Critical literacy in Australia – affordances, tensions and hybridizations

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ABSTRACT

This research project investigated Australian curriculum and teacher views on approaches to critical literacy in high school English teaching. Critical literacy has influenced secondary English teaching contexts in Australia for more than twenty years. It is evident in many different forms, but has common goals of promoting social justice and equity through challenging and interrogating textual representations of society. While it has common goals there are many versions of critical literacy discussed in Australian theoretical texts and evident in teacher discourse and enactment. In addition, its appearance in current curriculum documents is arguably a product of its highly politicised nature in current Australian literacy education. This thesis examines the place of critical literacy in Australia in recent times. It does this by; providing a literature review of Australian literacy theoretical texts on critical literacy; analysing how it appears in secondary English curriculum documents from Victoria and Queensland; and analysing representations in teacher discourses from these two states. The overarching research questions are; how has critical literacy been constructed in Australia in curriculum and by high school English teachers? and what is the relationship between theory, curriculum and teacher discourse/practice in relation to critical literacy?

The research was underpinned by a postmodern qualitative epistemology with an analytical framework influenced by Bakhtin’s theories concerning meaning and knowledge creation (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986). The findings from the analysis illustrated three major themes: Inclusions and omissions of critical literacy discourses in mandated curriculum documents can permit teacher discourse on critical literacy, or lead to subversive teacher discourse against mandated curriculum; teachers dialogues with critical literacy discourses can influence their ideological becoming as English teachers, and in turn add to the ‘hybridization’ (Bakhtin, 1981) of enacted critical literacy; and teachers demonstrate tension in their ideological becoming between critical literacy and traditional notions of teaching ‘literature’ and valuing the ‘aesthetic’.
DECLARATION

This is to certify that:

- the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD except where indicated in the Preface,
- due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,
- the thesis is fewer than 100 000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

___________________________________________________________

Amanda Gutierrez
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1.1 INTRODUCTION

There are different ways students can approach understanding, analysing, appreciating and constructing texts. For some years now there have been differences of opinion about the use of ‘critical literacy’ which covers a range of positions and practices to do with the analysis of texts in terms of their potential philosophical, political or ideological assumptions and content. (Freebody, 2008, p. 8)

Freebody’s comment above provides an apt opening to a thesis that has as its central concern the place and representations of critical literacy in Australian high school English curriculum and teacher discourses in the 2000s. Critical literacy is a much debated approach to literacy and the teaching of English. First labelled ‘critical literacy’ in the Australian scene in the late 1980s, it focuses on viewing texts as constructions that exist in political, social and cultural contexts and which represent ideological beliefs in particular ways. Definitions of these approaches have suggested they politicise language, challenge disempowerment, and in some cases aim to create ‘critical’ citizenry by encouraging social action (Freire & Macedo, 1987). Critical literacy has also featured in public and media discourse because of its various, often ideological, claims and the selected extract above reflects the varying nature of critical literacy enactment in the late 2000s. These approaches have inspired battles in literacy education in Australia and have been at the heart of various state (and now national) curricula debates (Snyder, 2008). These battles were reflected in an editorial published by Sawyer, Professor in Education, in the 2004 Spring edition of English in Australia in which he commented on the re-election of the then Prime Minister John Howard and educators’ failure to create critical citizens. He argued:

Every Australian school student for a number of generations now has studied some version of English. Even those who graduated before critical literacy became a norm in this country were exposed to a subject which had as its core a commitment to humane values and a sense of the ethical. Three years before, Howard had headlined
the non-existent children overboard, he had put race firmly on the agenda as an election issue and cynically manipulated the desperation and poverty of our Pacific neighbours. What does it mean for us and our ability to create a questioning, critical, ethical citizenry that that kind of deception is rewarded? Howard declared public education had no values and in the same sentence declared that institution too 'politically correct'. What does it mean for us that a citizenry could not only buy that, but apparently miss the oxymoron? (2004, p. 3)

Sawyer lamented what appeared to be unsuccessful training of students in the skills needed to be critically questioning citizens. This editorial produced a response not only in the media but also in politics through it being mentioned in the House of Representatives (Nelson, 2005a; Snyder, 2008).

