USE OF DIDACTIC LEARNING MATERIALS DURING WHOLE-CLASS LITERARY CONVERSATIONS

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Abstract

In this article we examine teachers' use of publisher-produced didactic learning materials in a multiple case study in Danish lower secondary schools. We characterize the teachers' use of analytical and interpretive activities from publisher-produced learning materials in three 8th-grade classrooms during whole-class literary conversations in mother tongue teaching. The project is motivated by research showing that learning materials from publishing houses are widely used in primary and lower secondary schools. Yet we know very little about the influence of learning materials on literature teaching. Video observations of whole-class literary conversations were examined through a framework grounded in three theoretical foundations: 1) a usage analysis (of learning materials) (Gissel et al., 2021), 2) a content analysis (Norup, 2024), and 3) a structure analysis (Roberts & Langer, 1991). We show that declarative and procedural knowledge about the world and basic understanding of the literature and other aesthetic texts dominated whole-class conversations in the three classrooms, even though analytical and interpretational activities were available in the publisher-produced learning material. We also show that the teachers primarily talked about activities they had designed themselves, even though they used a publisher-produced learning material as the frame for their teaching.

Keywords: literature analysis, literature interpretation, publisher-produced learning materials, didactic learning materials, literature teaching, whole-class conversation

INTRODUCTION

While Danish elementary schools use learning materials from publishing houses extensively (Niss & Niss, 2006; Mogensen, 2013; Bundsgaard et al., 2017; SFI, 2021), as do other Scandinavian (Gilje, 2016; Skjelbred, 2019; Blikstad-Balas & Klette, 2021) and international school systems (Goodlad, 1984; Valverde et al., 2002; Uyulgan et al., 2011; Mullis et al., 2012; Bergqvist & Chang Rundgren, 2017). Research is instead lacking on *how* teachers use such learning materials (Knudsen et al., 2011). In this study, we focus on *didactic* learning materials, defined as "having been especially developed for teaching and therefore with a didactic intention" (Hansen & Gissel, 2017, p. 125). Examples of didactic learning materials are textbooks or worksheets. Typically, the intended context of use is evident from the presence of explicit learning objectives, student activities and other elements facilitating teachers' didactic actions. The didactic learning material can be produced by anyone, for example a publisher or a teacher. Findings from previous research indicate that didactic learning materials have an influence on classroom activity (Ullström, 2006; Rønning et al., 2008; Gilje, 2016; Bakken & Andersson-Bakken, 2016; Oksbjerg, 2021; Gissel et al., 2021; Kvithyld, 2022). In this study, we take the case of literature teaching in the Danish elementary school and examine how four teachers of three different 8th-grade classes (aged 13-15) used publisher-produced didactic learning materials. The classes comprised 23, 27 and 30 pupils respectively. The class with 30 pupils had two teachers as the class comprised two classes that had been combined from the same year group.

We will focus on two of the key terms in literature teaching, literature analysis and -interpretation, as these are key components of literary competence and therefore highlighted in the Danish curriculum (FFM, 2019). Research has shed some light on the literary didactic designs that learning materials for literature teaching suggest. Recent quantitative research on mother tongue teaching in literature at lower secondary school in Denmark has shown that the content of publisher-produced didactic learning materials is dominated by analytical activities (20%), while interpretational activities are more rare (8%) (Bundsgaard et al., 2017, p. 39; see also Schou, 2021). Qualitative studies have also found this tendency across Danish primary and lower secondary school grades (Skyggebjerg, 2017; Kristjánsdóttir, 2017; Rørbech, 2017; Rørbech & Skyggebjerg, 2020). While the fact that these learning materials for literature teaching encourage pupils to do analytical work in general is not necessarily problematic, some researchers argue that overemphasis on some forms of analytical work can present a challenge, as "a one-sided emphasis on the analytical way of working [with literature] has a negative impact on [...] the students' learning outcomes" (Elf & Hansen, 2018, p. 40: our translation). Studies of literature teaching rarely focus on teachers' actual use of learning materials (see examples on use of learning materials in literature teaching as focus in Oksbjerg, 2021; Gissel, 2021; Gissel et al., 2021). Consequently, we know little about whether learning materials for

literature teaching are used in the classroom in a manner that contributes to a positive impact on learning outcomes for pupils.

When practiced appropriately, analysis of literature and other aesthetic texts is an important part of literature teaching. Such analysis requires pupils to learn domain-specific language and competences, which pupils can benefit from both in school and in life (Oksbjerg, 2023, p. 91; see also Peskin et al., 2010; Peskin & Wells-Jopling, 2012; Levine, 2014; Gabrielsen et al., 2019; Nissen et al., 2021; McCarthy et al., 2021). This language can be expressed as an analytical approach often found in New Criticism, and according to Rødnes, it is crucial for gaining insights into the aesthetic texts (2014, s. 11). New Criticism is the literary approach traditionally associated with literature education (Fialho, 2019, p. 3; Bakke, 2022, p. 14). In the research project *Quality in Danish and Mathematics*, it was found that, among other things, text-based/New Criticism approaches dominate in publisher-produced didactic learning materials and literature teaching (Elf & Hansen, 2018, pp. 24-25 and 34). The dominance of this approach leaves little room for other relevant literary approaches, such as the reader-response approach, the biographical approach, or the critical approach (see distinction in Levine, 2019).

In this article, we examine how the activity suggestions from the authors of three publisher-produced didactic learning materials were used during whole-class literary conversations in three classrooms. We define a whole-class literary conversation as any coherent classroom activity centering around didactic learning materials with the purpose of engaging the whole class in a joint conversation about a piece of literature or an aesthetic text. We chose to focus on whole-class literary conversations, as this was one of the dominant ways the teachers organized the pupils' work. An examination of 36 hours of video observations of literature teaching in the three classrooms found that literary conversations constituted approximately 17 hours of the total time spent on literature teaching. In case one, 46% of the literature teaching was organized as whole-class conversation, while in case two 41% was organized as whole-class conversation and in case three, 56% was organized as whole-class conversation. Furthermore, we chose to focus on whole-class conversations because conversations in general are regarded as important for learning (Dysthe, 1995) and are a widely used form of work in school internationally (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Klette, 2003; Haug, 2012) and in mother tongue teaching (Klette, 2013). Specifically, whole-class *literary* conversation is a well-established method within literature didactics and a well-known form of establishing communities of interpretation (Hultin, 2006; Tengberg, 2011; Andersson-Bakken, 2015). We build on the Scandinavian use of the term *literary conversation* (Gourvennec & Sønneland, 2023). The term refers to a collective activity specific to literature instruction in schools (Aase, 2005), especially as an instructional method for text conversations in the Scandinavian L1 subjects. In English terms, it might be referred to with terms like *text talk*, *book talk*, *literature circles/book clubs* and *shared reading* (Gourvennec & Sønneland, 2023, p. 4).

STATE OF THE ART

Empirical research on classroom conversations dates back to 1860 (Nystrand, 2006) and in Scandinavian and U.S. research "a strong case has been made for the educational qualities of discussing literary texts in the classroom" (Tengberg, 2011, p. 90). Research on literary conversations is extensive. In the Nordic context, studies mainly have a qualitative approach and examine a variety of aspects, for example, the conversations' form and organization (Dysthe, 2001; Hultin, 2006; Sommervold, 2011; Andersson-Bakken, 2015; Hennig, 2019), possibilities for developing literary disciplinarity (Tengberg, 2011; Rødnes, 2014; Gourvennec, 2016; Kvistad et al., 2021; Hennig, 2022; Nissen, 2024) and the texts chosen for the conversations (Johansen, 2015; Sønneland & Skaftun, 2017; Sønneland, 2018; Hennig, 2020; Sommervold, 2020). In U.S. research, we also find quantitative studies measuring the effects of literary conversations with statistical measures of the occurrences of various aspects in the conversations, such as the amount and distribution of speaking time for teachers and students and effects on student comprehension and critical thinking (Chinn et al., 2001). In a meta-analysis of 42 quantitative studies focusing on the effects of text-based discussions on pupils' comprehension in nine different approaches to conducting classroom discussions about text, findings showed that the effects of discussion differ depending on the discussion approaches and whether the discussion had an efferent, aesthetic, or critical-analytic stance (Murphy et al., 2009). Still, there is a lack of research on literary conversations which take didactic learning materials as their starting point.

