced aspects of broader scale social systems, such as conforming to authority figures, the students understood that teachers are not perfect authorities. For instance, transgression occurred in their conversations that criticised authority figures.

5.2.2.1 Resistance against authority: 'that was really unfair'

In the urban-mixed school, resistance and disengagement occurred because of teacher misjudgement.

Dylan Our head of year, he's sexist

RES Why?

Dylan Cause last week in assembly he told all the girls, they were all being annoying as well some of them, he said to all the girls you can go, and left all the boys, kept all the boys in assembly and started shouting at everyone. Even though some of the boys didn't do anything

Bo yeah, even though I'm a girl I still think that was wrong, cause I know some of the boys in school won't mess around in their lessons, and they're quite quiet and they get on with their work and the fact that he held all of them back, that was really unfair

RES Held them back from?

Bo Lessons. I think because of behaviour

Aisha And not wearing a school uniform properly

Bo So basically he let all the girls go in assembly and kept all of the boys but not all of the boys mess around and some of them were quite quiet and they wouldn't mess around. I thought that was unfair. I get the negative side of things, I don't really think about the positive (t32)

From Aisha, Bo and Dylan's perspective, the head of year misjudged the situation. Holding all the boys behind 'was unfair'. In this instance, there was nothing the students could do to protest against the head of year's action. He was in a higher position of authority. However, sometimes action was taken against teacher authority.

You know Tom? Tom just said to Ralph, 'You're a bad teacher cause [teacher's name] said if she's not available to give you help then ask your neighbour.' So Tom asked Ralph for help, then Tom didn't get it off Ralph and Ralph said, 'Tell the teacher, then,' then Tom got sent out of the room, C3, straightaway. And I said I didn't have a pen, so I looked in my bag. 'Oh Miss, don't worry, I've got a pen, yeah,' and then she said 'C2'. Just for saying that, and then, Mark sitting next to me, I said, 'Did Miss even do it?' Because she said 'Don't speak when I'm speaking, I asked Mark, 'Was she speaking when I was?' And Mark said 'No' and she gave me a C2. And then guess what? She phones home if she gets a C1. She gives you two negative points and a phone call home from a C1 (t32).

C1-C3 were warning slips, with C1 being the most severe, requiring a call home. In Dylan's account, the teacher used warning slips as a way to control class behaviour. Dylan was annoyed. He felt so strongly that he reported the teacher. Reporting a teacher could be considered transgressive behaviour, even if it followed approved complaint structures in the school, because it was an action against teacher authority in the classroom. The urban-mixed school complaints policy was aimed at adults. The policy contained language such as 'parents' rather than 'students'. After an official written complaint, a meeting would be arranged for an informal chat with the headteacher. It was unclear whether Dylan's complaint moved beyond an informal verbal complaint to the head or another teacher.

Student discussions surrounding teachers were positive and negative. The all-female and rural-mixed students liked their school. In the rural-mixed school, Mark and Millie said that the school supported and helped them meet targets (follow-up interview 2013). The students at the urban-mixed school seemed to be disillusioned. For example, Dylan mentioned that he had the opportunity to switch: 'I've got my application form, they said to me you can come, any time you want.' Khan replied, 'So you could leave now and go there.' Dylan responded, 'I can't be arsed now' (t32).

Interactions between students and teachers were reflective of different power dynamics. The main concerns about the urban-mixed school surrounded teacher fairness. Some teachers were fair, others unfair. For instance, Dylan said about a fair teacher:

[...] you know Lizzie? She said to me I couldn't speak so I had to write down what I wanted to say, she showed it to Sir! And then, guess what Sir did? He kept me in with a bunch of year tens and I just got to sit there and read. At least I didn't have to do maths (t32).

Dylan enjoyed his detention. Outwardly, the teacher was following the rules of the school. In practice, detention involved Dylan reading whatever he wanted, which demonstrated that the teacher transgressed the rules. This instance was suggestive of a teacher's deeper understanding of a situation.

Bo responded to Dylan with an example of unfair treatment. Bo had an experience where the teacher was not aware of her situation and treated Bo as if she had broken the rules of the school.

I was sick all last week yeah, ever since the power point to everyone, apparently I was a lazy person for not doing my work while I was actually being sick. All week I couldn't move, I wasn't allowed outside of my room. He was like, I gave a power point to everyone, and I was like, I was sick (t32).

While Dylan took action, Bo did not; instead, she counted the days until she could leave school to pursue her own interests.

Bo Can't wait to finish school, I'm going to college

Aisha Two years then

Bo Yeah, two more. I'm really excited, to do music and art (t32)

Student-teacher interactions involved transgression. These were complex social situations acted out with the confines of behavioural guidelines and disciplinary processes. Students' conversations about certain teachers captured transgressive dialogue. A student took action only rarely. Only one instance was mentioned by Dylan. Teachers expected students to conform to the school environment; however, student perceptions were more complex, observing that transgression of the rules was possible and that some teachers enabled that to happen.

To summarise, interactions existed between conformity and transgression; however, comparing conversations of transgression and conformity, conformity appears to be the "norm" within student discussions and fairy tales. Does this support Zipes' concept of the 'civilizing effect' of fairy tales?

The ‘civilizing effect’ of stories was brought into question because students had critical awareness; they were not just being influenced by stories but were resisting them. Yet understanding how character’s transgressed the social “norms” within stories does not necessarily create emancipation from strong social forces. Discourses of fair and unfair treatment actioned by figures of authority illustrated this. Conversations about *She-Bear* and *Rooted Lover* illustrated that although transgression was possible, it was constrained by conservative forces. Thus, despite transgressive conversations, overarching narratives within the students’ conversations were about working within and conforming to a system they believed they had no control over. So if a ‘civilizing effect’ does exist at this point it appears to encourage conformity rather than transgression. Yet current conformity does not signify mean future conformity as we must also consider that there was pressure to conform at this stage in the students’ lives because the consequences for their futures were significant in terms of academic success and future career prospects

Sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 explored how young people positioned themselves in relation to conformity and transgression in the storytelling space. The next section discusses transformative elements.

5.2.3 Transformative elements in *Moon Bear*

Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.2, proposed that transgressive stories facilitate personal liberation by challenging the “norms” inherent in other narratives (Berger and Quinney 2005: 6), while transgressive narratives were those which led to actual change (see Section 2.2.3.3).

Transformative narratives in stories can also be conformative or transgressive depending on the context. Many stories contain elements of transformation, such as the physical act of changing from a man to a flower in *Rooted Lover*, or personal transformation throughout a

series of challenges in *Moon Bear*. The way stories transform characters and situations provides alternatives to “right” or “wrong” choices. Fairy tales rely on the juxtaposition between the self and one’s surroundings. Characters transform to negotiate a variety of situations. In *She-Bear*, the princess transformed into a bear, her outer transformation representing her internal rejection of marriage to her father. As well as personal transformation there are elements of social mobility. Narratives of transformation in stories can lead to a real shift in social position, for example *Dick Whittington* (Bowyer 1905) became Mayor of London, but also conformity to roles such as princesses becoming queens. The students in my study were proceeding through a transformative, or transitional, period in their lives between childhood and adulthood. As mentioned in the literature review (see Section 2.2.2) stories provided the students with a basis for anticipating the transition between childhood and adulthood, although in many ways young people are a part of the world (see Chapter 4, Section 4.5.7).

In the literature review, I also outlined the reflections of Zipes on Elias: that fairy tales might play a role in the social construction of behaviour. Stories can teach people something about themselves and the world. However, such assumptions should also be critically examined. I question to what extent storytelling has the potential to influence and transform young people’s behaviour given the range of narrative forms they are exposed to, and other narrative forms contain “fairy tale” elements that might have similar effects to storytelling.

The students mentioned transformation, and negotiating boundaries, in relation to the fairy tales. At the rural-mixed school, the turning of the children into seals was associated with growing up and going ‘off to university’. Ryan mentioned ‘teenagers getting involved with

gangs' (t6). Group two also discussed the power of characters such as the king, the witch and the fisherman, rather than that of other characters (t10).

Amy pondered whether *MacCodram* was 'about power' (t6). Male or magic characters retained power, leaving the king's children, the fisherman's wife and their children powerless. Power was linked to being forced to do something against one's wishes, for example Peter mentioned 'child abuse' (t6). In *Moon Bear*, the woman discovered the power of patience through a quest to fetch a hair from the moon bear's throat. After making sacrifices to fetch the hair, the healer threw it in the fire and told the woman to use the skills she had learned during her quest to help heal her husband.

Peter disliked the fact that 'the potion maker' suggested a quest which risked the woman's life. Yet he understood that 'maybe she [the woman] needed first-hand experience' to learn (t7). Observing the students' conversations, the Jungian psychological interpretation of *Moon Bear* and students' interpretation of *Moon Bear* overlapped. Estés listed the following in her outline of the story's psychoanalytic themes: how to seek help, accepting challenges and obstacles, and how to manage anger through patience and compassion (1996: 380-381). The students' interpretation correlated with Estés' psychological approach, suggesting that they recognised lessons in stories. It is unclear whether the lessons and power dynamics the young people discussed had any behavioural influence.

Dylan connected behavioural lessons in *Karate Kid* to *Moon Bear* to patience and compassion. I will discuss *Karate Kid* as an example of transformative narratives and negotiating social boundaries.

5.2.3.1 Transforming anger into patience through *Karate Kid*

Moon Bear was an example of a transformative narrative in the sense that the main character experienced an inner transformation. In *Moon Bear*, a healer asked a woman to fetch a hair from a bear's neck for a potion to cure her husband. The woman endured weeks of hardship to obtain the hair. When she gave it to the healer, the healer threw the hair in the fire and told the woman to use what she learned fetching the hair to help heal her husband: primarily patience.

Dylan compared a moment in *Karate Kid* to the moment when the healer placed the hair in the fire. In *Karate Kid* (2010), Parker was instructed to take off his jacket, throw it to the floor, pick it up, hang it on the coat rack and put it back on – the equivalent to 'wax-on wax-off' during Larusso's training in the original *Karate Kid* film (Avildsen 1984). Dylan said that the ending of *Moon Bear* reminded him of the scene '[w]hen he keeps picking up his coat and he doesn't get what he means' (t32).

In terms of negotiating social boundaries, both characters were required to face rites of passage. In *Moon Bear*, the wife used patience and determination to obtain a hair from the bear's neck. Peter from the rural-mixed school mentioned the 'patience it took to get up the mountain to bring back her husband' (t7). Techniques were learned through *Moon Bear* in the same way that, in *Karate Kid*, Parker learns patience, through repetition of the same action. Parker learned how to control his anger. He showed compassion towards his mother through repeating the same action he thoughtlessly made her repeat every day: picking up his jacket to hang it on the coat rack. In the film, after many training sessions, Parker returned home and placed the jacket on the coatrack without having to be reminded.

Dylan connected *Karate Kid* with *Moon Bear*: 'It's a bit like that cause she has to get a hair for no reason' (t32). Neither the wife nor Parker understood why they were given their task. It was as annoying for the hair to be thrown in the fire as it was for Parker to pick up the coat over and over in *Karate Kid*. Yet both characters found that these actions transformed them, giving them behavioural skills of transforming impatience and anger into more patient behaviour.

The students recognised the compassion, patience and perseverance promoted by *Moon Bear* and *Karate Kid*. These stories encouraged conformity, through transformation, to socially approved standards. But who decides what these standards are? And is it acceptable to conform to a higher authority without asking why, or should one be more critical? Dylan made connections between the *Moon Bear* and *Karate Kid* with his own production of labour. In the household Dylan had many responsibilities that required repetition and patience: he mopped and hovered, tidied the house and cared for his younger siblings by dressing and feeding them. He did this to support his parents as his dad worked the nightshift and his mother had a disability (t34).

Khan agreed with Dylan that the repetitive movements of picking up the jacket were 'annoying'. Khan's initial reactions from week one to week five, when asked, 'What would you do if you were in the same situation as one of the characters?' was as follows: 'run, run', 'run away', 'Run away, sprint. There's a taxi, go,' 'walk away' and 'Jump off the ledge.' Through his initial reactions, Khan was challenging and resisting the stories. And there was an element of play with Dylan. This was an attitude Khan took to other things, such as school work. For example, Khan said, 'I never do homework' (t32). In contrast, Khan was motivated

by the challenges in video games (t31, t32, t34, t35). When Khan got 'in trouble' his mum took away his PlayStation (t34).

The students also related themes of perseverance in *Moon Bear* to music, through the imagery of the forest. Dylan said it reminded him of *Titanium*, 'when that guy was running through the forest from the police' (t32). *Titanium* showed a boy with supernatural powers running through a forest. The lyrics repeat themes of perseverance.

I'm bulletproof, nothing to lose

Fire away, fire away

Ricochet, you take your aim

Fire away, fire away

You shoot me down but I won't fall

(Guetta 2011)

Another song mentioned was *Never Give In*. Bo responded to Q5 by saying that the song was 'about never giving in, and stuff like that and I think that links'. Consider the following lyrics:

Never give in, hey, hey

Never back down, hey, hey

When your life feels lost,

Fight against all odds!

(Black Veil Brides 2010)

Music was an important part of Bo's life (see Appendix 2). Bo used the words of the song 'never giving in' to inform her comment. Both songs mentioned soldiers 'We're soldiers, in season, we can bring change before we die' (Black Veiled Brides), while David Guetta's lyrics stated, 'Stone-hard, machine gun, firing at the ones who run. Stone-hard as bulletproof glass.' Those words brought to life some of the things the students took from the story. For example, Dylan said that the husband in *Moon Bear* suffered from 'stress disorder' because of what he had witnessed (t32). Lessons of perseverance the students discussed in relation to the story were reinforced by music lyrics and other narrative forms such as *Karate Kid*. Thus, multiple forms of stories, depending on students' music and film preferences, were reinforcing social behaviours.

Sections 5.2.1 to 5.2.3 explored how young people positioned themselves in relation to conformity, transgression, and transformation in the storytelling space, and questioned the assumption that stories have a 'civilizing effect'. Stories have been assumed to have influence on young people. However, the different choices of young people in relation to story suggested a more complex and ambiguous range of constraining and enabling processes. The young people in my study mentioned a range of narrative influences to be considered alongside the culmination of different experiences over time: age, agency, choice, preferences, group memberships, gender, ethnicity, occupation and class. Therefore, I propose that a fairy tale's influence on a given individual is determined by a range of complex factors, from individual to broader social, economic and historical contexts.

Zipes argued that fairy tales reflected 'concerns' and 'contradictions' which were incorporated into the reworkings of stories (1983: 181-182). To understand the role of fairy

tales and storytelling in young people's lives first requires questioning of whether stories can make a difference in communities against dominating forces of control, discipline and rationalisation. Can stories inspire action in "positive" and "negative" ways, control, or offer liberation? The way young people discussed stories implied that they were aware of structures of power involving authoritative figures and considered these roles critically, for example Dylan's complaint against a teacher. They also acted in the storytelling space as critical thinkers concerning the lessons and the connections and differences between stories and the relationship of those stories to their lives.

Section 5.2 drew together potential issues of control, discipline and rationalisation from a storytelling perspective in order to debate whether stories have a 'civilising effect'. To question this assumption further, Section 5.3 continues to address part two of sub-question three, which is about the difference oral storytelling makes compared to other narrative forms by exploring how fairy tale language was repurposed in a social context.

5.3 Repurposing story

To consider how the themes, language and symbols of fairy tales were used by young people in a social context, four areas will be discussed. First, what narrative forms were linked to fairy tales during conversation. Second, what associations were made based on previous narrative experience. Third, how phrases or images from the stories were used in social interactions. Fourth, how the students became storytellers. This will allow me to further consider the 'civilizing effect' of stories in relation to storytelling.

5.3.1 The Little Mermaid to Assassin's Creed

A wide range of narrative forms were linked to the stories. Some selective examples follow. Holly, Olive and Ava sang during the storytelling sessions (t22, t23, t25). For example, after hearing *Moon Bear*, Holly sang, 'Oh these hard times, you're making me crazy, don't give up on me baby' and Olive joined in (t22, Machine Gun Kelly 2012). The group discussed books and films that provoked an emotional reaction: *Perks of Being a Wallflower*, *The Notebook*, *Titanic*, and *The Green Mile* (Chbosky 2009, Sparks 2007, Cassavetes 2005, Cameron 1998, Darabont 2008). Ava's favourite programme was the BBC TV series *Merlin*. She related it to every story (t22).

Art, music, literature, films, TV shows and internet sources of narrative were related to the stories. Films were mentioned during every storytelling session and were connected to every story in every group. Some examples of stories linked to films were: *The Little Mermaid* to *MacCodram* (t16), *The Lucky One* to *Moon Bear* (t17), *Brave* to *She-Bear* (t28), *The Princess and the Frog* to *Frog King* (t9), *Lion King II* to *Rooted Lover* (t34), and *Pinocchio* to *Toy Princess* (t25).

Other narrative forms mentioned were video games, such as *Assassin's Creed* (t32, t34, t35); YouTube – Dylan had a thousand views on a YouTube video he had posted (t34); newspapers (t6); news stories such as the London riots or the Woolwich attack (t35); and stories told by people in the family, such as Olive's father, who made up stories such as 'the onion, tomato and ice'.

I asked once why do people tear up when they cut onions? And it was a long story about three friends, the onion, tomato and ice. The ice got melted away so

the tomato and onion started crying. The tomato got run over so the onion was crying, and then God said that when the onion dies everyone has to cry. So when you cut onions everyone cries (introductory interview 2013).

Literature was mentioned in an educational context, for example five Shakespeare plays were named at the urban-mixed school (t32). This section acknowledged that art, music, literature, film, TV, video games, news and the internet were linked to fairy tales. When debating whether fairy tales have a 'civilizing effect' their various forms must be taken into consideration. Young people may be learning to negotiate similar and contrasting perspectives from a variety of narrative forms which is a topic for further research. Now Section 5.3.2 considers how previous narrative associations were also made with the stories.

5.3.2 Previous narrative experiences

Narrative connections were made via historical interpretation or metaphor. Ryan associated *Rooted Lover*, in which a farmer became a poppy to win the love of a princess, with a significant memorial event held since WW1 ended. Ryan said, 'It could be a story that's told on Remembrance Day, cause there's loads of poppies, but then they all die in the end.' *Rooted Lover* was written in 1894, before WW1 (Housman 1987). Peter linked the poppies metaphorically to soldiers who died in the war. Poppies have been associated with conflict since they grew in the fields after the Napoleonic Wars. After WW1, poppies again grew on the battlefields (BBC 2008). *Rooted Lover* was written after the Napoleonic Wars but before Remembrance Day was established in 1919. Ryan interpreted the story from his own historical perspective and knowledge.

The students acknowledged the perspectives of others. Millie understood that stories had multiple meanings, through 'different perspectives' (follow-up interviews 2013). Mary connected *Moon Bear* to the film *Brother Bear* because 'it reminded me of the crazy old woman with the fire' (t17) and Jamal connected the same story to *Mulan*, because of its location (t27).

Other conversations suggested that stories, even those with magical elements, were assumed to be based in "reality" by the students. Peter, in the rural-mixed school summarised this, saying, 'Who made the fairy tales? People that were in life and based them in facts that they already know' (t10). And Mark said in his follow-up interview (2013), 'Magic doesn't exist. It's just an easy way of explaining how things can and can't happen.' For example, in *Toy Princess*, a magical helper went to a magic shop and ordered a custom-made doll to take to the princess's place (De Morgan 1987). Shops, custom-ordering and robots are real things, while magical helpers are not.

Associations were made to other stories and to "reality". What stories symbolised, according to group discussion, was individual and collective. The fairy tale genre relies on metaphor: the ruby slippers as they changed ownership from the Wicked Witch to Dorothy represented power and its potential misuse; the red apple in *Snow White* was comparable to the forbidden fruit; spinning golden straw marked a transformation of circumstances through hard work (Gould 2006: xxiii). Yet space exists for individual interpretation, such as Khan's suggestion that selkies could have waterproof mobiles (t31).

One common interpretation across the groups was that the selkie returned to live in the sea at the end of *MacCodram*. However, O'Connor indicated that a common interpretation by storytellers was that a return to the sea represented life after death (t2). Ryan made an

alternative connection, saying, 'It's like teenagers getting involved with gangs because then they start spending less time with their family and going off' (t6). Fairy tales invited similar and different interpretations between and within groups.

What happened in the storied world had its own socially coded rules and expectations. For instance, in *MacCodram*, the witch used a potion to turn the king's children into selkies, while the healer threw the key ingredient for the potion into the fire in *Moon Bear*. Olive said, 'I thought she would do, a potion. Cause last time they did a potion' (t22). Fairy tales played with group and individual expectations to create a sense that anything might happen.

Section 5.3.2 discussed how previous experience led to different interpretations of story.

Previous experiences also include narrative experience in a variety of forms as discussed in Section 5.3.1. Students understood that their perspectives differed others'. Stories were compared to other stories and "reality" where expectations were met and broken indicating that young people were using their agency to negotiate different perspectives. Section 5.3.3 will consider how language from the stories was repurposed in conversation.

5.3.3 Repurposing story language

In the storytelling space, the students used language from the storytelling performance frequently. For example, repurposing imagery from *MacCodram*, Khan said to Dylan, 'You look like a seal.' Dylan responded, 'You look like the kids when they didn't have a mum' (t31). Use of language from the fairy tales indicated that story language was repurposed to become a part of social communication during group conversation.

Story imagery appeared to exist as a shared frame of reference between students. Details of the stories were recalled and retold while being adapted to the interpretation of the teller.

For instance, Mark retold *MacCodram*. In his version, the stepmother tried to look after the children but was then overcome by jealousy. The fairy tales became part of group interactions. While this was shaped by the research space, the way fairy tales became part of language and social interaction indicates how story becomes part of social structures. This can be seen, for example, through the perpetuation of class narratives (see Section 7.3.1). Section 5.3.4 discusses in what ways the students became storytellers themselves.

5.3.4 The students as storytellers

The students became storytellers by retelling the stories, sharing another story or using their imaginations to create new ones. Aisha retold the stories to her little sister, Olive, her brother, Dawn, her dad (t13), and Millie told her family the story of *MacCodram* over dinner (t12).

Some of the students also became storytellers within their groups. In week two, Millie compared *MacCodram* to *Moon Bear*. I asked the group to summarise the story for Rebecca, who missed the first week to attend a doctor's appointment. Despite a week passing, Dawn, Mark and Millie recalled the plot, including details such as how the wife found her seal pelt. Dawn said,

One day the fisherman goes to sea, fishing, and he goes further out than usual and there is a storm. The eldest child goes out to watch him coming back but then, he's taking so long. Then the wife panics because she can't find her eldest child. So she's looking everywhere. The mantelpiece falls off where the seal skin's hidden, falls off and she finds her seal skin. So she's like, oh, so he's been hiding this from me all these years. I don't want this life (t12).

The story was retold, but adapted to the student's interpretation. New details were added, for example in Mark's version of the story the stepmother looked after the children. The words in Miriam's performance were

He thought he better get married again so that the children had somebody to look after them. While he was searching he came across a sea witch. 'I'll marry her she seems quite nice. She'll help look after my children.' They got married. The sea witch, as you might suspect, wasn't really bothered about the children. She was only interested in being queen. [...] she didn't look after the children, and they were still fairly neglected (t11).

Mark's version differed as follows:

he went out and looked desperate quickly for a wife and he finds the sea witch. And he's desperate so he marries her and for a while everything is okay and she looks after them, but then she gets jealous of the kids and she stops looking after them. So she turns them into seals (t12).

Mark and Dawn decided that the selkie felt 'guilty' for leaving her children. This had been discussed in group conversation following the story and was worked into the retelling (t10). When the wife discovered her seal skin, Miriam said, 'immediately she went back with her brothers and her sisters and be free' (t11). Dawn and Mark's version differed.

Dawn So she's like, oh, so he's been hiding this from me all these years. I don't want this life

Mark She wants to stay with the family

Dawn I will feel guilty for leaving my children behind with my husband but I really miss my brothers and sisters, so she goes off with her brothers and sisters

In the retelling, Dawn and Mark paint the selkie in a more empathetic light because from their perspectives a mother does not abandon her children without guilt.

The performed stories reminded some students of other stories. Heidi recalled a story after hearing *Moon Bear*.

It's not the exact same plot but it's the same sort of thing of somebody going to go and tell, to go and do these things, cause I'm not going to go into too much detail but there was a couple of princes who wanted to get this princess and in order to get the princess they needed to do challenges and they had to win these challenges in order to win the princess's hand (t17).

In *Moon Bear*, the healer asked the wife to go up the mountain and fetch a hair for a potion to cure her husband. Heidi remembered that in the story the princes were challenged to complete a task, following the classic fairy tale pattern as seen in *Little Briar-Rose*, where a princess was protected by a wall of thorns (Grimm and Grimm 1983: 237), or *The Firebird*, which involved solving a puzzle and fetching items that were hard to acquire (Cherry 1994).

Some of the students turned their imagination towards the stories. Peter amused the group with his observations: 'Maybe the bear went to bear war and he's living away from his bear wife' (t7) and 'Life is a merry-go-round, we don't use metaphors we just carry on going' (t6). The groups also played with ideas collectively. Millie said that *Frog King* was too soppy. She was 'hoping for the death of someone'. Mark responded, 'It would have been a really good

finish if the frog had actually died. He comes back as a ghost and haunts her for the rest of her life. Until she kills herself by jumping off the castle tower.’ Millie countered, ‘No it would be better if he, when he falls, into her mouth and into her body and then he just lay in her stomach and rotted inside her stomach’ (t13). Between them, Millie and Mark created the story they wanted to hear.

Thus, the students became storytellers. They retold the stories, shared stories or used their imaginations to create new ones. Aisha, from the urban-mixed school, retold the stories to her little sister. At the rural-mixed school, Dawn told *MacCodram* to her dad (t13), and Millie told the same story to her family over dinner (t12). At the all-female school, Olive told stories to her brother.

Section 5.3 considered four aspects of repurposing stories. First, what narrative forms groups linked to the stories during conversation. Second, what associations were made based on previous narrative experience. Third, how phrases or images from the stories were used in social interactions. And finally, how the students became storytellers themselves. The ways in which young people use fairy tales in a social context paints a complex picture of any associated ‘civilizing effect’ that may exist. Young people made similar and different connections between various narrative forms, lived experience and the ways in which they utilised their agency to repurpose storytelling narrative in different contexts, such as sharing the stories with parents or siblings at home. Observing the ways in which young people repurpose stories and their language to their purposes I am not sure whether stories civilise young people, or whether young people civilise themselves through gradual processes of selection. This casts doubt on the ‘civilizing effect’ of stories as adult-driven action directed

towards young people but supports that story, in whatever narrative form, is an integral part of social process.

These aspects of repurposing stories demonstrate that fairy tales are reproduced in social interactions as a reference point. Young people utilise their agency to interact with stories and fairy tale language becomes a part of their social communications; at least in the storytelling space which raises questions about how fairy tales are dispersed into other narrative forms.

5.4 Conclusion

Chapter 5 addressed the main thesis question by investigating whether stories have a 'civilizing effect'. I approached this investigation by observing how the students compared literature to storytelling in order to establish a basis for comparing Zipes' theories of literature to storytelling. I then considered how stories might empower or control young people's behaviour using examples from how young people negotiated fairy tales and experiences from their lives which they connect to the storytelling in conformative, transgressive and transformative ways. I then observed how fairy tale elements were reused, during group conversation, to elaborate outwards from the storytelling space to the students' use of story in other social contexts. These areas revealed that the storytelling space was effective in gaining insights into whether young people from similar and different backgrounds were constrained or empowered by storytelling narratives.

In Section 5.2 the students' critical engagement with storytelling was demonstrated through interactions that existed between conformative, transgressive and transformative elements in the stories. I used these elements to explore whether young people's agency interacted

with oral storytelling narratives in empowering and/or constraining ways in order to address sub-question three. As critical engagement with the fairy tales did not necessarily lead to transgression it is brought into question whether fairy tales transgressive elements have any 'civilizing effects', or whether the stories encourage more conformative, or transformative, behaviours. The students resisted the conformative aspects of the fairy tales while transforming themselves to conform to adult authority. So there appeared to be limited scope for non-conformative action in opposition to authority figures, and wider networks of power. This idea raises issues of control, discipline and the rationalization of behaviour. There are limits to the generalisations that can be made from this study, however, it is important to be aware of what young people are being required to conform or transform themselves to, and whether those things should change to recognise them more as citizens rather than youth. If young people are conforming to child-adult power dynamics in their lives, and rationalise or justify their actions to fit their surrounding social situations and needs, where is the space for positive transgression against any potentially oppressive social policy and processes? One issue that I am concerned about is 'Are we as a society encouraging young people to conform and only talk about transgression?' That is not to say that transgression does not occur daily in "positive" ways, such as youth campaigning, and in less positive ways, such as crime. Attitudes that may be carried forward into their adult lives. Alternatively the critical thought and negotiation of narratives that young people enact through their agency demonstrates that they have the ability to be critical of the social narratives of society, such as gender conformity and the need to improve the criminal justice system, which I will discuss in Chapter 7, Section 7.3.2.

Conversations about the complexities and contradictions of these young people's daily lives indicated that they negotiated different narrative forms, such as storytelling, film and music,

and they negotiated competing narratives regarding issues of empowerment and control. Section 5.2 revealed the complexity and ambiguity regarding issues of empowerment and control. Storytelling narratives do not necessarily empower or control young people. Young people's lives are situated within larger frameworks of power. The students perceived a range of conservative, transgressive and transformative elements within stories. The complexities and contradictions of their conversations allowed me to acknowledge that young people negotiate the competing narratives of education, and family, and peer groups, in order to make choices about socially appropriate behaviour each day.

Interpreting storytelling engaged the students' moral emotions, indicating that critical engagement with fairy tales formed a bridge between individual's moral standards and behavioural action. However, examples of story influencing behaviour, such as the episode with Millie's sock, were also rare. Choices were established by adult constraints, but these could be transgressed if young people were empowered to question those processes by those "in power". The teacher who allowed Dylan to read during detention, for instance, and Jamal's parents, who empowered Jamal to take responsibility for his own actions when his brother asked him to drive (see 4.4.6, Chapter 4). Thus teachers, and others, played an important role in demonstrating critical thinking through demonstrating acts of transgression.

The school environment, social background and experience empowered the students with the skills required to respond in a more varied way to storytelling in the rural-mixed and all-female, rather than the urban-mixed, schools. This stressed the importance of the school environment if young people from deprived areas are to have the same levels of

empowerment and the same number of options to proceed in whatever directions they choose as those from households with average and higher-than-average income levels.