The media and political commentary during this time focused on 'postmodern' approaches to literacy and specifically targeted the promotion of 'social-critical' and 'critical literacy' teaching approaches in primary and high school English/literacy classrooms (Snyder, 2008). Opinion pieces and editorials criticising critical literacy were particularly prevalent from 2005-2007 and continued into 2008 with views being expressed such as those characterised in the following article 'The love of English' from the national newspaper The Australian:

The last decade has been anything but collaborative...The senior curriculum is a mess. Critical literacy, an avowed radical approach to textual analysis fixed on the unveiling of ideology, is widely opposed for its lack of intellectual or empirical authority. Still others blanche at the damage done by prescriptive critical literacy to children whose sole purpose in reading King Lear is to arraign Shakespeare on charges of sexism, racism or class bias. (2008, p. 13)

The focus on critical literacy in multiple opinion and editorial texts in various Australian newspapers illustrate the politicised nature of debates surrounding critical literacy in

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Australia. Another example was Slattery’s comments on Freebody’s involvement in the development of an Australian national curriculum:

In his advice on the core national English curriculum, University of Sydney educator Peter Freebody, one of the architects of critical literacy, conspicuously avoids mention of the term; the term is also absent from the new training document. I’m not sure we can read too much into this, as critical literacy is in the process of renewing itself, metamorphosing from a race, class and gender fixated method of enforced right-thinking into something a little more subtle. (2008c, p. 1)

In the same article Slattery further claimed “But word is yet to reach the classrooms. As a teacher recently explained in an email to The Australian: ‘Unfortunately it [critical literacy] has been a compulsory aspect of English at all school levels and has been given higher priority than reading, writing or speaking, as curriculum policy dictates that it must be used across all of these’” (ibid). As Snyder (2008) argued, these representations of critical literacy by the media contrasted with views from the education community, leaving the public to try to interpret what were often polarised constructions.

These kinds of public representations of critical literacy in the media often sided against the inclusion of the approach in curriculum and teaching, and privileged teacher voices who also reflected this view. The education community in the most part argued for critical literacy approaches as was evident in English teaching journals such as Idiom, Words’Worth and English in Australia (Sawyer, 2004; Gildfind, 2005; Hayes, 2005b). The politicisation of the approach is further illustrated by some English teachers arguing they would continue to use critical literacy approaches regardless of inclusions or omissions of critical literacy in mandated curriculum documents, as is reflected in the following comment by the president of the English Teaching Association of Queensland:

Teachers who see the value of critical literacy approaches (and I think that is the majority of those who are properly informed) can continue to apply them in classrooms even if they are not immediately evident in syllabus documents...Syllabus documents come and go and the world doesn’t come to an end. If they are to stay in the profession, teachers have, of necessity, to operate within the framework of existing
official curriculum documents – but they can, of course, be creatively subversive too.”
(G. Collins, personal communication, September 2010)

These various comments illustrate how discussions on the place of critical literacy in Australia cause contention. The opinions expressed varied in their representations of what critical literacy was and how it should be enacted. Slattery and Freebody’s discussions pointed to varying opinions on definitions of the approach in theory and for the literacy/English teacher. Also, as illustrated in Collins’ comments, questions can be raised about how English teachers view the relevance of curriculum documents to their practice, especially if these documents conflict with teachers’ values about what high school English should include. Slattery argued that these conflicts in the teaching sector related to ‘forced’ curriculum implementation of a particular style of critical literacy. Additionally, Collins’ statement suggested that some teachers were perhaps not “properly informed” about critical literacy approaches. If teachers were “creatively subverting” curriculum, where did their views on critical literacy come from; theory, professional development, other sources? And finally, as is especially evident in the bulk of the media commentaries over several years, there has been continued questioning of critical literacy’s relevance for the literacy/English classroom.