Internationally, empirical research on learning materials in use is sparse and has been requested for more than a decade (Horsley & Walker, 2005; Juuhl et al., 2010; Moje et al., 2010; Knudsen et al., 2011; Tomlinson, 2012; Christophe et al., 2018; Gabrielsen et al., 2019). This lack of studies includes use of learning materials in mother tongue teaching specifically (Gissel & Buch, 2020; Tannert & Berthelsen, 2020; Oksbjerg, 2021). Furthermore, studies of use of didactic learning materials in mother tongue teaching tend to pay little attention to the design of the learning material, thereby ignoring the interplay between learning material design and actualized teaching (Gissel & Buch, 2020). In studies of learning materials in use, the learning materials are a crucial focus point because they often function in practice as authoritative interpreters of curricula in the form of ready-to-use packages and have a significantly greater impact than policy documents (Ullström, 2006, p. 126). As research within the field of learning materials in use is sparse, the logical consequence is that few frameworks have been developed for analyzing situations where the learning material is the center of attention in a classroom (also noticed by Kvithyld, 2022, p. 3). This study describes and operationalizes such a framework in an empirical exploration of teachers' use of learning materials for specific purposes of literary teaching. Our focal research question is: What characterizes the teachers' use of analytical and interpretive activities suggested by publisher-produced learning materials in three 8th-grade classrooms during whole-class literary conversations?

ANALYTICAL STRATEGY AND ITS THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

We combine theoretical perspectives from the fields of learning materials, literature didactics and literary conversations. Each perspective has its own analytical framework that enables descriptive analysis of the teachers' use of analytical and interpretive activities. The perspectives were chosen as they represent three different aspects of the whole-class conversations: 1) what the class talked about (content analysis); 2) how the learning materials were used (analysis of teacher use of learning materials); and 3) how the teachers and pupils talked (structure analysis). Combining these three perspectives into a multi-level analytical framework enables us to gain nuanced knowledge about the teachers' use of learning materials. For instance, we can gain insight to how the teachers used the publisher-produced learning materials (examination of usage of learning material) when talking about analytical activities (examination of content) in particular ways (examination of structure) (see a similar strategy in Derry et al., 2010, p. 7; Kvithyld, 2022, pp. 56-58). In this section we briefly present the three theoretical perspectives that guide our analytical strategy.

1.1 Analysis of teacher use of learning materials

The first level of the framework examines how the teachers used didactic learning materials. The didactic learning material is per definition didacticized by the author of the learning material. This means that it is produced for teaching specific content (e.g., assignments, texts, activities, themes) using specific methods (e.g., flipped learning, case-based learning, simulation, scenario-based learning) (Skovmand & Hansen, 2011). Of course, the teacher can choose to follow or ignore the suggestions in the teacher's guidelines or student materials. To encompass this complexity in use scenarios, the analysis of teachers' use of the didactic learning materials is based on a three-part typology describing the extent to which the teacher adheres to or deviates from the suggested design of teaching laid out in the learning material (a similar approach was used by Brown, 2009; Sikorova & Cervenkova, 2014). When a teacher implements parts of the suggested design from the learning material directly, that is, without adapting or supplementing the suggested design, this is categorized as *commissioning* (Gissel et al., 2021). When the teacher makes changes to or opt outs from the didactization in the learning material, for example by twisting an activity in a different direction, this is termed a *redidactization* (Hansen, 2006). If the teacher supplements the learning material, for example by designing new kinds of tasks that were not present in the learning material, this is termed a *didactization* (Gissel et al., 2021). The concepts of commissioning, redidactization, and didactization constitute the analytical framework for analyzing how teachers use learning materials, as shown in table 1.

Table 1. Overview of the three codes in the analysis of teacher use of learning materials: the name and definition of each code with illustrative examples from our video observations of the teaching.

Usage analysis (of learning materials)	
Code	**Example**
Commissioning The sequence is guided by the learning material	Then you look at these three questions [the teacher points to the three questions in the publisher-produced learning material on the smart board. The teacher reads out the first question from the learning material:] "What expectations do you have of the text?"
Redidactization The sequence is adapted from the learning material	I have changed a little in the assignment from the [publisher-produced] learning material. Now you just have to write: "who are the people". So basically, what we know about them.
Didactization The sequence is an original design by the teacher or vaguely inspired by the learning material	[The pupils work with the teacher's orally framed task, which the teacher has designed and written down on a piece of paper. The pupils must categorize different types of poems]

1.2 Content analysis

Literature teachers teach pupils to read literature and other aesthetic texts in specialized ways that draw on approaches from the domain of literature teaching. We thus needed an analytical strategy that could capture the various ways learning material authors and teachers instruct pupils to relate to literature. Our study refers to these various ways of instructing as the content of didactic learning materials and whole-class literary conversations. To analyze these materials and conversations, the first author developed a coding manual for content analysis of literature teaching.

The coding manual was developed through an abductive approach comprising documents (e.g., publisher-produced didactic learning materials and the teachers' written planning) and video observations (e.g., whole-class conversations). This enabled the first author to develop a set of codes for content analysis of both the didactic learning materials for literature teaching, the teachers' planning and whole-class literary conversations. For example, the content code *interpretation* would be attached to sequences where pupils are instructed to interpret a short story by discussing the story's theme. Two of the classroom cases were used to develop the coding manual and the third case served as a trial of the coding manual.

Our theoretical approach to the content analysis distinguishes between *the world of the story* (which orients the reader to construct what the text *says*, e.g., to understand the plot of the story) and *the world beyond the story* (which orients the reader to construct what the text *means*, e.g., to interpret the theme of the text) in line with Kathryn S. McCarthy and Susan R. Goldman's view on literary reading (McCarthy & Goldman, 2015, p. 5; Goldman et al., 2015, p. 387; see also Hillocks & Ludlow, 1984; Alvermann & Hayes, 1989; Burkett & Goldman, 2016; McCarthy & Goldman, 2019).

McCarthy, Goldman and Burkett associate *the world of the story* with local inferences and the *world beyond the story* with global inferences with reference to Graesser et al. (1994) (Goldman et al., 2015, pp. 389-390). The two types of inferences, local and global, are frequently mentioned in research determining levels and nature of readers' inference making (Kispal, 2008, p. 22). And the distinction when researching reading is amongst others used by Vipond and Hunt (1984), McKoon and Ratcliff (1992), Beishuizen et al. (1999), Graesser et al. (1994), Gygax et al. (2004) and Wannagat et al. (2020). We employ the following definitions of local and global inferences in our analytical framework. Local inferences create "a coherent representation at the local level of sentences and paragraphs" (e.g., inferences about what happened, why and where it happened, who was involved) (Kispal, 2008, p. 22). Global inferences "create a coherent representation of the whole text, the reader would infer overarching ideas by drawing on local pieces of information" (e.g., inferences about the theme, main point or moral of a text) (Kispal, 2008, p. 22). In short, "local inferences create a coherent representation at the local level of sentences and paragraphs while global covers the whole text" (Kispal, 2008, p. 9).

Our analytical framework includes a further layer that the first author developed to represent *the world outside the story* (which orients the reader to include the external conditions surrounding the text, e.g., to find declarative knowledge about a novel). We added the world outside the story as we believe that external conditions to the literary or aesthetic text also play a central role in literary work. For example, external conditions can help pupils create inferences in the literary or aesthetic text by activating knowledge about the world (Graesser et al., 1994; Blau 2003).

The first author also added two codes, *framing* and *assessment*, to categorize situations that were not strictly related to the text, but to the literary work in general. During the coding process, we found that the literature didactic codes were not sufficient for coding all parts of the conversations. We needed general didactic codes to cover parts of the conversations that were not directly related to the text but were rather about how to organize the classroom (the framing code) and follow up on the pupils' work (the assessment code). Our framework for content analysis of whole-class literary conversations thus consists of ten codes (see table 2).

Several of the ten codes are interrelated in such a way that they cannot be practically separated. For example, understanding and interpretation, as well as analysis and interpretation, occur in a reciprocal interaction. For methodological reasons, we have separated them with the aim of examining the concepts individually, while acknowledging that they are essentially inseparable. The ten codes were chosen because they each represent prominent concepts, such as those used in Scandinavian curricula, learning materials, and everyday language in schools and educational institutions. Additionally, these concepts are frequently selected as codes in other empirical literature on literary didactics, although the terminology may vary across countries. For instance, coding often differentiates between analysis and interpretation in a manner similar to this article (see, for example: Hillocks & Ludlow, 1984;

Zeitz, 1994; Lewis & Ferretti, 2009; Kabel, 2016; Bundsgaard et al., 2017; Schou, 2021).

Table 2. Overview of the ten codes for content analysis of whole-class literary conversations: the name and definition of each code with illustrative examples from our observations. The examples originate from both the publisher-produced learning materials, the teachers' planning, and the classroom conversations.