Section 5.3 addressed four aspects of repurposing stories that occurred in group conversation: groups linked different narrative forms to the stories; associations were made based on previous narrative experience; phrases or images from the stories were used in social interactions; and the students became storytellers. Observing the ways in which young people repurpose stories and their language to their purposes I am not sure whether stories civilise young people, or whether young people civilise themselves through gradual processes of selection. This casts doubt on the 'civilizing effect' of stories as adult-driven action directed towards young people but supports that story, in whatever narrative form, is an integral part of social process.

These aspects demonstrated that fairy tale language and storytelling performance were repurposed and used in conversation. That repurposing occurred within the storytelling space suggested that story language becomes an integral part of other social contexts.

Chapter 5 focused on exploring in what ways oral storytelling narrative empowered or constrained young people, and compared oral storytelling to other types of story in order to debate the assumption that stories have a 'civilising effect'. Chapter 6, in line with the analytical framework of the thesis, introduces emotions to examine how interpretations of emotions in the storytelling space arose in similar and contradictory ways.

Chapter 6 Young people's interpretations of emotions in the storytelling space

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to explore similar and contrasting interpretations of emotion which arose in the storytelling space and what these indicate concerning the management of emotion. Emotions other than 'shame' or 'anxiety' were a missing element from Zipes' analysis of which focused on the behavioural influence of fairy tales (Zipes 1983: 29-57, 2006b: 37). It is important to include the emotions because they interact with individual's morals to inform action. Chapter 5 briefly introduced moral emotions into the 'civilizing effect' indicating that emotional and critical engagement with fairy tales formed a bridge between an individual's moral standards and behavioural action. Chapter 2, Section 2.3.5, summarised the lack of storytelling methods in the sociology of stories and emotion. Hochschild's concept of emotional labour has also been adult focused and work related, rather than associated with the experiences of young people in school contexts (Yin et al. 2013: 143), although emotion has been considered within education studies, such as therapeutic pedagogy (Ecclestone 2004, Zembylas 2007, Marchand 2008).

Chapter 6 considers the feelings and emotions that individual students expressed and shared. This chapter further examines the main research question, regarding the constraint and empowerment of emotion, and addresses sub-question five, about what "norms" and values surround emotions in young people's lives.

Section 6.2 will summarise the ways in which emotions arose in the storytelling space in similar and contrasting ways. Educational practices are designed to promote students'

education and welfare and the control and subordination of young people's emotion and behaviour towards instrumental ends. So in order to answer sub-question six about demonstrating the wider implications of storytelling methods the students' interpretations of emotion and behaviour are also discussed in relation to educational guidelines on these issues.

Section 6.3 examines group conflict that arose as young people negotiated emotions and behaviour in the storytelling space. Emotions are discussed in conjunction with Hochschild's (2012: 7) emotional labour: how people manage their emotions in relation to others' through 'feeling' and 'framing' rules (see Section 2.3.2.2, Chapter 2). This is an original contribution to the interdisciplinary study of story, as an extensive literature search found no evidence of Hochschild's concepts linked to oral storytelling, as well as a general lack of storytelling methods in the sociology of stories and emotion. In education and drama studies emotion is often associated with therapy, such as how storytelling empowers coping mechanisms (see Section 2.3.5, Chapter 2).

Lastly, Section 6.4 considers how emotional management occurred in different social contexts. I will explore the students' management of emotion in different social spaces. Their emotional management will be connected to Bourdieu's concept of habitus, 'A structuring structure, which organises practices and the perception of practices' (Bourdieu 1984: 170).

6.2 Similar and contradictory interpretations of emotion

The storytelling space created an area for the students to express, or name, emotion. Section 6.2.1 focuses on the students' most significant emotional responses to Q7.

6.2.1 Themes of emotional and financial neglect

Student conversations indicated that expectations surrounding parental figures included emotional as well as material concerns. Peter emphasised how the father in *MacCodram* neglected his duty to check ‘everything’s okay’ with his children following the death of his wife.

Ryan Don’t neglect your kids

Peter Don’t neglect your children

Amy Don’t put yourself first

Peter You need to pay attention to them to see if everything’s okay because even when he did marry the sea witch she still didn’t pay attention to her, to her new children, stepchildren, but he was too upset to notice. So he let his emotions get in the way of his children (t6)

The king’s grief obstructed his duty of care. Peter, Lucy, Amy and Ryan’s conversation indicated that the king’s responsibility to his children was not fulfilled. Miriam’s performance of *MacCodram* described the children’s appearance as ‘dirty’ and ‘unwashed’ and how ‘their beautiful hair was tangled’ (t11). The king, in his grief, was ‘too upset to notice’ his children’s appearance. Lucy described the children as ‘defrazzled’ as the conversation continued (t6). Amy referred to emotional management when she said, ‘Don’t put yourself first.’ Emotional labour was described by Hochschild (2012: 7) as the management of internal feelings to create socially appropriate displays of emotion. The king’s grief interfered with the emotional labour the students felt the king owed his children. The king’s lack of ‘emotional labour’ was viewed by the students as a failure of parental responsibility.

Conversations across all six focus groups highlighted that the king neglected to consider his children in decision-making. The king was perceived, by 14 students, to have made a series of bad choices. First, he 'chose a witch' to remarry (Amir, t26) rather than find a 'better wife' (Dawn, t11). Second, it was unclear whether he looked for his children when they became seals (Millie and Amy, t11, t6). Third, Amir, Jamal and Mark raised a material concern, asking why the king did not provide 'day care' or 'get a servant' when he was in a position to afford it (t11, t26). These students' discussions implied that a parent should make responsible choices that consider their children. The students consistently agreed that the king emotionally and financially neglected and abandoned his children by ignoring their grief and failing to provide alternative care if he was unable to care for them himself. Thus, the students had emotional and material expectations of parental figures.

Political and legislative systems aim to prevent the abandonment or neglect of young people. Such systems shape, and are shaped by, social belief systems: dominant morals and values which are deemed collectively important by citizens and institutions, for example government and religious institutions. Fears of abandonment represented the students' own interests and concerns at their current life stage regarding powerlessness in the face of decisions that adults made about their lives. It was important to them that the king considered the needs of his children. A significant amount of dialogue around abandonment and neglect implied that the king's actions violated the students' expectations of trust in parental figures.

Issues of trust reappeared in response to *MacCodram*, when the fisherman stole the selkie's pelt. Mark said,

It definitely makes you frustrated, you really want to be there to tell them you're making the wrong decision. The king married the witch, the children are disrespected, the children leave home, the witch turns them into seals. There's so many bad choices in the story (t11).

Mark felt 'frustrated' that the children were 'disrespected'. The children were in a powerless position, their future determined by the 'bad choices' of parental figures. Different groups discussed how actions that stemmed from bad choices had an emotional impact on dependent family members, such as children and partners. For example, the selkie could not return to the sea when the fisherman stole her pelt. Dawn said that it was 'selfish of the man' to take the woman's pelt to 'make his life better' (t11). Actions and choices were perceived to have emotional impacts on others. The woman married the fisherman, but stared at the sea every day, grieving for the company of her siblings who remained seals.

Students' views on the theft of the pelt were consistent across all six groups: stealing and lying were not moral acts. For example, Peter said the story 'had a moral' because 'you shouldn't always trust someone'. Lucy said, 'I wouldn't steal the skin.' Amy agreed, 'Yeah, it's not yours, so you shouldn't take it, ruining someone's life' (t6). It was not viewed as moral to make decisions that had a "negative" impact on others' emotions. Thus moral emotions informed actions. The students' discussions of bad choices involved understanding emotions in the story, or their own emotions in response to the story, such as the selkie's grief for her pelt or Mark's frustration about characters' choices in *MacCodram*.

Fourteen students reached a consensus that the theft of the pelt was wrong. The remaining ten students did not comment, nor did they say that they would steal the skin. Its theft was taken seriously, as the following example demonstrates.

He could have said ‘I’ve got your seal skin but please, I’d like a better life. You seem very nice, would you marry me?’ She’s got a choice and then maybe she would have said no and maybe that would have been the right choice. And maybe he would have accepted okay, and just continued looking [...] But it definitely is not alright to force somebody to marry you, that’s just self-intent. If you’re thinking about her first you’re being a better person, and you could say I could have married but no I want to do what’s best for them (t11).

Note how Mark spoke in terms of ‘he’, and ‘she’, then switched to a more reflective ‘you’, placing himself in the fisherman’s shoes. Mark used a reflexive ‘you’ when talking about “right” and “wrong”, implying that he framed the situation through his own morals and values. The ending of *MacCodram* supported Mark’s moral stance. The fisherman’s wife found her pelt and returned to the ocean rather than remain with her family. Her departure was seen as a consequence of the fisherman stealing the pelt.

Dawn, Mark and Millie interpreted the wife’s actions as a conscious decision to abandon her children in favour of her siblings

Mark [...] was that the right choice? Is the right choice to—

Dawn Yeah cause she might have been happy as a seal because when she was little her mum’s died and that’s obviously going to affect your life. So you’d probably prefer it if you could have a new start

Mark If you could know your mother had died you’d try and be a better mother by making sure that your kids were prepared if their mum went away

Dawn She didn't want to have that life. She wanted to be a seal and it was this man's fault because he stole her seal skin, and she specifically asked him for it

Mark What if the man hadn't stole her seal skin?

Millie You can understand why she'd be angry, I think she should have waited to have an argument with him about it (t11)

The wife was perceived as making a selfish choice following on from the actions of her husband. Dawn said, 'It's sort of their father, dad's fault for taking it for himself but now he's got to look after them by himself because she was selfish, but then it was his fault in the first place' (t11). Only Amir mentioned that the wife had no choice: 'She had to go back or something bad would happen to her' (t26). Nineteen students used words such as 'left' or 'walked out' (t6, t11, t16, t21, t26, t31). The woman's return to the ocean was not interpreted as death. 'I feel very empathetic for the kids,' Mark said. 'The fisherman's kids don't even know what's going on, suddenly their mum disappears. Oh, mum's a seal.' In the students' interpretation, the wife had a choice to stay or to live in the ocean, and she chose the latter. The adults in the story were empowered to make decisions while children were constrained by the actions of their parents.

Despite their bad choices, empathy was demonstrated towards the fisherman and his wife. Lucy's group in the rural-mixed school considered the fisherman's actions from his perspective. Lucy said, 'He was overcurious.' 'I think I would be curious,' she continued, 'but I wouldn't steal something,' and, 'I feel a bit sorry for him because he's quite lonely' (t6). Here Lucy mentioned that feeling lonely caused the fisherman to act the way he did. The wife's actions were also linked to emotions. For instance, Millie described the wife's 'anger'

towards her husband. Dawn responded, 'She kept looking out the window looking really sad' missing her siblings (t11). Thus, emotions and actions were linked rather than separated.

Nine students expressed the idea that parental figures in *MacCodram* made selfish decisions. How characters felt was used as a way to understand or justify what actions characters took. Conversations surrounding cycles of bad decisions and emotional choices might signify that the students viewed emotional decisions as bad ones.

Millie The cycle continues as well, I really like what Dawn said about how woman's, mum's ill and their daughter goes off and leaves her husband

Dawn Yeah so she's left her husband now with her children so what kind of impression are their children going to get? [...] They're just repeating a pattern! (t11)

The idea of a cycle, or pattern of behaviour, also arose in both groups at the urban-mixed school. Dylan said, 'At the beginning the mother left, at the end the mother left' (t31), while Jamal said, 'the cycle continues' (t26). Students at the urban-mixed and all-female schools mentioned the danger of repeating cycles of feeling and action in response to personal history, and therefore the importance of emotional management in decision-making.

The all-female school students did not discuss the cyclical aspect of the story. However, they did discuss the impact of emotions and behaviour on social relationships. Ava said, that stealing 'ruins people's relationships' (t21). Students' conversations across all three schools demonstrated complex emotional and behavioural interpretations of character motivation. The students' emotional interpretations appear standardised to some extent when considering the diverse range of ethnicities, gender and class, across the all-female and

urban-mixed groups (see Section 4.2, Chapter 4). The conformity of their emotions corresponds with a range of psychological, sociology and gender literature on the social and occupational constraints which are placed on emotional labour, such as gendered, ethnic and class discrimination occurring in the workplace (Nesdale *et al.* 2005: 635, Syed 2008: 195). For example Batnitzkya and McDowellb (2011) researched how the emotional labour of Caribbean and Asian nurses were perceived in the workplace.

In the interactive and emotional labours of caring, foreign-born nurses are subjected to stereotypical and normative assumptions about their attributes and skills from colleagues, managers and patients that affect their opportunities to progress within the National Health Service (Batnitzkya and McDowellb 2011: 181).

Thus emotional labour was linked to career progression via ethnic and class discrimination which affected social status in terms of income and power. The nurses were denied social status, promotion in the workplace for example, based on their gender, ethnicity or class rather than their abilities. Related to this several sociologists have connected Bourdieu's (1986) concept of 'social capital' to 'emotional capital' within education to discuss the role of emotion in social relationships (Reay 2000, 2004, Colley *et al.* 2003, Colley 2006). To explain what social capital is we must first understand that capital is more than its economic or material resources; capital involves class and social status: the status of groups, such as people with the same lifestyles, and the politics of those groupings which determines whether or not they have a voice in political changes that affect their quality of life. Through an individual's relationships to others they are positioned within social networks, and the benefits of those relationships is social capital (Bourdeau 1986: 243).

Zembylas (2007: 444-445) argued,

The concept of emotional capital offers a tool for thinking about the ways in which emotion practices are regulated within an educational context, based on emotion norms that may change but are also reproduced. In these terms, emotional capital is both generated by and contributes to the generation of the habitus of a particular educational context. Secondly, the notion of emotional capital can help educational researchers understand the importance of teachers' and students' emotion practices as forms of resistance to prevalent emotion norms. Particularly, in light of functionalist and deterministic calls for an optimal exploitation of emotional capital in contemporary education and the workplace.

Another important consideration was that morals and values were adaptable in different social situations involving emotion. Discussing jealousy, Olive said, 'I did some stuff against [friends] cause I'm jealous [...] little things like steal stuff from them, steal stuff from my brother' (t21). In general, Olive expressed that stealing was wrong. However, she had done so more than once. Olive seemed to transform her jealousy, a powerless feeling, through stealing, a subversive behaviour, and thus empowered herself. Olive potentially had other options to deal with her jealousy, but chose to steal.

To summarise, student discussions indicated that the students utilised their own emotions and experience to understand character motivations and decisions. Discussions included the interpretation of characters' emotions and the students' own responses to issues of emotional and financial neglect. Students related 'bad choices' to the emotions of the characters – the fisherman's loneliness and the wife's longing for her siblings led to stealing and abandonment. The students expressed frustration with parental figures in the stories

that made bad choices. This frustration denoted the constraints placed on young people in relation to authority figures which placed them in a position of powerlessness. Disrespect enacted by story characters entailed not taking young people's needs into account in the decision-making process. Abandonment was seen as a conscious choice made by parental figures, which related to the students' present emotional needs and views. Emotional management was considered necessary to select appropriate choices and actions which conformed to socially approved standards of behaviour. Behaviour which could be breached through acts of subversion directed by unregulated emotional states such as loneliness and jealousy.

Now that these ideas have been introduced, the next subsection considers the agency of the students to reject feeling in the storytelling space.

6.2.2 The agency to reject emotion

The students were invited to experience the performance of six fairy tales and respond emotionally if they wished (see Chapter 3, Section 3.3.3). Millie shared with the group that she related to two stories through her emotions.

Moon Bear, that was a very good one [...] overall most people can relate to it more than the selkie one. People can empathise more with the woman, and more people can relate to PTSD today. I think more people as a whole can sympathise and empathise, put themselves in their shoes, more on the wife rather than the selkie (follow-up interview 2013).

Millie talked about empathising with the husband's and wife's contrasting viewpoints *MacCodram*. The students' opinions of different stories often contradicted each other,

especially at the all-female school, where individuals were divided over what the best story was (see Figure 4.2, Chapter 4). In *Rooted Lover*, a farmer fell in love with a princess and transformed into a poppy, risking his life to win her love. Khan thought the story was ‘boring’ yet it was Jamal’s ‘favourite’ (follow-up interviews 2013). Such contrasting examples between schools, and within groups, indicated that the students engaged differently with different stories at different times.

The students’ conversations suggested that young people used their agency to explore or resist emotion. Four boys at the urban-mixed school expressed boredom and disconnection with some of the stories: David, Dylan, Khan and Jamal. Responding to the question ‘How does the story make you feel?’ David responded, ‘No feelings’ (t27) about *Moon Bear*, but the preceding week he had said, ‘It feels really emotional how the mother left’ about *MacCodram* (t26). Dylan said, ‘It [*MacCodram*] makes me feel a bit bored’ and ‘just normal I guess’ (t31). In response to being asked what he liked or disliked about *Rooted Lover*, Khan said, ‘I hate the whole thing, it’s just boring’ (t34).

Jamal was the only student who rejected the idea of having an emotional response to storytelling. More precisely, Jamal indicated that imagining a story in his head did not invoke feelings. Jamal said, ‘Listening to a story on its own is just what you imagine, so feelings, I didn’t have any feelings’ (t26). What feelings film invoked in Jamal remained vague. Jamal said, ‘Stories can’t make me feel anything, just films can, and real things’ (t27). I asked what his experience was during a performance. Jamal indicated that he was capable of engaging visually with storytelling, ‘I was, linking it to whatever, things I’ve seen before. Imagining the setting, the place.’ This suggested that Jamal was willing and able to engage with the story but not on an emotional level (t26).

Jamal's non-engagement with 'feelings' during the storytelling might be influenced by a broad range of discursive frameworks such as gender, class and ethnic background. Jamal's parents were Iranian. He was born in Iran and moved to the UK with his parents. Jamal aspired to be a computer systems engineer. The school he attended was situated in an urban area with lower than-average income. His mother was a homemaker and part-time college administrator, while his father worked as a food services manager.

When I asked 'What did you learn?' from *MacCodram*, Jamal replied, 'You're going to lose someone in your life at the end of the day.' He said, 'I lost all my grandparents except for one.' Jamal connected the death of the king's wife with his own family. He was able to recognise emotion while being detached. As he said, 'I just prefer not to think about it.' Jamal did not recognise, or want to acknowledge, what emotional engagement occurred. This also indicated that he did not want to engage emotionally, or at least not at that moment in that social setting. Storytelling was a social activity, but Jamal said that he responded emotionally to films which he watched alone at home. To some extent his emotional response was governed by personal preference.

Jamal's group did not discuss the emotions in *MacCodram* in as much detail as some of the other groups. Yet the group mentioned similar themes of abandonment, trust, jealousy and loss (t26). So while Jamal's words indicated that he was able to recognise and interpret emotions, he chose not to engage with emotions such as loss. Wilson (1997: 32-25, 38) proposed that storytelling in different geographical areas reflected the varying morals of different communities determined by class. What I inferred from my analysis was that Jamal was choosing not to engage emotionally with 'feelings' during the storytelling, which might

have been influenced by his gender, class or ethnic background, or by other aspects of his experiences and personality, in complex and ambiguous ways.

Connell (2014: 67-71) argued for a more inclusive view of masculinity. While masculinity is often associated with physical strength, violent sports or pursuits like hunting, sexual vitality and crime (Newburn and Stanko 1995: 74), Messerschmidt (1995) also proposed different types of masculinity related to class and power.

Opposition masculinities, then, are based on a specific relation to school, generated by the interaction of school authority with class, race, and gender dynamics. For white, middle-class boys, a nonviolent, opposition masculinity occurs primarily outside school; for white, working-class boys, a specific type of opposition masculinity prevails both inside and outside school. Yet for each group of boys, a sense of masculinity is shaped by their specific relation to the school and by their specific position in the divisions of labour and power (Messerschmidt 1995: 98).

So Jamal's rejection of emotion might also have been tied to his conceptualisation of masculinity as a working-class, Iranian male.

My research suggested that the students interpreted the emotions of characters regardless of their emotional engagement with the story. For instance, at the all-female school, Olive and Holly discussed stories and feelings.

Olive Okay, it makes me feel, I don't know really cause stories, some stories, like reality stories they can make you feel

Holly They make it up, a bear wouldn't talk to a human would he?

Olive Yeah, you can't really feel anything, cause it would be entertaining for you. But you can't really feel what the lady's feeling, it's not really real

Holly You can, sort of, you can tell that she feels

Olive Like she feels, desperate

Holly It hasn't happened in your own life so you can't really tell how it feels, you can tell how she feels, but you can't tell how *you* feel cause you're never in that situation (t22)

Holly said that although the story was fictional, she could interpret how the wife felt in *Moon Bear*. She could empathise with people in situations that were different from her own. Conversations like this one also occurred in gender-mixed groups at the other schools. For example, Millie, from the rural-mixed school, said,

The story makes me feel quite confused, as to why her husband's a soldier actually because, I feel really sorry for the woman because she's only trying to do her best for her husband and her husband's rejecting it. Then the husband is lost and confused and stuff (t12).

Again, the students interpreted characters' actions through the characters' emotions. Millie was able to imagine the wife's viewpoint yet perceived that the husband was rejecting his wife because he was 'lost' and 'confused'. The students' conversations involved complex interpretations of emotions and actions; they thus saw storytelling from multiple characters' perspectives. Such reasoning, connecting the behaviour of a character to a character's emotions, occurred 44 times (in response to Q4). Perspective-taking is a valuable social skill because it enables empathy and cooperation with others, such as reciprocal behaviour (Diekmann 2004: 502-503).

Note that I have mainly cited female students talking about their feelings. This is an incorrect representation of what occurred in the groups. When coding how often males and females linked a story to their emotions this revealed that conversations containing emotion were evenly distributed across each school and between males and females (see Table 6.1). This was further reinforced when I compared what words each gender used. At the urban-mixed school the emotion most mentioned by both girls and boys was anger. In the rural-mixed school the girls emphasised with a character's actions, or felt sorry for the way certain characters were treated. Millie said, 'I feel quite sorry for the father cause he spent ages worrying about his kids and trying his hardest to look after them' (t11). In contrast the boys felt happy about the outcomes of the stories, for example Mark said that he was 'glad for the lad' when the ploughboy succeeded in winning the princess in *Rooted Lover* (t14), and Mark said while discussing *Frog King*, 'There's a build-up, there's a problem, she doesn't want to live with the frog, there's a solution, he turns into a prince, nice happy ending' (t8).

Table 6.1 Number of times a story was linked to personal emotion across the three schools in this study

<i>School/Personal emotion</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>All-female</i>	14:18	n/a	32
<i>Rural-mixed</i>	22	14	36
<i>Urban-mixed</i>	10	18	28

There was a slight difference between the boys of the urban- and rural-mixed schools. The boys in the urban-mixed school felt 'bored' and related to 'anger' and being sad or lonely (t27, t30, t32, t34) while the rural-mixed boys mentioned happiness, empathy and emotions like fear, jealousy and desperation (t11, t12, t13, t14, t15). These findings correspond with Shamire and Tavis (2002) who challenged that middle-class males were alienated from their emotions via an analysis of twentieth-century US literature, and psychiatry which suggests that 'girls express more happiness, sadness, anxiety' and 'embarrassment', while 'boys express more anger and the externalizing of emotions, such as contempt' (Panjwani *et al.* 2016: 117). Panjwani *et al.* (2016: 128) also argued that different emotional expression occurred in low-income young people of 14-17 years under acute stress.

The students had the agency to reject feeling in the storytelling space, however, as the storytelling space was situated within the context of the school, it was important to consider whether associating storytelling with the school disengaged students from participating in discussion. The English curriculum could be compared to the focus group situation, where the students were invited to share their interpretations of oral stories instead of key literary texts.

I mentioned educational guidelines in the introduction to Chapter 6. Hey and Leathwood (2009: 103) provided a summary of how higher education emphasises supportive learning environments for all students, for example through the presence of student support, mentoring and tutoring schemes. The affective turn in education has been about support and inclusion, providing behavioural and emotional guidelines within schools towards 'safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children' (DoE 2012: 2) and providing students with the ability to engage in appropriate behaviours that will be needed for later

employment. Emotional literacy skills, for example, have been sought after by employees looking for personal skills in managerial and other types of work (Hey and Leathwood 2009: 104).

Legally schools also have to

- promote good behaviour, self-discipline and respect;
- prevent bullying;
- ensure that pupils complete assigned work;
- regulate the conduct of pupils (DoE 2012: 3).

Educational practices are therefore designed to promote students' education and welfare and the control and subordination of young people's behaviour towards instrumental ends.

I found that education provides a way of intellectualising or instrumentalising emotion, which I will now explain. The students understood the actions of characters via their emotions, including their internal emotional states. For example, the all-female school students were set an essay on *Romeo and Juliet* for English. Heidi said, 'We had to pick different quotations' from the balcony scene on 'fear' and 'love'. Mary added, 'We had to look at feelings' then 'describe it from the audience perspective' (t17). Educational policy placed Shakespeare on the curriculum as a national literature of importance. DoE guidelines (2013: 4) state that GCSE English literature should deepen students' understanding of key texts. This form of interpretation was an intellectualising of emotion because the focus of the English essay on emotion indicated the way in which the students were educated to understand key texts by interpreting the motivations of characters via their emotions.

The aim of the English curriculum, in relation to reading comprehension and critical literacy targets, is that students must demonstrate an understanding of a character's motivations through their actions.

understanding a word, phrase or sentence in context; exploring aspects of plot, characterisation, events and settings; distinguishing between what is stated explicitly and what is implied; explaining motivation, sequence of events, and the relationship between actions or events (DoE 2013: 5).

There were significant similarities between these educational guidelines and the way in which students interpreted oral storytelling. The students understood a character's emotional and behavioural 'motivation', and linked this to 'actions or events'. For instance, Millie perceived that the husband rejected his wife because of his emotional state. My research indicated that for the young people in my study, the education system has been effective in providing them with the tools young people need to link and interpret a wide range of texts. It follows that the same way of interpreting behaviour and emotions might arise in other situations in the students' lives.

Parallels can be drawn, through the work of Hochschild, between 'how society uses feeling' (2012: 17) and how the students were educated to use feeling through educational policies such as the National Curriculum. And the behavioural and disciplinary guidelines of the Department of Education (2012: 2) which 'support staff in managing behaviour, including the use of rewards and sanctions'. The National Curriculum combined with behavioural and disciplinary guidelines place young people in a subordinate position, where they are expected to conform to a set of behavioural rules determined by figures of authority which promote 'good behaviour' and 'self-discipline' (DoE 2012: 3). To clarify, I do not want to

imply that conformity is positive or negative, rather that it is necessary, but that does not mean that it should not be brought into question, particularly when considering who is being conformed, and towards what purposes. Young people are also required to interpret emotions and behaviour in certain ways to obtain high grades, yet the ways are less discernible than the way in which employers train customer service staff to perform 'emotional labour'. Whether emotional training occurs through interaction with text in educational settings is less discernible because there are multiple factors to consider some of which include text selection, how gender, ethnicity and class is represented in that text, who has or lacks a voice, and what essay topics are set by the teacher.

This section has touched on a range of similar and contradictory interpretations of emotion that arose in student conversation. The research indicated that education has succeeded in enabling students to comprehend the emotional and moral aspects of stories, as well as their technical aspects. This type of education aims to develop young people's lives 'culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually' (DoE 2014). Education might have structural influence over students' emotional and behavioural connections, but it is worth remembering that such influence might be symptomatic of social conditions rather than be contributing towards creating them. Hochschild focuses on business and family structures over education but generalises that 'within institutions various elements of acting are taken away from the individual and replaced by institutional mechanisms' (2012: 49). Other forms of training, such as education, then also have an influence on people's emotional lives.

One issue is that young people's emotional lives are being affected by their education.

Therefore, the intellectualising of emotion is linked to other issues surrounding conformity,

transgression and transformation that arose in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3). For instance, my study demonstrated that young people talked about transgression but indicated that they conformed most of the time, and transformed their behaviours and emotions to socially approved ones. An example of conformative and transformative behaviour, and its connection to emotion, was how Dylan cultivated patience surrounding household chores and in order to care for younger siblings (see Section 5.2.3.1, Chapter 5). Another example were the expectations that the students' had regarding parents 'emotional labor' (see Section 6.2.1).

The effects of influence have consequences for individuals and broader social structures. Education has structural influence over students' emotional and behavioural connections in a range of other situations, potentially in the negotiation of social relationships with others. This is not necessarily a "negative" phenomenon which constraints and disempowers but a form of social education which empowers through supporting and rewarding collective behaviours that will enable young people to co-operate and negotiate social relationships with others when they enter the workplace as adults.

Section 6.2.2 discussed how young people connected to or resisted engaging with emotions in the storytelling performance. Stories and their interpretations are complex and ambiguous. How young people in this study related differently to the same stories was a part of the complexity and ambiguity of processes in the storytelling space. The students had the ability to see contrasting emotional perspectives, and linked emotions to behaviour as characters' motivations were interpreted via their emotional state. The students' understanding of contrasting perspectives, and their linking of emotions to behaviour, implied that educational objectives have been successful in enabling students across all

three schools to interpret text through the emotional state of the characters. Such interpretation is reflective of an intellectualising of emotion, so it is worth considering the potential consequences on young people's lives if such power is abused. A link was established between 'how society uses feeling' (Hochschild 2012: 17) and how the students were educated to use feeling to interpret text. The following subsection further discusses the emotion-behaviour connection through the storytellers' performance and Hochschild's concept of emotional labour.

6.2.3 Managing patience and conflict

Conflicts arose between individuals, which inferred that motivation played a role in emotional management. Heidi said, 'I have to be in the mood to have patience otherwise I just can't deal with it' (t17). The all-female school students discussed patience in relation to waiting for music to download (Mary) and waiting at school to be picked up (Paris and Heidi, t17). Paris waited in the snow for one hour, and Heidi's dad was repeatedly late. Patience is clearly linked to emotion because it requires endurance, involving 'management and transformation' to control one's emotions (Preece 2006: 131). The girls mentioned how they felt and acted in those moments. Whenever the students talked about emotions, behaviour and action was related to feeling.

Patience was perceived as hard to achieve and framed as a choice from the girls' perspectives. Emotional and behavioural management occurred in these instances. For example, Mary said,

If it's something I really want then I could do. I'm quite patient. If it's just something small [...] I want to get it over and done with cause it's getting on my

nerves. If I'm downloading music and it's taking *for-ever*, forever, and in five minutes I have to go out, so I'm like, 'Hurry up' (t17).

Mary's impatience was demonstrated through her emphasis on 'taking for-ever' and 'Hurry up.' She acknowledged she could be patient when she wanted something, introducing an aspect of motivation. Motivation helped her manage her feeling of impatience in order to act a certain way. When her desire was to go somewhere, she became less patient. This suggested that Mary's emotional management required motivation. Whether or not Mary was patient was determined by her tolerance levels regarding a) the desire to get something done, such as downloading music, or b) the desire to go out and do something else. So when Mary wanted to go out, her patience for downloading music decreased.