These issues lead in to the research problem and aims of this thesis. In light of the contentious nature of this approach, this thesis asks; what is the place of critical literacy in Australia in high school English practice and curriculum? The specific research questions are:

- How has critical literacy been constructed in Australia in curriculum and by high school English teachers?
- What is the relationship between theory, curriculum and teacher discourse/practice in relation to critical literacy?

The thesis addresses these questions through a comprehensive literature review, and via the use of two sets of empirical data. The literature review tracks theoretical views on critical literacy (and variants) that have influenced the Australian context since its beginnings in Australia in the late 1980s. The thesis then deconstructs high school English curriculum documents from two states (Victoria and Queensland). Finally this thesis analyses high school
English teacher discourses through an interview and observation of practice from the two states. Using these data it is possible to reflect on the place of ‘critical literacy’ in Australia today.

1.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR RESEARCH QUESTION AND DESIGN

Investigating constructions of critical literacy is important for several reasons. As noted earlier critical literacy appears to be implemented in many ways, and there are numerous examples of its use in publication. It has received a great deal of media attention and created tension in literacy education in this country for decades. As we move into a new century Australia, and other parts of the world, are revisiting educational priorities and in some cases moving to nationalise curriculum. At the time of this research the federal government had received state endorsement to draft and trial a national curriculum in the mainstream subjects, English being one of the first. During times of change it is important to analyse inclusions and omissions in existing curriculum documents and ask high school English teachers what particular literacy approaches mean to them within the existing context. Considering the point of curriculum interpretation and enactment is located with teachers it is important to identify shared knowledge and possible reasons for variations. This develops a better understanding of the relationship between critical literacy theoretical definitions and current practice. It can also assist in examining the extent to which curriculum affordances and limitations influence teachers’ pedagogical practices in relation to critical literacy in the context of this study and for future changing curriculum environments.

In relation to the currency of critical literacy and its relevance for today’s classroom there are conflicting arguments. While some argued it was time to move on or critical literacy needed to ‘evolve’ (Misson & Morgan, 2006; Misson, 2009, 2012), the creation of an online peer reviewed journal Critical literacy: theories and practice by academics in the United Kingdom in 2007, recent theoretical publications (Freebody, 2008; Freebody & Freiberg, 2011; Green, 2006a, 2006b; Luke, Dooley & Woods, 2011; Luke, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c) and the state based case studies in this research suggest it still has currency in both the international scene and local Australian educational community. In the Australian context, it has been argued that this nation has been the most committed towards the inclusion of critical literacy in mandated
English curriculum documents and has made a significant contribution to international critical literacy discourses (Luke, 2012c; Sinfield & Hawkins, 2006). It is important to revisit the ways this approach is influencing curriculum and teaching to examine its place in Australian high school English in the late 2000s and how it may transform in the future.

To address the research questions a qualitative research method was selected and curriculum and teacher data were collected from two states with varying approaches to critical literacy in curriculum. As is discussed in further detail in the methodology and literature review chapters, these states were selected as cases after canvassing all state curriculum documents because of their differing critical literacy emphases and histories. This allows a comparison of constructions of critical literacy in differing political environments. Using a qualitative approach allowed the researcher to investigate specific socially situated instances of constructions of critical literacy to develop a better understanding of the place of critical literacy within these environments. The data consisted of high school English curriculum documents from Years 7-12 and three teachers from both Victoria and Queensland. In addition, selecting two states with differing contexts and approaches to critical literacy allowed an investigation of the multi-voiced construction of this approach. A more detailed justification for this methodology and data sets is outlined in the methodology chapter.