Content analysis	
Code	**Example**
Perception Describing one's own emotional perceptions within the world of the literary or aesthetic text	How do you perceive the language in the short story?
Experience Recounting one's own and/or others' personal or collective experiences outside the world of the literary or aesthetic text which can be recalled and used actively	When I was a child, we didn't have a television in our own room
Knowledge Laying out declarative and procedural knowledge outside the world of the literary or aesthetic text	How old is the smoking law?
Understanding Identifying direct information in the literary or aesthetic text and to connect information across the text's sentences, paragraphs, or pages in order to draw basic inferences within the world of the text	Write a summary of chapter three in the novel
Analysis Breaking the literary or aesthetic text down into parts and reassembling them in a systematic examination within the world of the text	Characterize the main character
Interpretation Collating the analytical parts from work on the literary or aesthetic text so that a deeper meaning emerges that extends beyond the world of the text	What is the theme in the poem?
Evaluation Evaluating conditions within or outside the world of the literary or aesthetic text	What significance does it have for the plot of the short story that the point of view changes so many times?
Contextualization Placing the literary or aesthetic text into a wider context by elevating the text and contextualizing the interpretation to the world outside the text	What similarities does this short story have with the short story we read last week?
Framing Framing the learning materials and practical conditions	You must work in your groups during this activity
Assessment Assessing teaching or student learning	What went well during the process? And what did you learn?

1.3 Structure analysis

The last level of our analytical framework examines the structure in the whole-class conversations by studying how the teachers use conversational moves to facilitate publisher-produced learning materials. As a learning material author obviously cannot facilitate whole-class conversations, the teacher necessarily has this function and

thereby plays a prominent role in facilitation. The codes for the structure analysis in our framework stem from Roberts and Langer's coding categories for the purposes that underlie the speaking turns of teachers and pupils in a literary conversation and for the kinds of help teachers give to pupils (1991, pp. 10-11). These coding categories capture the structure of literary conversations in relation to how a literary or aesthetic text is talked about, and how the teacher facilitates the conversation.

Our framework consists of four main codes to examine how teachers use conversational moves in whole-class conversations. We limit our analysis to focusing on how the teacher helped the pupils (e.g., when the teacher provided hints) and how the teacher used different types of resistance (e.g., when the teacher challenged a pupil's point of view). These two perspectives were chosen to examine the conditions in which the pupils were to develop literary competence. The coding categories for our structure analysis are shown in table 3.

Table 3. Overview of the four main codes in the analysis of structure: the name and definition of each code with illustrative examples from our video observations of the teaching. The code 'help' includes five subcodes. Note that the overview consists of selected codes from Roberts and Langer (Roberts & Langer, 1991, p. 11). The examples originate from the classroom conversations from the three classrooms in our study.

Structure analysis		
Code	**Definition**	**Example**
Help	**Offering assistance or scaffolding to move thought along to broader or deeper considerations**	
Focus	Focusing attention or narrowing the field of consideration	"Is there anything else that makes you think that she could fight for something?"
Hint	Giving a bit of an idea or answer in an effort to elicit an expected or possible response	"There are also some signs that this is not happening right here and now, but a few years ago"
Modify/shape	Changing the idea(s) of another slightly, usually by using different language or adding something, in an attempt to elicit an alteration in the perceptions or idea that person has voiced	"You can call them *subgenres*"
Summarize	Reviewing or restating ideas which have been stated before by a number of people to bring them to everyone's attention	"Yes, everyday life. That's what almost all of you are saying"
Tell	Explicit statement of a fact or information for the purpose of establishing it as a given	"[The Smoking Act] has just turned 25 years old. So, it's been at least 25 years"
Disagree	Disagreeing with another's idea or position	"No, it's not [the character] Bitten who does that"

| Challenge | Asking someone (or the class) to consider an alternate view | "Is there any argument that it is not prose poetry?" |
| Upping the ante | Asking students to address a more difficult task than they are currently addressing | "You are absolutely right, but how does he do it?" |

METHOD

1.4 Research design

Our case-study research design uses data from video-recorded classroom observations, as this approach is well-suited to mapping tendencies in teaching (Elf & Hansen, 2018, p. 52). The data selected for analysis consist of teaching sequences from whole-class literary conversations (see table 4), while video recordings of other activities were omitted (e.g., 'brain breaks' or filling out wellbeing surveys; the same strategy is used by: Rangvid, 2013; Solem, 2017; and Nissen et al., 2021). The data were collected during 2022-2023.

Table 4. Overview of the scheduled lessons for literature teaching, the number of observations, the time spent on literature teaching, the time spent on whole-class conversations and the duration of the observational period.

	Scheduled lessons for literature teaching (of 45 minutes per. lesson)	Number of observations	Time spent on literature teaching	Time spent on whole-class conversations	Duration of the observational period
Case 1	21 scheduled lessons	6 observations	878 minutes (14.6 hours)	406.5 minutes (6.7 hours)	4 weeks
Case 2	20 scheduled lessons	10 observations	742 minutes (12.3 hours)	304.5 minutes (5 hours)	4 weeks
Case 3	17 scheduled lessons	6 observations	541 minutes (9 hours)	302.5 minutes (5 hours)	2 weeks

To study literature teaching empirically is a complex affair (Elf & Hansen, 2018, p. 50) and when learning materials are used, they become a part of a complex context in the classroom (Rønning et al., 2008, p. 29). Consequently, we took the case study approach due to its suitability for capturing complexity (Flyvbjerg, 2015) regarding both literature teaching and use of learning materials. The three cases were selected to examine different aspects of whole-class conversations to gain insight to the complexities when teachers use learning materials, rather than aiming to provide generalizations. The lower secondary school level was chosen because we wanted to study pupils who are near the end of their mandatory education and can be assumed to be skilled in approaching literature and other aesthetic texts in the domain-specific

way we wanted to examine, namely analysis and interpretation (Blau, 2003; Mason, 2006; Genereux & McKeough, 2007; Rørbech & Skyggebjerg, 2020).

The video camera was placed to capture the detailed use of the didactic learning material, which was viewed on the smartboard and/or black-/whiteboard (e.g., when the teacher was pointing at a specific assignment or showing pictures). As the scope of our case study is not concerned with what pupils *do* but what they *say*, the first author chose not to disturb the pupils by pointing a camera towards them and thus tried to avoid disrupting the natural setting more than necessary.

1.5 Participants

The participants in the study were four teachers from three different average-sized public schools. One of the observed classrooms had two teachers, as two classes were combined into one (case 2). Two of the schools were located in suburbs of Denmark's capital and one in a medium-sized city on the mainland. To participate in the project, the teachers had to be employed in a public school and perform mother tongue teaching in Danish in 8th grade. Further, they were to have chosen a didactic learning material for their teaching without any involvement from the researcher, which they were to select because they saw potential in using it for their particular class. The participants have consented in accordance with article 6(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Table 5 provides an overview of the characteristics of the three cases, including a description of the teachers' professional profiles and characterization of the pupils in their classrooms.

The characterization of the teachers and pupils paints a picture of three similar 8th-grade classes. The teachers are relevantly trained and experienced and the classes consist of pupils with a fairly even distribution of capabilities for working with literature. The similarities make it possible to detect patterns across the three cases.

1.6 Coding procedure

The initial part of the coding procedure was carried out in collaboration with the first and third author to ensure a common understanding and use of each of the codes. The whole-class conversations were transcribed and coded by the first author following the coding manual of our analytical framework (see the detailed coding strategy with examples in the coding manual: Norup, 2024). This entailed coding the transcriptions of the whole-class conversations in three layers, each representing one level in the framework: usage of learning materials during whole-class conversations, content in whole-class conversations and structure of whole-class conversations. Units of utterances that did not meet the definitions from the framework were coded as *residual* (e.g., irrelevant remarks, indistinct sound). These units comprised a fairly small part of the transcripts in total. It is challenging to code dynamic classroom conversations, especially in cases where the coder needs to distinguish between instances when pupils are discussing their analysis *or* interpretation, as the

two activities can appear similar. In the coding process, we have therefore applied the principle of *functional weight* (see the same strategy in Bundsgaard & Illum Hansen, 2016, pp. 12-13). Functional weight, in this context, means that when there is a possibility of assigning two or more codes, the coder must assess which of the possible codes has the greatest weight and thus should be the code ultimately assigned to the utterance(s) (Norup, 2024, p. 8).

Table 5. Overview of the characteristics of the three cases. Descriptions of the teachers' professional profiles and characterization of the pupils in their classrooms.