Mary, Paris and Heidi talked about their parents picking them up late from school.

Mary My mum was stuck in traffic and I was stuck outside [school name] for half an hour

Heidi That must have been awkward

Mary It was very awkward

Paris Me and Gray were waiting outside [school name] when it was snowing cause my gran was like, 'Yeah, I'm coming now,' so we walked from Gray's cause she didn't know where Gray's was, we walked to [school name] and were waiting outside for an hour cause she got stuck in traffic. Snowing, so we waited outside for an hour while it was snowing

Heidi The amount of times I've waited outside the school for twenty minutes and then my dad says, 'Oh, I'm late back from work. You're going to have to walk back,' and I was, 'Are you being serious?'

Mary had a close relationship with her mother, who raised her as a single parent. This close mother–daughter bond, expressed in conversations over five weeks, might be because Mary was able to view the situation as one which neither party was in control of. Hence, Mary used phrases such as ‘mum was stuck’ and ‘I was stuck.’ Paris, however, expressed frustration due to a number of factors, such as waiting for an hour in snowy conditions with a friend. Paris used phrases such as ‘she didn’t know’ and ‘she got stuck in traffic’, indicating that if her gran had been more organised, Paris and her friend could have waited at her friend’s house. Heidi was similarly frustrated by her dad’s consistent lateness. This indicated that relationships between people dictated motivation and that the level of emotional management invested in the relationship was based on what young people perceived they owed others.

Groups expressed different strategies to deal with emotions. To consider sibling relationships, Dawn said,

My sister, sometimes I try and help her [...] She’ll be doing something and I’ll try and hold something still to help her, she’ll be like, ‘No!’ Well I was only trying to help. And she’ll kick off on one at me and I wasn’t doing anything wrong I was just trying to help (t12).

There were times when offered assistance was refused. Dawn responded by telling her sister she was only ‘trying to help’. Millie had a similar experience with her sister and responded in a similar way to Dawn. Millie made her sister some tea and told her she would leave it on the stairs because she had homework to do. The tea was never collected. Millie said,

Well first you get very angry, and I do confront her about it. But then once you see, you empath– [empathise], once they tell you their side of the story and you realise why they obviously acted like that. It wasn't out of spite or anything (t12).

Millie expressed empathy for her sister following the initial confrontation. She had learned to communicate and understand two different emotional perspectives of the same social situation.

These few examples began to illustrate the number of different relationships and interactions which involved emotional and behavioural management. Each example, such as waiting to be picked up from school or making tea, suggested a complex interweaving of emotions, behaviours, morals and values in relation to others.

Section 4.3, Chapter 4, outlined how young people interpreted the geographical, historical, technological and social aspects of story. Some of those aspects were connected to emotions. For instance, the storytelling space was perceived as enjoyable; and performance framed the story in different ways via language, gesture and expression. The research connected performance, as a social interaction, to Hochschild's framing rules. Feeling rules are built on social conventions which determine what is acceptable to share, and why (Hochschild 2012: 66-67). Greeting a close friend, for example, might initiate different feeling and behavioural responses from an appointment with the doctor.

The storytellers chose to frame emotional situations in a story in different ways. For example, in *She-Bear*, when the king tried to carry out his wife's dying wish, this is how the episode was told by Alex and Michelle:

he'd made a promise to his wife that he'd only marry the next beautiful woman to her [...] He would go around playing all these women off each other, a sort of horrible display of, I don't know, misogyny [...] It was then when he realised, rather strange I should point out, 'Why should I spend all this time searching all over the globe, for the next woman, when I've got someone just as beautiful as her in my own house?' [Laughs] You're right. He's got the daughter (Alex, t23)

'When I die you shall not remarry otherwise I will cast a curse upon you' [...] He cried so bitter, he was screaming, he pulled out his hair, his moustache! [...] 'I will marry someone who is as beautiful as her so this new queen can bear me a son' [...] He was worried that he could not find a new queen for his kingdom, and then he had this thought all of a sudden. He thought, 'My beautiful daughter is just here. She looks exactly like her mother. I could just marry her and let her bear a son for me' (Michelle, t28).

The two storytellers framed the king's actions to justify his actions in different ways. In the text provided to the storytellers, the wife asked the king to promise not to marry anyone unless they were as beautiful as her, or she would 'curse' and 'hate' him from beyond the grave. After a grieving period, the king realised he needed an heir to the throne. He had all the beautiful women in the world line up, then turned to his daughter and proposed marriage to her. Of course she 'severely reprov'd and censur'd' him for the idea (Basile 1893). The original tale is very moralistic in the way the princess rejected her father's advances. The idea of marrying a close relation is in opposition to a long history of religious, and social, morals and values reinforced through legislation in the UK; although no universal consensus exists regarding marriage practices, there is a universality of the prohibition

against sexual relations within the nuclear family. However historical practices in Roman Egypt raise questions about whether social and moral “norms” guide such practices (Huebner 2007: 21).

When Alex performed at the all-female school he was hesitant, tripping over his words, pausing to find the right words as he framed the story for the audience. Alex was emotionally embarrassed as a male in such a setting. This was demonstrated by the way in which Alex focused on the misogynistic nature of the king’s actions to prepare his audience for the king’s proposal to his daughter. Alex hesitated, and took care to explain that what he was about to say was ‘strange’. His hesitation implied a social expectation of how this incestuous act was going to be received. In contrast, Michelle did not hesitate. She framed the story through the queen’s curse, the king’s grief and the eventual decision that he needed an heir to the throne. Michelle carried the listener through the king’s changing emotions. The narrative was set up to surprise the listener when the king’s eyes rested on his daughter. Thus emotions do not just guide story experience but effects how a story is told, which in turn effects experience.

During Alex’s performance, Ava responded, ‘His daughter?’ Alex laughed, and the students joined him. Alex continued telling the story in a less hesitant manner when the story’s immoral twist had been revealed (t23). In Michelle’s group, the surprise was followed by an awkward silence. A number of the students looked at me for my reaction. Bo whispered, ‘That’s just wrong!’ and everyone laughed, breaking the tension of the room (t28, research journal). So while Alex’s and Michelle’s framing of the story occurred differently, laughter was a way of preventing awkward feelings and tension created by the king’s immoral choice of wife.

Michelle stuck to the original script of the story; Alex's performance involved 'framing rules' in consideration of the fact that he was performing the story at the all-female school. Alex detached his performance from the king's grief, which was well-illustrated in Michelle's version. Alex's version rationalised the king's decision; Michelle's version did not.

This affected the students' interpretations of the king's emotions. Alex's rational performance led to rational and emotional interpretations. For example, Felicity said she felt 'happy' because the princess was empowered to say 'I'm not going to do that. It's my life, my rules' (t18). Holly said she felt 'weird' because 'it's not normal to marry your daughter' and she imagined the king would feel 'horrible and 'embarrassed' (t23). Michelle's more emotional performance resulted in comments such as, 'It's not really an emotional story' (Amir, t28). The students had been supplied with the emotions of the characters, which appeared to have prevented them imagining, or connecting to, the emotions of the characters. Instead, they talked about the reasons for the marriage. Amir said, 'He only wanted to marry his daughter to get a—'; David interrupted, 'a wife'. (t28).

Section 6.2.3 considered how emotional management involved motivation and effort in relation to others and how performance framed the story and influenced interpretation.

Subsection 6.2.4 discusses further how the storyteller's performance influenced emotional interpretation.

6.2.4 How storyteller performance influenced emotional interpretation

What the husband saw during war and how he was feeling was open to interpretation depending on the storyteller's performance. The storytellers gave different descriptions of the husband's emotions at the start of *Moon Bear*.

Her husband had been away for many, many years fighting in the war. One day he trudged home in a foul, foul, foul mood. She got everything ready for him: she got the house redecorated, she got all the favourite foods he liked, all that sort of stuff. Trying to give him the best welcome possible. But he was just in this awful, awful mood. He wouldn't really speak to her. He refused to go into the house cause he'd been so used to sleeping on stone for so long (Alex, t22)

He was a soldier and so it happened that there was a war and he had to go away. He was away for a really long time. The wife missed him terribly, but eventually, a few years later, it was time for him to come home. Now when he'd been at war he'd seen some terrible things, and he'd done terrible things, and he'd lost people. And he was angry, and he was scared and confused, and he didn't know how to be the gentle, kind, loving husband that he'd been before [...] He'd got so used to being outside and sleeping on the rocks that he wouldn't come into the house (Miriam, t7)

Her husband was fighting a war for a very long time. So finally the husband returned but this time he refused to get back into the house and he's always angry at her. So he did not live in the house he'd rather live in the forest because he's so used to sleep on the stones. She was so excited when he heard about the husband returning she did shopping, she cooked, she prepared this fresh white soybean curd, some different kinds of fish, some different kinds of seaweed and some rice. She happily bring all the food to the husband but the husband stood up and he kicked away the bowl! (Michelle, t27).

Only Miriam used the word soldier. She also used emotion words to express how the husband felt and what he experienced: 'terrible things', 'anger', 'scared' and 'confused'. Miriam also compared the husband's personality before and after going to war. Michelle focused on the husband's actions from the wife's point of view. She was 'excited' and 'happy' but he was 'angry'. Alex referred to an 'awful mood' and the wife's preparations for her husband's homecoming. His description was the least emotional of the three storytellers.

The three storytellers' different performances did not prevent all six groups identifying that the husband suffered emotionally from his encounter with war. This was indicated by the words they used, which included 'depressed' (Ava, Paris, Jamal), 'shell-shocked' (Millie, Dawn), 'mental' (Mary), 'mental problem' (David), 'crazy' (Peter) 'stress disorder' (Dylan), and 'confused' and 'mentally scarred' (Millie). Some of those words, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, were medical terms. Different groups also discussed the guilt the soldier must have felt. For instance

- Olive Like if they, if they killed somebody
 - Holly Killed a friend by accident
 - Ava Or they see their best friend killed, *Hunger Games!*
 - Olive Or they killed a German wife by accident, and then he feels really bad
- (t22)

After watching Alex's performance, group two at the all-female school linked the husband's angry behaviour to something that may have happened to him during the war. Alex had not mentioned in detail what the husband might have seen during the war, so the students

inferred what the husband's experience of war might have been like. They filled in the emotional gaps.

At the rural-mixed school, following Miriam's performance, Amy mentioned torture, and Peter added, 'That might have made him feel bad, but maybe he should have realised what the war would do to him before he left.' Peter assumed that the soldier had a choice about going to war despite Miriam declaring, 'He had to go away' (t7). Peter mentioned emotions, in the context of the husband's decision to go to war, as if the husband by choosing to be a soldier 'should have realised' the emotional consequences of his actions (t7). Conscriptio and conscientious objection were not discussed, although these were topics taught on the history curriculum; for example, students at the rural-mixed school referred to watching the film *War Horse* (t9).

Students connected the soldier's experience to their lives through family, indicating that stories were interpreted through the 'world views' and experience of the students (Lewis *et al.* 2010: 9). Millie, for instance, had a relative who had 'flashbacks' and 'bad dreams'. Other students made connections to the army through a stepdad (Mary), stepbrother (Felicity) and a family friend (Heidi), while Paris admitted, 'My family are too wimpy' (t17). Their use of medical terms and second-hand experience through family and education, indicated that the students understood the potential hardships and emotional consequences of war.

In *Moon Bear*, the woman went on a quest to heal her husband by fetching a hair from a bear's neck. When she returned, the healer threw the hair in the fire. Heidi said, 'You'd be pretty annoyed because you spent that long' fetching the hair (t17). Five students expressed dislike that the hair was thrown into the fire, yet understood the connection with healing. Jamal said, 'I guessed the healer was going to say to her that you showed your honour for

your husband, and now you've shown how much you care about him, you should go back and it will be fine' (t27). Despite the possibility for multiple interpretations of *Moon Bear*, the students' interpretations involved a central message of healing or recovery in every group.

Emotions and ill health were discussed in relation to other stories, such as *Toy Princess*. The princess became ill because she was not allowed to express any emotion. Hochschild considered the detrimental psychological and physical implications of flight attendants suppressing emotion. Hochschild (2012: 188) argued, 'when we lose access to feeling, we lose a central means of interpreting the world around us'. She used health as an example, suggesting that overidentifying one's sense of self with a job could result in overwork, causing stress and ill-health and emotional numbness, and passive behaviour to avoid further stress. For example, one flight attendant said, 'It was like I wasn't really there. The guy was talking, I could hear him. But all I heard was dead words' (Hochschild 2012: 187-188). If a person becomes used to distancing themselves from their feelings in this way, they lose 'access to feeling', which may be detrimental to their private lives and relationships. For example Jamal refused to engage with his own emotion during storytelling (see Section 6.2.2). The management of emotion can have detrimental effects; the students mentioned this in response to *Toy Princess*.

Olive Because there was no emotion, she was all sad

Ava Can that really happen? Can you become really ill from not sharing emotion?

Holly Doubt it

Olive Maybe

Ava It's depression isn't it?

Olive If you keep everything in your heart it can be unhealthy for you (t25)

The students' words encapsulated the idea that emotion needs an outlet, as 'not sharing emotion' was considered 'unhealthy' and might lead to 'depression'. The suppression or conformity of emotion to socially approved standards of behaviour in *Toy Princess* made the princess ill. So the management of emotion can have detrimental effects on well-being.

Conforming to socially approved standards of behaviour, while necessary to negotiate social relationships, could cause access to feeling to be lost. The cost of this could be a loss of emotion to offer to private lives and relationships. An alternative to Hochschild's structural approach is that the emotional skills required to conform and do well in educational contexts could support the negotiation of feelings in personal relationships (Durlak *et al.* 2011, Jones and Bouffard 2012, Bridgeland *et al.* 2013).

The princess tried to contest the structures in place. When the kingdom rejected her leadership, she went to another kingdom, where she was able to express her emotions and recover her health. The princess found a place where her surroundings were not in conflict with her inner, emotional self. She was in touch with this emotional self all along, while the wife in *Moon Bear* connected to her inner resources via her journey up the mountain.

Millie's interpretation of *Moon Bear* was that the wife's character underwent transformation in order to help her husband:

You can also see how she's changed. Cause before she ran in her house and locked the door, like when she was scared of her husband. And then it goes from that to going up a mountain and singing, going right up close to a bear. Look how

much she's come out of her shell. So in the end it's done loads, not only has it made her experience new things, build her character, and stuff, it's really made her (t12).

The word 'character' is often used colloquially to mean disposition, which can be related to mood and thus emotions. One message of the story was the transformation of anger into patience. Estés compared holding on to emotion as 'toxic waste' from a psychological perspective (1996: 375). Socially, individuals may have learned to frame emotions as requiring transformation through the dominance of psychology and philosophy, and the rational over the emotional, in Western thought. Millie's words captured how the wife's quest for her husband became a journey for her own 'character'. It was a quest of 'change' and 'experience' which could be equated with growth and learning. Messages of personal transformation (*Moon Bear*) and finding one's place (*Toy Princess*) might also be appropriate for the transitional stage, between school and future roles in society, that these young people were facing.

Section 6.2.4 considered how storytellers' performances influenced interpretation. All six groups identified that the husband in *Moon Bear* suffered emotionally despite the different expression of his emotions in the performances. The students' interpretation suggested that they filled in emotional gaps by understanding the character's actions through their emotions. The detrimental effects of emotion were associated with Hochschild's theories of emotional labour. Untransformed emotion was perceived as unhealthy, but emotions could be transformed, such as anger into patience.

Overall, Section 6.2 showed that emotions arose in the storytelling space in the following ways: storyteller performance, the performer–audience relationship, and students'

observing contrasting perspectives in the stories and comparing personal emotional experience in group discussion. Performance framed the story and influenced interpretation. The students utilised their own emotions and experience to understand character motivations and decisions. Emotional management by characters, such as the King in *MacCodram* who married a wife over the death of his wife, a witch who was jealous of the children and cast a curse on them, was considered important to make decisions, especially when actions affected other family members. So emotional management was considered necessary to select appropriate choices and actions. Management in the students' own lives, whether waiting to be picked up from school, interacting with siblings and parents required motivation, effort and different strategies in relationships with others. They expressed frustration with parental figures in the stories that made bad choices. This frustration denoted the powerlessness of young people in relation to authority figures. Disrespect enacted by story characters entailed not taking young people's needs into account in the decision-making process.

Finally, 'how society uses feeling' (Hochschild 2012: 7) was linked to how young people used feeling to interpret storytelling. There appeared to be an educational influence on the interpretation of emotion. The students understood contrasting emotional perspectives, and used emotional impacts on behaviour to interpret storytelling in a similar way to how they would deal with texts such as Shakespeare. There are costs and benefits of interpreting texts through emotions. The benefits of utilising emotion in the curriculum are that it enables young people to construct deeper understandings of texts in other situations involving story and to understand the role of the management of emotion in sustaining social relationships. The management of emotion, through suppression or conformity, could also have

detrimental effects on young people's sense of well-being, as it did for the flight attendants in Hochschild's study, through loss of feeling.

The previous sections reflected on the ways students discussed emotion in the storytelling space. Section 6.3 examines group conflict, which occurred as young people negotiated emotions and behaviour in the storytelling space. Section 6.4 will then consider how emotional management occurs in different social contexts.

6.3 'It was a slap': gift exchange and group dynamics in the storytelling space

Certain social interactions in the storytelling space implied that Hochschild's concept of 'gift exchange' occurred following storytelling. Feeling rules and framing rules were introduced in the literature review (see Section 2.3.2.1). These concepts also involved gift exchange – what Hochschild called the exchange of feelings at a social or group level. An example would be 'anger-desensitization' being used in order to deal with demanding customers calling to complain (2012: 21). Anger-desensitisation occurred in this example because the employee who took the call had received training in dealing with difficult conversations so as to manage their emotions for the benefit of the company. Emotional management not only affected their ability to express anger in the workplace; Hochschild (2012: 21) argued that it also 'affects the degree to which we listen to feeling and sometimes our capacity to feel'. Emotional management in the workplace then extends into an individual's personal life. Such private–public aspects to feeling rules also determined how people acted in groups, including what was acceptable to share and why, what was appropriate to feel and for how long, and where to express different feelings as determined by social "norms" (Hochschild 2012: 66-67).

Emotional management occurred in different contexts and spaces in the students' discussions. Foucault (1998: 63) argued that social processes and structures reproduced uneven power distributions that individuals had no power over. He proposed that power was everywhere, outwith processes of agency or structure, and therefore that power arose within structures and could not be transcended. Bourdieu (1984: 170), however, argued that individuals were ordered and constrained by a changing perception of the social and structural practices around them, and would therefore adapt. Individuals would conform to certain situations and resist others (Bourdieu 1980 cited in Moncrieffe 2006: 37). In support of Bourdieu's reasoning, the students talked about adapting their behaviour to different situations

RES You guys were talking about feeling happy when everyone else was feeling sad. What do you then do?

Holly Stop, and you go, oh okay

Olive I would probably go to my room, if I'm surrounded by people I would try and get away from them

Ava If you were happy then I'd try and make everyone else happy, I wouldn't let them all be sad

Holly Yeah but if you try to do that everyone else is, 'No, this isn't the right time'

Olive Yeah, if it's a very serious situation and you're, 'Everybody be happy!' That's what happened in the, Christmas party we had in year 7. Me and Louise were there like, [raises voice excitedly] 'Everybody!'

Holly I wasn't in that day

Olive And everyone else was like, [lowers tone] ‘I don’t really care.’ Everyone was at their tables, like that [acts sad] eating their crisps [mimes eating crisps sadly]. And me and Louise were, [raises voice] ‘Whoo hooo party!’
(t25)

The group expressed different behavioural strategies related to emotion. Holly said she would stop if her emotions were different to those around her. Olive said that she would leave the room to go to her own. Olive’s words, ‘try and get away’, suggested that she would leave to protect her own emotional state, happiness, over joining others in their sadness. Ava said she would try to ‘make everyone else happy’. This was typical of her expression in the group – making jokes and funny comments. Holly and Olive disagreed that Ava’s strategy would always be appropriate. For example, in a ‘serious situation’, despite Olive describing a school party as an example, Holly and Olive understood that certain situations required conforming to, and respecting, others’ feelings. The girls’ conversation covered most of Hochschild’s ideas associated with social interactions: what was acceptable to share and why, what was appropriate to feel, and where different feelings were expressed as determined by the social situation. The spatial element in terms of how long it was appropriate to feel was missing from this instance.

Boys and girls were expected to control or display emotion in different ways. During school assembly, as mentioned in Section 5.2.2 in the previous chapter, the headteacher kept all the boys behind and let the girls go to class even though Bo said that some of the boys were ‘quiet and they wouldn’t mess around’ (t34). In that example it emerged that boys and girls were treated in different ways. The highest authority figure in the school was treating the boys one way and the girls another. The all-female and rural-mixed schools did not discuss

teacher discipline, yet this was apparent through the boys and girls at the urban-mixed school which was a school with a high level of behavioural difficulties (Ofsted 2007). Hence the social context of the school may have exacerbated the differences between boys and girls. An ESRC study into the constructions of gender in young people, of 14 to 16 years, revealed that they believed that boys 'laddish behaviour', such as having a laugh, were loud and demanding in class, impeded their learning (Francis 1999: 357). The girls focused on the social rather than gender causes of differences between genders, such as 'boys behave laddishly because that is what is expected of them', while boys explained their actions via gender differences (Francis 1999: 364, 369).

Section 7.2.4, Chapter 7, will pick up this feminist interpretation in relation to conversations the students had about how men and women are viewed, and the division of labour in the household. And habitus, in relation to how emotional practices are viewed and organised will be explored further in Section 6.4. For now, I wish to point out that the students' emotional expressions were constrained by the different spaces they inhabited, such as the school and the research space.

Hochschild (2012: 85) said that people often have to 'accept uneven exchanges'. One could expect that children experience a wider range of uneven exchanges than adults, because of the way social structures and practices are informed by adult decisions. There are different constraints on young people's emotional expression and behaviour via the extent to which young people are enabled to question and challenge emotional exchanges at school and at home. An illustration of the unevenness of exchanges was a clear example of 'gift exchange' at the rural-mixed school, when Mark protested that he had been 'slapped' (t12). Group one comprised Dawn, Rebecca, Mark and Millie. Rebecca was absent in week one due to a

doctor's appointment. In the second week, when Rebecca joined the group, there was an argument between the girls and Mark which caused Rebecca to ask permission to leave the room.

The conflict resulted from Mark's behaviour. The literature across many fields, psychology, developmental biology, evolutionary psychology, education, and sociology, suggests that men feel more able than women to express themselves verbally and physically with aggressive and disruptive behaviour (Thomas 1993, Connell 2014: 47). Feminist literature moves away from historical representations of female emotion as gendered and irrational to advocating that expressions of emotion like anger are indicative of 'thwarted agency'. In such ways women's anger is perceived as a positive transformation rather than a masculine, destructive or irrational trait (Pratt and Rosner 2012: 5).

Psychologist Dr Sandra Thomas, a leading researcher in women's anger, has said that males and females have learnt to control their emotions in different ways: 'Men have been encouraged to be more overt with their anger. If [boys] have a conflict on the playground, they act it out with their fists. Girls have been encouraged to keep their anger down' (Dittmann 2003: 52). Developmental psychology states that this is due to some psychological differences at the point of adolescence, such as a younger brain maturation rate in girls, and differences in testosterone which cause aggression in boys. However, the largest risk factor related to a young person's behaviour appears to be social through the encouragement of gendered behaviours by parents which cause inhibitory control or lack of control (Loeber *et al.* 2013: 160).

In the conflict between Mark and the rest of the group he exhibited a number of disruptive behaviours. Mark interrupted when people had not finished speaking; he started to read the

next question when it was someone else's turn; he corrected facts; reported information as if they were 'eating sweets' into the recorder; and gave instructions to the group such as, 'Put the recorder down!'

Then Mark protested that he had been 'slapped.' This example of gift exchange occurred as the group discussed shell shock in response to Q5. Millie overstepped Mark's boundaries by touching him on the cheek.

Mark We did that in English

Dawn We didn't

RES [Observes Millie patting Mark's cheek]

Mark What was that for?

Reb It was a pat on the cheek

Dawn [Laughs] She always does that to me

Mark You slapped me! You don't slap somebody! (t12)

Mark's tone rose in pitch as he responded emotionally to Millie's action. Mark's words indicated that his emotional and physical space had been violated. This could have been a result of many factors, including his expectations of appropriate conduct at school. What Mark thought was appropriate in terms of physical contact could have involved how he usually interacted in difference spaces at home and at school. For instance, 'the type, intensity, duration, timing, and placing of feelings' learned from influences in his

surroundings might subsequently have determined how Mark responded to the situation (Hochschild 2012: 85).

Mark's emotional reaction, his annoyance, in response to Millie's action was congruent with Hochschild's concept of 'gift exchange'. Mark's response to Millie's pat on the cheek indicated a breach of his feeling rules that the girls did not ignore. They altered their approach to Mark. At first, Mark rejected Dawn's explanation that Millie 'always does that to me'. In the following passage, the group was talking about what stories they could link to *Moon Bear* when Mark referred back to the incident.

Millie *Mulan, Mulan, Mulan*, reminds me of this

Dawn I don't know what *Mulan* is

Mark *Mulan's* a Disney film where this girl

Millie *Mulan, Mulan*

Mark Who is, you know, a girl who is not supposed to be in the army. She takes her father's armour and pretends to be a boy in the army and she goes on, this massive quest

Millie It reminds me just of this

Mark Yeah, cause women doing things they're not supposed to

Dawn That's really sexist

Mark Yeah, well so is slapping me

In the above extract, Millie interrupted Mark, then Mark mentioned the slapping incident. Rebecca tried to avoid the argument escalating by moving the group onto the next question. Despite Rebecca indicating to Millie that she should read the question, Mark continued to talk, causing Rebecca to alter her approach.

Millie [...] if I was the woman I'd go, you don't like my food! You don't like my food! [bangs the desk] I'll show you food! I'd throw it in his face and get really angry and probably kick him where it hurts

Mark I know what it's like to be the woman because I know what it's like to be slapped

Reb [Whispers] Mark, do you like a Mentos?

Mark No I would not like a Mentos. I don't take sweets from strange people.
Stranger danger

Dawn It was a friendly offer, don't be so harsh

Mark's 'stranger danger' comment was a reaction associated with the stranger-danger education programme. The programme was created in response to child abduction and sexual predation in a variety of places and spaces, now inclusive of social networking sites (Moran *et al.* 1997, Guo 2008). For example, Stage One revealed an awareness of online safety. Dana said, 'Some people, on the internet and stuff, they try and trade with you but you don't know who they really are and, you might not understand what they want in return' (t1).

Returning to the conflict, the girls used a number of approaches which Mark rejected. When Mark said 'Stranger danger', the seriousness of his voice, and tense body language, signalled to the group that he was rejecting their attempts to appease him. The use of 'stranger danger' contained powerful imagery. It implied a threat or harassment. Dawn's response, 'Don't be so harsh', indicated to Mark that he had gone too far. At that point, after offering Mark a sweet and receiving a negative reaction, Rebecca gave up trying to communicate with him. She expressed frustration by sighing, then said, 'I'm going to have to stand outside

in a minute.’ Rebecca asked me, ‘Miss, can I leave?’ This was approximately 15 minutes into the focus group. When Rebecca re-entered, approximately three minutes later, Mark made a comment about it into the recorder: ‘They go on a quest, they learn a lesson and the lesson helps them instead of— Rebecca has entered the room.’ I was with the group at the time and responded, ‘Mark, that’s unacceptable, please don’t do that,’ to which Mark responded, ‘Sorry.’ I checked with Rebecca that she was willing to continue.

Near the end of the focus group session, Mark continued to challenge the girls’ behaviour, saying, ‘You’re whispering to each other.’ Rebecca explained to Mark why they were whispering as he talked, ‘Yeah cause we didn’t want to interrupt you. Dawn said, “How it’s going?”, and I said, “Okay.” We didn’t want to interrupt you.’ It was interesting that Rebecca felt the need to repeat ‘We didn’t want to interrupt you’ twice as if to be sure that Mark understood. During the conflict, Mark’s need to challenge the group demonstrated that he felt his opinions were being ignored.

Mark’s emotions, and his emotional expression, represented gender and power dynamics in the group which Millie explained, in her final interviews (2013), was a usual aspect of Mark’s personality. Millie said, ‘I don’t get on with Mark very well. He’s always been the same. A bit full of himself.’ The question is whether Mark’s behaviour was gendered or not. Connell (2014: 71) said that masculinity ‘is simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture.’

Impacts on one another’s emotions and behaviour occurred between male and female students in the storytelling space. In groups one and two at the urban-mixed school, and group one at the rural-mixed school, some males tried to dominate the conversation. For

example, I noticed in Mark's initial interview (2013) that he liked to talk, and had a science-orientated, analytical mind-set. He was the same in the groups. Mark liked to control the conversation and question everyone's opinions. I read this as an aspect of his character rather than a gender difference. However, he was the only boy in this group and his controlling behaviour annoyed the girls. Mark felt empowered to give his opinion, interrupt others and frequently question their answers. The girls' response to his controlling behaviour indicated that they felt constrained by his constant interruptions and empowered to push back. This differed from the urban-mixed school where Maru and Amir allowed David and Jamal to control and lead the situation, except where the boys insulted Amir by calling her a man and a bear (t27), associated with her skin colour and 'moustache' which I elaborate on in Chapter 7, Section 7.2.3. Amir spoke up when she was insulted indicating that the boys had crossed a line.

Some boys, such as Mark, David and Jamal in their groups enacted controlling behaviours over the girls in terms of interrupting, questioning their answers, and in David and Jamal's case insulting Amir about her appearance. Ryan in the rural-mixed school cooperated with the group, while Peter's behaviour was disruptive. He banged the desk to emphasis his words, made jokes and interrupted people speaking in his eagerness to get his jokes or opinions across. The group however responded differently to Peter than the other group did to Mark, where Mark was outnumbered by the girls 3:1. They expressed their opinion if it contrasted and moved on. For example in the following extract Peter interrupted Lucy (t10).