### 1.3 THE THESIS STRUCTURE

This thesis is broken into six chapters including the introduction. The second chapter, the literature review, contains critical discussion of literature spanning the history of critical literacy in Australia as well as literature relating to the relationship between curriculum and teacher practice. The methodology chapter outlines the qualitative methodological approach. It also discusses the influence of Bakhtinian theory (1981, 1986) and the appropriation of several of Gee’s (2011a, 2011b) tools for the analysis and interpretation of the data. Chapters four and five are the data analysis chapters with chapter four analysing Years 7-12 English curriculum documents from Victoria and Queensland and chapter five analysing interviews and classroom practice of three teachers from each of these states. The final chapter is the discussion of findings and conclusions, which answers the research questions by providing an
interpretation of the findings through three major themes. It also discusses the implications of the findings in relation to the future of critical literacy in Australia.
CHAPTER TWO – REVIEW OF LITERATURE IN THE RESEARCH AREA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This literature review focuses on research relating to the main concern of this thesis: the construction of critical literacy in curriculum and practice in Australia, and the ways the relationship between/amongst Australian theory, curriculum and practice work towards creating these constructions. It serves a dual purpose in that it identifies gaps in existing research literature on critical literacy and informs the data analysis. To assist in addressing the research questions this chapter maps key parameters of critical literacy and explores important conceptual understandings and definitions. It begins by briefly contextualising critical literacy internationally. It then reviews Australian contributions, and research literature on variations of critical literacy in practice in Australia. The second half of the review covers literature relating to curriculum/policy considerations, specifically the politicisation of critical literacy into policy, representations of critical literacy in past and present state based Australian curriculum policy and the ‘relationship’ between teachers and official policy/curriculum documents.

2.2 SETTING THE SCENE – CRITICAL LITERACY IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

English is an ever evolving subject often changing due to global and local contextual events. As Kress (2006) argued “‘English’ is a very different thing in different localities with different histories, distinct presents, and distinctly different trajectories into the future” (p. 35). Luke and Woods (2009) and Misson & Morgan (2006) suggested Australia has been a key player in defining critical literacy in theory, for curriculum and in practice and contributed its own unique constructions. It is important to note, however, the impact of international movements on the development of these constructions. This section provides a brief summary of some of the main international scenes that have influenced the development of Australian constructions of critical literacy.
Before looking at each context, it is important to identify the global impact of a shift in theory from modernism and structuralism to postmodernism and poststructuralism. This shift was the catalyst for the development of critical movements influencing education across the globe. Briefly, the postmodernist movement, originating in the United States, sought to break away from capitalist ideals, bureaucratisation, grand narratives (Lyotard, 1984) and claims of ‘truth’ in art, literature and science that typified modernist ideologies from the Enlightenment heritage (Hassan, 1985; Huyssen, 1984; Lyotard, 1984; Rosenau, 1992). This movement was typically interested in critiquing literature, art, culture and society (Rosenau, 1992). Poststructuralism, originating in France, built on and modified structuralist theories that focused on the ways structures existed in, and impacted on, meaning in language, literature, culture and society. Of particular interest to theorists in this movement was developing Saussure’s (1966) work on semiology for modern contexts. In the current climate, poststructuralism and postmodernism have influenced each other to such an extent that they are often inseparable (Honneth, 1985), and both have impacted significantly on educational approaches to textual analysis in English.

Along with postmodernism and poststructuralism, key ideas from critical and emancipatory paradigms have been used to construct socially critical approaches to education (critical literacy, critical pedagogy) since the 1960s, particularly in South America, Australia, United States, United Kingdom, and South Africa. Each context has developed their own variations in emphasis and the extent to which approaches were reflected in curriculum/practice. It has, in fact, been argued that Australia has been the most committed nation to making curriculum mandated inclusions of socially critical literacy and has historically and presently contributed to an international understanding of what these approaches look like in theory and practice (Luke, 2012c; Sinfield & Hawkins, 2006). While this may be the case, the Australian context has been influenced by international scenes hence it is important to now move to the discussion on critical literacy in these countries/continents.
The first usage of the term ‘critical literacy’ can be traced to the ‘father’ of critical pedagogy, Paulo Freire (1970). Freire’s work on critical pedagogy began in South America. He believed in progressive postmodernity (1999) and viewed literacy as “a form of cultural politics...a set of practices that functions to either empower or disempower people” (1987, p. xii). His literacy work in South and Latin America, Africa, Europe and Australia (Freire, 1990) led him to the conviction that “literacy makes sense only when the illiterate person begins to reflect on his position in his world, and his ability to transform the world. That’s consciousness” (Freire, 1990, p. 76). His ideas about reading the world being intricately linked to reading the word, which he shared with Macedo (1987), also had a major impact on approaches to critical literacy (Mayo, 2004).