	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Number of pupils	23	30	27
The teachers' educational background	Teacher education (but not with a specialization in mother tongue teaching), a completed education as Master of Science in Information Technology and a Pedagogical Diploma Program	*Teacher 1*: Teacher education (with a specialization in mother tongue teaching) *Teacher 2*: Teacher education (with a specialization in mother tongue teaching)	Teacher education (with a specialization in mother tongue teaching), a completed education as Master of Arts in Nordic Language and Literature
The teachers' work experience of being a teacher (full time)	21 years (15 years of experience with teaching mother tongue teaching)	*Teacher 1*: 18 years *Teacher 2*: 34 years	17 years
The teachers' assessment of the number of pupils with special needs and the characteristics of those needs	None of the pupils had special needs. However, there were three pupils with special teaching needs in relation to Danish as a second language	12 pupils had special needs and 10 of these pupils had dyslexia	One pupil with dyslexia, one with visual impairment and reduced cognitive function, one with autism. In addition, there were two pupils who received special needs teaching related to autism and two received special needs teaching related to ADHD
The teachers' rating of each individual pupil's capability towards activities when working with literature or other aesthetic texts	Good: 5 Average: 10 Challenged: 8	Good: 10 Average: 10 Challenged: 10	Good: 8 Average: 10: Challenged: 9

The coding of the whole-class conversations was carried out in the data processing program NVivo. The coding of the utterances ranged from units consisting of one word to multiple sentences in the transcripts (see also McCarthy & Goldman, 2015, p. 592) and was carried out while looking at both utterances that occur before and after the unit at hand (see e.g., Alvermann & Hayes, 1989, p. 311). This means that a string of utterances was considered while placing a code for just one utterance in

the string. The results of the coding were calculated based on utterances counted in the transcripts as characters without spaces. The reason we chose to count characters without spaces was that the utterances, and strings of utterances, were too short to use time-based records of utterance duration from the video data.

In each case, the teachers selected a publisher-produced course from one of the two largest and most frequently used Danish digital portals for learning materials: *Gyldendal* and *Alinea*. The materials had undergone an editorial process before being published on the respective companies' websites. The three courses in our cases contain instructions and activities for the pupils and a teacher's guide. The teacher in case 1 chose the material *Dig og mig ved daggry* [You and me at dawn] (Bach, n.d.). The aim of this material is to read and work with a contemporary novel using cooperative learning as an approach. The teachers in case 2 chose the material *Noveller fra 00'erne* [Short stories from the 2000s] (Rasmussen, n.d.). In this material, the pupils are suggested to read and work with short stories. The aim is for the pupils to learn to apply selected analytical tools. The teachers in case 3 chose the material *Sci-fi: Fremtiden er her nu* [Sci-fi: the future is here now] (Ertbølle, n.d.). In this material, a variety of texts are available (e.g. poems, short stories, movie trailers etc.). The aim is for the pupils to develop genre awareness and be able to interpret based on the author's contemporary context. As such, all three materials are intended for literary teaching.

The coding of activities from the publisher-produced learning materials was carried out by breaking the activities down to the smallest possible instruction within each activity. Each instruction was assigned its own code. For example, one activity suggested that the pupils' work with an activity called 'before you read'. The activity consists of five different instructions. Here are two of them:

1) Investigate when the first reality show in Denmark was broadcast (code = knowledge)
2) What is the most extreme reality show you know? Argue that it is the most extreme (code = evaluation)

Instruction 1 received the code *knowledge* as the pupil could for example google-search for an answer online as to when the first reality show in Denmark was broadcast. Instruction 2 received the code *evaluation* as the pupil was asked to decide on the most extreme reality show based on argumentation. Table 6 below is an overview of the number of instructions in the publisher-produced learning materials and in the teachers' planning in the three cases.

Table 6. Overview of the number of instructions in the publisher-produced learning materials and in the teachers' planning in the three cases.

	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
The number of instructions in the publisher-produced learning materials	74	170	93
The number of instructions in the teachers' planning	135	87	76

While each of the three levels in the framework function as separate analytical approaches to the data, when combined, they can reveal more insights into the research questions than any one of them could contribute alone. There are multiple ways to combine the data using the three levels and more results can be generated than needed to answer the research questions for this article. Therefore, we have limited the way we generate data to focus on the following key aspects:

1) *Content analysis*: overview of the content during the whole-class conversations (e.g., to what extent the pupils talked about literature analysis and interpretation)
2) *Content analysis combined with the usage analysis (of learning materials)*: overview of not only to what extent the learning materials were used during the whole-class conversations, but also which types of learning material use were present when the classes worked with literature analysis and interpretation (e.g., to what extent literature analysis was present when the teachers used the publisher-produced learning material)
3) *Content analysis combined with the structure analysis*: overview of not only how often the selected conversational moves were used but also in which content categories they occurred (e.g., to what extent disagreement concerning interpretations of the literary text occurred)

RESULTS

In the following, we present the results from the examination of the four teachers' use of analytical and interpretive activities from publisher-produced learning materials during whole-class conversations: 1) the results for the content analysis 2) the results for the content analysis combined with the usage analysis (of learning materials) 3) the results for the content analysis combined with the structure analysis.

1.7 Content during whole-class conversations

The content analysis gives an overview of what content was brought up during whole-class conversations and to what extent, divided into when the teachers and pupils are speaking. For example, content was identified as a pupil giving a summary of the literary text (code = understanding) or the teacher going through his/her characterization of the main character (code = analysis).

First, the results show that the teachers did most of the talking during whole-class conversations (see table 7).

Secondly, when viewing the distribution of content in the teachers' utterances (see figure 1) the dominant category is *framing*. Next come *understanding* and *knowledge*. The fact that the teachers spoke most of the time during whole-class conversations and that a large part of their utterances had a framing function, where the teachers for example instructed the pupils about what they had to do and for how long, left little time for actually talking about the literature or other aesthetic

texts. If one adds the large amount of utterances in the categories *understanding* and *knowledge*, over 70% of the utterances in all of the three cases were about instructions, talk about declarative and procedural knowledge from the world surrounding the texts and basic understanding of the literature or other aesthetic texts (case 1: 76%, case 2: 77%, case 3: 70%). This is, amongst other things, at the expense of analysis and interpretation.

Table 7. Percentage distribution of who is talking during whole-class conversations: the teachers and pupils. Note: the percentage distribution is calculated based on utterances counted in the transcriptions as characters without spaces.

	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
How much did the teachers talk during whole-class conversation?	74%	92%	67%
How much did the pupils talk during whole-class conversation?	26%	8%	33%

Figure 1. Distribution of the content categories in percent for when the teachers speak. Note: the percentage distribution is calculated based on utterances counted in the transcriptions as characters without spaces.
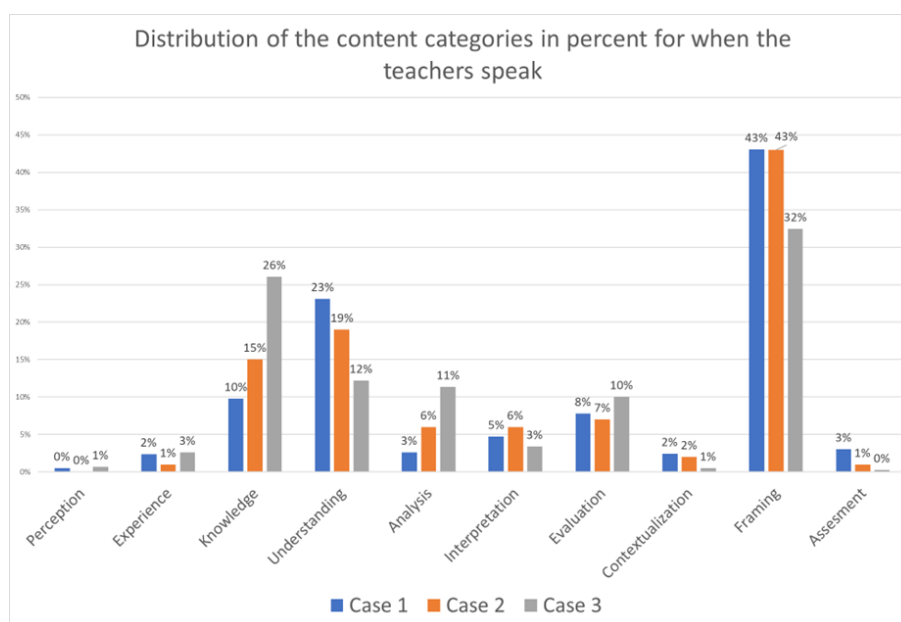

Figure 2 shows that when the pupils spoke during whole-class conversations most of their speaking time falls into the category *understanding* and thereafter *evaluation*. Case 3 differs by also having a large part of utterances in the category *knowledge*.