Lucy It's not really life it's cause it's a fairy tale

Peter Well, who made the fairy tales? People that were in life and based them
in facts that they already know

Lucy If you say that-

Peter We're not interested in that, I'm sorry to tell you this but four, okay say what you think, sorry. [Mimics croaky voice] respect your opinion!
Respect your opinion! [Sound of crinkling paper]

Amy Peter, you're ruining-

Ryan [Reads Q4]

Amy began to speak up when Peter interrupted Lucy. Then Ryan intervened by reading out the next question. Thus the group followed some similar strategies to the group Mark was in: being direct when someone interrupted another person, and reading the next question to move the conversation on. Ryan, however, when he read the question interrupted Amy. In some groups female voices were more empowered than others, Millie, Rebecca and Dawn held the gender majority, and it took all three of them to counter Mark's strong personality. In the other group Peter took the lead reading out the questions in week one. When he missed week three and four this enabled Ryan, Amy and Lucy to forming a cohesive group which then worked together to move the conversation on in week five.

Summarising the conflict between Mark and the girls, a gender dynamic arose as the girls collectively reacted to Mark's actions and took charge of the group conversation. Mark then became annoyed, and indicated through his emotional response to Millie's pat on the cheek that he did not feel as if his opinion was being taken seriously. So elements of power, gender and emotion were interwoven throughout this incident. Emotions are not easy to distinguish (see Section 2.3.2.2), which created complications when considering how emotion and behaviour interacted. Emotional management and its associated actions were not

necessarily a linear or straightforward process; there was complexity and ambiguity when interpreting the interaction of inner feelings, using external expression and action within a social situation.

Hochschild proposed that human emotions adapted to different situations through feeling and framing rules. Those rules directed emotions during social interactions, and directed gift exchange. The way Rebecca tried to appease Mark through various actions demonstrated that gift exchange occurred during this conflict. The students may have been responding instinctively, from unconscious models of experience and learning, and were not necessarily conscious of their emotional processes (Ruys and Stapel 2008: 390). But social emotional processes were taking place: despite their annoyance, the girls were managing their emotions by actively trying to appease Mark using different strategies. Similar to the ways in which students read characters' inward feelings from external expressions and action, the girls interpreted Mark's feelings through his behaviour and emotional expression.

At the end of the focus group session, I summarised both sides of the conflict, while remaining neutral, to demonstrate awareness of what had happened. The intervention was an ethical consideration to ensure that everyone felt comfortable enough to attend the next session.

RES It's okay to discuss and disagree, but there's a difference between that and shouting at each other, and I do feel that at times you [the girls] might have been ganging up on Mark a little bit

Mark They do! You offered your—

RES But at the same time he was cutting in on the end of your sentences when you hadn't finished, so I completely understand that

I noted that the girls had been shouting. As Mark refused all attempts at putting the incident behind them, their frustration towards Mark had escalated. Members of the group were adapting and responding to one another's actions and emotional expression. Mark's sense of framing and feeling rules had been breached. The girls responded to him, and gift exchange occurred through what they felt was owed to Mark in this social situation. Interpretations of emotion and behaviour during the conflict were congruent with the work of Mead and Goffman, which suggested that individuals recognised, or felt, when boundaries had been breached through the interaction of internal and external dialogues during social interaction (Goffman 1967, Mead 1934 cited in Hochschild 2012: 222-224). In this instance, Mark indicated that he was upset by how he was treated. The girls used different strategies to appease him.

First, the girls attempted multiple strategies to appease Mark. First, they tried to provide an explanation or alternative perspective. 'It was a pat on the cheek,' Rebecca stated, and 'She always does that to me,' laughed Dawn. In this way, Dawn and Rebecca acknowledged that something had happened. As the rest of the group attempted to justify Millie's pat on the cheek, the girls formed a gender-based group in opposition to Mark. There was gender conflict occurring in this group. Some feminist analysis, including masculinity studies, writes about solidarity against male aggression (Pratt and Rosner 2012: 11, Connell 2014: 191), however feminist solidarity is an idealised concept. In a highly public debate Mikki Kendall, the woman responsible for the Twitter hashtag #SolidarityIsForWhiteWomen, argued that women were not a group in solidarity against oppression (Vasquez 2013).

When I launched the hashtag #SolidarityIsForWhiteWomen, I thought it would largely be a discussion between people impacted by the latest bout of

problematic behavior from mainstream white feminists. It was intended to be Twitter shorthand for how often feminists of color are told that the racism they experience "isn't a feminist issue" (Kendall 2013).

Second, when Mark did not accept their explanation, the girls returned to the questions – an avoidance tactic. Third, Rebecca attempted appeasement in the form of offering Mark a sweet. Fourth, Rebecca became frustrated and left the room. At that point, Dawn gave a direct instruction or warning when she asked Mark to 'Leave it.' Finally, Rebecca politely explained that they did not want to interrupt him. The complexity and variety of the girls' responses made to try to appeal to Mark through actions, words, and the recognition of his point of view demonstrated gift exchange in action.

Dawn, Mark, Millie and Rebecca's conversation demonstrated that emotional management involved emotional and behavioural management. This conflict also illustrated how social circumstances can be 'improvisational' to some extent. Dawn, Mark, Millie and Rebecca displayed different feeling and framing rules, which led to various displays of gift exchange. The girls had the agency to accept Mark's interpretation, or ignore or reject it. Hochschild mentioned that social interactions could be genuine, fake, amplified or played down, for example when people felt that they did not owe any payment (Hochschild 2012: 79-81). Dawn and Rebecca interacted with Mark, yet Millie did not attempt any further appeasing strategies other than saying, 'I didn't' and 'It was a pat.' Millie acknowledged, 'I don't get on with Mark very well' in the follow-up interviews (2013), so she did not feel that she owed Mark an apology. Individuals might also display a negative response, as when Mark refused to accept the girls' attempts to pacifying him. Mark's tone at the end of the storytelling

session was one of reluctant acceptance, indicating that he understood that the group had tried to apologise.

In some ways, student behaviour was in response to the research space where the students were instructed to answer the questions, listen to one another's opinions and talk about the story. While the group was responding to the research space, the students also created their own social situation in the storytelling space, yet remained positioned within the school as the behavioural policy of the school influenced the group's conduct. The behaviour policy of the rural-mixed school stated that students should be 'caring and kind', 'courteous and friendly' and 'hardworking and co-operative' (rural-mixed 2013). The majority of those terms were more instructional about how to feel rather than how to act. The girls' reactions to Mark were polite considering his controlling behaviour, although numerous other factors outside the space could not be accounted for, such as family values and manners.

Emotional management could be influenced by a diverse range of factors in school, social situations and at home. When group one, at the all-female school, was asked 'Where do you think we learn our emotions?' it evoked the following response:

Holly Our parents?

Olive Parents

Holly And the environment

Belle Our family

Holly People around you

Olive I think it's not learned, it's already there

Holly Yeah, but she was, born all happy and everything, or crying, and they tried to teach her that it was bad to do that

Olive Yeah, but she already had emotions (t25)

Belle's and Olive's first answers were 'family' and 'parents' respectively. Holly listed a range of different influences on emotion: parents, environment and people. Olive suggested that emotions were innate not learned. Holly explained that, yes, the princess was born with feelings, but was then taught about what was appropriate. So the students perceived that emotional management was learned from different influences in their surroundings, with a key aspect being interactions with other people, especially family members.

Students at the all-female school cooperated, and conflicts did not arise as they did in group one at the rural-mixed school. Group two at the rural-mixed school had differing opinions but cooperated. At the urban-mixed school, group one cooperated, while David and Jamal controlled the conversation in group two. Given the diverse range of student backgrounds, between groups and schools, and the different ways groups interacted, understanding how different families manage emotion could have important implications for facilitating cooperation between groups of people from a range of diverse backgrounds. In an educational setting, for example, it might help schools understand and accommodate the needs of students who are currently placed in pupil referral units, where young people are placed outside of the main stream education system due to a variety of reasons (teenage pregnancy, behavioural issues, physical and mental health issues) with the aim of reintroducing them back into main stream education.

Section 6.3 demonstrated significant support for Hochschild's concept of 'gift exchange', including what was socially appropriate to share and why, and what was appropriate to feel and express in different locations. This was seen in the conflict between Mark and the girls. Various strategies showed that Dawn, Millie and Rebecca read Mark's emotions through his

behaviour, and they managed their own emotions. The guidelines of the school seemed to have influenced behaviour by motivating the cooperative management of emotions. The students understood that they were taught how to manage emotions by others, such as parents. Section 6.4 will consider how emotional management occurred in different social contexts.

6.4 Habitus and emotion in different spaces

The position developed in Section 6.3 drew on Bourdieu's (1984: 170) concept of habitus: 'A structuring structure, which organises practices and the perception of practices'. Division of labour in the home, household objects, modes of consumption and parent-child relations are all examples of habitus. Young people are born into structures, and not structures of their own choosing (Marx 2006). Marx indicated that people had agency but they were constrained by the choices given to them (Holt 2015: 20). And they must learn to negotiate the emotional and behavioural dimensions of social situations. As discussed in Section 2.3.3 of the literature review, habitus is central to Bourdieu's theory that self-identity was formed via social interaction engaging with structure. Bourdieu attempted to establish a link between social structures and social practice. For example, if individuals absorbed the patterns of social structures, those structures would then inform their actions (Bourdieu 1990, Nash 1999), whether consciously or unconsciously.

In relation to *MacCoddram*, Heidi, Felicity, Mary and Paris talked about how they dealt with anger in family situations. Heidi and Mary discussed dealing with their emotions in different ways. 'Me and mum do have our moments arguing,' said Heidi. 'I don't argue with her, I just let her argue at me and I stares and then I get it all out in my room' (t16). Heidi mentioned

expressing herself differently in two spaces in the home: downstairs in the family living room she controlled her emotions, while upstairs in her bedroom she let 'it all out'.

To consider Heidi's example further, she stated that downstairs 'I just suck it up and stand there and listen' while upstairs in her room she expressed herself verbally and physically by jumping on the bed, turning up her music, screaming or punching the wall (t16). For Heidi, there was a clear division between what behaviour she communicated in different parts of the home. There was emotional management involving what feeling was expressed where (Hochschild 2012: 66-67). Heidi might have learned emotional management through social relationships within the family, such as appropriate social responses to parental figures in the home.

While being aware of controlling herself in front of her mother – 'I just let her rant at me' – Heidi felt the need to physically move and shout in her room. This physical release suggested that Heidi was physically and emotionally controlling herself in the living room. When Felicity asked Heidi, 'What do you do to take it out? Do you punch the wall or something?', Heidi and Mary discussed punching walls, which they had done before. Heidi said that she usually jumped on her bed, turned the music up or screamed into her pillow. Such actions might also be considered a way of resisting authority. Though Heidi withheld those actions in the main family space, she appeared to control what she did to release her emotions within the territory of her room. Figures of authority might not be able to see what she was doing; music might or might not have masked her screaming and jumping; and as loud music would be audible in most modern houses, Heidi's family allowed her to turn up her music (at least for a little while). How long she was able to turn up the music for was not clear.

Student households differed. Paris and Mary argued more verbally with their mothers. Mary said,

My mum says that we argue quite a bit because I was like her when she was young and we both put up a fight, but obviously she always wins [laughs] or she threatens stuff to me. I don't know, if I'm going to go out at the weekend she'll say, you can't go, or take my pocket money off me or something (t16).

Mary stated that when arguing with her mum, 'I'll have a go and then she'll have a go at me.' Mary's experience differed from Heidi's because Mary was able to have a dialogue with her mother. Mary's experience of family and habitus differed from Heidi's. When Mary shared with the group that she had 'punched a wall before,' it was not clear in what part of the home this might have taken place. Heidi did not mention that she was able to talk to her mother, except, 'if my mum's just yelling at me my dad comes along to stick up for me'. Heidi's father accordingly became a mediating or protective figure in the household.

Paris responded to her mother in a similar way to Mary. 'I can't ignore it,' she responded, 'I'm just, "Argh, shut up!"' Paris did not mention any resolution or dialogue with either of her parents, or in what parts of the home she expressed her anger. In response to what Heidi shared with the group about not replying to her mother, Paris reflected, 'It would probably be better for me to do what you do but I can't help myself.' By saying this, Paris seemed to be aware that she might not have been able to copy this emotional and behavioural strategy; however, Paris was acknowledging that an alternative emotional and behavioural strategy existed. Embodied expression, or transformation, of emotion appeared to be more significantly related to space for Heidi rather than for Paris or Mary. The way in which Heidi's and the other girls' emotional expression differed in the home was consistent with

Bourdieu's theory of the adaptability of habitus in relation to individuals' situations and experiences (1990: 66-67).

When these verbal and embodied exchanges were considered alongside Hochschild's framework of feeling rules, it could be seen that Heidi underwent a process of emotional work that was appropriate for her home environment. Heidi controlled her actions, and did not argue with her mum, but felt that she had to let the resulting anger or frustration out in her room. There were a number of variables which might account for this way of managing emotion, including respect for her mother and established patterns of behaviour in the home. Mary's situation was different: she verbally expressed herself in front of her mother. There was a suggestion that Mary's mother talked about their disagreements through Mary's use of 'mum says'. Paris's situation was unclear because she did not elaborate. The girls' different social family situations appeared to affect their habitus and emotional exchanges.

Parents and siblings featured the most in all group conversations (See Figure 7.1, Chapter 7). Parents were mentioned 145 times, followed by celebrities (110) and siblings (74). The figure for celebrities was misleading because group one in the all-female school, in week four, were listing celebrities in what Mary called 'a girly conversation' (t19). Teachers were mentioned 31 times. The frequency of parents and siblings as the most named relationships indicated the significance of parents and siblings in the formation of habitus.

There were a variety of places from which the students may have learned what was appropriate according to social structures, including education. This was further illustrated by comparing the actions of the girls in different situations. In week two, as the group discussed Q5, Heidi mentioned acting differently with people her own age.

[...] whenever my mum tells me off I just stay there and not answer back but when it's other people who are my age or something I do have to fight back [...]

Me and my cousin argue all the time. It's almost like she tries to give me a life lesson on what I should and shouldn't do, like she did, and at the end of the day, I said, my life's different to yours. I'll try things that I want to try (t17).

Hochschild's concept of feeling rules guides emotional work by creating 'entitlement or obligation that governs emotional exchanges' (2012: 56). Feeling rules have gendered aspects which is clear in Hochschild's (2012: 127) example where a female flight attendant is instructed to smile by a male passenger, as well as subordinated workers that are in a paid service relationship. There is evidence that in other contexts women are allowed to express emotion more while masculinity constrains. Connell (2005: xvi, 165) argued that there was no single concept of masculinity although there are 'specific settings where masculinities organizes around technical knowledge predominate', such as psychology. In one example Connell highlights one male's experience of forming a working relationship with his sister.

Greg has to deal with women's authority in the workplace. He worked for his sister's firm and found that she insisted on remaining the boss. She would not follow his 'suggestions' about the direction the business should go (Connell 2005: 178).

Greg said,

I completely seized up, all my muscles just locked, and I was crazy. I was outside her [his girlfriend's] house [...] My hands were stuck to the steering wheel for an

hour. I couldn't let go. And she [the girlfriend] was just saying 'Come on, let it out.' (Connell 2005: 178-179).

Many things were condensed into Greg's example: 'the inscription of masculinity in the body, the gender division of labour in emotion, the displacement of conflict' which Connell (2005: 179) connected to Greg's car: 'There is a symbolic link between cars and youthful masculinity, and his sister had rejected his attempted steering of her business'. Greg appeared physically constrained by his emotions when his sister did not take a subordinate role as a woman, or as a business colleague.

The students also discussed the management and physical embodiment of emotion. Perhaps Heidi acted differently around people her own age because the rules and entitlements of the social situation were different. I asked Heidi, who had been talking about arguing with her cousin a moment before, 'Have you ever said anything to someone that you didn't mean to say and it upset them?' Mary, not Heidi, responded, 'I've upset them but I've meant to say it [laughs]. Cause they've really got on my nerves and I don't like them. It makes me sound really horrible but I'm not, I'm not a horrible person'. I added, 'If it was someone who was close to you what would you do?' Heidi said, 'If I yelled at someone who was close to me I think I'd probably be really annoyed with myself' (t17). Again, Mary differed. She felt that she did not owe anything to someone who annoyed her. Heidi reflected that she would feel bad if she hurt someone she was close to. She felt that she owed her mother, possibly understanding that her mother shouted because she cared, whereas her cousin's advice, although potentially being given for the same reasons, was taken as interference because they were less close. Heidi protested in her room when her mother was involved, but in person against her cousin.

Examples of social exchange with parents, cousins and friends, had different levels of potential consequences. Different consequences would occur if Mary shouted at her mother compared to shouting at her friend. For instance, Mary stated that she would lose privileges like the freedom to go out, or pocket money, if she argued with her mum. Arguing with a sibling had a lower associated social and disciplinary cost. Paris, for example, said, 'Me and my sister have a fight and then five minutes later we're like, yeah, do you want to do my hair?' (t16).

Different embodied responses, demonstrated by the girls in relation to parental figures, were indicative of Hochschild's processes of emotional management during social exchange. Hochschild proposed that emotional management was central to social interaction because social interactions required negotiating boundaries between one's own feelings and others' (Hochschild 2012: 56). So far, the students had discussed parents, cousins or siblings. They also mentioned situations involving non-response and strangers.

When a person chooses not to respond to a situation, and manages their behaviour through convincing themselves to play another role, this is 'deep acting', according to Hochschild (2012: 37-40). Heidi mentioned this in the context of jealousy:

To be honest, all the people that I've felt jealous for I've just tried to keep my chin up, cause at the end of the day I've always thought that people who try and make you jealous karma will come back to them [...] I just think that everybody has a right to be themselves.

Heidi provided herself with an internal narrative, which allowed her to dismiss her jealousy by framing others' attempts to make her jealous as controlling. By transforming her

emotional state, Heidi refused to act like others, based on her experience. Inaction also existed on a 'surface' level (Hochschild 2012: 37-40), for example when students chose not to answer a focus group question. For instance, responding to Q5, Millie said, 'I can relate to the dad because I can empathise with the dad.' Mark stated, 'That doesn't relate to your life.' Millie responded, 'Oh, bit personal' and chose not to answer the question (t11).

In another situation, involving strangers, Heidi put herself at risk by defending her friends against a group of travellers. The group were discussing stealing in response to *Frog King*. Heidi described a conflict with a group of travellers at a fair when she was with a couple of friends.

I went to the fair [...] I was about thirteen at the time, and they just started squaring up to me and like saying that we're dogs and everything [...] Trying to cause a fight because I basically told them to [gestures] [...] I didn't even realise that they were gypsies, and then they brought this girl over and she just started saying, 'Who do you think you are?' At the end of the day I'm not just going to stand there and let some lads call me and my friends dogs. So she was like, 'Do you want to bring this?' and it got out of hand. And I got really really worried, I didn't know what was going to happen. And then they started telling me to get on my knees and get all sorry (t18).

Heidi found the travellers' reaction unexpected, perhaps because she was responding to what they said in the context of the fair, a leisure space. I asked how it started. Heidi said, 'There were, probably four or five lads, ten, eleven years old, started whistling at us and calling us dogs and stuff.' The situation was resolved when Heidi's friend picked up her phone to call someone. It was unclear whether they called a parent or the police. The

woman who had been arguing with them calmed down. Heidi spoke of her parents' reaction: 'My mum and dad said, "You were brave." I was like, "Not really." They said, "Yeah, if they said that they were more than capable of taking a swing at you, then yeah."' Heidi admitted she was 'worried' rather than brave. She responded to an insult which escalated into a potentially threatening situation, yet appeared to have remained calm and been praised by her parents for her bravery. Heidi realised her gesture towards the group of boys added to the aggression of the travellers; however, she believed she was right not to let the group call her and her friends names in the context of the fair.

To summarise Section 6.4, emotional management in relation to distinct spaces in the home was linked to Bourdieu's concept of habitus. The students managed their emotions differently in response to parental figures and spaces in the home. For some students, this involved an open, or "public" exchange, while others suppressed and let their emotions out "privately". Students expressed their agency by dealing with emotions in similar ways, including the embodiment of emotion to conform or transgress through reasoning, gesturing, jumping, screaming, punching and even inaction. Feeling rules governed what was appropriate in different situations, involving different people and space, leading to emotional management occurring in different social interactions. What the students felt to be appropriate connected to Bourdieu's concept of habitus, where emotional expression was influenced by social structures such as school and family. Varying disciplinary and social costs were involved during incidents of emotional expression between different parents, siblings, friends and strangers. These costs motivated emotional management. For example, deep and surface acting was performed to not respond to situations, to transform jealousy and to actively disagree with others' perspectives.

6.5 Conclusion

Chapter 6 addressed the main thesis question by investigating what similar and contrasting interpretations of emotion, in the storytelling space and young people's broader experiences, indicated about the management of emotion. The aim of this chapter was to explore the similar and contradictory interpretations of emotion which arose in the storytelling space, and what these indicated concerning the management of emotion.

Section 6.2 approached sub-question five, which is about the "norms" and values surrounding emotions in young people's lives. Overall, emotions arose in the storytelling space in the following ways: storyteller performance, the performer–audience relationship, and students observing contrasting perspectives in the stories and comparing personal emotional experience in group discussion. All the students, across all three schools, utilised their own emotions and experience to understand how characters managed emotion and made decisions. Examples of emotional management in the students' own lives required motivation, effort and different strategies in relationships with others. Students expressed agency by dealing with emotions in different ways. Action and inaction among group members suggested differences in feeling and framing rules. Jamal was willing to interpret emotions but unwilling to engage emotionally, suggesting that agency played a role in his emotional connection to a storytelling performance. The frustration young people felt in relation to parental figures that made bad choices denoted the powerlessness of young people in relation to authority figures. Disrespect enacted by story characters entailed not taking young people's needs into account in the decision-making process.

An extensive literature search found no evidence of Arlie Hochschild's concepts associated with oral storytelling. In Section 6.3, 'how society uses feeling' (Hochschild 2012: 7) was

linked with how young people had been educated to use feeling to interpret story. There appeared to be an educational influence on the interpretation of emotion, which differed within groups, in terms of expressing different behavioural strategies related to emotion that the students brought with them into the space. This might be related to their different social backgrounds but how remained unclear. Education, however, was a significant factor influencing the students' interpretation of storytelling through the intellectualisation of emotion. A Shakespeare assignment was set at the all-female school to critically engage with emotion in *Romeo and Juliet*. The way the curriculum shaped the students' interpretations of emotions in the storytelling space indicated that the students' interpretations might be influenced by other structures in society, such as education. The management of emotion, through suppression or conformity, while necessary in order to negotiate social interactions, could also have detrimental effects on young people's sense of well-being, as it did for the flight attendants in Hochschild's study, through loss of feeling, when emotions were suppressed.

Section 6.3 demonstrated significant support for Hochschild's concept of 'gift exchange', including what was socially appropriate to share and why, and what was appropriate to feel and express in different locations. The students used a broad range of emotional and behavioural strategies in their interactions with one another. The guidelines of the school seemed to have influenced behaviour by motivating the cooperative management of emotions. Knowledge about the way young people might interact, and understand and manage emotion in similar and different ways, and in similar and different spaces, might aid schools to accommodate the needs of students who are currently placed in pupil referral units.

The conflict between Mark and the group significantly supported Hochschild's concepts of gift exchange, and framing and feeling rules. Dawn, Mark, Millie and Rebecca displayed a range of different feeling and framing rules which led to various displays of gift exchange. Applying Hochschild's concept of gift exchange to emotions in the storytelling space suggested the importance of emotions in facilitating cooperation between groups of people from a range of different genders, and a range of class and ethnic backgrounds.

Section 6.4 connected Bourdieu's concept of habitus to emotional management. Different social spaces and relationships determined behaviour and emotional expression in different ways. For example, Heidi defended her friends from travellers at the fair but did not argue with her mother in the home. This indicated how habitus might arise, at least sometimes, through different social situations, including physical spaces. Different relationships and rules in those spaces connected to feeling and framing rules which governed what was appropriate to share, and why, in different social interactions.

Chapter 6 demonstrated the links between behaviour and emotion by examining how interpretations of emotions in the storytelling space arose in similar and contradictory ways. Chapter 7 will bring gender, class and conformance structures of the previous three analysis chapters together by considering the storytelling space as a complex social space and a narrative that arises from, and connects to, wider narratives of broader social practices and structures.

Chapter 7 Interactions in the storytelling space in the context of broader social narratives and practices

7.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates storytelling as a complex social event connected to individuals' experiences, including other narrative forms and broader social narratives and practices such as gender expression, class, and the morals and values that are associated with the young people's experiences of gender, ethnicity and class. The first three analysis chapters focused on exploring the spaces that oral storytelling created in three secondary schools in Warwickshire. Chapter 6 connected Hochschild's theory of gift exchange to storytelling through the students' discussions and expressions of emotion and behaviour. That emotional expression occurred in different contexts was linked to Bourdieu's concept of habitus. Chapters 4 to 6 developed the main research question of the thesis by exploring how young people related storytelling to behaviour, emotion, social practices and structures that arose during group conversation. Chapter 7 continues to address this question, exploring a wider approach such as how story was related to broader social contexts such as morals and values.

What storytelling reveals about the connections between stories, identity and social structure is an important step towards addressing the role of storytelling in social spaces, particularly in education. Chapter 7, Section 7.2 summarises the storytelling space as a complex social event at which group discussion was connected to broader social processes. Section 7.2 addresses sub-question three by investigating the conformity or transgression of masculine and feminine "norms" through conversations involving gender expression. Section

7.3 continues with issues of conformity and transgression to address sub-question two, for instance whether young people's social narrative processes, focusing on their interpretation of storytelling, were shaped by wider discriminatory or class narratives to explore how story is a part of social practices and structures, such as the connection of legal structures to morals and values. Some preliminary conclusions are drawn at the end of the chapter before advancing to the concluding chapter of the thesis, where some implications of the research will be connected to the interdisciplinary storytelling literature and educational policy.

7.2 'My step-mum isn't evil!': rejecting the "norms" of the storytelling space

Chapter 4, Section 4.3 illustrated how young people connected storytelling to different narrative forms such as TV or video games. Chapter 5 formed connections between storytelling and the lessons that existed in other stories for example transforming anger into patience in *Karate Kid* (see Section 5.3.3.1), Millie's sock or Dawn's patience. Such examples suggested that transformative narratives informed young people's behaviour and emotional management (see Chapter 6, Section 6.3).

Issues surrounding femininity and masculinity arose in the students' discussions of storytelling. Stereotypical gender images appeared in conversations across the three schools. Connections were formed between the stories and broader narratives of gender expression in empowering and constraining ways. Butler (1988: 527) described gender expression as performative and constrained by "norms" of identity which are constructed and authorised by the collective. Butler proposed that gender is then a fictionalised narrative that creates itself, performing on the subjects rather than the other way around (Butler 1999: 179). Gender is enacted within limitations determined by social conditions, which creates, sustains and transforms gender narratives over time, similar to the way in which

social conditions gradually influence habitus (Bourdieu 1990: 54-55). This section will compare the students' perceptions of gender expression across the three schools, beginning with stereotypes.

7.2.1 'It's a bit old fashioned': stereotypes

Some conversations in the storytelling space suggested that the students recognised "norms" in the form of stereotypes: a phenomenon arising from social relationships and a mental shortcut 'to form quick judgements about other people based upon their group membership' (Khan *et al.* 2012: 3). Section 7.2.1 considers whether gender "norms" were empowering or constraining. Take, for example, the image of the evil stepmother in fairy tales who rid herself of her stepchild(ren) or subjected them to servitude. Four of the six groups recognised the stereotype of the evil stepmother after hearing *MacCodram* and named fairy tales in which stepmothers were present: *Snow White* (t6, t16), *Hansel and Gretel* (t16) and *Cinderella* (t6, t21, t26). Both of the groups in the all-girls (t16, t21) and rural-mixed (t6, t11) schools recognised the evil stepmother stereotype, but only one group in the urban-mixed (t21) school.

In group one in the all-female school, Mary linked the 'witch who gives her the apple' in *Snow White* to stepmothers. Heidi reflected, 'Whenever they've got a step-mum they're always seen to be evil.' If it were not for Heidi's tone, her words could be read as acceptance of a common theme. But Heidi's tone expressed dislike that stories, such as *Snow White* or *MacCodram*, portrayed stepmothers as evil. Felicity also said, 'My step-mum isn't evil!' (t16) indicating that she rejected this supposition.

When I asked, 'Did you relate to one of the characters more than the others?' Mary responded, 'I guess you could say the children because we're children. If your mum left you'd be pretty upset. I kind of know how they would have felt' (t16). As discussed in Chapter 4, family was important in the students' interpretation of story. Themes of abandonment or cruelty towards children arose. The groups saw such actions as selfish choices which ignored the needs of the family. The actions of stepmother figures were associated with jealousy and a lack of emotional control. The queen's jealousy led her to poison Snow White with an apple; and the stepmother's jealousy of the king's children in *MacCodram* led to the creation of a potion, which turned them into seals. Felicity concluded that the stepmother's jealousy of the children was a result 'of their prettiness'. Jealousy then informed her decision to transform the children into seals to get rid of them (t16). The stepmother's emotions took control, indicating a lack of emotional management.

In the rural-mixed school, Mark's opinion differed from Felicity's. He said,

She's been given this lovely life; she can wear nice clothes, she can have money, she can have everything. All she has got to do is look after the kids, you might think she would take them as her own (t11).

Mark's words suggested that, like the fisherman who stole the seal skin, the stepmother had a choice to accept or reject the king's children. In Mark's words 'she can have everything [...] all she has got to do is look after the kids.' Thus, the stepmother was complex; she was not intrinsically evil and unable to make good choices.

In the urban-mixed school, Maru connected *MacCodram* to *Cinderella*.

Maru It reminds me of *Cinderella*

RES In what way does it remind you of *Cinderella*?

Maru Cause she had to go back before twelve and then she [fisherman's wife] went in a hurry as well

RES Yeah, they both had spells on them

Maru Yeah, and a fairy godmother

Amir And a stepmother (t21)

Maru related the sea witch in *MacCodram* to the fairy godmother in *Cinderella* because of her use of magic. Amir mentioned the stepmother figure in a previous comment, 'It was the king's fault. He was so dumb and stupid to get a witch to look after the kids, after the mum died to look after them. He got a witch.' This was the only discussion of stepmothers in this group. Amir linked the stepmother to a witch who would harm the king's children, which showed an understanding of story stereotypes that in the urban-mixed school were recognised but not questioned like the students at the other schools.

Students in the all-female and rural-mixed schools questioned the stepmother stereotype but those in the urban-mixed school did not. With such negative images of step-parents portrayed in fairy tales and film, the "evil" stepmother stereotype might continue to make an impression on young people. This questioning of the stepmother stereotype recognises, as Zipes argued, that fairy tales might influence structure. I disputed the influence of story in Chapter 5. Story can have some influence alongside others, but the contradictory perspectives that emerged throughout my work indicates that there is plenty of space for changing, challenging and reinterpreting story by individuals and groups of individuals.