While some of his aims have been identified as being “idealistic” (Christie & Misson, 1998, p. 12) at times, his work can be traced in critical literacy discourses globally, and is particularly evident in Australian variants of critical literacy. His views that had the most influence on critical literacy constructions were his critique of domination in society, his views on reading and experience, and his goal of developing ‘critical consciousness’ in society through education (Freire, 1970, 1999; Freire & Macedo, 1987).

Socially critical approaches to education in the United States (US) have been influenced by a postmodernist focus on cultural studies, Freire’s critical pedagogy and feminist movements (particularly in relation to race issues - see US feminists bell hooks, 1981 and Frankenburg, 1993). The term ‘critical literacy’ is used in the US to refer to the product of critical pedagogy rather than a set of specific approaches. Authors such as Apple, Aronowitz, Giroux, McLaren, Shor and Willinsky² continue the work of Freire for the US context (particularly through their

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contributions to the website http://freireproject.org) in arguing for education and literacy to encourage social action in order to 'empower' marginalised students and create active democratic citizens. They are also highly critical of bureaucratic education systems and government agendas. Due to a strong emphasis on standardised testing, accountability and regulated education in the US (Apple, 2000; Kim & Sunderman, 2005) it has proven difficult to implement critical pedagogies into curriculum. Hence authors such as those listed above are in constant struggle to legitimise any forms of socially critical approaches, and their work reflects their battle with bureaucratic educational priorities that work in opposition with these approaches (see for example Apple 2000, 2004, 2006; Cadiero-Kaplan, 2002; Giroux 2010, 2012).

THE UNITED KINGDOM

Socially critical movements in the United Kingdom (UK) were influenced by a poststructuralist emphasis on language and semiotics. There was a focus on analysis of power representations through language as a tool for empowerment, rather than the kind of resistant culturally and politically emancipatory agendas of critical pedagogy emphasised in the US and parts of South America. Influential movements beginning in the UK because of this emphasis were particular strands of critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 1989, 1995, 2007; Kress & Hodge, 1979) and critical language awareness (Clark, 1992; Fairclough, 1992; Wallace, 2003) which Wallace (1997) argued were strongly influenced by Halliday's (1985) work. The socially critical (or critical literacy) approaches that developed within this context included a structured examination of the ways power was reflected in language and discourse. Fairclough's (1992) development of a three dimensional representation of how discourse and power work in society was also influential, providing a model for academics developing critical approaches to education. This representation had three levels, 'text', 'discursive practice' and 'social practice', all of which worked together to provide a complete picture of

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3 As compared to their close neighbour Canada who used Luke and Freebody's (1999b) four resources model designed around four roles of the reader (code breaker, text participant, text user, text analyst, outlined in the next section) as a base for official literacy policy. The implementation of this model, as with Australia, did not incorporate the text analyst role as explicitly as the other three roles (Sinfield & Hawkins, 2006).
how discourse works in society. Even though Fairclough’s work originated in the UK context, this model has also been important for the development of critical literacy in South Africa and Australia.

While critical discourse analysis (CDA) and critical language awareness (CLA) originated in the UK, the uptake of critical literacy in curriculum and practice did not receive the kind of attention that critical pedagogy did in the US in theory, or that critical literacy did in Australia in theory, curriculum and practice. Some have argued the reasons for this relate to the same kinds of government emphasis as the US on standardised teaching and testing for functional/traditional literacy outcomes (Street, 1998; King 2002).