Figure 2. Distribution of the content categories in percent for when the pupils speak. Note: the percentage distribution is calculated based on utterances counted in the transcriptions as characters without spaces.
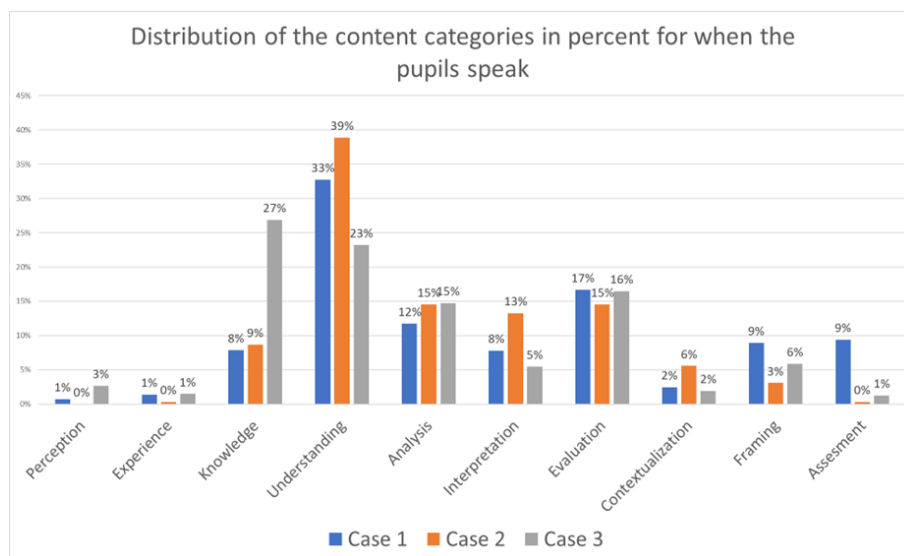
In summary, the teachers spent a large part of the speaking time on framing the teaching and the pupils on understanding the text. Analysis and interpretation were not notably prioritized during the whole-class conversations. Table 8 gives an overview of the total numbers of activities coded as *analysis* and *interpretation* in the publisher-produced learning materials the teachers used for framing their teaching. These numbers show that multiple activities for analysis and interpretation were present in the learning material:

Table 8. Distribution of analytical and interpretational activities by actual numbers and in percentage of total (in parentheses). The total number of activities in the publisher-produced learning materials is shown for comparison.

	Number of activities in the publisher produced learning materials		
	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Analysis	15 (20%)	29 (17%)	15 (16%)
Interpretation	0 (0%)	10 (6%)	16 (17%)
Total number of activities in the publisher-produced learning materials	n = 74 (100%)	n = 170 (100%)	n = 93 (100%)

Compared to the amount of analytical and interpretational activities in the publisher-produced learning materials, analysis and interpretation was a fairly small part of both the pupils' and teachers' talk. The three publisher-produced learning materials

consisted of 15-29 analytical activities. Two of the materials contained respectively 10 (case 2) and 16 (case 3) interpretational activities. The material from case 1 had no interpretational activities. Thus, the teachers had several analytical and interpretative activities at hand, but they chose not to put them into play during whole-class conversations.

1.8 Use of learning materials during whole-class conversations

The following section presents the results from the content analysis combined with the usage analysis (of learning materials). By combining these two levels in our framework, we can identify how teachers used the materials for analytical and interpretive activities respectively during whole-class conversations.

Figure 3 shows the distribution between the three types of use of learning materials during the whole-class conversations. The usage type *didactization* constitutes approximately half of the time when teachers and pupils spoke in all three cases. This means that half of the whole-class conversations centered on activities the teachers had designed themselves. *Commissioning* is the second most used learning material usage type, where the class spoke about activities taken directly from the publisher-produced learning material. The least used learning material usage type is *redidactization* which consisted of talk about adapted activities from the publisher-produced learning material.

Figure 3. Distribution of the three different types of learning material use during whole-class conversations. Note: the percentage distribution is calculated based on utterances counted in the transcriptions as characters without spaces.
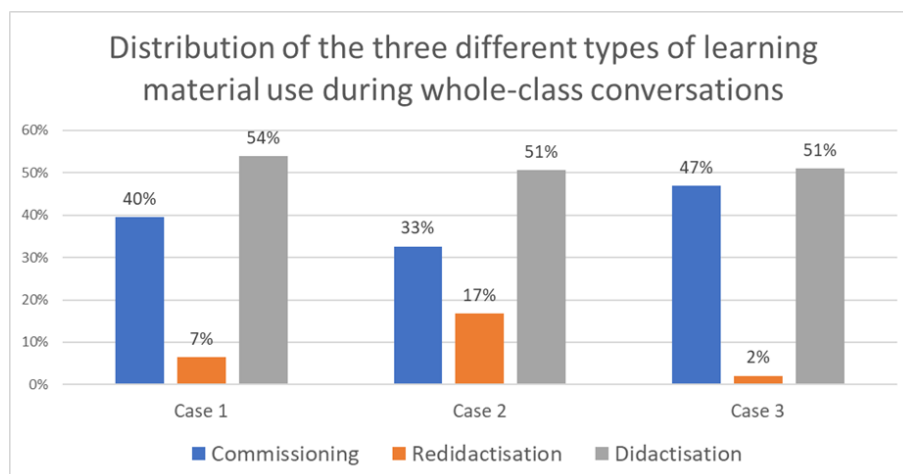
Even though the teachers in all three cases had chosen a publisher-produced learning material as a frame for their literature teaching, the classes mostly talked with an outset in the teachers' own designs.

Further, we combined the usage analysis with the content categories *analysis* and *interpretation*. The results for the code *analysis* show that the classes mostly talked with an outset in analytical activities from the publisher-produced learning materials - directly or redidactized. When looking at the code *interpretation,* the picture is quite different. The classes talked with an outset in both the publisher-produced learning materials, the teachers' redidactization and didactization.

Table 9. Overview of the number of analytical and interpretational activities the teachers had planned to use from the publisher-produced learning material (commissioning), the number of activities the teacher had planned to use adapted from the publisher-produced learning material (redidactization) and the number of activities the teacher had planned to use from his/her own designs (didactization).

|	**Commissioning** - number of activities the teacher had planned to use from the publisher-produced learning material	**Redidactization** - number of activities the teacher had planned to use adapted from the publisher-produced learning material	**Didactization** - number of activities the teacher had planned to use from his/her own designs
Case 1			
Analysis	14	0	3
Interpretation	0	0	6
Case 2			
Analysis	10	4	4
Interpretation	0	0	5
Case 3			
Analysis	6	2	7
Interpretation	5	0	3

The numbers in table 9 show that the teachers planned to mainly use analytical activities from the publisher-produced learning materials or adaptations of it and planned to mostly use interpretational activities based on their own design. This indicates that more open-ended activities with a variety of answers such as interpretational ones can be less appealing for the teachers to adopt from the publisher-produced learning materials.

1.9 Content when scaffolding during whole-class conversations

In the remaining part of the results section, we combine the content and structure analysis with a focus on conversational moves when the teachers scaffolded (helping) and when resistance was applied (disagreeing, upping the ante and challenging) during whole-class conversations. The combination of the content and structure analysis gives insight into how often the conversational moves were used and in which content categories they occurred.

First, we turn to focus on the teachers' scaffolding of the literature teaching (code = help). A teacher can facilitate whole-class conversations in many ways, for example, by organizing turn-taking, asking questions or confirming pupils' answers. The teachers' scaffolding is an important part of the conversations. The structure analysis shows that in all three cases the teachers' scaffolding was the dominant part of their speaking time (case 1: 73%, case 2: 82% and case 3: 62%). When focusing on scaffolding, most of the help given by the teachers to the pupils was when the teacher explicitly stated a fact or gave information with the aim of establishing it as a given (code = tell). For example, the teacher in case 1 delivered facts about the authors of the novel instead of having the pupils do research themselves: "It is therefore both a man and a woman who wrote the book" (quote from case 1). The rest of the teachers' scaffolding is divided between the codes focus, hint, modify/shape and summarize. When combining the structure and content analysis with a focus on the code tell (the most dominant way the teachers scaffolded the whole-class conversations), the results show that the categories *understanding* and *knowledge* are the most dominant (figure 4). The teachers told the pupils how to understand the literature and other aesthetic texts and gave them declarative and procedural knowledge about the world surrounding the text.