Four groups recognised the stepmother stereotype. However, the image was rejected as a social “norm” at the all-female school, which was related to personal experience: three students had stepdads (Felicity, Holly, Mary) and one a stepmother (Felicity). The rural-mixed school students did not have personal experience of step-parents; however, the stepmother was seen as a complex woman with choices, not as intrinsically evil. The groups questioned the stepmother stereotype because they were equipped with a strong narrative education and belonged to a creative writing club.

One student, Bo, at the urban-mixed school, had a stepmother. She was not present in week one to question Dylan and Khan’s interpretation of the stepmother figure in *MacCodram*. Dylan and Khan said, ‘witches are weird’, which Khan related to school, saying, ‘My teacher was a witch’ (t31). The other group at the urban-mixed school linked the stories to *Cinderella* via her stepmother. Therefore, both groups did not explore or question the stepmother roles in stories. Instead, *MacCodram* reinforced their previous image of evil stepmother figures in stories as ill-intentioned witches. So in this instance, education or personal experience empowered students to question and reject stereotypes, while lack of personal experience and a different educational background constrained interpretation.

A rejection of stereotypes could indicate the agency to resist social “norms”. A stereotype might be resisted because its very character lacks the complexity and ambiguity of real situations and people. Transgression was created as young people measured stereotypes against personal experience. Hypothetically, if experience was in conflict with a stereotype, this might lead to awareness and possibly resistance. Following the same logic, if a stereotype was consistent with experience, this might reinforce the dominant belief that stepmothers are “evil” or that princesses are “good”. For example, Lucy responded to the

image of the perfect princess, 'a classic fairy tale princess, beautiful, good singing voice' (t9), by saying 'It's a bit old-fashioned.' The image was ineffective for Lucy. She said, 'She's like, I meet someone and, oh let's get married' (t6). Lucy appeared to find the image offensive because it conflicted with her identity as a literate, cricket-playing, contemporary young woman (introductory interviews 2013).

Fairy tales contain and may reinforce stereotypes, and also shift in response to audience demand. Disney's *Frozen* is an example of this. When Peter mentioned 'love at first sight', I asked, 'Do you think that's relevant today?' Peter said, 'Nope.' Amy said, 'Not really' and Lucy said, 'It's a bit dated' (t6). Disney's *Frozen* attempted to make fun of love at first sight in response to changing social tastes. In the song *Love is an Open Door*, Hans met Anna and proposed at the end of the song (Bell and Fontana 2013). Anna's sister responded, 'You can't marry a man you just met' (Buck and Lee 2013). Disney subverted its own love-at-first-sight formula in response to criticisms regarding stereotypical representations of ethnicity, gender and heterosexual relationships (Byrne and McQuillan 1999: 11-13, 84, 143, Harrington 2015: 12, Giroux and Pollock 2010: 104, 109, 205), criticisms which overall Disney has done little to address within the confines of the company's ideology (Schickel 1986: 53, 72).

Other stereotypes discussed in the storytelling space included: male and female roles in the household (t6, t7, t11, t17, t28, t31, t32, t34), the portrayal of princes and princesses (t14, t9, t10), wealthy families living in castles (t13, t14, t15), happy endings (t13) and a lack of ethnic diversity (t13). For example, Mark said of *Frog King*, 'It's only got one culture in it. You've got one culture, it's medieval, white, one country' (t13). Stereotypes could be compared to social "norms", such as masculine and feminine notions of gender expression. The students had varied and rich experiences of fairy tales and other narrative forms (see

Chapter 4, Section 4.2). By observing the students' conversations over five weeks, it was clear to see that the storytelling space provided a place where the potential existed to discuss, accept or reject stereotypes, which ranged from conservative to transgressive within the stories.

Section 7.2.1 suggested that young people used their agency to reject stereotypes, depending on their personal experience and education. Now I will explore discussions of femininity and masculinity to question whether students responded to gender expression in a similar way to how they responded to stereotypes.

7.2.2 'You've always got a disguise on': concepts of femininity

In the all-female school, "norms" surrounding feminine expression were stereotypically about appearances and how women were perceived. In Chapter 6, Section 6.2, I mentioned how emotional control is often gendered, for example women have a complex relationship with anger expression although some feminist interpretations saw associations between anger and agency. I observed that constraints and empowerments on one another's emotions and behaviour occurred between male and female students in the storytelling space. Make-up was described as a surface act, a mask. Heidi said, 'When you've got your make-up off you tend to look at yourself in the mirror, and you don't usually see the same person that you do with make-up. When you've always got a disguise on.' She reflected, 'You're not the same person than you are with nothing on' (t16). Heidi wore a bit of make-up, such as eye-liner, but emphasised that she did not 'plaster my face in it'. Felicity wore make-up sometimes, while Mary said that she occasionally wore mascara (t16). The most obvious make-up wearer was Paris, who had thick mascaraed lashes and smoky eyes at every storytelling session. Paris regarded her make-up as essential to her identity, as her

eyes looked ‘horrible’ with ‘no make-up on’ (t16). Paris and Heidi’s associations with make-up as a ‘disguise’ to enhance their faces indicated that they viewed make-up as part of their everyday identity or self-expression.

The students at the all-female school criticised women’s identities by referencing appearances. Mary said,

I turned on the telly and *Single Date* was on, and there was this girl, and she had the biggest eyebrows you’d ever seen in your entire life. I took a picture. I’m going to show you now [fetched her mobile]. Like slugs on her face (t16).

Mary’s critique was about painted eyebrows. She utilised technology to confirm the truth of her statement (see Figure 7.1). The group continued to discuss ‘weird eyebrows’ on *The Only Way is Essex*, a scripted reality drama. The group referred to the ‘Scouse brow’ (White 2012). Mary said, ‘Why would you shave your eyebrows off just to draw them back on again?’ Felicity commented, ‘They think it looks good but it’s not. It looks really ugly’ (t16).



Figure 7.1 example of a ‘Scouse brow’ (Allison 2012)

I asked the group, ‘Why would they think it looks good?’ Heidi said, ‘People who end up being like that, do get attention from the lads, and think they’re beautiful and then they

keep on doing it all the time.’ In Heidi’s example, attention received from men was a contributing factor to gender expression. Personal preferences were mentioned concerning make-up, hair colour, fashion and piercings (t16, t17, t19, t20). The above conversation indicated that the girls did not feel pressure to conform completely to media portrayals of female “beauty”. However, they noted that when females received attention it reinforced conformity to certain portrayals of beauty. As women, the girls were aware that external appearances were judged by other men and women. It appeared that the entertainment industry and male–female interactions formed constraints on female appearance, while personal preference and style empowered the girls’ identity through self-expression.

I will now compare the gender-mixed schools. The rural-mixed school students criticised female behaviour regarding appearances, although appearances were mentioned in relation to both males and females. For example, Ryan linked *Frog King* to *Beauty and the Beast*: ‘There’s a beautiful princess and then, a really ugly frog’ (t8). And discussing why the farmer, in *Rooted Lover*, wanted to be the most beautiful flower, Amy said, ‘You have to be the most beautiful to be liked’ (t9).

The students were aware of judgements based on appearances; however, they did not discuss appearances in detail like students at the all-female school, and there was no mention of make-up. Instead, fashion and wealth were connected to female appearances. Ryan said a person could fall in love immediately if someone looked ‘nice’ and ‘rich’. When Lucy questioned this, Ryan said, ‘They could look rich, if she wore posh clothes and stuff’ (t8). The group questioned why the frog should like the princess because of her character. During that conversation, Lucy compared the frog’s opinion of the princess to a graph.

If it was a graph then it would be like that [draws a smile-shaped line in the air].

If he sees her when she's, nice-looking, then he-slash-she doesn't keep her promises then it goes down, and then he marries her so obviously it goes up at the end (t8).

The frog prince's opinion of the princess changed according to her behaviour. This was related to stereotypes by Lucy, who said, 'If you're beautiful then you're good, and if you're ugly then you're bad, which is not necessarily true, stereotypical' (t6). Peter demonstrated a richer perspective of female behaviour, drawing on personal experience.

I've got two sisters who are twins, and you'd think they'd think the same but they think completely different. One likes scary movies for their age, not really scary, and roller coasters [...] The other one's scared of them and she, likes drawing. It's really weird. One of them hits me, and one of them shouts at me (t10).

Peter observed that even female twins differed. Thus, the rural-mixed school had a complex understanding of gender and character rather than supporting an unambiguous male-female divide.

Students at the urban-mixed school discussed fashion and physical features such as hair but these were not gendered conversations. Those conversations involved branded clothing such as band or Ninja Turtles T-shirts (t32), and how their hair differed in curliness and colour because of the students' diverse backgrounds (t35). For example, Bo said, 'Imagine Khan with dreadlocks.' Aisha told the group, 'My cousin's got proper dreadlocks' (t35). Discussing hair led to a discussion about family roots: Bo and Aisha's Jamaican connections,

Khan and Dylan's Asian backgrounds, and Aisha's mixed Irish, Indian and Jamaican heritage (t35).

The urban-mixed school students were the most demographically diverse (see Table 4.1).

There was a strong theme in group one at the urban-mixed school that people should not be judged 'by their looks' (Khan t34). Or, as Dylan summarised, 'Don't judge a book by its cover' (t34).

Bo Sometimes yeah, I think there's a lot of judgemental people, especially people that are our age as well. I think that people that are around our age, a couple years older, a couple years younger, are the most judgemental. In my opinion.

RES Can you give me an example why?

Dylan They call me a gnome, I'm not even small

Bo They call me Emo [origins from 'emotional hardcore', punk movement in Washington DC]

Khan Yeah, as in class, yeah

RES Why do they call you Emo?

Bo Cause of the music that I like and the way that I dress

Khan Roger

Bo Roger did that and I went mental. They're too harsh. I don't get what their problem is. They're not thinking about the bigger picture. They

only think of it as a joke when they do that, they joke about self-harming stuff like that. I don't find it funny. It's serious. Not to be a stick-in-the-mud or whatever, I don't like it

Khan So you don't like racism, fucking horrible to each other (t34)

Again, note that the conversation was not gendered, except where Dylan had received an insult about his height, and therefore his physical masculinity. From Bo's perspective, judgement was likely to occur among her peers. Khan mentioned racism in response to Bo's example about being judged by her personal style, which demonstrated that how others perceived them was an important issue to them. The urban-mixed school students therefore discussed racism and ethnicity more than gender expression.

In Sections 2.3.3, Chapter 2, and 3.3.3, Chapter 3, I noted that there was a lack of ethnicity in the European fairy tales selected for this study. *Moon Bear* was an exception. It was also the only tale that had been selected from outside of Europe. The story was told to Estés (1996: 346) in Illinois by a US soldier with Japanese ancestry. The other European tales lacked ethnic diversity which I associated with lower migration and immigration levels at the time the stories were written and/or told. As different ethnicities lacked a voice in the fairy tales of the study (see Table 3.2, Chapter 3) I wondered what the consequences of this lack of ethnicity would be for student conversation. The following topics arose in conversation: hair type and colour, skin colour, language, bullying and racism.

There were differences between the three schools. Neither of the groups at the urban-mixed school gave an example of racism. Name-calling was experienced by students for a variety of

reasons: Dylan said, 'They call me a gnome, I'm not even small' (t34), Bo said, 'They call me Emo [...] cause of the music that I like and the way that I dress (t34).

At the all-female school Mary said that she had experienced 'Racist comments sometimes' because 'I live in a horrible area'. When I asked, 'What kind of things?' the example Mary gave was connected to her skin colour. Mary said, 'I'm a Paki or [pause] I pretend I'm Italian'. She attributed the cause of the racial abuse being due to where she lived and her skin colour (t16).

At the rural-mixed students, who were all British-White, experienced labelling, or bullying, about their intelligence. For example, in response to Q10 Millie drew connections between the red-haired farmer in *Rooted Lover*, a friend, and stereotypical labelling.

Millie My friend, she's got ginger hair and I know quite a few people find it quite offensive when people say, 'You're a ginge', and stuff. She gets a bit upset. People use that as a label and so she was getting upset because somebody said that she was ginger and that made me think of the kid in there that had ginger hair, well it was red

Res Do you think people use labels to describe you?

Millie They use labels a lot, yeah

Mark If you call somebody a bully they will be a bully

Millie I you go on the computer people can be, 'Oh you're nerdy', and stuff I think in modern culture it's used way too much. It's like a cliché, putting you into groups, for example there's no stereotypical person who

always wears glasses who is always on the computer and brilliant at maths. Yeah they're probably brilliant at maths but they could be brilliant at running as well (t15)

It was Mark who used the word bully. The urban-mixed school, the most ethnically diverse talked about bullying in a general way not related to ethnicity. The rural-mixed school, the least ethnically diverse, mentioned stereotypical labelling based on appearances, such as hair colour, or academic ability. Only Mary at the all-female school, with an ethnic diversity between the other two schools, mentioned a specific experience of racism which she did not describe in depth.

Only one student in the rural-mixed school noted the absence of ethnicity in the fairy tales. Mark said, 'What I didn't like is, being stereotypical it's only got one culture in it. You've got one culture it's medieval, white, one country' (t13). Mark's comment about a lack of 'culture' was about *Frog King*, in week three, which I propose was a reaction to hearing *MacCodram* based in Scotland, and *Moon Bear*, based in Japan in the previous two weeks. In this context a lack of cultural context was apparent to Mark in *Frog King*.

That this thought only arose once in one group in one school, and the least ethnically diverse school, demonstrates that who lacks a voice in fairy tales can be overlooked by students in a rural-mixed school which on all other levels enhanced those two groups abilities to interpret the stories, and schools with students from a mix of ethnic backgrounds. Perhaps this was because open questions were predominantly used in the focus group questions (see Appendix 1). Open questions allowed the groups to express what they thought in their own words, around topics that interested them but ethnicity was not discussed directly during group discussion. Why was ethnicity not more of a central topic of conversation? There are

a number of possibilities. One is that their knowledge of ethnicity is limited, which might have been the case at the all British-White school but not the other two which had students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds (See Tables 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3). Another reason that more conversation about ethnicity did not occur might be because the students did not make links between storytelling and their ethnicities or did not think that their experience of ethnicity was relevant to the interpretation of storytelling. As the stories lacked ethnicity, as described in Chapter 3, Section 3.3.3, this might have constrained the young people's agency to discuss ethnicity which might have arisen more had the stories been more multicultural. Thus when they read focus group question five, 'Can you relate the plot, characters, images or places to your life in any way?' the lack of ethnic diversity in the stories might have subconsciously informed their thoughts during group discussion of the stories.

However, the students made some links between the stories and ethnicity, indicating that ethnicity has a role to play in the interpretation of story and its connections to broader social contexts, such as education. For instance, when one group at the urban-mixed school discussed different hair types which led to a conversation about their mixed cultural backgrounds (t35). So a lack of ethnic discussion indicated that the young people may have not thought that ethnicity was relevant to discuss. I propose that lack of ethnic content in the young people's discussions connects to a larger debate about the way in which education empowers some voices and constrains others (Robinson and Taylor 2013: 32, Sargeant and Gillett-Swan 2015: 177). Pedagogical education stresses the importance of ensuring that teaching practices empower learners to bring their own experiences into the classroom. I mentioned Freire in the literature review (see Section 2.2.3). Freire and Macedo (1995: 379) stated that educational practices needed to 'engage with dialogue', the dialogue

of others because it was an 'indispensable component of the process of both learning and knowing' (see also Boud and Miller 1997: 7, Smith and Smith 2008: 14, Brühlmeier 2010: 19).

There was a multi-layered exchange of ideas between the girls' make-up use and wider social influences such as the entertainment industry that did not occur at the gender-mixed schools. Certain standards of beauty may be socially sanctioned, but the students' conversation indicated that these standards were not always accepted or internalised. For instance, while collectively agreeing about their dislike of painted eyebrows, there was a varying range of make-up usage between individuals at the all-female school. Students' individualism might be the result of exposure to critical narratives regarding appearances, for example the naming of the 'Scouse brow' by the media (Figure 7.1); personal experiences, for example of racism; and the different educational backgrounds of the three schools.

To summarise, Section 7.2.2 discussed how femininity was discussed differently across the three schools. The focus of students in the all-female school was on appearance, the rural-mixed school students critiqued female characters' behaviour, and the urban-mixed school students were more interested in discussing how they were judged by their appearances associated with their ethnicities. The three schools' different conversations demonstrated that young people cannot escape criticisms on many levels. Lack of general life experience and a different educational background constrained the ability to reject female stereotypes, while education or personal experience empowered students to question and create more complex perspectives. Section 7.2.3. will compare concepts of masculinity in the three schools.

7.2.3 'Always want things to go their way': concepts of masculinity

Masculinity was previously discussed in Chapter 6, see Section 6.3, in relation to the conflict that occurred between Mark, Dawn, Millie and Rebecca. There were more specific discussions around masculinity in the focus groups. Peter said 'looks can be deceiving' because female characters in the performed stories were beautiful. However, Ryan said that beautiful stepmothers 'do bad things'. Peter joked, 'It's teaching men that women can fool you with their beauty' (t6). Therefore, fairy tales cautioned the boys to be wary of female beauty, and power, for the stepmothers were witches. As illustrated in Section 7.2.2, a disparity emerged between male and female roles in the household, indicating power differences. While conversations surrounding feminine identity focused on appearances, discussions of masculine identity depicted uneven power dynamics between men and women, and the complex nature of masculinity. In the literature review (see Section 3.3.3), I briefly touched on the differences between male and female roles in the texts that were provided to the storytellers. Women's powers were restricted while men typically broke the rules and were free of constraints.

In group one, at the all-girls school, Mary said that the men in *MacCodram* and *Moon Bear*, 'Always want things to go their way' (t17). The fisherman stole the selkie's pelt and asked her to marry him and the soldier rejected his wife's attentions when he returned from war. This prompted the group to question the power dynamics of male-female relationships. Felicity recognised that, 'Some men are different in their own way cause of the different personalities' and 'Some men are actually really good. The women are more lazier than the man.' Heidi agreed,

You do get proper men but then you get guys who try and act like men when they're really not. They try and act like they're better than everybody else [...] they make you feel like they care but they actually underneath it makes them seem like they are players and they go off and fool around with somebody else (t17).

Heidi captured two stereotypical male images: the 'player' versus 'proper men'. She viewed her dad as a strong role model, because when I asked the group, 'What would a real man be?' Heidi said, 'Kind, do anything for you, ask if you're alright, care. He wouldn't get bored of everything that you say. He would really love you, listen'; she said that this was a fairly accurate description of 'my dad'.

There was also a gender divide in terms of appearance. When discussing women, the conversation evolved around criticising appearances, in a way that it did not when the students talked about men. Men were described by their attractive qualities. For example:

Heidi [...] I like guys with piercings and long hair, other people don't

Mary I don't like guys with long hair

Heidi Exactly, everybody's different. I like guys with long hair and piercings, my mum loves guys that are really really muscly and such a man.

Paris Yeah, muscly and good-looking (t19)

In contrast, women were described as trying to please others. For example, Heidi said, 'They [women] end up having stuff done to them like plastic surgery for no reason, just to try and

attract other people but it really isn't, it's not right.' Paris commented, 'Accept yourself for who you are.' 'Exactly,' Heidi agreed (t17).

At the all-female school, Mary touched on the complexity of femininity in a similar way to the players–proper man dynamic. Mary said, 'You've got different women as well, some are complete slags really. It's true though, some are nice and down to earth and others are in the clouds.' Mary said, 'Some women can be really harsh.' Some of the words used to describe men were real, players, fool, kind and care; some that were used to describe women were slags, nice, down to earth, in the clouds and harsh. Masculine and feminine roles were portrayed in contrasting ways.

At the rural-mixed school, the students discussed social changes. For example, Peter said, 'Women go into the army now, and some men stay at home' (t7). Amy, Lucy, Peter and Ryan discussed the king's behaviour in *MacCodram*.

Lucy He neglected his children and married a witch

Peter What a horrible man

Amy The other man wasn't too nice either

Ryan Cause he lied to the seal woman (t6)

The students discussed male behaviour like they discussed women's behaviour (see Section 7.2.2).

The urban-mixed school students also referred to men's behaviour (t27). For example, Jamal said in response to Q4, 'If I was the man I wouldn't be, harsh to my wife' (t27). A power dynamic arose as Jamal resisted the ground rules laid down for the storytelling space (see

Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1). Whenever I was present, Jamal acted differently than when I was absent, Jamal used the bear's image to tease Amir (t27). The image of the bear was used by Jamal when Amir pushed back against the boys' authority. In response to Q4, Jamal said to Amir, 'If you were the bear? You are a bear.' He added, 'A grisly one, a brown bear.' Amir responded, 'That's just racist, that's just racist. I'm a darker shade of brown.' Here is an indication that ethnicity may be an issue for these young people. Jamal's intention might have been to call Amir a bear as an insult, because the bear was essentially a male symbol. Jamal referred to Amir as 'a man', making his association clear (t27). So Amir received gendered and ethnic insults about her outward appearance as a black woman. The students at the urban-mixed school came from multi-racial backgrounds (see Table 4.1, Chapter 4). Aisha for example listed the following influences in her family tree: Irish, British traveller, Indian and Jamaican (t35).

The students at the all-female school discussed the complexity of male narratives, those at the rural-mixed, social change and character behaviour, and those at the urban-mixed, character behaviour and associated symbols, such as the bear, in the story that included masculine traits (strength and aggression). Sometimes femininity and masculinity were transgressed, such as the recognition that evil step-parents were stereotypes, and that both men and women were judged by their appearances and behaviour but gender expression and identity were more complex. Femininity and masculinity were also conformed to such in aspects such as the division of household labour, judging women by their appearances more than men, and the way that men broke the rules, three aspects that were reinforced through the stories.

Sections 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 suggested that uneven power dynamics existed between males and females. There were interactions between constraining and empowering perspectives between different schools and within groups. Male characters in the stories took active, rule-breaking roles, while women pleased others. There was also discussion acknowledging female and male stereotypes and their complexity. My examples have shown that the students were also aware that social changes had altered the power dynamics between males and females to some extent. These things indicate that story might have some influence alongside others, but the contradictory perspectives that emerged throughout my work indicates that there is plenty of space for changing, challenging and reinterpreting story by individuals and groups of individuals.

7.2.4 'The bear was like the husband': text, performance and interpretation

I will now illustrate that the story, and the storyteller, reinforced gender divides. In the stories, the women, be they selkies or princesses, were judged for their ability to attract, or look after, a mate. In *MacCodram*, the fisherman stole the selkie's pelt to obtain a wife. In *Moon Bear*, the wife tended to her ill husband and went on a quest to heal him. In *Frog King*, the prince married the princess even though 'she wasn't a nice person' (Dawn, t13). In *She-bear*, the king wanted to marry his daughter, who was 'prettier' than his ex-wife. The princess escaped to cook and tend to a prince. Comparing *Romeo and Juliet* to *Rooted Lover* in week four, Paris said, 'He doesn't even know her, in both stories the man doesn't even know the woman. He just likes their appearance' (t19). In relation to *Toy Princess*, Amir said, 'They disowned their daughter just because she wasn't, polite' (t30). Meanwhile males ruled the kingdom, or worked for a living: there was a fisherman, a soldier, a farmer and a toy-maker.

In the text of *Moon Bear* that was provided to each storyteller, the wife was described as shy, subservient and scared of her husband's anger.

Smiling shyly she carried the food to the woods and knelt beside her war-weary husband and offered to him the food she had prepared. But he sprang to his feet and kicked the trays over so that the food spilled into the dirt. Leave me alone! He roared, and turned his back on her. He became so enraged she was frightened of him (Estés 1996: 346).

In Miriam's performance the woman was subservient to, and fed, the bear. Furthermore, she was scared of its aggression and physical strength and begged it to help her, mimicking the gender actions of the story.

She laid out food for it in a small bowl [...] She could see its dark fur, and its long claws, and its sharp teeth [...] The bear looked at her and it roared [pause] and she could see right down its throat it was so close. She didn't run away: she fell to her knees and pleaded with the bear (t7)

The students, in their interpretation, also observed the parallels between the bear's actions and those of the husband: the woman served her husband food, her husband was angry and she pleaded with them both. Lucy said, 'The bear was like the husband wasn't he.' Peter added, 'If the bear's like the husband the bear's nicer than the husband'. Group one at the rural-mixed school did not link the husband and the bear (t11).

Group one at the urban-mixed school missed this connection; for example, Dylan said, 'I thought the bear was about to kill her' (t32). Group Two made the connection through Jamal calling Amir 'a bear' (t27).

Neither group at the all-female school connected the husband to the bear. Holly said, 'A bear wouldn't talk to a human would he?' (t22). Mary, in the other group, said, 'It wasn't a mean bear (t17). The storytellers each received the same text, so I wondered if Alex's performance of the story had affected the girls' interpretation. Alex described the woman's interactions with the husband differently:

She got everything ready for him, she got the house redecorated. Got all the favourite foods. [...] He was in an awful, awful, mood. He didn't want to speak to her, he refused to go into the house because he'd become so used to sleeping on stone. [...] all he would do was, murmur or grumble every time she came near. [...] he would get up, scream at her, smash his food (t17).

The woman cooked and cleaned for her husband. Alex, however, explained the husband's actions more fully: his mood, and that he was used to sleeping on stone. He did not 'roar' as Miriam described, but 'screamed' like a human. So something of the husband's animalistic nature was lost in Alex's telling. The wife tried her best, then calmly went to the healer for help.

Alex also described the meeting with the bear with more distance than Miriam. Alex provided the bear's thoughts and it was surprised and responded aggressively to the woman's presence.

She saw this large, grizzly bear trudging away towards his cave. Obviously she was scared so she ran [...] She prepared a big bowl of food for the bear [...] His first reaction is one of aggression. He doesn't know what she is doing here, he doesn't know, a fight or flight scenario. She pleads with him.

The woman offered food; the bear's strength was not described, and Alex softened his aggression by again explaining that the bear acted the way he did because he did not know the woman. This technique appeared to stop the all-female school students from recognising the similarities between the bear and the woman's husband.

I have drawn connections between the story, the performance and the students' interpretation of the wife's social status in *Moon Bear*. Symbolic representation of the husband as a bear in the story was interpreted in that way by some of the groups at the urban and rural-mixed schools, but not at the all-female school due to the performance style.

Section 7.2.1 described how education or personal experience empowered students to question or reject stereotypes, while lack of personal experience and a different educational background constrained interpretation. Section 7.2.2 demonstrated that students conformed to, or resisted, portrayals of gender in fairy tales which breached their preferences. Section 7.2.3 considered that although stereotypical gender images arose in response to the fairy tales, further probing revealed complex perspectives of femininity and masculinity. Section 7.2.4 illustrated that the students understood that there were uneven power dynamics between men and women in the fairy tales, and in their lives.

Section 7.3 will explore young people's social narrative processes by focusing on whether their interpretations of storytelling were shaped by wider discriminatory or class narratives; and this reason is why this section is positioned here rather than elsewhere in the thesis.

7.3 Class, morals and subversion

Epic narratives, such as *Gilgamesh*, *Arabian Nights*, *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, have historical span and influence because story does not remain historically or socially isolated. It interacts and crosses borders transcending languages and culture. The (re)invention, or interpretation, of tales is complex and ambiguous. The social interactions of different narratives and the paths it has followed are not obvious or direct. Yet sometimes the connections are there to interpret. For example, Disney created *Lion King*, which Khan understood was ‘based on a Shakespeare play’. Dylan then made the connection to *Hamlet*, which had been studied in English (t32). Dylan’s association with the storytelling to another text introduced the concept of intertextuality which Allan defines as follows,

The act of reading, [literary studies] theorists claim, plunges us into a network of textual relations. To interpret a text, to discover its meaning, or meanings, is to trace those relations. Reading thus becomes a process of moving between texts. Meaning becomes something which exists between a text and all the other texts to which it refers and relates (Allan 2000: 1).

More contemporary writers, such as Terry Pratchett, have also used plots and themes from Shakespeare plays. For instance, Pratchett used elements of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* in *Wryd Sisters* (Pratchett 1988). And in turn, Shakespeare’s work is derivative of other sources of literature and folklore. For example, Hippolyta from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* said, ‘silver bow / New-bent in heaven’. Shakespeare borrowed the crescent moon image from the end of the *Odyssey* (Shakespeare 2003: 55, Wood and Wood 2011: 180).

This connects to my research because the images and plots within stories were interpreted by the students alongside the images of plots of other stories. The students formed connections such as *Hamlet* and Disney's *Lion King*. Various storytellers have proposed that different narrative forms have been crafted by collectives of people over time via historical and social practices, because stories have been perpetuated through the social actions of people retelling them through various narrative forms (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1). An alternate approach to the relationships between people and stories considers the power dynamics between agency and structure; and ways in which young people are constrained or empowered through the interaction of agency and structure (Nitz 2013, Cacicedo 2016). From the political reading of *Invisible Cities* (Ryan 2016) to the ways in which our brains form connections, a 'literary competence' as they read and critique literature (Pagan 2016: 176).

Yet these two approaches are one in the same. That is the students made connections between stories and other types of stories, and they also made connections between these and various sources of empowerment and constraint. For instance, social processes and structures, such as education and group membership, and contributing factors, such as inequality, contributed to story interpretation. These things allow a critique of the work of Zipes from a broader standpoint consisting of the interdisciplinary literary studies cited above, and additional humanities fields, such as philosophy and theatre studies, and social sciences, such as sociology, education, childhood and youth studies.

Incorporating a range of disciplines within my conceptual framework allows me to consider to what extent agency interacts with structure. This is a common issue across these, and many other, disciplines. Structures are perceived to have power dynamics with associated

issues of inequality and diversity. Education policy, for instance, has decided which texts remained on the curriculum, and therefore which texts have been sustained among collectives of individuals with the same educational background. Being able to refer to specific texts influenced storytelling interpretation. Thus, Khan and Dylan were empowered to associate Disney's *Lion King* with *Hamlet*, yet they were constrained by making associations with a seventeenth-century text written by a British-White male and with texts on the curriculum, in Khan's case, as he expressed that he hated reading (t31). Current curriculums have a broad range of literature on them. Reading lists for English 2016 GCSEs (AQA 2016) lacked ethnicity in their nineteenth-century authors like Stevenson, Dickens and Austen, but the modern texts included the writers Kazuo Ishiguro (British-Japanese) and Meera Syal (British-Punjab). As each class will study only one of 12 of the modern set texts this suggests a lack of representation for multicultural discussions on the curriculum; which depending on teaching standards might then impact the recognition by students, that their own diverse range of experiences have something to contribute towards the interpretation of stories.