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SOUTH AFRICA

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The South African context, particularly through the work of Janks, has been influential on some variations of critical literacy in Australia. While the political and economic systems are very different to Australia, the work done in this country extending Fairclough’s (1989, 1992, 1995, 2001) critical discourse analysis and critical language awareness for practice (for example see Janks and Ivanic, 1992; Janks, 1994, 1999, 2000, 2010) have assisted theorists and practitioners in other parts of the world to conceptualise these kinds of critical literacy approaches for their own contexts.

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AUSTRALIA

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The inclusion of critical literacy in curriculum and practice in Australia has been influenced by the theoretical stances of academics such as Luke, Freebody, Misson and Morgan (Luke, 2000; Misson, 2009) through their work within Australian bureaucratic educational systems. Luke has had considerable influence on literacy curriculum in Queensland in the last two decades through holding roles such as advisor to the Education Minister and the Deputy Director General of Education Queensland. Freebody worked with numerous state and national advisory groups on literacy education and curriculum design, with his most recent position as the lead consultant in the development of national curriculum. Both Misson and Morgan
worked in their respective states (Victoria and Queensland) as state panel chairs on senior ‘Literature’ courses. Approaches in Australia in theory, curriculum and practice reflect influences from all theoretical paradigms identified in this section to varying degrees. As this thesis focuses on the Australian context, using the cases of Queensland and Victoria, the following section explores constructions of critical literacy in Australian theory (including discussions on its application) and the contributions Australian academics have made to a developed (and critical) understanding of what this approach means and has meant across time. This includes relevant political contexts impacting on constructions nationally and on a state based level in Queensland and Victoria.

2.3 CRITICAL LITERACY IN AUSTRALIA (1980S-2009) – AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO CRITICAL LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

Socially critical approaches to education and literacy were first introduced to the Australian context in the late 1980s. Politically, western nations were moving towards corporatisation and neoliberal agendas (Green, 2006b) and the impacts of globalisation were beginning to be felt. Despite (or perhaps because of) this political climate, those in the education field in Australia began exploring ways to prepare students to become global critical citizens. This included introducing new approaches, such as ‘critical literacy’, that could help students face the challenges that a global economy driven by corporations may bring. The term ‘critical literacy’ and concepts began appearing at conferences (such as the 1st Joint National Conference of the Australian Reading Association and the Australian Association for the Teaching of English, Darwin, 1989) and nationally published journals such as the Australian Journal of Reading (1988). In addition to these presentations, particular approaches to critical literacy influenced by gender/cultural studies and poststructuralist/postmodernist paradigms, were developed in the form of a number of Chalkface Press publications. These introduced ‘critical literacy’ style activities for English teachers (Mellor, O’Neill & Patterson, 1991; Mellor, 1989; Moon, 1990; Mellor, Patterson & O’Neill, 1991). These teacher resources were (and continue to be) influential in curriculum design and teacher practice.
In the academic context, publications focusing on critical literacy in this era included an initial exploration of what ‘critical literacy’ may look like in an Australian context, and how it would be a shift away from personal growth and reader response models to English/literacy (Patterson, 1990). There was also transition in this era in Australia from whole language and cognitive-psychological approaches to reading towards those that focused on socially critical agendas. Discussions of a socially-critical approach to literacy (often used in modern contexts interchangeably with ‘critical literacy’) began in 1983 in Australia with the document *Orientations to Curriculum and Transition: towards the socially-critical school*. In this document Kemmis, Cole and Suggett argued that a socially-critical approach to literacy and education “must address society and social issues immediately, emphasizes social and critically speculative processes, and maintains that only collective action can execute social change” (1983, p. 1). This description connected literacy and education not only to individual transformation, but also to responsible critical collective action to bring about change. This transformative notion of literacy reflected the teachings of the Brazilian liberatory educator Paulo Freire (1969, 1970), who focused on teaching literacy to poor and marginalised citizens as a way for them to undergo a process of empowerment (which he called critical pedagogy).