Figure 4. Distribution of the content categories in percent for when the teachers used telling as a way of scaffolding during whole-class conversations. Note 1: framing and assessment are not included, as these two categories, even though they are an important part of the teachers' scaffolding in general, are not considered closely related to the textual work itself. Note 2: the percentage distribution is calculated based on utterances counted in the transcriptions as characters without spaces.
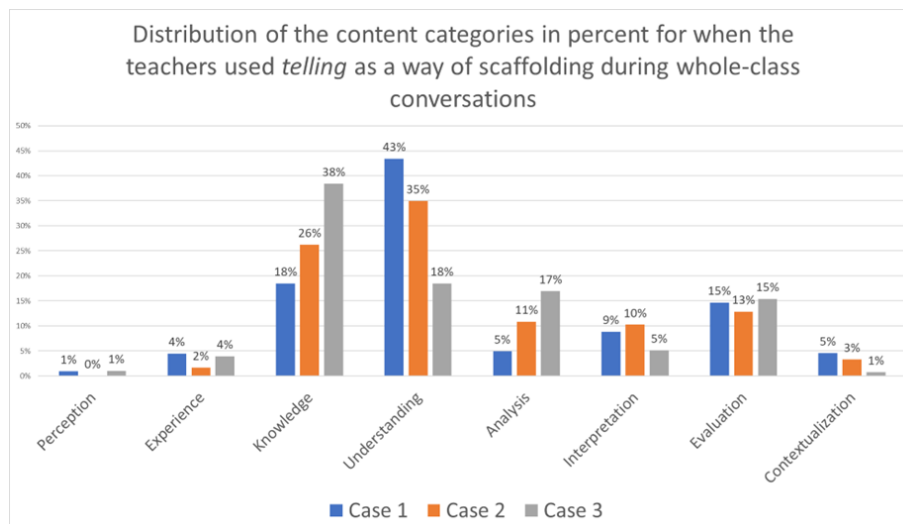
The teachers put emphasis on conveying their knowledge about the world and understanding of the literature and other aesthetic texts to the pupils during whole-

class conversations. This was at the expense of having the pupils doing their own research and working on their own understanding. Furthermore, the teachers' own analyses and interpretations of the texts were not extensively presented for the pupils to engage with. This suggests that the teachers felt there was less need to explain their analysis and interpretation of the texts to the pupils.

1.10 Content when disagreeing during whole-class conversations

This section presents the content categories in which *disagreements* occurred. For instance, a disagreement can occur when discussing how to understand which of the characters are present in the novel in a specific location:

> **Pupil C**: I think it's the daughter
>
> **Pupil F**: It is the mother
>
> **Teacher**: It is actually the mother and father inside the morgue

The publisher-produced learning material does not encourage disagreement or have specific activities that ask if the pupils agree or not. But as shown in table 10, disagreements occurred between 16-36 times during whole-class conversations in the three cases.

Table 10. Overview of how many times disagreement occurred in the three cases. Note: the number of occurrences has been chosen rather than converted to a percentage of total occurrences, as a percentage distribution can obscure how few occurrences there actually are. For example, six occurrences would look like a lot when converted to a percentage of 21%.

	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Total number of occurrences in the category *disagreement*	36	28	16

Figure 5 shows the distribution of the content categories when disagreements occurred during whole-class conversations. In all three cases, disagreement for the most part occurred when the pupils and teachers spoke about how to understand the literary or aesthetic texts (code = understanding) and declarative and procedural knowledge about the world surrounding the texts (code = knowledge). Disagreement in the category *analysis* also happened but is only a minor part of the disagreements in all three cases (2-5 occurrences). Only in case 2 did disagreements occur in the category *interpretation* (6 occurrences) and none in case 1 and 3.

Disagreements in the three classrooms were rare when one considers that the whole-class conversations for the three cases in total consisted of almost 17 hours of interaction about literature and other aesthetic texts.

Figure 5. Distribution of the content categories in the number of occurrences for when disagreement happened in the three cases. Note: the number of occurrences has been chosen rather than converted to a percentage of total occurrences, as a percentage distribution can obscure how few occurrences there actually are. For example, six occurrences would look like a lot when converted to a percentage of 21%.
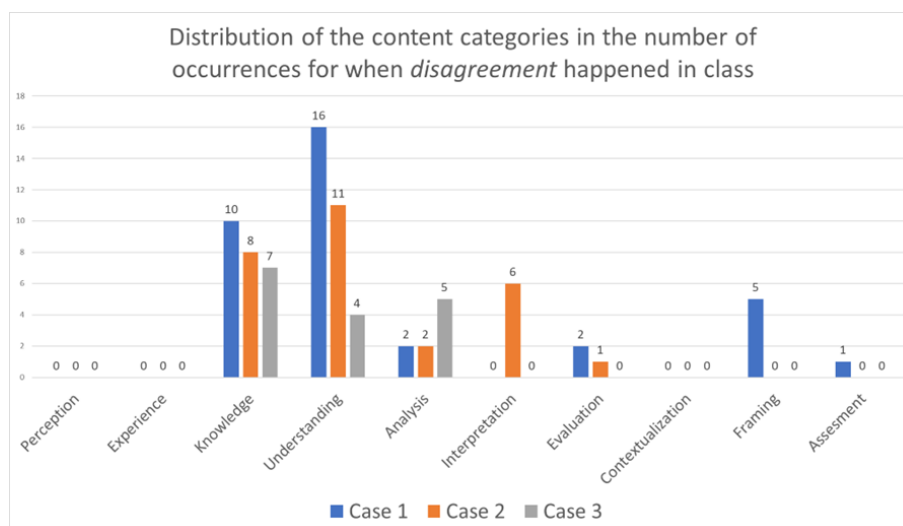
1.11 Content when upping the ante during whole-class conversations

In this section the code *upping the ante* was identified in situations where the teachers asked the pupils to address a more difficult task than they were currently addressing. When *upping the ante* was used during whole-class conversations it was typically teacher questions that sought to prompt a pupil to answer one or more *why questions* with the aim of addressing reasons, for example:

> **Pupil C:** This is where Mr. Fris says he freezes and dies
>
> **Teacher:** And why does it escalate the conflict?
>
> **Pupil C:** Because the main character is really provoked by it. It will affect the main character a lot

In the publisher-produced learning materials the pupils in case 1 were asked to answer why-questions eight times, in case 2 ten times and in case 3 thirteen times. For example: "Are these important themes to read about when you are young yourself? Why/why not?". As shown in table 11, the teachers asked pupils to up the ante between 15-30 times during whole-class conversations in the three cases.

These numbers show that there were significantly more occurrences of why-questions during the whole-class conversations than in the learning materials. These questions, however, were not the same as the suggestions in the learning materials, but rather the teachers' own questions.

Table 11. Overview of how many times upping the ante occurred in the three cases. Note: the number of occurrences has been chosen rather than converted to a percentage of total occurrences, as a percentage distribution can obscure how few occurrences there actually are. For example, six occurrences would look like a lot when converted to a percentage of 21%.

	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Total number of occurrences in the category *upping the ante* during whole-class conversations	15	30	22

Figure 6 shows a great variation in the categories in which the teachers ask the pupils to up the ante during whole-class conversations in the three cases.

Figure 6. Distribution of the content categories in the number of occurrences for when upping the ante happened in the three cases. Note: the number of occurrences has been chosen rather than converted to a percentage of total occurrences, as a percentage distribution can obscure how few occurrences there actually are. For example, six occurrences would look like a lot when converted to a percentage of 21%.
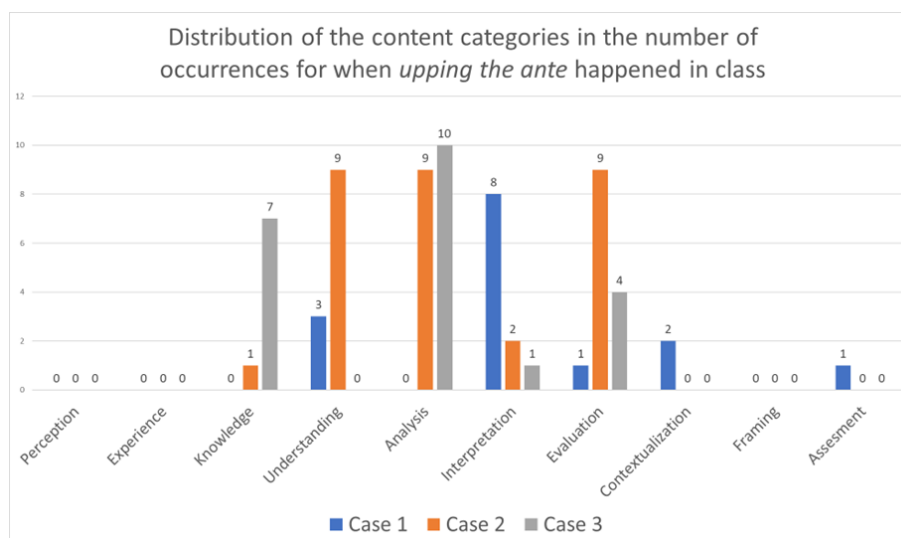
As with the results for the category *disagreements*, *upping the ante* was not a widely used move during whole-class conversations. This causes the distribution of the content categories to appear random.