Section 7.3 asks, 'Do issues of inequality and diversity arise in young people's responses to storytelling and are they connected to wider issues of structure and agency?' Section 7.3 considers the associations that young people made between storytelling and broader social narratives and structures. For example, social status was discussed alongside other narrative forms, such as *EastEnders*; and conformity and transgression arose in response to legislation and stories in the media.

Section 7.3.1 addresses sub-question three, about whether wider issues of inequality and diversity in young people's lives influenced how they responded to storytelling. To do this,

Section 7.3.1.1 discusses issues of class categorisation in the students' conversations. Section 7.3.1.2 considers whether legislation narratives inform morals and values. Section 7.3.1.3 explores similar and different social contracts between the students.

7.3.1 'She shops in Jimmy Choo's: working-class "norms"

Section 2.3.3, in the literature review, summarised how the fairy tales in this study contained commentaries about class and class mobility. There was no upward mobility in the stories I presented the students with, except for two magical creatures: the witch in *MacCodram* who married the king, and the frog prince might represent a working-class position thus he was only allowed to marry the princess when he had resumed his original princely form. The students made their own associations with class based on storytelling performance and personal experience. Section 7.3.1. will not consider the storytellers' performances and the students' interpretations of *Rooted Lover*. In the story, a princess was disowned and married a farmer.

At the rural-mixed school Dawn, Rebecca and Mark discussed the difference between princes marrying in the past and Prince William marrying Kate Middleton in 2011. Kate was described as 'not a princess' or 'royal' and 'everyone's fine with it' (t14). Millie introduced social status into the conversation by saying, 'Compared to Victorian times it's much much better, cause before it was, industrialists, and then the upper upper rich. The rich are really rich and the poor are really poor.' In response, I asked the group what they considered to be 'upper and lower class' Millie responded, 'Working-class I would define *EastEnders*, that kind of place.'

Social structures, such as class categories, are resistant to change. Class seemed connected to social narratives in the students' conversations. Fairy tales reinforced class structures, such as a lack of social mobility or loss of social status, however the students connected to narratives, such as *EastEnders*, which appeared to constrain some of the students when discussing class. Issues surrounding definitions of class involve assessing class via limited categories, such as income; how to account for the whole household; unpaid labour, temporary work or unemployment conditions; and each household's reasons for their income situation, alongside a host of other factors such as educational qualifications and property ownership (Roberts 2011: 27, 35).

Resisting Millie's categorisation that *EastEnders* was representative of the working classes, Dawn said, 'That's a programme not a class.' Note that the students introduced the term 'working-class'. I used 'upper and lower', then shifted my language to mirror Millie's terminology when I asked, 'What makes *EastEnders* representative of working-class?' Mark said, 'Council estate, old houses, small houses.' Millie said, 'Do you know what chav stands for?' Mark responded, 'Council House and Violence' (t14). Chav is a disputed and derogatory term, a caricature, like *Little Britain's* Vicky Pollard, which ridicules the working-class (Jones 2011: 8). In this example, Millie and Mark have used *EastEnders*, a long-running British soap, as a social status reference. The show was well known for undertaking previously unseen issues on UK mainstream TV, such as homosexual relationships (Bradley 2013: 33). The show can be perceived as raising awareness of social change, indicating that narratives can transgress, or comment on, controversial social issues. The students' discussions of class also indicated the conformity of *EastEnders* to what some of the students thought of as representative of class stereotypes, but others questioned this view. This raised issues

around agency and narrative structure, as the students' perceptions of the same TV programme differed.

As with wider debates, not all of the students agreed on a definition of working-class (Savage *et al.* 2013, Dorling 2014, Mills 2014, Tyler 2015). Rebecca disagreed with Millie and Mark that working-class and Chavs were comparable: Rebecca said, 'That's not necessarily true because some people don't have a choice that way. You can't put a label on a group of people.' Rebecca associated *EastEnders* with labelling. She appeared to suggest that categorising people into classes is an arbitrary process. Chav was a label that did not represent the inequalities of working-class life, such as access to education. Similarly, Rancière argued that academics labelled groups of people as unequal in status and in doing so preserved class hierarchies (Rancière 1991: 47-49, Mecchia 2010: 43). Therefore, the students' conversation raised inequality issues: Rebecca said that some people 'don't have a choice' – they are constrained by others' perceptions, education, employment and housing systems, some of which Mark referred to when he said, 'chav' and 'council estate'.

Rebecca's and Mark's backgrounds differed. Mark was interested in science, and participated in many out-of-school activities, indicating that his family had the money to support them. One parent had a highly skilled job for a large car –manufacturing company, the other a senior management position in a school. Rebecca enjoyed history, and writing, and aspired to be a teacher. She defended what was working-class, indicating that she identified with this class, which was consistent with her parents' occupations: one was a social worker, the other a receptionist (Appendix 2, Table 4.3). Mark appeared to have no experience of working-class life, as he referred to the stereotype of a "violent" council housing estate.

The act of labelling continued in Rebecca's group as Dawn drew links between class and working mothers. Dawn mentioned 'like single mums trying to work. You know J. K. Rowling started off like that.' 'Working-class,' Mark added. Rebecca raised her voice, repeating, 'You can't put a label on people.' Millie connected Rowling to social mobility.

Millie J.K. Rowling was living off benefits. She wrote a story and now look at her: she founded a charity, she's got millions of pounds, she shops in Jimmy Choo's for goodness sake

Mark She was working-class, she worked her way up to second class (t14)

Mark and Millie associated Rowling's change in status with wealth obtained from the economic success of her children's books. Social mobility was situated within broader economic and welfare structures because Rowling was in the benefit system until she had an opportunity to change her social status. A contemporary fairy story was made of Rowling's transformation: from living on benefits as a single mum to shopping 'in Jimmy Choo's'. As Mark acknowledged, 'She worked her way up.' Thus, working hard to obtain money was viewed as a passport to social mobility. Class barriers are more rigid than the kids presume as social mobility rates are low and inequality is widening (Clark *et al.* 2014, Atkinson 2015: 19-20, Clark and Cummins 2015).

Zipes (2006b: 171) debated that fairy tales incorporate elements of 'control, discipline and rationalization.' From my perspective one of the ideological "functions" of stories is to exaggerate the extent to which mobility is possible, blaming people if they are not able to realise these expectations. I was able to connect Zipes' theoretical literary-based interpretations of fairy tales with young people's interpretations. The potential control of

young people by fairy tales was seen where the students discussed the consequences of actions on social status.

In response to *Rooted Lover*, students at the urban-mixed school talked about the consequences of the princess's actions. Bo said, 'If you were the princess you would feel really betrayed because your own father's just kicked you out of the castle [...] to fend for yourself.' Group one then discussed consequences related to personal experiences. Bo explained that she had stayed with her nan for a while 'because of my behaviour'. All she revealed was that it had something to do with anger management. Dylan mentioned being sent to the 'naughty step', and the whole group talk about technology, video-game consoles and iPads, and so on, being confiscated by parents (t34). Group Two also discussed consequences for the princess. Amir compared the princess choosing a farmer to Juliet selecting Romeo. Amir said, 'The father forces her to go out with the dude but then she goes out with someone else' (t29). The consequences for each female character differed: the princess was thrown out of the castle but Juliet lost her life. Both became lower in social status but in different ways: one chose a farmer, the other chose a man 'alike in dignity', and alike in social status, but of whom her father disapproved. Female choice in both stories was constrained and met with punishment, reinforcing the notion that there are consequences for disobeying parental figures.

Students at the all-female school touched on topics connected to social change, such as the opportunity women now have to choose their own partner. In group one, Ava said, 'You shouldn't go for the looks and the money, you should look for the person that's closer to home and, always likes you, not just likes you for your money.' Holly described this ideal of marrying someone that they liked as 'a moral' (t24). Group Two touched briefly on

consequences related to social change. Mary said, 'I would have been angry, you have had to be back then, but I would not have kicked her out, I mean it's your daughter, why would you do that to her?' Heidi responded, 'It's weird how the rules have changed, those days you had to marry, you had nothing.' Again there was a reference to the daughter being dependent on her father, but Heidi was more optimistic about how things have changed and that now there are more options for women regarding careers and marriage (t19).

The group at the rural-mixed school accepted a narrative of deferred gratification within social structures, tied into historical debates surrounding literacy associated with a middle-class ideology. I observe two perspectives here: one argues that being educated to interpret text forms more "moral", "better" or hard-working citizens that allegedly make up the middle classes; the other perspective is that such education will threaten social structures by creating 'politically critical' people unwilling to do 'menial jobs' in the lower classes (Gee 1998: 61-62). There is another perspective, the emancipatory use of literacy, supported by Freire (2013: 47, 53).

The idea of the emancipated hard-working citizen emerged in another conversation when Rebecca mentioned how the farmer risked his life, transforming into a poppy, to win the love of the princess. Rebecca said, 'I think, with the boy he tried everything to get what he wanted. He sacrificed a lot and it did pay off in the end. So I think that relates to, if you work really hard and you sacrifice a lot.' Dawn interrupted, 'You have a good life, a good retirement.' Rebecca continued, 'Say if I work, if I keep on working hard then it should pay off in the future.' Dawn interrupted again, 'You get a job, good pay.' Rebecca continued, 'if I work hard at school now in the future it should get back to me' (t14). Hard work, therefore, was associated with rewards such as social mobility and wealth, despite the farmer

remaining a farmer in the fairy tale, and the princess sacrificing her wealth and status to live as a farmer's wife. Despite the contrasting messages within stories, the students had internalised the idea that hard work was worth the sacrifice.

Millie shared her dream of having a dog.

I do jobs, lots, and I do chores to prove my responsibility so I can get a dog and I haven't got one yet, but the thing is I've proved myself for ten years, and every time I've asked, every single Christmas and birthday, thank you mum and dad. They've each gone, 'No, we can't give you a dog.' So, what I'm going to do, I'm going to work really really hard to get eighteen. When I'm eighteen they're going to pay me money to go to university, and to buy a dog because I deserve one (t14).

Despite previous disappointments, Millie was focused on owning a dog, as a deferred gratification. Across all groups, students discussed working hard, and deferred gratification related to academic achievement, implying that this might be the "norm". Yet the students acknowledged that the outcomes were uncertain. At the urban-mixed school, David said, there were 'no jobs' (t26). At the all-female school, Heidi said that the importance placed on As and A*s in exam results made her 'feel pressured into having to get a really good level' (t17).

Ideologies, such as deferred gratification as an alleged potential class difference, were reinforced through stories, though this depended on the students' social background. Deferred gratification was a key middle-class value in the era of the industrial revolution (Rosen 2010: 254), an ideology that remains in individuals aspiring to increase their social mobility (Ahmad 2013: 77). I discuss delayed gratification because, although this seems to be

dated literature, such values arose in student conversation. The rural-mixed students discussed future opportunities, the all-female and urban-mixed students the pressure to reach those opportunities. Were the different ways they responded to opportunity the result of the school they attended, the storyteller or their own self-narratives? There was a lack of academic confidence at the all-female school. When Heidi reflected on why the group had been selected for the storytelling sessions, for example, she referred to their intelligence.

Heidi I bet [teacher's name] put us forward cause he wanted to get rid of us
cause we're probably the most unsmart girls

Felicity Pretty much yeah

Heidi We're probably the most unsmart people and that's why he got rid of us
[laughs]. Cause everyone else who's in the classroom is smart (t17)

There was no discussion in Mary, Heidi and Felicity's conversations around transgression, rather a lack of confidence in their abilities, and the worried about academic success and future career prospects. It was as if they could not see a way of transgressing or transforming themselves to fit the ideal model of a "successful" student. Thus self-image might have a role to play in order to be motivated to work hard for a future reward.

The storytellers' versions of *Rooter Lover* differed from the original text. The original text described how the farmer, transformed into a poppy, strove to survive so that he could win the love of the princess (delayed gratification).

He saw autumn changes coming over the garden: flowers sickened and fell, and were removed, and the nights began to get cold. Beside him the other poppies

were losing their leaves and their flaming tops had grown scantier [...] And now death was taking hold of him, each night twisting and shrivelling his leaves; but still he held up his head, determined that, though but for one more day, his eyes should be blessed by a sight of his princess [...] At length he could see that he was the very last of all the poppies, the only spot of flame in a garden that had gone grey.

In Housman's (1987) story, the farmer, or ploughboy, was 'determined'. His sights were set on the princess. Miriam retold the story at the rural-mixed school.

The seasons began to change, all the other flowers around him started to shrivel, started to drop their petals. Eventually they all started to die. The one poppy that had been the ploughboy held on, and held on, for as long as he could. Hoping that the love he had for the princess would mean that he would bloom that bit longer [...] Until he was the last flower left in the garden before winter came. He felt winter's cold icy fingers start to take hold (t9).

Miriam's telling focused on holding on for hope, the delayed reward of the princess's love.

Alex retold the story at the all-female and urban-mixed schools in slightly different ways.

As winter came in the other poppies started to wither and die. Their leaves wilting and dry, their stems crooked. His did also, but the only thing that kept him going, kept him strong was the idea of the princess. All the other poppies died around him, the only thing that kept him going was this desire for the princess. Eventually he was the only poppy left (t19).

At the all-female school, Alex used phrases such as 'kept him going' and words such as 'desire' when talking about the ploughboy's delayed reward. At the urban-mixed school, Alex mentioned hope.

It became difficult for him, he had to, hope and hope and hope and hope. The winter set in and time went by. His leaves were slightly more withered, and those around him started to die off. The only thing that kept him going was the thought of seeing the princess. And perhaps the tiny, tiny, tiny hope that one day she would place him in her bosom (t29).

Again, the phrase 'kept him going' emerged, after 'hope' was repeated five times, and it was a 'tiny hope' indicating an unlikely outcome. Miriam's telling was more optimistic about the farmer reaching his goal. The surrounding poppies died, rather than 'wither and die', despite the ploughboy feeling winter's arrival. This might have influenced student interpretation when Alex's versions were told. As mentioned at the start of Section 7.3, the (re)invention, or interpretation, of tales is a complex and ambiguous process that is intertwined in the storytelling space with interactions between storytellers and the story, the storyteller and the audience, and the audience and the story performance in complex and ambiguous ways.

Zipes hypothesised that different narrative types in society continue to use 'models, ethical principles, canons of literature, and social standards to *play* with the prescribed models, principles, canons, and standards' (Zipes 1995: 4). The storytellers' performances and the students' interpretations of fairy tales suggest that any 'civilizing effect' that occurred related to stories, such as Millie's sock, is indirect. Because the factors involved appear complex and ambiguous rather than fundamental. This does not mean that emotional and behavioural lessons are not an essential part of story structures. I observed that the students

interacted with the lessons contained in the stories in varying ways. Moral lessons were used, or alternatively rejected or ignored. This variety implied that stories inform moral emotions, and bridge the gap between moral standards and behaviour. Yet in contradictory ways, because while sometimes the students responses were the same, for instance about whether *EastEnders* represented working-class people, other responses differed, like when they were associated with morals (Section 7.3.2 will further support this).

Section 7.3.1. looked at how narratives such as *EastEnders* were connected to social structures of class, sometimes through personal experience and sometimes in complex, unknown ways. Now Section 7.3.2 explores how morals and values were linked to wider social structures in group discussion, and will return to considering the students' self-narratives.

7.3.2 'Life should be until you die': legislation and moral order

Conversations in group one at the all-female school referred to legislation proscriptions, suggesting a connection between morals and values and between the interpretation of story and broader social structures. For example, the group discussed what they would do in the same situation as the fisherman who stole the selkie's pelt in *MacCodram*.

Mary I know this is getting off the subject a bit but if you murder someone
you get ten years

RES If you murder someone you get a life sentence

Felicity A life sentence is about twenty-five years

Paris It's not good enough

Felicity A life should be until you die

Paris You can get bailed out before then because if you're good you're allowed

Felicity If your family have enough money

Paris Yeah but, and you're let out if you're good

Mary You shouldn't do it though, just do your time (t16)

Mary stated that her thoughts, on criminal sentences, were off-topic, yet the fisherman's theft of the pelt was a legal issue, and a moral one. Taking the selkie's pelt meant that she could not return to the sea. Mary had previously said, 'It's like taking someone's life, in a way, cause that's her life out of the water' (t16). So the group's conversation about the legal consequences of murder was relevant to *MacCodram* and also wider processes of social interaction.

Morals create order through systems of social or moral codes which indicate how and when to act in a socially appropriate way (Turner 2013: 586-588). Wuthnow (1987: 66) defined a moral code as 'commitment to a particular course of behaviour'. Mary said that if a person was to break a moral code, to commit murder, then they should also be committed to the consequences. Felicity and Mary expressed dissatisfaction with a system in which a murderer received 'ten' to 'twenty-five years'. Paris appeared to trust the fact that people were released for good behaviour. She used the phrase 'if you're good' twice in this conversation, suggesting a just-world bias in which people's misfortune is the result of their own actions. Thus, good deeds are rewarded and bad ones punished (Lerner and Montada 1998). This was more of a soft-justice approach than the approach of Mary and Felicity, who

stated, 'You shouldn't do it' without accepting the consequences. Students in the same group therefore have different perspectives or moral guidelines.

The group's conversation could be viewed as part of a wider narrative context. Felicity loved crime-based programmes. She said, 'I love *CSI*,' watched *Crimewatch* (t16), and was knowledgeable when a news story arose in conversation (t16). Mary watched the news once a week, *CSI* and *Customs UK* (t16). Paris watched the news, and 'programmes about crime', such as *Night Cops*, *Crimewatch*, and *Midsummer Murders* (follow-up interview 2013, t16). Mary's and Felicity's words implied a conservative approach, which included political aspects as well as notions of preserving or sustaining resources for long-term collective welfare (UK Conservative Party Manifesto 2015: 58, Scott and Marshall 2012a, Bauman 2001: 144). Governmental structures, along with other sources of information, such as *CSI*, partly informed the students' different points of view.

TV and media may have been influential on the girls' attraction to the police force. Mary said, 'I want to be in the police force.' Paris said, 'It's a lot of training, 3 years, not sure about that yet.' And it was Felicity's second choice after a veterinary degree (follow-up interviews 2013). Felicity had a stepbrother in the army, and Mary's stepdad worked in bomb disposal, and she participated in the cadets. These family and leisure links might be linked to their interests and hard-justice stance (initial interviews 2013, t17).

Mary, Paris and Felicity seemed to agree that the criminal system was flawed because 'it's not good enough' when a murderer is released from prison 10 to 12 years later (t16). This matched Lerner's (1980) concept of a social contract that shapes behaviour through the belief in a just world. If a social contract occurs between individuals, and groups of individuals, it is likely to be reinforced by broader-scale structures, such as legislation. In

turn, these shape the morals and values of people who reproduce or transgress those morals in different narrative retellings, whatever the narrative form. Thus, storytelling connects to multiple aspects of living, including, as demonstrated through the students' words, broader social processes such as legislation. The converse might also be true: that the morals and values in different narrative forms inform people's actions, which shape broader structural processes, in conformative, transgressive or transformative ways. The students' morals and values overlapped despite different perspectives, which suggested the existence of similar and different social contracts that must be negotiated between people in order to build collective structures. I will now expand on this idea.

It is unlikely that the students' morals and values arose from one source. Interactions between narrative forms (storytelling, TV) and structures (legislation) occur in complex and ambiguous ways, perhaps through the interaction of different narrative forms, which are social interactions because they involve communication between people. In addition to the TV shows mentioned earlier, Felicity watched films such as *Dear John*, about the relationship between a soldier and a college student, and *Shawshank Redemption*, in which a character was sent to jail for a murder he did not commit (t17, t18, Hallström 2010, Darabont 1995). Felicity played *Modern Warfare 3* on the Xbox, and read books such as *Stone Cold*, in which a 'psycho' killed homeless people (introductory and follow-up interviews 2013). Another source of information was social relationships. For example, Felicity said 'my teacher told me' when referring to the facts of the Kevin Bennett Killing (BBC News 2013). Therefore, TV, film, literature, video games and social relationships were some of the sources that Felicity's morals and values towards legislation could have been shaped by, or at least connected to. Various sources, like different narrative forms, are a part of, and shaped by, social processes and structures in which power is held by authority figures.

Agents of the law, authority figures, who hold power, catch criminals to prosecute them. Observing how crime was portrayed in TV series such as *Crimewatch*, *CSI* and *Night Cops*, those enforcing the law appeared violent and focused on catching the criminals. For example, *Crimewatch* reconstructed unsolved crimes (BBC1 2015), and *CSI* focused on the catching of criminals by using forensic and criminal psychology. *CSI* contained sexual and violent content (CSI 2001). *Night Cops* filmed police officers across the UK and covered topics such as knife, gun and drug-related crimes, domestic violence, dangerous driving, resisting arrest and drunken-related behaviour. The show emphasised the 'serious consequences' of different behaviours (UkCops1 2012). Messages were promoted in these series involving the consequences of actions, and legislation was enforced by agents of the law.

Crime was discussed in response to Q8 (see Appendix 1). Paris mentioned rules, Mary talked about crime and Felicity introduced TV programmes on crime. A recurring subject of discussion during week one was crime (four times) in response to the story *MacCodraml*, in which a fisherman stole a selkie's pelt. Felicity mentioned the Kevin Bennett Killing. Paris was unfamiliar with the story so the group explained what happened.

Paris When? Where?

Mary A homeless man got beat up by three teenagers

Heidi They got dared

Mary A twelve-year-old, a thirteen-year-old and a seventeen-year-old

Paris They got dared?

Heidi They got dared to kill a homeless man

Mary They were dared to kill this man. They beat him up and then

Felicity Dared, saying I dare you to go kill that man

Mary No, they beat him up first. Then they walked away, and their friend makes like, 'I bet you couldn't finish him off' and they were like, 'Yeah,' and then they battered him to death. The twelve-year-old didn't do anything. He stood and watched. But he still got something like five years, three years for it

Felicity He got six years. Yeah, my teacher told me this, the homeless man. Eye socket was missing. That's how much damage they gave to him

Paris You what?

Mary His eye socket was missing, that's how badly they

Felicity The seventeen-year-old who did most of the work, he only got ten years

Mary He should have got like twenty-five, he should have got murder

Felicity He should have got life (t16)

Note how Mary and Felicity related the facts of the case. There were some inconsistencies: the teenagers' ages were 17 and 14, and they were imprisoned for 12, 8 and 6 years respectively (Bennett 2013). Justice was important to the group. Felicity and Mary said, 'He should have got life' or 'murder'. Mary said that conformance to her represented things that were 'illegal' or against 'common decency rules'. Mary's idea of common decency rules

supported the existence of a social contract. The Rights of the Child (Unicef 2015) talks about the role of education in shaping a child's behaviour to that of their social environment.

Article 29 states that education should 'encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures'. Mary's words suggested, at least in her case, that that aim has been successful. Her perspectives, however, could be related to a host of other unrelated factors. Conversation implied that some of those factors were Mary's home environment (her relationship to her mother, and the fact that her stepdad was in the army), leisure activities (cadets) and some were because of her narrative experience (*CSI*). These factors reinforced a social contract of decency, despite watching TV programmes and hearing stories via social media, where social contracts are continuously breached as crimes are committed and people run from the law.

In the context of crime, Felicity said,

I was up by the Co-op on my bike and this man was at the cash machine. He went through, took his card, I looked, and he didn't take his money. So I took it and ran and gave it to him. I didn't keep any. That was about a hundred and fifty quid (t19).

Felicity may have exaggerated the amount involved but the message was the same: the money wasn't hers to take. 'I didn't keep any' indicated to the group that her social contract involved not taking others' money. Situated within the context of what Felicity shared earlier – when talking about *MacCodram* in terms of "right" and "wrong", justice and consequences – she appeared to live by those rules. Discussing the theft of the seal pelt, mourned by the selkie, Mary said, 'It's someone else's belongings.' Thus, stealing money or belongings was

considered an unjust action. I asked, 'Why shouldn't you do whatever you want to do?' Mary said,

It could mean a lot to somebody and, I don't know, even if it's just a pen or something. Their nan could have gave it to them and died. And then they'd be without a pen. Even if it's just silly stuff it's still someone else's (t16).

Mary expressed an interpretation of stealing which considered the emotional impact on the recipient. Section 6.2.1, Chapter 6 mentioned that all students in the groups viewed stealing and lying as immoral. Yet morals were flexible in different social situations involving emotion. For example, implying that human action can be conformative or non-conformative, Olive stole things out of jealousy (t21). Another example would be the way the husband treated the wife in *Moon Bear*. Mary said,

I reckon the non-conformative was probably the way the husband treated the wife, it wasn't very nice. I wouldn't have put up with that [...] I guess you could say that the wife was conformative because she [...] Cared for, [him] yeah (t17).

Mary labelled the husband's treatment of his wife as 'non-conformative' despite his PTSD, because it contradicted the way Mary felt a woman expected to be treated by her husband. The conformative action was the wife assuming a caring role despite the husband's treatment. All six groups agreed that the wife's actions were conformative and the husband's actions were non-conformative. For instance, at the all-female school, Lucy called the wife's actions 'compassionate' (t7), and thus as one would expect. However, at the urban-mixed school, Aisha said that the husband's behaviour was not expected because 'every time she goes to give him the food he kicks it away' (t27). Just as taking a pen broke

some social rule of decency, these instances indicated certain social values held by Aisha, Lucy and Mary: consideration of others' property and expected social codes and their associated emotions. Group one at the all-female school also discussed how emotions could be conformative. When the husband returned from war in *Moon Bear*, people expected him to be 'happy' to return home, but his experience of war caused him to be 'sad' (t22).

The students provided a wide range of responses even while the overall moral remained coherent: it was "wrong" for the husband to treat his wife that way. The more power a moral or value contained the more coherent the students' responses could be. Hence, not all of the groups agreed with the husband's treatment of the wife and the stealing of the pelt, because mistreating a spouse and stealing had been reinforced as socially unacceptable. A shared moral interpretation did not mean that the students acted uniformly. Regarding the husband's behaviour, Mary said, 'I wouldn't put up with that.' Felicity said, 'I'd be like, "Get out my house now"' (t17); Olive said 'divorce him' and Holly said 'slap him' (t22). Dawn said she would 'give my wife a chance', and Jamal said, 'I wouldn't be, harsh to my wife' (t12, t27).

The students also appeared to be reproducing broader media narratives. For example, Heidi commented on immigration and the misunderstandings that arise around cultural differences.

I think people just try and get away with things too much now [...] I'm going to try and word this as best as I can. But a lot of people who came from other countries, who from human rights have turned around and said you can't say certain things to them cause they can report it. Cause you're basically doing it against their, what would you say?, language or religion or whatever (t16).

Heidi seemed to suggest that certain individuals had been using 'language' or 'religion' as an excuse to 'get away with things'. Heidi's words imply the existence of prejudice against some, if not all, migrant workers, based on other complex social processes that she references between herself and different racial and ethnic groups such as language or religion. Mary contradicted this perspective, 'There's all these teenagers saying that they're taking all our jobs and stuff. But if you ask a seventeen-year-old, 'Do you want to work in Tesco's?' The response is 'No.' The girls question why anyone would mind someone taking a job in Tesco's that they did not want. In broader social terms, customer service work is a necessary role in a system which supports the specialisation of roles in the workplace. Mary indicated that the students were aware that young people, like themselves, were prejudiced. Yet the complexity of different morals and values, such as notions of prejudice against immigrants as "stealers of jobs", were (re)produced in the students' conversations.

Van Dijk (1991) wrote an extensive study of press coverage of ethnic affairs largely from British and Dutch newspapers. He concluded that,

[D]uring the last decades the coverage of ethnic and racial affairs in the Press, on both sides of the Atlantic, has gradually become less blatantly racist, but that stereotypes and the definition of minorities as a 'problem' or even as a 'threat' is still prevalent, in particular in the popular newspapers, while minority journalists, especially in Europe, continue to be discriminated against in hiring, promotion and news story assignments (Van Dijk 1991: 245).

Current media conversations regarding migrants cite that unemployment figures are on the decline (Salt and Gander 2015). Debate about young people's attitudes to migrants in the media suggest that many misconceptions about migration and employment exist: with conservative, right-wing papers like *The Express* and *The Telegraph* fuelling such misconceptions (Culbertson 2015, Kirkup 2015), while *The Guardian* provides more left-wing Labour perspectives (Inman 2015). Thus the young people, in general, have to negotiate competing narratives situated within larger contexts of ethnicity and race. However, Modood (2005: 208) and Bisin *et al.* (2006: 4) argued that the UK less racist than previously because film and television such as *Bend It Like Beckham*, demonstrate that Britain is multicultural. Despite this, Modood (2005: 14) believes that there are still problems with what he terms 'cultural racism' which focuses on language, religion, family structures, dress and cuisine.

From a storytelling perspective, Chesterton wrote about the laws, ideals and moral spirit of the fairy tale.

[N]othing is wasted in the mills of the world, that a jewel thrown into the sea, a kindness to a stricken bird, an idle word to a ragged wayfarer, have in them some terrible value and are here bound up with the destiny of men (Chesterton cited in Tibbetts 1998: 37).

The concept of deferred gratification remerged in Chesterton's words and was linked to social relationships. Chesterton supported the idea that story instructs and preserves moralistic ideals through the concept of delayed consequences, as if all actions, even 'an idle word', carry unknown costs. Morals and values dictate what a person can, or is obliged or allowed to, do in different situations. Codes 'of decency', as Mary called them, provide a

constraining force against impulsive or misinformed actions. As the examples in my study have showed the students make many connections to different narrative forms and different consumer products.

Stories also captured the interactions of uneven power distribution between people.

Oziewicz wrote that,

Andersen saw his own life in terms of a poetic justice script with a transcendentalist promise. The unfairness of the fact that he was born in poverty and had to struggle for what was the given for the bourgeois was bound to be readdressed, Andersen believed, in one way or another: preferably through his fame and the recognition that would follow. He waited for this moment all his life, but it was always deferred, always incomplete. (Oziewicz 2015: 101).

Oziewicz then illustrated that Andersen's sense of injustice, through Zipes (2007: 82), accounted for the conflicts between class that were at the centre of many of his tales. For example, when love was thwarted by class differences such as in *The Little Mermaid*.

In a consumerist age one would not think that deferred gratification was still a key value, however, the concept seems to have stuck within narratives of education that present sacrifice, the students discuss lost time with friends and family, for a delayed future reward.

Section 2.3.3, in the literature review, mentioned how the stories conformed to certain social conditions; the world was divided into rich and poor with only magical creatures moving upwards in the class structure. Through revealing class structure, the fairy tales in this study promoted a clear set of power dynamics. For example, Amir compared the princess choosing a farmer in *Rooted Lover* to Juliet selecting Romeo (t29). In both stories,

parental figures ordered their daughters to marry wisely. The king in *Rooted Lover* threw his daughter out of the palace when she failed to comply.