The concept ‘socially-critical’ literacy reappeared along with discussions about the ideological nature of literacy in the Australian context in the *Australian Journal of Reading* in 1988. In this edition, Luke (1988) argued that literacy is ideological, political and cultural, exists in a social context and can be linked to the reproduction of inequality. These sentiments were echoed in another Australian educator’s article ‘Becoming socially critical: literacy, knowledge and counter-construction’ (Singh, 1988), in which a summary of the American scholar Krevotics’ (1985) conceptualisation of ‘critical literacy’ was included. While it is a lengthy summary, this was the first published mention of ‘critical literacy’ in the Australian context and is a definition that is of relevance to views on critical literacy to this day. Singh’s summary is as follows:

For Krevotics (1985 pp. 50-62), *critical literacy* means not only providing students with functional skills, but with conceptual tools necessary to critique the distortions and injustices in society. Critical literacy provides people with a means of interpreting
their material conditions, the cultural milieu in which they exist and their relationships to the wider society and its dominant interests. Any text is defined not only by its interpretation and the questions it raises, but just as importantly, by what it does not or cannot say, and those questions it cannot pose or answer. By examining the interpretative framework present in any text (including the selective use of vocabulary and the structured silences), the interests embodied in and served by the text can be exposed. Further, it is possible to reveal whether such interpretation makes social justices seem inevitable or reinforce the status quo as natural. (1988, pp. 156-157)

Critical literacy was viewed as an approach that could disrupt text’s representations of society and cultural expectations. It was also an avenue for making visible, or ‘exposing’, social injustices that may be replicated within texts. What was absent from this definition was the notion of collective social action against social injustices (as seen in the earlier description), illustrating some of the development of variances in constructions of critical literacy (or socially-critical literacy).

Throughout Singh’s article he demonstrated a preference for the term socially critical approach to literacy rather than critical literacy which he argued linked to the ‘socially critical school’. The first use of the term ‘critical literacy’ specifically directed at Australian educators and Australian classrooms was most notable at the Darwin Australian Association for the Teaching of English/Australian Reading Association conference in 1989. It was at this conference that speakers such as Claire Woods and Margaret Gill began to explore the notion of ‘critical literacy’ for literacy education in Australia (Withers, 1989). Woods’ published article from this conference argued that classrooms needed to go further with reading and writing to view literacy as “productive, active and critical, ‘potentially disruptive’ and oriented to change in society” (1989, p. 54) and that there was a need to recognise texts as “artefacts of cultural, social and political contexts” (ibid). She argued that this “critical and constructive literacy at work” (ibid) was an entitlement students should have access to rather than experiencing literacy as simply ‘functional’.
Also within early debates on critical literacy Freebody (1991) and Luke (1989) outlined the limitations of these approaches, as well as the limitations of initial theorisations of critical sociology. Instead they called for clearly defined and practically accessible socially critical approaches. Freebody argued transitions from traditional approaches to socially critical approaches required a consideration of several questions, such as:

How are the outcomes of the critical-sociological agenda to be characterised? Having done away with essentialist, monolithic notions of reading, having deconstructed the myth of ‘literacy-as-liberation’, and having politicised the relations among students, teachers and texts, what clear and positive agenda for reading pedagogy can be rebuilt? What would be the documentable features of its effects? (1991, p. 254)

Freebody and Luke's (1990) way to address these kinds of questions was to develop a reading 'model'. This model has had considerable influence on literacy curriculum and practice in Australia in the last twenty years. It has contributed to the development of critical literacy in the domain of reading, and has had an influence on theoretical conceptualisations, curriculum design and practical implementation in the Australian context. The next section covers this development and the many other contributions to constructions of critical literacy that occurred in the prolific and foundational years for the development of critical literacy in Australia - the 1990s.