1.12 Content when challenging during whole-class conversations

Only one activity in each of the learning materials from cases 1 and 3 consisted of a challenge where the pupils were instructed to consider an alternate view. For example, in the learning material from case 1, the pupils were asked to consider if the main character could have handled things differently. In contrast, we coded nine activities from the learning material in case 2 as challenges. During the whole-class

conversation only three *challenges* were found across the three cases where some-one (or the class) was asked to consider an alternate view. For example, the teacher in case 3 challenged a pupil by asking: "Is there any argument that it is not prose poetry?", challenging the pupil's answer that the poem was prose poetry.

Thus, we again found that one of the selected conversational moves was almost absent. *Disagreements* and *upping the ante* were rare, but *challenges* were almost non-existent.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

In the following we will discuss the key findings from the multi-level coding of the whole-class literary conversations in the three classrooms.

Our content analysis generated knowledge about the distribution of who is talk-ing divided between teachers and pupils and about *what* the teachers and pupils talked about during literary conversations. We found that the teachers talked con-siderably more than the pupils during whole-class conversations. This phenomenon is noted in several other studies (Flanders, 1970; Marshall, 1989; Chinn et al., 2001; Nystrand, 2006; Alexander, 2020). The two content categories which received the least attention during whole-class conversations were *perception* and *experience*. This was surprising, as these two categories are the prerequisite for analysis in the Danish national curriculum (FFM, 2019), a starting point for an understanding of the text (Bakke & Lindstøl, 2021) and makes it more likely that the pupils identify literary devices and speak more frequently during conversations (Levine et al., 2021, s. 497 and 503). The lack of focus on *perception* and *experience* that we found is similar to the results of a Norwegian video study of 50 different classrooms in lower secondary schools, which reported that these two categories carried limited practical signifi-cance (Blikstad-Balas & Roe, 2020, p. 98; see also Gabrielsen et al., 2019; Levine et al., 2022).

Approximately half of the teachers' utterances were spent on framing, which has previously been found as a frequent priority among teachers in research (Klette, 2013, p. 185). Of the content categories that are directly related to working with literature and other aesthetic texts the dominant category during whole-class con-versations was *understanding*. Both teachers and pupils talked extensively about their understanding at a basic level (e.g., what is the plot in the short story?). This finding corresponds with similar findings in a number of studies at different levels in school and educational systems (Chinn et al., 2001; Tengberg, 2011; Levine & Hor-ton, 2015; Tengberg, 2019; Blikstad-Balas & Roe, 2020; Blikstad-Balas & Klette, 2021). On the one hand, this tendency is noteworthy as analysis and interpretation are some of the key terms of literature teaching and thereby should have a promi-nent place. On the other hand, understanding is a precondition for analysis and in-terpretation, which makes the result a logical consequence; it is difficult to have an idea of a novel's theme if one has not understood what one has read in the novel. Research also shows that literary novices or pupils "tend to closely paraphrase the

text and rely on more domain-general meaning-making strategies" (McCarthy et al., 2021, p. 93), which can explain why a basic understanding is predominantly represented in the results. Overall, both pupils and teachers placed great emphasis on grasping the text at a basic level when speaking.

When much of the conversation time is spent on working with understanding what the texts *say*, less time is left to work with what the texts *mean* at an interpretational level. However, when analysis and interpretation were present, our results for the most part show that analysis was more prominent than interpretation. This aligns with other studies showing that inferential thinking and interpretation activities are rare. For instance, Tengberg (2019) finds few examples of intellectually challenging tasks and deeper interpretive work. Blikstad-Balas and Roe (2020) find that teachers spend time identifying literary elements, but this is not followed by reflections and discussions about the effects of these elements, how a literary element may be used to emphasize something or how they can be understood in different ways (see also Gabrielsen et al., 2019; Oksbjerg, 2021). Interpretation is an expression of what literature and other aesthetic texts convey about humanity and the world (McCarthy & Goldman, 2015, p. 585). Therefore, interpretation should hold a prominent place in literature teaching. Otherwise, working with literature and other aesthetic texts is at risk of being reduced to instrumental manoeuvres, where pupils spend their time rigidly filling out analytical templates (e.g., if pupils answer the exact same questions every time, they conduct an analysis of a piece of literature). In such cases, literature analysis overshadows other important perspectives of literature teaching (e.g., experience, perception and interpretation). Together with our findings, this may indicate that working with literature and analytical activities have a potential to be instrumentalist, while literature work on the literature's own premises, including the experience and perception aspects, is given little space.

An uneven distribution of analysis and interpretation in didactic learning materials was also reported by a quantitative research project on mother tongue teaching (in Danish) (Bundsgaard et al., 2017). Bundsgaard et al. (2017) suggest two possible explanations for this uneven distribution: "This result might indicate that the learning materials prescribe a considerable amount of analytical work that is not used for actual interpretational work. It may also be the case that interpretation requires a relatively larger amount of analytical work" (p. 40: our translation). In classroom practice, these could also be likely explanations for the uneven distribution of analysis and interpretation. In addition, we would like to add two possible explanations that are only applicable when learning materials are used in classrooms. First, time was a factor, as teachers must decide how much time a class should spend on analysis and interpretation when the time frame is limited by a lesson schedule. Second, the learning materials should fit the specific context of the class, thus teachers must decide what the pupils in a specific class need when working with the literary or aesthetic text.

All the participating teachers in the project are experienced. Previous research shows that experienced teachers are less dependent on learning materials than

inexperienced teachers (Wade & Moje, 2000; Tsui, 2003; Grossman & Thompson, 2008; Gray, 2010). Therefore, it came as no surprise that the teachers deviated from the publisher-produced learning materials. The surprise was the extent to which the teachers deviated. The teachers had originally chosen the publisher-produced learning materials as a frame for their literature teaching. But the results showed that the whole-class conversations mainly centered around the teachers' own designs (see also Gilje et al. 2016). For example, a teacher in case 1 used time on a regular basis during whole-class conversations on self-made reading comprehension questions. We can consider two reasons for the conversations centering around the teachers' own designs. First, this focus on the teachers' own designs could indicate that the teacher guidelines in the publisher-produced learning materials are deficient. Research shows that teacher guidelines in digital learning materials tend to be too minimalistic and do not inform the teacher why a given task or question could be appropriate, for example, for fostering a dialogue and how one could support pupils in voicing their reflections towards the text (Gissel et al., 2023). In other words, teachers do not get access to the intermediate didactic purposes of the material. The teacher guidelines only contain suggestions that remain unelaborated. As the teacher guidelines in our three cases were lacking as described above, it comes as no surprise that the teachers found the need to adapt and supplement the learning material as they knew their own reasons as to why an activity was relevant.

A second reason that the conversations centered around the teachers' own designs could be that the teachers felt more comfortable speaking within their own designs. In this way, the teacher is likely more aware of *what* activities the class should talk about, *why* they should talk about those and *how* to talk about them.

Further, our results show that when the teachers chose to talk about analytical activities during whole-class conversations, they did so in two forms: exactly as written by the author of the material or adapted from it. This indicates that the teachers are comfortable commissioning (or partly taking over) analytical activities designed by the author of the learning material. This tendency might be caused by the more closed nature of analytical activities. Compared to interpretation, analytical activities have fewer response options.

When it came to the interpretational parts of the conversations, the teachers used commissioning, redidactization and didactization. Interpretation was carried out during the whole-class conversations with an outset in both the publisher-produced learning materials, the teachers' adaptations from them and the teachers' own original designs. The lesser emphasis on talking about interpretational activities from the learning materials produced by the publisher can be attributed to the fact that interpretational activities are open to developing conversations in any number of directions. This openness can cause difficulties for the teachers in facilitating questions and assignments made by another (in these cases, a learning material author) because the whole-class conversation may have led the interpretation in different directions than what the author of the learning material had envisioned. Optimally, a whole-class conversation about how to interpret a literary or aesthetic text should

be based on the students' previous investigations and findings (FFM, 2019). There-fore, it makes sense that ready-made instructions for an interpretive conversation can be discarded by the teacher if other aspects of the text than those envisioned by the author of the material have been the center of attention in the class.