I expected the social power dynamics of stories to reproduce similar, uneven power dynamics in the students' discussions. However, the research showed that there were more ambiguous processes occurring between structure and agency, processes which suggested overall conformity, at least to behaviour that is expected via legislative structures.

Conformity is necessary to some extent in order for cooperation to occur, for example in relation to the rules of football, which Khan talked (t31, see Section 5.3.1). So conformity is not always a "bad" thing. However, discussions of morals showed differences regarding what conforming to the rules meant to students in the same group. Paris accepted that if a murderer was released it was for a reason – the system had authorised 'good behaviour'. Mary and Felicity challenged that perspective (t16), and the three perspectives were able to co-exist. Contradictions enabled many alternative perspectives to emerge, suggesting that the young people used agency to conform to or reject morals and values that were not part of their previously constructed self-narrative.

Stories did seem to reinforce the values and beliefs of the young people's surroundings through transgressive narratives, such as the fisherman who stole the selkie's pelt. The theft contradicted Mary's and Felicity's views on what was "right" or "wrong". Paris agreed, but she saw the situation from the fisherman's perspective, saying 'He was lonely, had no one else.' She said, about immigration, 'If they're not contributing to the economy then they should get kicked out' (t16). Heidi agreed, and Felicity and Mary did not comment.

Continuing with the theme of contradictory perspectives, Section 7.3.3 considers student discussions of crime.

7.3.3 'We think it's wrong': varying social contracts

In week five, Group Two at the all-female school thought crime was related to concepts of "right" and "wrong". The princess violated the kingdom's social contract.

Olive Criminals think it's right to, commit crimes. We think it's wrong. It's different people's opinions, isn't it

Holly No, some people don't think it's right. They just do it and then after they do it, 'Oh, why did I do it?'

Olive But, at the moment they think it's right. Like the princess, she thinks it's right to have emotion but the other people think it's wrong to have emotion (t25)

The story that week was *Toy Princess*, in which the kingdom chose a doll instead of the princess because she cried and laughed, in a kingdom where emotions were impolite (De Morgan 1987). Olive and Holly discussed the struggle of the princess to conform to her surroundings. Goffman's (1959: 24-25) notion of the 'presentation of self' is relevant here; he described this as being needed to 'incorporate and exemplify the officially accredited values of society'. Building on what was said about emotion in the previous chapter, the society which the princess found herself in constantly reinforced the idea that expressing emotion was incorrect. However, the princess was unable to present herself as emotionless. Hochschild (2012: 7) used Goffman to inform her theory of emotional labour: 'the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display'. In Hochschild's theory, deep and surface acting allowed individuals to present themselves in a certain way by transforming inner states of emotion. The princess in the story was unable to

perform emotional labour, which made her ill. The only way for her to recover was to go and live in another place, but in “reality” young people often cannot escape unsuitable situations to live in another place. Some run away, but the majority must learn to fit in. It is therefore important that they learn to manage their emotional selves.

The plot of *Toy Princess* contradicted the notion that it was possible to internalise emotions through the princess’s inability to manage her emotions. The story, however, is not “reality”. De Morgan (1987) captured lessons within it about the necessity of managing unsuitable emotion. There is a tendency to assume that morals and beliefs held within social structures become internalised (Scott 1971: 89, Waksler 1991: 12), while emotions are managed and transformed (Hochschild 2012, Turner 2013: 353).

Parsons wrote in great detail about internalisation in his theories of socialisation.

Socialisation is a problematic concept; minimal consideration is given to agency, structural influences are overemphasised or socialisation is portrayed as a “negative” rather than a necessary process (Wrong 1961: 12). Parsons stated, ‘The child may be likened to a pebble “thrown” by the fact of birth into the “social” pond’ (1956: 36). If one were to agree with this statement, one would believe that people adapt to their surroundings but the processes involved are not easily traced. Social processes are complex, ambiguous and are different for individuals even within groups educated in the same environment, as indicated by the follow-up interviews (2013).

Olive’s phrase ‘different people’s opinions’ in the extract above captured this ambiguousness. In conversations about “right” and “wrong”, individuals did not necessarily agree where the boundaries lay. Olive compared the kingdom’s choosing of the doll over the princess to criminals who choose to steal. Holly proposed that individuals had different

justifications for what they thought was “right”, which Olive linked to the story, in terms of the kingdom thinking that emotion was “wrong”.

Olive’s and Holly’s words exposed the complexity of different perspectives. There are interactions between structure and agency based on what is expected by others, personal preference and what sorts of people are in a particular group. Different social codes exist, like in the two kingdoms, where one kingdom expressed emotion and the other considered it “wrong”. Perhaps what is termed as internalisation or socialisation really names a continuous negotiation of social codes representing the varied perspectives of individuals and collective groups, which is a landscape which the young people in my study have learned to negotiate, expressed through their understanding that perspectives differ between people.

Connected to the work of Marx and Zipes, summarised in Chapter 1, Section 1.2, the students are born into a capitalist system that limits choices. The students believed that they had choices. Discussing *Toy Princess*, Peter, from the rural-mixed school, said, ‘The story’s trying to tell us that no one should be the same, everyone is unique.’ Amy agreed, ‘You don’t have to accept what everyone else does.’ I asked, ‘Do you think you always have an option?’ Peter responded, ‘Yes, you always have an option, depends on the consequences.’ This view suggested that Peter and Amy believed individuals have the agency to choose, a viewpoint echoed by the group’s interpretation of *MacCordram* being about the importance of making the “right” choices, illustrated through incorrect choices made by the characters, such as the stealing of a seal pelt. The fisherman’s choice was situated by the students within the context of the legal system, rather than transcending it. Marx (2006, Holt 2015: 8-15) contended that people’s agency was constrained by the choices given to them (Holt 2015:

20). The students echo this concept in their discussion of how the fisherman made the “wrong” choice, and chose to justify his actions via his emotions, loneliness, rather than a logical choice to transgress certain morals and beliefs for a valid reason.

Some student conversations emphasised how people were constrained by broader-scale structures. Peter and Amy described the agency of individuals to make the “right” choices. Lucy disagreed, ‘There are circumstances where it would be stupid, if people say that there’s a law against it’ (t10). Yet conflict arose, as captured by the TV shows the students watched: people were assaulted, stolen from and murdered. Individuals, and groups of individuals, have complex, highly contextualised perspectives, and therefore different morals and values which may create conflict with, or resistance to, social contracts. However, although the law is transgressed, the majority of people conform. The law carries great organisational weight, influencing people’s decisions by informing individuals what the consequences of their actions will be.

Sometimes people have choices; at other times they conform to structural power. The stories provided a good trigger for a wider discussion of issues such as “right” and “wrong”, and transgression and punishment. For example, group one at the urban-mixed school discussed just and unjust punishments. ‘When I’m getting the punishment,’ Bo said, ‘I’m like, “I ain’t done anything wrong!”’ then ‘I realise that I have, sometimes I haven’t, and they’re just being harsh’ (t34). Bo agreed that she was sometimes at fault, but at other times she said she was not. Her perspective differed from that of her parents about where the boundaries lay (previously mentioned in relation to teachers in Chapter 2, Section 5.3.2.1). Different perspectives created a sense of injustice. Khan talked about injustice related to his brother. He said, ‘My mum just blames me if my brother’s crying. Once I accidentally hit his

head off the wall. I accidentally did that. I got told off. I went to my room' (t34). Regardless of what occurred leading up to Khan accidentally hurting his brother, there was a difference in opinion between what his mum thought was just and Khan's perspective. Khan saw things his mum did not, adding to his sense of frustration and injustice: 'He got my mobile and lobbed it at my mate,' and 'He is swearing all the time,' and 'stole my stuff and threw it in the bin' (t31, t34, t32). Perspectives differed between young people and figures of authority.

As young people learned to negotiate their surroundings they began to think that authority was not always right. Group Two at the urban-mixed school thought that individuals learned to negotiate the social codes of their surroundings while being constrained by what others perceived as "normal". In *Toy Princess*, the princess became sick when she repressed her emotions. Jamal said, 'If you were brought up in that kind of situation you would be used to the way those people were behaving.' Jamal suggested that individuals conformed to their surroundings through perceiving the actions of others as "normal". None of the students shared instances in which they directly disobeyed a parent or authority figure. That is not to say that such incidences did not occur, but only that their conversations suggested that they were more likely to conform to the behaviour expected by authority figures than transgress their rules. I am unsure whether this reflected disempowerment. Jamal's words appeared to be more about learning how to negotiate the social codes that he had been taught since birth.

Transgressive stories can facilitate personal liberation by challenging the "norms" inherent in other narratives (Berger and Quinney 2005: 6). When discussing the princess's options, David said, 'I'd just leave' rather than conform. Jamal disagreed, 'As a child, you would do whatever your parents say, you would follow in their footsteps' (t30). Jamal emphasised the

need for a child to conform to authority figures. Social structures place parents in a higher social position than children, from Jamal's perspective. Parents are the social gatekeepers, the role models from which to learn in order to successfully negotiate the social world. David resisted conformity and was less restrained by parental authority. He said, 'If you don't do it like them, you don't do it like them' (t30). Young people are situated in families and in schools, but also in broader structures of influence, such as the law.

Further related to social codes, group one, at the all-female school, discussed manners. I asked some questions in response to the group's conversation about visiting a friend's house.

RES What do you guys think is polite?

Paris Saying please and thank you

Felicity Please and thank you, and everything

Heidi Unlike my sister

Mary Smile at people

RES And where did you learn these things?

Mary My mother

Paris Parents

Heidi Parents, relatives

Felicity Parents yeah, family

RES Where do you think they learned them from?

Paris Parents

RES Who decides what is polite and what isn't? In the story you had two kingdoms that were very different

Felicity They learnt from their family, and their family, and their family

Heidi Because if you go round to someone's house and they offer you something, you say yes, and you don't even say please, somebody will tell you, 'Are you going to say please?'

Mary My uncle will go, 'Yeah'

Paris Just common decency ain't it? (t20)

The group mentioned that social interactions had been influenced by relationships with parents and relatives. Family was central to the perspectives of Paris, Heidi, Felicity and Mary. Paris termed what might be considered part of a social contract as 'common decency'. Note that Mary's uncle's words were transgressive. Being prompted by, 'Are you going to say please?' he would transgress the rules by joking 'Yeah.'

In the literature review, I connected offering food to a visitor to Bourdieu's concept of habitus: something that determines the rituals and actions of everyday lives. Group opinions about this also differed, reflecting varied habitus. For instance, Mary and Felicity accepted offers of food and drink when visiting other people.

Mary My mum takes us to an old piano teacher's house [personal details removed]. Every time we go there she brings out this massive plateful of biscuits and cakes. Doesn't ask, just brings them all out. Thank you!

Felicity My nan does that, every time someone comes round she has to get, her little chocolate biscuits out and everything (t20)

Mary and Felicity expected this act and associated the offering of food with the ritual of welcoming guests. Heidi's habitus differed. She explained why this social tradition made her feel uncomfortable.

When I went around my cousin's house. His wife brought out these cookies and I thought, 'I'm not having any.' They were chocolate ones as well. I didn't. I didn't know whether to do it [...] I think it's quite a polite thing, cause if you take it then I think you just end up feeling rude, yes you do want it. At the end of the day that's somebody else's food they've paid for, and drinks, and you don't want to have it (t20).

Heidi thought it was rude to accept her hosts' food. Her experience demonstrates an awareness of depriving others of food, perhaps linked to income. Heidi and Felicity's social backgrounds were similar, in contrast to Mary's. Mary participated in a number of extracurricular activities outside school, which her mum could afford (see Appendix 2). While Mary learned guitar and piano and was a member of cadets, Felicity and Heidi spent more solitary time listening to music or doing art, and family time playing video games. Yet their habitus differed, for some unknown reason. I noted throughout the five weeks that Heidi was tuned into her emotions and the emotions of others, so I thought this emotional skill

might have made her socially considerate. Placing herself emotionally in the same situation as others, Heidi stopped herself from taking a chocolate cookie, even though she wanted one, because she was being considerate towards her hosts.

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter explored the interaction of young people with oral storytelling in the context of broader-scale social processes and their perceptions of structure-agency issues in relation to them. There is no doubt that storytelling is a complex social event connected to other narrative forms, such as film and broader social narratives and practices, such as those associated with crime and legislation. The stories were entrenched with gender, class and conformative structures which young people connected to a broad range of narrative influences, such as TV, social media, film and literature, and wider social structures, such as class, class mobility, education, family, leisure activities and legislation, and associated with morals and values in a social contract of 'common decency'.

Section 7.2 addressed sub-question three by investigating conversations involving gender expression. Conversations surrounding gender expression discussed the conformity to, or transgression of, masculine and feminine "norms". The students recognised "norms" in the form of stereotypes: the handsome prince and the evil stepmother. Young people used their agency to reject stereotypes related to personal experience and education. Femininity was discussed differently by students across the three schools: students from the all-female school focused on appearance, the rural-mixed school students critiqued female characters' behaviour and those from the urban-mixed school discussed racism and judgement.

Male behaviour, more than appearances, was discussed across all three schools. The students perceived that the male characters in the stories took active, rule-breaking roles,

while women's actions focused on adopting caring roles. The students discussed uneven power dynamics that existed between males and females in the household. However, there was also discussion about female and male stereotypes and the complexity of gender in "real" life. Education, or personal experience, empowered students to question and create more complex gender perspectives. Lack of life experience and different educational background constrained the ability to reject gender "norms".

The storytelling space provided an interesting way to explore how young people's discussions indicated connections between social structures and story. The students' conversations indicated that broader-scale social structures were associated with different narrative sources, such as animated films. This association implied that narratives captured the processes of larger-scale social structures, as previously hypothesised by Zipes when he claimed that different narrative types in society continue to use 'models, ethical principles, canons of literature, and social standards' in a way that transgresses and conforms to collectively held morals and beliefs (Zipes 1995: 4). Morally approved standards of behaviour could shape and influence social structures, while they are also influenced by broader-scale social structures. The processes involved in this aspect of the study appeared complex and ambiguous. I connected Zipes' theoretical literary-based interpretations of fairy tales with young people's interpretations of class, social mobility and morals. One of the ideological "functions" of stories was to exaggerate the extent to which mobility is possible, blaming people if they are not able to realise these expectations.

Storyteller performance enhanced interpretation by aiding the connection of the stories to behavioural metaphors. When parallels between the husband and the bear in the written stories were conveyed by performance, links were made by the students between the

husband and the bear. However, while students in the urban- and rural-mixed schools made that metaphorical connection, those in the all-female school did not, due to a difference of performance style.

Therefore, to answer sub-question three, about whether young people's agency interacted with oral storytelling narrative in empowering or constraining ways, young people's agency appeared to be contingent on a variety of factors such as personal experience, education, social background (ethnicity and class) and story aspects (the original text and performance). Storytelling was a complex social event at which an unknown number of factors interacted in constraining and empowering ways, thus revealing the complexity of asking whether young people might utilise fairy tales to conform or transgress social "norms".

Section 7.3 addressed sub-question two by exploring interpretations of storytelling connected to wider discriminatory or class narratives. Where the students' reaction were similar or different indicated that associations occurred between storytelling and similar and different social codes. For example, the students' responses to murderers being released from prison or to rituals involving guests. The students' conversations related to wider social structures and processes, such as class and legislation, indicating that storytelling was connected to wider discriminatory and class narratives. The students also negotiated different points of view, for example perspectives of what the definition of working-class is when EastEnders arose in conversation.

The research showed that ambiguous and contradictory processes occurred between structure and agency, sometimes through personal experience and sometimes in unknown ways. Examples from the students' lives suggested overall conformity to the expectations of authority figures and legislative structures, living with the consequences of actions, which

was connected to morals and values, and delayed gratification. Conformative actions were also related to the storytelling, for example conformity to the expectations of authority figures. The students' acceptance of delayed gratification, and hard work, imply an ideological framework connected to capitalist class structures where the capitalists own the means of production and the working-class sell their own labour power (Holt 2015: 47).

This was the last of four analysis chapters which answered the main thesis question. Chapter 4 developed an understanding of the space that oral storytelling created in three schools in Warwickshire to redefine the storytelling space and to explore how storytelling could be used as a way to observe in what similar and different ways young people related story to their lives. Chapter 5 asked whether young people negotiated fairy tales in conformative, transgressive and transformative ways. Chapter 5 connected storytelling to wider social behaviours by relating the students' different and similar backgrounds to Zipes' concept of written stories and their 'civilizing effect'. Chapter 6 considered Hochschild's theory of feeling rules in relation to the students' interpretations of storytelling to explore the emotion in the interpretation of story but also how young people negotiated emotional management during social interactions. Chapter 6 explored the similar and contradictory interpretations of emotion which arose in the storytelling space and what these indicated concerning the management of emotion. Chapter 7 then connected the storytelling space to broader-scale social practices in order to see storytelling and narrative in a broader context. Chapter 8, the concluding chapter, brings together the findings of all four analysis chapters to answer the main thesis question.

Chapter 8 Thesis conclusion

8.1 The findings of the thesis

The oral storytelling spaces discussed throughout this thesis were created to research the extent to which young people's emotional and behavioural response to personal and social circumstances may be empowered and/or constrained by story. The storytelling space was an effective method to explore the issues surrounding the 'civilizing effect' of fairy tales via storytelling, as raised in the introduction. The conclusion will address whether effective storytelling spaces were created in schools, as a means of investigating young people's concerns and issues through their experiences of emotional and behavioural management.

I was interested in the interactions between the students, the story and their lives through their own words. Student dialogue offered a way to examine current theories about feeling and framing rules and the civilising potential of stories while identifying young people's empowerments and constraints. The storytelling space, allowed me to observe whether Hochschild's and Zipes' ideas were relevant to young people's experience of oral storytelling or not. I can conclude that they were. My study cannot address all aspects of Zipes' impressive body of work surrounding fairy tales, storytelling and children's literature on the 'civilizing effect' of fairy tales (Zipes 1983: 29-57, 2006b: 22, 37). That is, how the fairy tale genre has historically exerted influence on young people's behaviour by endorsing conformity and transgression to standards of socially approved behaviour.

My thesis demonstrated that behavioural conformity was not restricted to literary tales or films of fairy tales. Conformity is not necessarily a bad thing, because it supports co-operative behaviours that are required to negotiate social relationships. The storytelling

space provided young people with a flexible range of ways to connect their lives to story and also to a broad range of other narrative forms, including storytelling, and social structures such as legislation and education. However, the risk of conformity is that young people may be taught to be overly conformative, such that they cannot make a difference in the world, and they cannot create social change, for example, what is just enough conformity and what is too much remains uncertain. Storytelling was not simply empowering or constraining. The themes that young people engaged with in the performed stories were indicative of their broader engagement with contrasting and conflicting narratives. I proposed that young people conformed and transformed themselves to fit what was expected of them more than they transgressed socially approved standards of behaviour and emotional expression. To use a metaphor from Goldilocks, stories sometimes supported young people's judgements, allowing them to decide whether the porridge, or whatever that porridge represented, was too hot, too cold or just right for them. Issues of conformity, transgression and subversion were woven through the thesis.

I will now illustrate how I approached the six sub-questions of the thesis to answer the main thesis question, which is about whether young people negotiated the emotional and behavioural dimensions of their lives in empowering and/or constraining ways. I chose to answer the sub-questions through four analysis chapters once the theoretical framework and interdisciplinary gaps had been established in Chapter 2. Chapter 2, the literature review addressed the gaps that exist across the following interdisciplinary subjects related to storytelling: sociology, philosophy, education and theatre, folklore and literary studies, and childhood and youth studies. This research project addressed some of these gaps in the literature by exploring oral storytelling in three different school environments.

In Chapter 3, the methods chapter, I explained the challenges involved in setting up semi-autonomous oral storytelling spaces. The main limitation of the research was that in an educational setting used for research purposes there are numerous factors that cannot be accounted for using qualitative methods. For example, in a research educational setting there are: the research methods; the researcher; the participants and their experiences inside and outside the school; the stories; the way the storyteller interprets the stories; and the way individuals interpret each story and share or do not share ideas in the space. There are also the conditions of the space situated within a school, within a community, and within a country. There are therefore many layered contexts and variables involved. Quantitative analysis would divide these up to be examined. My research is exploratory. A qualitative approach was consciously chosen over a quantitative one in order to gather students' stories as examples of how they connected storytelling with their lives.

With that in mind, Chapter 4 investigated the effectiveness of the storytelling space. The chapter explored issues of empowerment and constraint by considering how young people experienced storytelling narratives and how the storytelling space could be defined in their words. The chapter first built on sub-question one by reflecting on young people's expectations in the three schools. The students brought prior experience of many narrative forms into the storytelling space. Their experience of stories at home and school created expectations that the stories would be read.

The chapter next addressed sub-question two by examining how young people, from similar and different backgrounds, related to storytelling. The students related to storytelling in terms of their prior expectations and experience which was associated with the inequality

and diversity of their socio-economic backgrounds, a point that is picked up further in the summary of Chapter 7.

In response to the students' expectations and experiences I redefined the storytelling space as an exploratory method, involving exposure to oral storytelling performances and student-led discussion. The space was positioned within three schools, but outside a classroom situation. The space was initiated by the storyteller's physical and vocal performance: a living experience that would not be repeated in exactly the same way. The audience discussed the story from a variety of expectations, experiences and socio-economic backgrounds. This variety enabled contrasting perspectives to be shared; which arose in interpretive similarities and differences between the three schools and within groups.

The students expressed the idea that storytelling created a separate space within the school; which mattered because the broad range of topics discussed openly and honestly in the groups, such as suicide and concerns about terrorism, suggested that young people felt "safe" discussing issues that they had experienced, were experiencing or were concerned about. The storytelling spaces created were viewed as social rather than research spaces. The space offered young people a flexible range of ways in which to connect their own lives to story. Follow-up interviews revealed these students experienced: listening and responding to others' opinions; improved confidence; new friendships; and that storytelling was a social activity involving multiple reading-and-telling relationships with others from within, and outside, the school. The wider applications of the information gathered from this chapter answered sub-question one by revealing that storytelling was a rich and valuable way to gather knowledge about young people's similar and varied experiences.

Chapter 5 addressed the main thesis question by asking whether young people negotiated fairy tales in conformative, transgressive and/or transformative ways. The chapter explored sub-question four through the differences young people perceived between oral storytelling and other narrative forms. Active, critical engagement with storytelling was demonstrated through the ways young people related behaviour to other narrative forms. Themes of perseverance and patience in *Moon Bear*, for example, were associated with transforming anger into patience in *Karate Kid*. The students utilised narrative skills to interpret stories in historical and metaphorical ways, such as the connection between poppies and dead soldiers in *Rooted Lover*. They incorporated story images into their conversations during banter: 'You look like a seal,' Dylan said to Khan. They retold *MacCodram* and adapted the telling to group thoughts, shared other stories and used their imagination to reshape parts of the fairy tales. These things indicated active engagement with story.

Oral storytelling and literature had more similarities than differences. The most important similarity was that storytelling was interpreted like text, implying that education influenced young people's thinking by providing them with a framework with which to interpret literature, which was then applied to interpreting a variety of narratives forms. The main difference between storytelling and literature was that text was associated with education, while storytelling created a social, student-led space and the experience was engaging, even for reluctant readers. In response to sub-question three, it was found that young people negotiated contrasting or competing narratives to make choices about socially appropriate behaviour but were constrained by narratives situated within larger frameworks of power which endorsed conformity: education, family or peer groups. Figures in their lives, such as teachers, demonstrated to young people through acts of transgression, how to engage with critical thought. It was rare that a story directly influenced social behaviour. When it did,

such as Millie's episode with her sock or Dawn's patience, the students' behaviour was socially conformative.

There appeared to be limited scope for non-conformative action in opposition to authority figures, and wider networks of power, in the students' discussions of storytelling and lived experiences. This brought into question whether stories have a 'civilizing effect'. I am not optimistic that critical thinking translates into action because the students' discussions were about conformative and transformative action that was constructed to suit their social surroundings. When transgression occurred the students' options were constrained by the structures around them. For example, when Dylan complained about a teacher, he did so through the complaint procedures of the school. What remained unclear was whether the school took his complaint seriously and supported his right to protest. Social change to improve standards of living for everyone cannot occur if barriers and limitations are imposed on young people who are trying to turn their complaints into actions. The risk is that conformative structures place young people in a position of powerlessness, which might then be carried forward into adulthood.

Chapter 6 addressed the main thesis question by investigating how young people negotiated emotional management. To explore the similar and contradictory interpretations of emotion which arose in the storytelling space and what these indicated concerning the management of emotion. Considering emotion was relevant because emotions and behaviour were linked in the students' interpretations of storytelling. The chapter approached sub-question five, which is about the "norms" and values surrounding emotions in young people's lives. The 'civilizing effect' of storytelling is brought into question when young people are recognised as active participants in their social education. Storytelling appeared to be more adaptable

to young people's needs, more empowering than constraining because conversations revealed complexity and ambiguity regarding issues of empowerment and control.

An extensive literature search found no evidence of Hochschild's concepts associated with oral storytelling. In Chapter 6 'how society uses feeling' (Hochschild 2012: 7) was linked to group interactions and also to how young people had been educated to use feeling to interpret story. The students were resourceful during conflicts. Feeling and framing rules were used in sophisticated ways to consider the emotions of others in social interactions. The conflict between Mark and the rest of his group significantly supported Hochschild's concepts of gift exchange, and framing and feeling rules. Hochschild's concepts governed what was socially appropriate to share and why, and what was appropriate to feel and express in different locations. The guidelines of the school seemed to have influenced behaviour by motivating the cooperative management of emotions. Applying Hochschild's concept of gift exchange to emotions in the storytelling space suggested the importance of emotions in facilitating cooperation between groups of people from a range of different genders and a range of class and ethnic backgrounds.

Chapter 6 then connected Bourdieu's (2005) concept of habitus to emotional management. Different social spaces and relationships determined behaviour and emotional expression in different ways. For example, Heidi defended her friends from travellers at the fair but did not argue with her mother in the home. This indicated how habitus might arise according to the perceived "rules" of different social spaces, at least sometimes. Different relationships, and the rules of those spaces, connected to feeling and framing rules which governed what was appropriate to share, and why, in different social interactions.

To address sub-question five, which is about the “norms” and values surrounding emotions in young people’s lives, it appeared to be the “norm” to read others’ emotions as if they were informing social behaviour and to use this interpretation to manage one’s social behaviour accordingly. The research clarified that social interactions required emotional and behavioural management. Zipes argued that children’s literature attempts to control young people’s behaviour through ‘shame’ and ‘anxiety’. Students’ conversations throughout Chapter 6 indicated that the emotional landscapes of young people were more complex than allowing a narrow range of emotions to determine their behaviour. For instance, the students discussed some of the emotions they experienced when they were engaged in co-operative behaviour with others, such as patience, anger, frustration and empathy. A wide variety of emotional expression, action and inaction among group members suggested that young people found different ways of transforming emotion, compared to the conformity placed on behaviour. The frustration young people felt in relation to parental figures, in the stories, who made bad choices denoted the powerlessness of young people in relation to authority figures. Disrespect enacted by story characters entailed not taking young people’s needs into account in the decision-making process.

Chapter 7 considered sub-questions one to four alongside the students’ negotiations of conflicting notions of class, gender identity and moral values in a variety of narrative forms. Storytelling is a complex social event that is connected to other narrative forms, for example film, and broader social narratives and practices, such as those associated with crime and legislation. The stories were entrenched with gender, class and structures such as legislation, which were perceived as conformative, and conformed to. Young people connected a broad range of narrative influences, for example music lyrics, TV and literature, to wider social structures, such as class, class mobility, education, family, leisure activities and legislation.

Narratives and social structures were associated with morals and values: they constituted a contract of 'common decency'.

Interactions between narratives and social structure that arose from the students' conversations support Zipes' hypothesis (1995: 4) that different narrative forms in society continue to use 'models, ethical principles, canons of literature, and social standards' in ways that transgress and conform to collectively held morals and beliefs. In other words, narrative interacts with and informs collective morals and values which concurrently interact with and inform broader social structures such as class and young people's perceptions of class. The processes involved in this aspect of the study appeared to be complex and ambiguous. Yet the storytelling space, related to sub-question one, provided an interesting way to explore how young people's discussions indicated connections between social structures and story.

The chapter next addressed sub-question two by exploring how young people connected broader social structures and processes to issues of inequality and diversity. For instance, social status was discussed alongside other narrative forms, such as *EastEnders*. Examples of young people's conformity and transgression arose in response to discussions about legislation and media stories. Narratives such as *EastEnders* drew together sub-questions one, two and three because of differences and similarities across the students' social and socio-economic backgrounds.

The answer to sub-question two is that young people's responses to oral storytelling were shaped by wider social processes, some of which were connected to inequality and diversity in educational practices such as student–teacher interactions and after-school opportunities in school, and economic factors such as access to out-of-school hobbies which enriched their interpretations of stories by providing additional experiences to relate to the stories. This

stressed the importance of the school environment if young people from deprived areas are to have the same levels of empowerment and the same number of options, in order to proceed in whatever directions they choose as more privileged students from households with average and higher-than-average income levels. Such knowledge stresses the importance of places like community centres that offer stimulating activities, such as storytelling, to young people whose after-school opportunities are otherwise limited by the economic situation of their family. In addition, sharing conversations indicated that discussions at the all-female school did not reach as much depth as those at the mixed-gender schools indicative of a disadvantage of using the storytelling method for single-gender groups. Further research to compare single- to mixed-gender groups is required.

To answer sub-question three, about whether young people's agency acted in constrained or empowered ways in relation to storytelling, agency appeared to be contingent on a variety of factors, such as personal experience, education, social background (ethnicity and class) and story aspects (the original text and performance). Education or personal experience empowered students to question and create more complex gender perspectives. Lack of life experience and different educational background constrained the ability to reject gender "norms". Conversations surrounding gender expression discussed the conformity to, or transgression of, masculine and feminine "norms". The students recognised "norms" in the form of stereotypes: the handsome prince and the evil stepmother. Young people used their agency to reject stereotypes related to personal experience and education.

Storytelling was a complex social event. An unknown number of factors interacted with young people's agency constraining and empowering ways, thus revealing the complexity of asking whether they might utilise fairy tales to conform or transgress social "norms". The

power dynamics of stories prompted conversations depicting uneven power dynamics in the students' lives. The research showed that ambiguous and contradictory processes occurred between structure and agency, sometimes through personal experience and sometimes in unknown ways. However, examples from the students' lives suggested overall conformity.

8.2 Future research directions

The data collected for this thesis arose from a short intervention using storytelling as a way of finding things out and of drawing together the interdisciplinary literature that I associated with storytelling. Future research is required to see whether the findings of the thesis can be replicated in different storytelling environments. A longitudinal study would be beneficial to address certain elements arising from my findings. Oral storytelling created a space where social interactions between young people and storytelling could be observed and considered in relation to emotion. Future research could build on these observations to explore in greater depth Hochschild's concept of emotional management. A study with storytelling focused solely around emotional management as a conceptual framework, might draw out additional complexities. Alternatively, a research project could focus on the broad range of discursive frameworks and structures which might impact on the students' interpretation of emotions.

Another future direction is to conduct a similar project incorporating critical literacy analysis. The Bridges (Lewis et al. 2010: 4-10) storytelling and drama programme discerned four categories of critical literacy:

- addressing critical areas but in no depth
- challenging assumptions

- understanding and challenging perspectives in the story
- imaginative retelling/acting of stories to challenge the assumptions of a story

I am collaborating with Edinburgh and Loughborough University to create and assess a storytelling–sports intervention in students’ sports literacy; which aims to increase motivation, confidence and physical competence, and knowledge and understanding of sports. This innovative approach applies critical literacy tools gathered from five years of critical literacy assessments, carried out by the Bridges storytelling programme, to sports literacy, by combining physical activity with performances of the success stories of elite athletes. However, my intention is not to encourage the use of storytelling as a tool in a target-driven way. I observed in the schools, as well as at storytelling festivals, that storytelling brings people together and engages them with story. Overusing and instrumentalising storytelling risks spoiling the creativity, fluidity and imagination that each storyteller brought to the story, and the novelty that students found in and the engagement they had with storytelling in the storytelling space.

Research conducted with storytelling in schools is important because it has the potential to provide valuable insights that can help to inform legislation, education and support services. I previously mentioned that because the storytelling space encouraged open and honest sharing, the information gathered from a storytelling setting might aid schools to understand and accommodate the needs of some students who are currently placed in pupil referral units, which is where young people are temporarily placed outside the main stream education system. Only 1.3% of pupils in referral units achieved five or more GCSEs at A*-C grades (DoE 2015). Educational teaching methods and behavioural policies within schools are therefore not working for these young people. Data could inform youth policy by

gathering knowledge about high-risk groups, such as young people in abusive surroundings or ones facing poverty. For example, the young people's concerns in my study indicated that students required more customised support to provide them with coping strategies while studying for exams, agency to select the subjects they enjoyed, information about finding Saturday jobs or full-time employment, and access to funding in order to proceed to further study.

I also propose that storytelling research should be recognised as a field in its own right because it brings additional knowledge to a number of areas. The research provides a deeper reflection on the interaction of stories with young people's agency and the empowerments and constraints in their lives to inform ideas in the sociology of stories and education practices. The starting point for storytelling research to be recognised as a field in its own right is the creation of an archive as a resource for future researchers. This would enable researchers to locate relevant studies across many disciplines. I will now make some observations about my data regarding the theoretical framework.

8.3 The consequences of my findings for the interdisciplinary and oral storytelling literature

I aimed to address comparative analysis gaps in the literature across gender, ethnicity and class and different educational settings. In the introduction and literature review I put forward some ideas and issues surrounding whether young people's emotions and behaviour were empowered or constrained by story. I also proposed that a theoretical framework incorporating ideas from Zipes and Hochschild was a way to approach the issues surrounding empowerment and conformity in order to investigate how young people from similar and different social backgrounds negotiated emotions and behaviour.

Zipes argued that written stories indicate to children how to 'conform to dominant social standards which are not necessarily established on their behalf' and 'reinforce the dominant social codes within the home and school' (1991: 18-19). This suggests that behaviour is somehow codified through children's literature. Likewise, Hochschild saw emotional training being taught at Delta Airlines as a form of 'social engineering' (2012: 33). This implies emotions might also be codified through training processes involving emotional management. Zipes and Hochschild are saying that structures in society, whether imposed by an employer or the publishing industry, are in a position to have an effect on social "norms" through re-codifying, or reinforcing behaviour and emotions by encouraging and rewarding certain actions and emotions. This might influence young people to conform to structures, such as the workplace, and their top-down power dynamics with little space for agency.

The work of Zipes and Hochschild overlapped with Bourdieu's (2005: 43-44) concept of habitus, in which self-identity and social conventions are informed by social interactions; their work was further influenced by social institutions, such as the intellectualising of emotion in educational structures, and social practices, such as customs in the home or morals and values, which inform emotional expression. During the data analysis, I found that social spaces and relationships determined behaviour and emotional expression in different ways. For example, Heidi defended her friends from travellers at the fair but did not argue with her mother in the home. This indicated how habitus might arise according to the perceived "rules" of different social spaces, at least sometimes. Different relationships, and the rules of those spaces, connected to feeling and framing rules which governed what was appropriate to share, and why, in different social interactions.

My theoretical framework filled a gap in the literature by considering emotion alongside Zipes' socially approved standards of behaviour. I raised in the literature review the idea that stories may have empowering and constraining potential. The extent of the influence of storytelling on an individual's behaviour is a challenging question in the study of fairy tales that is yet to be answered. I propose that influence does occur, however, the processes are not causal but, are complex and ambiguous, because storytelling interacts with other factors in young people's lives, such as education, ethnicity, gender and class. Storytelling also fills a gap in interdisciplinary literature by linking storytelling to Hochschild's theories for the first time. Moreover, the storytelling space allowed for consideration of young people's emotions and behaviour from their own perspectives and life experiences, which also addressed comparative analysis gaps in terms of gender, ethnicity, class and educational backgrounds.

Thus, my tale is told. However, I will leave you with a traditional folk tale ending which seems appropriate to reflect the beauty, the joy, and the ambiguities of storytelling which inspired four years of work.

The dreamer awakes, the shadow goes by,

When I tell you a tale, the tale is a lie.

But listen to me, fair maiden, proud youth,

The tale is a lie, what it tells is the truth. (Kane 1995: 9).

Abbreviations

AQA	Assessment and Qualifications Alliance
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
ATON	Uysal-Walker archive of Turkish oral narrative
CSI	Crime Scene Investigation
DoE	Department of Education
EACEA	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
FONC	French Oral Narrative Corpus
HSCIC	Health and Social Care Information Centre
IBM	International Business Machines
LCIS	London Centre for International Storytelling
LRRH	<i>Little Red Riding Hood</i>
MAXQDA	Mixed Methods and QDA Software for Windows & Mac OS X
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Q1 – Q10	Focus group questions 1 to 10
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States
WW2	Second world war

Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview and focus group questions

Introductory interview

Introductions

Hi my name is Emma. Thank you for taking part. Today I'm going to ask you a few standard questions you (to get to know you a little better, really). And let you know what to expect in the focus groups.

Background

Name and age

Where were you born? And your parents? Grandparents?

If applicable: why did they move here?

Do you have any brothers and sisters? How do you get along?

What do your parents do?

Home life

Are you close to your grandparents?

Do you have siblings?

What do you do in your spare time? / What do you like doing outside of school?

Do you have a job or do any voluntary work?

School life

What do you like most and least about school?

Expectations

Are you looking forward to hearing a storyteller? Have you heard one before? What was it like?

What do you expect the stories will be like?

What fairy tales do you know?

When I say 'storytelling' what do you think of?

Have you had stories told to you before?

Points to cover

Provide a consent form.

For the storytelling sessions I'm interested in what meaning you get from stories, and how you connect them to their life. There are no right or wrong answers.

Describe what happens in session: Storyteller, then split into groups of four (been in same group each week) group discussion. Recorded, typed out, names changed etc.

This will be a lot of fun it is also like collaboration between us, I can't do my research without your help so it is important that you attend each week.

Ask if they have any questions.

Focus Group Questions

Q1. How would you summarise the plot in your own words?

Q2. What images, things, or events in the story do you like or dislike, and why?

Q3. What other stories do you remember that you can link to this one?

Q4. What would you do if you were in the same situation as one of the characters?

Q5. Can you relate the plot, characters, images or places to your life in any way?

Q6. What is this story trying to say? What do you take from it?

Q7. How do you feel about the story? Or how does the story make you feel?

Q8. What conformist/non-conformist elements are there in the story?

Q9. Now you have experience of traditional storytelling how does it differ from having a story read? Do you prefer a story to be read or told and why?

Q10. During the week did anything remind you of the first story *MacCodram and His Wife*?

Did you think or reflect on the story in any situations whether at home or at school?

Follow-up interview

Thank students for taking part.

Questions

What ethnicity would you identify yourself as?

What did you think of the storytelling?

Was the experience different from what you expected?

What did you take from the experience?

Did you have any close friends in the group of people that made you feel uncomfortable?

What was your favourite story? Why?

Did the storyteller's performance of the story help you connect to it?

Did you retell the stories to anyone?

Do you have any final thoughts you would like to share? E.g. how could the school improve to help support you?

Would I be able to contact you in the future if I have any further questions?

Final points to cover

Thank student and provide a personalise certificate for attending

Appendix 2. Participants of the study

The following information was gathered from the introductory and follow-up interviews, unless otherwise referenced.

All-Female School

Group one

Ava came from a British-White background. Her dad was a travel agent, mum a homemaker. Chelsea liked ITC 'but only cause I'm good at it' and PE, playing netball after school. At school she described herself as 'too shouty-outty'. At home she used to have a paper round but dropped it because it took up too much of her time and got in the way of netball. She was obsessed by the fantasy TV programme *Merlin* and managed to weave it into the conversation every week of the focus groups. She did not really read 'unless my phone counts'. She spent a lot of time texting and on FB, and twitter, to learn what was going on in the world. For example the Boston Marathon Bombing. She liked playing Xbox like *Call of Duty: Black Ops*. Ava remembered that once an author came into the school and read from their recently published book, but can't remember who the author was or what the book was about. Her mum used to read fairy tales like *Sleeping Beauty* to her and still read to Ava's little sister. To Ava storytelling is 'Making up a story in your head about a fairy tale then changing it if you feel like it' so for her storytelling was very much something to be memorized and told to another person.

Belle was the youngest of seven children, British-White. Belle did not speak much, and described herself as 'shy' when asked why. Neither of her parents worked because her mum looked after her brother who was diagnosed with a mental health condition, and her father

was disabled. Her favourite subject was English. She wrote stories at home on her mum's laptop and watched TV soaps with her sisters like Neighbours, Home and Away, Emmerdale, and Coronation Street. They also played a lot of board games as a family. At home it was rare for Belle to get any alone time. Her parents did not read to her growing up. She read and told stories to her little sister.

Olive identified with Euroasian. Her parents were originally from Sri Lanka. Her mum was a homemaker and her dad a chef. She liked create subjects like English, art and drama. Olive described herself as 'an internet person' who spends time at home on the internet listening to music, watching music videos like Mumford and Sons. Yet she was not part of any social media sites. She enjoyed reading realistic books like *The Fault in your Stars* by John Green. About 'this girl who is suffering from cancer and she falls in love with a person who can't stand'. When asked about storytelling Olive mentioned that her parents used to make up stories. She said 'I asked once why do people tear up when they cut onions? And it was a long story about three friends, the onion, tomato and ice. The ice got melted away so the tomato and onion started crying. The tomato got run over so the onion was crying, and then God said that when the onion dies everyone has to cry. So when you cut onions everyone cries'. Her parents continued to tell that story to her nieces. She had read *Little Red Riding Hood*, and a lot of princess stories but did not have a favourite. And liked movies like Dirty Dancing. She did not have a part-time job or get pocket money.

Holly liked English, art and drama. She wanted to work backstage in a theatre. She was British-White. Her mum was a baker while her stepdad was a coach driver. She never mentioned her dad. When talking about home Holly spoke about family holidays to Cyprus, Malta, and Spain. She had a paper round seven days a week. Socially Holly went swimming,

or to town, or 'round people's houses'. The music she listened to was indie and folk or rock such as Birdie [UK indie], Mumford and Sons [English folk rock], and The Vaccines [English indie rock]. She had been read to not by her mum but her step-dad, stories like *Billy Goat's Gruff*. Her favourite fairy tale was *The Little Pigs* [*Three Little Pigs*] because 'It's sad then it goes happy.' She remembered being read to since primary school by various teachers. In her spare time she liked to read realistic books like *Submarine*, where the main characters dad suffered from depression.

All-female School

Group two

Felicity described herself as British-White with no religious affiliation. Felicity liked to go out, 'around town' in her spare time, or listen to the Top40 charts especially R&B and pop on channel 18 (a digital music video channel). One of Felicity's current favourites was Let Her Go by Passenger, 'I love his voice it's not like others'. She said, 'Some songs I listen to the lyrics, some I like the beat and the tune and everything'. Felicity liked shooting games on the Xbox like Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3, and wanted to take up the guitar. She had two half-brothers and an older sister. She remembered being read to 'sometimes at nursery' and Felicity knew quite a few fairy tales like *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Hansel and Gretel*, and mentioned the rhyme *Humpty Dumpty*. She read *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Hamlet*, in English class and she was reading the book *Stone Cold* by Robert Swindells about 'homeless people' where 'this psycho goes killing them'. She and Mary were good friends, and Paris was in a lot of her classes. Felicity wanted to be a vet or work in the police force.

Heidi preferred to spend time alone. She said, 'Usually I like my own space because I have my art and that's where I tend to express myself through my art'. She had short blond hair and a nose stud, creating this image to be somewhat reflective of her love of rock, heavy metal, and art. Heidi described herself as British-White with no religion. Heidi was very emotionally intelligent, revealing deep and honest stuff within the group. At home she listened to music, sketched in her art book, and had chores around the house such as looking after her younger sisters. She also played electric guitar and Xbox. 'On Friday nights me and dad just have the time together. Just play different things. We sometimes play Guitar Hero but then we usually play things like Rock Band Blitz. Resident Evil, that sort of thing'. Heidi remembered being read to as a child by her grandfather. She also liked gothic vampire fiction, horror movies, and mentioned Shakespeare in relation to fairy tales.

Mary was articulate and sociable at school and home. She described herself as British-Asian (Bangladesh) and an atheist. Her mum and step-dad were able to support her financially to do out of school activities like air cadets and working towards her yellow belt in Taekwondo. Mary was fond of stories: she remembered being read to as a child. Mary's mum read to her and her older sister as they grew up, they also had stories on tape. Her mum had a book, full of fairy tales, like the *Twelve Dancing Princesses*, *Rapunzel*, *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Three Little Pigs*. Mary liked old soul and R&N music, as 'nowadays it's more or less about boys and girls, and relationships'. She played piano and guitar, watched horror movies and described herself as 'obsessed with Assassins Creed' (on the Xbox) 'I like Brotherhood the best as it's set in Italy and I really like Italy'. Mary read books like *Shadow* by Michael Morpurgo, about a dog during WW2 'that finds its way across the country back to where he lives'. She watched the news once a week 'to see what is going on'. After the sessions Mary

said, 'I'm friends with Felicity and Heidi, but me and Paris are friends more now'. She wanted to be a police force or a photographer as a back-up plan.

Paris described herself as British-White and nonreligious. She tended to be quiet but seemed introspective, even if she said more than a few times she considered herself stupid. She watched the news on the TV in the mornings when getting ready for school. Paris remembered being read stories in primary school but not their content. She had just finished reading *Stone Cold*, 'Sounds weird but it's actually a good book. It's interesting to see other people's perspective'. In the groups she said she hated reading. In the final interview Paris clarified, 'don't mind it but, I find it hard to find a book that interests me' preferring things with real-life situations in them like the film LOL (a teenage comedy about relationship between a mum and her daughter, and school life). Paris felt the pressure of having to get good grades. She wanted a job outside school 'but it's hard to get a job at fourteen. Some of my friends have jobs but they're all taken now'. So she looked after her little cousin, and did chores at her nan's house, and received £5 a week pocket money which she intended to save up towards clothes.

Rural-Mixed School

Group one

Dawn identified as British-White, both parents were from the UK. Dawn was articulate, able to defend her point of view. She preferred being outdoors cycling, rather than reading. It took her time to get into a book so she did not bother unless she thought the book worth reading. She was reading *Summer of the Sisterhood*, and her mum still read to her sometimes when she was ill. She had a younger brother and sister. Dawn had a Saturday job

at Potter Inn, and was a member of the creative writing and art clubs at school. Her favourite subjects were German, history, art and drama. She liked 'the stagework, the set design and costumes and make up, the directing. I'd quite like to do something to do with film, theatre.' She watched crime dramas on the TV like *New Tricks*. And read magazines to 'find out what's happening the in world'. Magazines were preferred to the news.

Mark identified as British-White, both parents were British. Mark was very chatty. He talked enthusiastically and very fast, going off the subject easily. Making quick links things. He had some trouble in the group because of his tendency to cut people off, interrupt when they had just started making their point. At the start of IT or tech lessons he tried to look at the news, online starting with the science and technology. Mark likes technology at school, especially the woodwork room where he made a clock and a letter rack. And the computer room where he was able to design and model in 3D and create 2D drawings. Mark appeared to have a stimulating and rich home environment. He played video, games like *Minecraft*, *Team Fortress Two*, *World of Tanks*, drew and painted in acrylics, did plastic modelling, and went swimming every weekend, and played board games with his younger sister who called him *Wicksapedia*, like *Wikipedia* (t15). Mark read a lot. He loved the *Gone Series*, manga, and a game-science magazine for teenagers called *Flipside*. He used to do scouts outside school, then just creative writing club.

Millie identified as British-White, and Church of England, both parents were born locally. Millie liked to make jokes. From week one she picked up the digital recorder and would mock-interview others around the table. Millie was part of the creative writing club, she did Taekwondo and was working towards grade seven piano. She used to do squash and rock climbing with her dad and sister. She enjoyed listening to a diverse range of music from

classical, like Handel, to My Chemical Romance and Coldplay (alternative rock). She wrote a lot, stories, poems and a novel. She was reading *Pride and Prejudice* having already read *Sense and Sensibility*, *Animal Farm*, and *Mansfield Park*. She was also watching the vlog, *Lizzie Bennett Diaries* on YouTube.

Rebecca identified as British-White, both parents were from the UK. Her favourite school subjects were Spanish and History. She had recently restarted trampolining. She identified as British-White, and had one sister and a half-brother. She was a member of the creative writing club. Rebecca loved history read about WW1 and the Victorian era at home. She had read and watched *War Horse*. Rebecca enjoyed, 'How the emotion gets across, you can really, even though you haven't had experience of war you can really connect to it'. She had a job washing in a pub kitchen. She read a lot, history and autobiographies, and also enjoyed poetry and writing. Rebecca thought that she might like to be a school teacher, specialising in history.

Rural-Mixed School

Group two

Ryan identified as British-White, both parents were from the UK. Ryan was more guarded than the others when I first met him; although he was quieter and reluctant to talk in one-to-one interviews he participated well in group discussions. Ryan had no experience of storytelling before, and could not think of any examples of folk or fairy tales, nor had he heard of the Grimm Brothers. He had one younger brother. When he was little Ryan had stories read to him but couldn't remember any examples, or didn't want to reveal that

information to me. He liked to play football and music, and also read quite a bit. He was reading *The Hobbit*, but had not read *Lord of the Rings*.

Lucy identified as British-White, both parents were from the UK. Lucy was very literate and quiet spoken. She liked to read factual or historical books like *Hero on a Bicycle*, based in occupied Italy in the Second World War. She also loved to play cricket. She had one older brother. Lucy had not heard a storyteller before, but remembered books being read at home by her mum, and parts of the story being left out because of Lucy's age at the time. Speaking of *Harry Potter* Lucy said, 'She would read ahead and edit bits out that she didn't think were... yeah, cause I think in the sixth book or something there's a lot about Ron and his girlfriend or Ginny and Harry'. When I asked Lucy what she thought of her mum doing this she mainly thought it was funny, 'I wasn't too worried, I don't think I really understood what was going on anyway, to be honest, at five. So it was alright'. Lucy was dyslexic and was concerned that would mean she was not able to participate in the group work.

Amy identified as British-White, both parents were from the UK, and she had an adopted sister. Amy liked to be creative, she enjoyed dance, music, art and read quite a bit such as *King of the Cloud Forest* (a blend of "reality" and fantasy). Music was important to her family, she played the viola. She went to folk festivals with her dad. Amy also watched the news. At school she liked subjects like English, art and RE. Amy was the only student that linked storytelling to stories her grandparents told her from their lives, but she could not remember any other experience of storytelling, except that teachers had read stories, and her grandparents read her stories also.

Peter identified as British-White, both parents were from the UK. Peter was a big horror fan (books and films) perhaps because his dad was a big fan of James Herbert. One of his

favourite book series was *Skulduggery Pleasant* (an Irish fantasy about a skeleton detective). He liked being scared. He enjoyed creative writing club at school and wanted to do tech club because they 'design cars and stuff'. In his spare time he played video games and football with his friends. He also slept or watched TV. He liked rap music with a good beat. When asked about his expectations in the initial interview he said, 'I'm not sure quite what to expect. They did it back in time when they didn't have a telly, used to tell stories, around the camp fire. It's mainly, I don't know, I guess it's the start to most horror movies [laughs]'. Peter also mentioned group reading at school, and that his mum used to read to him. He has one younger brother and two twin sisters.

Urban-mixed school

Group one

Aisha was from British and Jamaican parents. She did not consider herself religious, including Atheism. Aisha described herself as shy and quiet spoken, she was more talkative in one-to-one interviews than the groups which might have something to do with coming from a large family. She had two sisters and three brothers, some of whom were older and no longer live at home. She described frequently watching drama programmes with one sister, like *EastEnders*. Her parents did not work as they both had operations in the past. Her dad lived elsewhere in his own place. Aisha could not remember stories being read to her, and did not know what to expect from the storytelling sessions. She did not read or play many video games, except for the occasional racing game with one brother. Aisha enjoyed shopping for clothes with her friends Aisha said, 'I wear loads of things like leggings, Converse [Brand of trainer], jeans' (t34). Aisha also referred to being always on her phone, texting, or doing her homework on her mobile. She wanted to work in hair and beauty when

she left school, and was trying to get a job as a waitress to save some money and get work experience (t32).

Bo was born in the UK and Muslim. Both her parents were from Africa so she identified herself as British African. Bo played guitar, was part of a punk band and liked listening to heavy metal and rock music, anything 'with a good beat to it like R&B,' or with a message in the lyrics like *Don't Hold Your Breath* by Nicole Scherzinger [American dance-pop]. She also liked 'old school rap' like Tupac, Eminem, and Biggie (t32). She liked to draw portraits in pencil, and play sports or hang out with her friends. Because of these interests Bo planned to study art and music and become a tattooist (t32). She also read supernatural fiction like *Hush Hush* by Becca Fitzpatrick [supernatural romance]. 'I like that genre,' Bo said, 'Cause it's a bit of everything, it's adventure, romance and there's the imagination as well'. Bo assumed the stories would be read out of a book as she used to go to the library every day and there were storytelling sessions there with people reading from books. Her parents read to her a lot growing up, but she preferred not to be 'disturbed' in her 'own space'. When asked about fairy tales in particular she saw them as formulaic. 'I like Disney stories,' Bo said, 'but once you get into it you know what's going to happen, a happy ending. Introducing everyone, then gets into a problem, solve it, then happy ending.'

Dylan was British-Asian and went to an 'open religion temple'. He was an active young man who talked in a fast, bubbly way. He collected Batman comics and enjoyed video games like Batman and Assassins Creed. He preferred reading funny books like *Diary of a Wimpey Kid*, *the Twits*, and drew his own humorous cartoons. 'People call me too kiddieish,' he said, 'cause I wear Sponge Bob tops' (t34). He enjoyed wearing comic and cartoon related clothes, watched comedy shows like Ugly Betty (t34). Dylan had a black belt in kick boxing, loved

basketball, and was a member of the student council at school. He was also in a band but was asked to leave after missing a practice (t32). He had had lots of things read to him as a child by his mother and teachers. He was reading *the Book Thief* at school. Dylan expected the stories in the sessions to be read from a book, or to include some creative writing. He enjoyed making up his own rap songs (t34). His musical tastes involved Missy B, Missy Elliotts, Backstreet Boys, and Michael Jackson (t32). Dylan also had a YouTube channel where he created animated Lego videos (t34).

Khan identified with British Punjabi and went to a Sikh temple; he loved comedy horror films like *Scream* and *Scary Movie* and video games such as *Assassins Creed*, *Black Ops*, and *FIFA*. He talked about wanting to get work experience at the video store Game, so that he could get a discount on the games. He hated reading except for a football skills book he read a bit of every night (t32). Generally he watched movies before bed, or the Simpsons (t34). He enjoyed PE at school, was on the school football team, and played tennis with his friends at weekends. Khan also enjoyed rap music like *Without Me* by Eminem. In terms of storytelling he did not know what to expect. He remembered his parents reading stories from *Mother Goose* 'I liked all of them when I was younger' and admitted that he still 'read it sometimes'. The last time he remembered being read to at primary 'we had story time in a circle, they'd read you a story'. He couldn't remember what the books were. Khan helped his dad at work in his own handy man business and was thinking of training to do something similar.

Urban-mixed school

Group two

Amir's parents were from Africa, she was born in England and was Islamic. She was the oldest child of five: with two brothers and two sisters. She enjoyed art, PE, English, liked drawing portraits in pencil. Played netball. At home she drew, played sports or hung around open spaces like parks or stayed in when the weather was bad. She liked listening to music with beats like RnB. Songs with meaningful lyrics, like *Don't Hold your Breath*. She read supernatural romance like *Hush*. She liked fantasy 'because it's a bit of everything, adventure, romance, and imagination as well'. She used to read more when she was younger, and liked to be left alone so she could really get into the story. *Aladdin* was her favourite Disney film because 'he's just an ordinary boy and something really big happens to him. You can imagine yourself in it, how that experience changed everything in his life.'

David was from Africa and his parents were African. He enjoyed RE, English and Drama. He played for the school football team. At home he played video games like *FIFA 3* with his family, played football, or watched TV at a friend's house. He listened to Hip Hop music, and enjoyed movies like *Johnny English*. He had a stutter and was always tired in the groups as if he never got enough sleep. David did not like school. He did not watch the news a lot or read. His parents never read him stories perhaps because he had four brothers and three sisters.

Jamal's parents were from Iran and came to UK for work. He identified himself as Eurasian. He played football and table tennis with friends. In school he liked IT and PE. At home he was usually on Facebook, listening to music like pop anthologies and mixes, or PS3 'playing online with friends'. He played video games like *Black Ops*, *FIFA*, and *Call of Duty*. His mum told him stories when he was younger, 'She would just make things up'. He hated reading preferring to watch action films, with his brother, and comedy. He liked to philosophise, when I asked

him what he thought about Jamal said, 'Asking questions about myself and it's just getting confusing. There's so many questions and no answers to it, about God and everything. If God is loving and caring why does he give people pain and stress? Why does he give death? Why do people go to hell?' Jamal was good at maths. He was thinking of computer system engineering as a job when he left school.

Maru classed herself as British Pakistan, and Muslim. One parent was from Pakistan, the other from England. She watched things like Vampire Diaries on the TV, did not listen to music a lot, or read. Maru watched the news if her parents did. Usually the family would watch a DVD then sit and talk. She was one of seven siblings, three older and three younger. Maru was very quiet spoken, barely talking in the groups, which she said was because she was shy. She was read to at home and read to her younger siblings, 'baby books' like *That's Not My Monster*, and *The Hungry Caterpillar*.

Appendix 3. Consent form



My research aims to observe storytelling in a group setting. The information gathered will be used towards a postgraduate thesis. Sessions will take place over five weeks and be roughly one hour long. At the start of each session the storyteller will share a story to be discussed as a group. The conversation will be digitally-recorded to be converted into transcripts with all names and details changed to preserve anonymity. Any data collected will be stored securely. It is important to note that any information shared by individuals in the group is to be treated as confidential by their peers and that everyone is to be treated with compassion and respect.

I would also like to interview the students beforehand to get to know them and talk each student through how the group discussion will work. I would like to do a follow-up interview to see what the student's experience was and answer any questions they may have. If the student wishes to keep a video diary of their experience and thoughts and share this with the researcher any relevant information will be transcribed to preserve anonymity.

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

There is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation.

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me.

Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications.

If applicable, the information which I give may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form.

All information I give will be treated as confidential.

The researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity.

.....
(Signature of participant)	(Signature of parent)	(Date)

.....
(Printed name of participant)	(Printed name of parent)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher.

Contact details of researcher:

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact e.l.parfitt@warwick.ac.uk or write below

.....

Data Protection Act: The University of Warwick is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without any previous prior agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.

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Transcript 2. SW School, week two, 27 June 2012. ts.

Transcript 3. SW School, week three, t4 July 2012. ts.

Transcript 4. SW School, week four, t11 July 2012. ts.

Transcript 5. SW School, week five, t18 July 2012. ts.

Transcript 6. 15 April 2013. Rural-mixed school, week one, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 7. 22 April 2013. Rural-mixed school, week two, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 8. 29 April 2013. Rural-mixed school, week three, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 9. 13 May 2013. Rural-mixed school, week four, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 10. 20 May 2013. Rural-mixed school, week five, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 11. 15 April 2013. Rural-mixed school, week one, group 1, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 12. 22 April 2013. Rural-mixed school, week two, group 1, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 13. 29 April 2013. Rural-mixed school, week two, group 1, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 14. 13 May 2013. Rural-mixed school, week four, group 1, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 15. 20 May 2013. Rural-mixed school, week five, group 1, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 16. 19 April 2013. All-female school, week one, group 1, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 17. 26 April 2013. All-female school, week two, group 1, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 18. 3 May 2013. All-female school, week three, group 1, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 19. 10 May 2013. All-female school, week four, group 1, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 20. 17 May 2013. All-female school, week five, group 1, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 21. 19 April 2013. All-female school, week one, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 22. 26 April 2013. All-female school, week two, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 22. 26 April 2013. All-female school, week two, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 23. 3 May 2013. Urban-mixed school, week three, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 24. 10 May 2013. Urban-mixed school, week four, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 25. 17 May 2013. Urban-mixed school, week five, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 26. 25 April 2013. Urban-mixed school, week one, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 27. 9 May 2013. Urban-mixed school, week two, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 28. 9 May 2013. Urban-mixed school, week three, group 2, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 29. 16 May 2013. Urban-mixed school, week four, group 2, Warwickshire.

Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 30. 23 May 2013. Urban-mixed school, week five, group 2, Warwickshire.

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Transcript 31. 24 April 2013. Urban-mixed school, week one, group 1, Warwickshire.

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Transcript 32. 2 May 2013. Urban-mixed school, week two, group 1, Warwickshire. Recorded and transcribed by Emma Parfitt.

Transcript 34. 16 May 2013. Urban-mixed school, week four, group 1, Warwickshire.

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