Many assignments in learning materials for mother tongue teaching do not pro-vide the necessary scaffolding for pupils (Slot, 2015) and many pupils find it hard to understand the instructions (Reichenberg, 2000, p. 177). Therefore, the teacher can-not rely solely on the learning materials to instruct, guide, and help the pupils; the whole-class conversation addresses this issue by enabling the teacher to scaffold col-lectively in the classroom. Our results show that the teachers primarily scaffolded the conversations by giving the pupils declarative and procedural knowledge and told them about how the teachers themselves understood the text. This result sup-ports previous research showing that telling/explaining is more frequent used for the elder pupils than the younger across subjects (Klette, 2003, p. 58). The fact that the teachers primarily scaffolded the pupils at a basic level should, based on the research field of scaffolding (see e.g., Wood et al., 1976), reduce frustration, contribute to maintaining direction and generally lead the pupils towards the goal that is the cog-nitively most demanding part of the activity. However, seen in relation to how little the pupils talked about interpretation, our results indicate that the pupils may not have reached the place to which the process should have led, namely the interpre-tation.

We had expected the teachers to perform master interpretations by telling the pupils about their own analysis and interpretation because of a common notion, here noted by Levine and Horton:

> Yet many students are inexperienced literary readers who struggle when asked to move beyond literal sense-making. Teaching literary interpretation remains challenging and sometimes frustrating, and teachers often resort to lecture or interpretive strong-arm-ing in their attempts to help novice literary readers engage in interpretive sense-making as experienced readers do (2015, p. 125)

Teachers recounting their own interpretations to pupils is one way of modeling how experienced readers read, analyze, and interpret literary texts, and consequently a way of scaffolding novice literary readers (see for example the recommendation for demonstrating the master interpretation process in Hansen et al., 2020, p. 30). This way of scaffolding can be categorized as a demonstration (Wood et al., 1976, p. 98). The teachers could demonstrate by telling the pupils about possible ways of analyz-ing and interpreting the text in question as a model for the pupils to imitate. This type of modeling, however, has been challenged with the argument that pupils' in-terpretations are suppressed in this way and that alternative perspectives on the text are lost (Blau, 2003, s. 188). But instead of teachers presenting their own analysis and interpretation, we found teachers who extensively tried to provide the pupils with common ground by making sure that the pupils understood the text at a basic level and providing them with knowledge about the world. It would seem that our study confirms Tengberg's finding that teachers seldom provide explicit strategy

instructions that can help pupils interpret literary texts (Tengberg, 2019). Another possible explanation is that teachers might be reluctant to talk about their interpretations because they wish to avoid giving the impression that there is only one proper interpretation. Research indicates that teachers find it challenging to move away from the master interpretation, even though they are eager to hear the pupils' interpretations (Hansen et al., 2020, p. 232-233). The fact that the teachers know they are being observed and filmed may also have led them to act in ways they believe align with the researcher's expectations. The video observations are not triangulated with teacher interviews, so we are not in a position to comment on the teachers' intentions or reflections on their practice.

The conversational moves *disagreeing* and *upping the ante* were rare and *challenge* was almost absent from the whole-class conversations. All three moves are important during literary conversations because they can contribute to building knowledge on reading literature in general and to developing a deeper understanding of the actual text at hand (Blau, 2003). Different voices, understandings and opinions are important to thematize and reflect upon, because the individual might find their own voice in this confrontation with different voices (Dysthe, 1995, p. 212). We view *disagreements*, *upping the ante* and *challenges* as forms of uptake and ways of making pupils reflect further upon their views or understanding. We do so in line with Blau's dimensions for developing literary competence: help pupils to sustain focused attention, develop willingness to delay conclusions, discover possible uncertainties or paradoxes and be willing to change one's mind (Blau, 2003). In this regard, the teacher can help a pupil develop his/her contribution by asking a why-question. Being asked directly to give reasons for an answer creates an opportunity for the pupil to give an elaborated answer and by asking pupils a why-question, teachers can help pupils to reflect further, create better arguments or justifications. For example, the pupils can give reasons for their answers by using examples from the literary or aesthetic text or they can support their interpretations with arguments from their analysis. However, the low occurrences of *upping the ante* in our study imply that the pupils were rarely presented with situations that provided them with the resistance that why-questions can foster. The low occurrence of why-questions is also found in previous research based on video data from 178 hours of mother tongue teaching (Blikstad-Balas & Klette, 2021, p. 276; see also Gabrielsen et al., 2019), which indicates that teachers often do not use the opportunity to follow up the pupils' contributions and scaffold them to further develop their statements.

With reference to prior research, Chinn et al. point out these moves of well-chosen types of resistance as a possible way for the pupils to strengthen conceptual progress, if teachers use the moves appropriately (Chinn et al., 2001, p. 395; see also e.g. about difficulties as desirable for learning in Bjork, 2013). However, resistance in school is in short supply and instead teachers' aim is rather to make learning easy, quick, simple and fun, thereby avoiding, for example, obstacles that could be used as pedagogical potentials (Johansen, 2017). Yet resistance is central in all teaching (Blikstad-Balas & Roe, 2020, p. 181) and from our point of view resistance is crucial

in literature teaching where the use of open works (Eco, 1989) in the classroom should foster diverse interpretations. We thus posit that our main finding is the low occurrences of the three conversational moves, rather than their distribution among the content categories. This finding implies that analysis and interpretation were largely left to the pupils without notable disagreements, requirements of upping the ante or challenges of their points of view during the whole-class conversations.

CONCLUSION

We developed and used a multi-level analytical framework to characterize three 8th-grade teachers' use of analytical and interpretive activities from publisher-produced learning materials during whole-class literary conversations. By using the framework, we have contributed to knowledge of how analysis of *content* (e.g., pupils talking about analysis), *conversational moves* (e.g., disagreements between teacher and pupils) and *use of learning materials* (e.g., teachers' choice of using their own instead of published materials) in combination can give insight into what happens when learning materials are used during whole-class conversations. Our primary results were as follows:

The whole-class literary conversations were dominated by talk centering on knowledge about the world surrounding the texts and basic understanding of the texts. Analysis and interpretation were not as prominent in the conversations even though analytical and interpretational activities were available in the publisher-produced learning materials the teachers used.

The teachers and pupils mostly talked based on the teachers' own original designs even though the teachers had chosen publisher-produced learning materials as a frame for their teaching. When analytical activities were a part of the whole-class conversations, the activities were mostly either picked from the publisher-produced learning materials and used directly or the activities were based on the teachers' adaptions of the activities from the learning materials. When interpretational activities were a part of the whole-class conversations, the activities were picked both from the publisher-produced learning materials, redidactizations and the teachers' original designs.

The teachers' scaffolding during the whole-class conversations mainly centered around giving the pupils declarative and procedural knowledge and telling them how to understand the texts. This was done instead of instructing pupils about possible ways of analyzing and interpreting the texts or instead of scaffolding by other means such as giving hints, summarizing, helping to focus or modifying and shaping what the pupils had voiced.

Common conversational moves such as disagreements, upping the ante and challenges were not widely used by the teachers during the literary conversations and not much help or inspiration was to find in the publisher-produced learning materials. There were too few occurrences of the moves to derive trends in analytical and interpretational activities in the three cases. However, our key finding on the three

moves was that they had a low occurrence and were thus underused by the teachers in the whole-class literary conversations.

Several of our findings concur with the findings of existing research. For example, we can confirm that understanding dominated the content of the literary conversations and that there was a low presence of desirable and necessary resistance from the teachers. Further, we can confirm that experienced teachers tend to work freely with publisher-produced learning materials. We deviate from previous studies in that we ensured the teaching we examined took its outset in publisher-produced didactic learning materials, because we expect these materials to represent high-quality suggestions and resources for teaching and therefore can be assumed to greatly influence what happens in classrooms (Ullström, 2006; Rønning et al., 2008; Gilje, 2016; Bakken & Andersson-Bakken, 2016; Oksbjerg, 2021; Gissel et al., 2021; Kvithyld, 2022). By using a multi-level framework, we have been able to combine three perspectives that enabled a fine-grained characterization of how the teachers used the learning materials. This gave us an overview of 1) content during literary whole-class conversations, 2) the content when the learning materials were used during whole-class conversations, and 3) the content when selected conversational moves were used during whole-class conversations. This analytical strategy has given insight into new perspectives in the use of publisher-produced learning materials as it revealed nuances not shown elsewhere in the research field. For example, we showed that the teachers specifically preferred to talk about their own designs, which adds a nuance to the previously established finding in the research field that experienced teachers work freely with learning materials. Further, we were able to show that this tendency did not apply to analytical activities during the whole-class conversations, as these originated from the learning material produced by the publisher.

These results lay the groundwork for further research into the use of learning materials in literature teaching. The coding strategy developed for this study has proved appropriate for analyzing the three cases examined; every activity and utterance could be captured by the definitions in the coding manual. We are therefore confident that the coding manual developed for this project can be adapted and applied on both small- and large-scale studies of publisher-produced literary didactic learning materials, teachers' written planning of their literature teaching and actual literature teaching.

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