THE 1990S – DEVELOPING CRITICAL LITERACY FOR AN AUSTRALIAN CONTEXT

The Political Climate

The 1990s was an era of defining, modelling and contesting critical literacy approaches and outcomes. Much of the contestation arose due to misalignment between some curriculum policy shifts (in some states) and federal political shifts. The Australian political contexts of this era, both at federal and state level, were particularly influential on attempts to develop critical literacy. While at a federal level the decade began under a Labor government, there was a shift in 1996 to a conservative Liberal party, led by John Howard. This shift had negative consequences for social equity (Reid, 2011) and in particular for critical literacy agenda in Australia in both this era and the early-mid 2000s. One of the contributing factors to this was the party's public statements against 'postmodern' approaches to education.
(Nelson, 2005a, 2005b; Luke, 2008). Criticisms of this nature were also evident in conservative media presentations of the approach during this era (for example Donnelly 1992; 1998) and were persistently evident in the 2000s (as discussed in section 2.3.3).

In relation to the two states selected for this project, in the 1990s Queensland policy pushed towards explicit inclusion of critical literacy in the curriculum. This could be partly contributed to long-time critical literacy advocate Luke’s work as the Deputy Director-General of Education within the education department and directing policy document construction for the state (Luke, 2000). Also, critical literacy advocates such as Morgan developed the senior curriculum course English Extension (Literature). In addition the Queensland government, under the guidance of Luke, conducted an evaluation of school reform (through the Queensland School Reform Longitudinal Study) which found that it was “more useful to consider student learning in the context of what good teachers did (rather than what school structures did) with students, with each other and with communities” (Gale, 2006, p. 106). The result of this finding was that the state moved from focusing on systems of schooling governance to teacher pedagogy and produced publications such as Leading Schools and Leading Learning (Education Queensland 1997). The findings also argued for more intellectual engagement and ‘rich’ tasks that were “more connected to the world, and more cognisant of difference” (Gilbert, 2011, p. 174). These documents encouraged in-depth critical engagement with texts and tasks.

In contrast, the Victorian political environment influenced bureaucracies and state controlled systems such as public schools to move towards corporatisation, bureaucracies and centralisation of education. Gale (2006) argued that the 1990s marked a change in the relationship between schools and governments. Schools were expected to run as businesses and became accountable not only to the government but also their clients, the parents and students. This approach to schooling was most evident in Victoria, “Nowhere in Australia was this neoliberal version of self-managing schools more fully embraced than in Victoria under the Kennett state government and its Schools of the Future (Education Victoria, 1993) initiative” (Gale, 2006, p. 105). Gale further argued this push for a conservative managerial
style led principals to focus on the inclusion of "corporate literacy" at the expense of socially critical approaches that often challenged neo-liberal ideologies.

Even though the political environment shifted towards conservative and economic rationalist ideologies, this did not dissuade academics to continue the work started in the 1980s on defining critical literacy approaches for the Australian context. Several authors argued the growing prevalence of these ideologies meant the inclusion of critical literacy in schools was even more important (Baker & Luke, 1991; Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke, 1991a, 1991b). The Australian academic literature in this era explored theoretical influences (such as postmodernism, poststructuralism, critical pedagogy, feminism and critical discourse analysis), as well as contextualising approaches for practice and designing models.

Defining And Exploring Theoretical Influences On Critical Literacy In Australia

Australian critical literacy authors in the 1990s were identifying and validating the influence of perspectives from postmodernism/poststructuralism, critical pedagogy, feminism, critical discourse analysis (CDA) and cultural/media studies in developing approaches to critical literacy in Australian theory and practice. The following discussion identifies key parameters as discussed by these authors. In particular, the ways postmodern/poststructuralist ideas such as texts being ideological and constructed in particular social, cultural and historical contexts, challenging author authority and the multiplicity of available readings, and Foucauldian views on power, discourse and knowledge were explored in these texts. Also Freire’s (and his followers’) work in critical pedagogy featured, particularly in the areas of emancipatory education (also with influences from feminism), the relationship between ‘reading the word’ and ‘reading the world’, the role of the educator and challenging bureaucratic/political ideological agendas. In addition, how critical discourse analysis (and critical language awareness), mostly through Fairclough’s work, was identified in much of the literature as a central influence in the ways approaches focused on language, discourse and power to bring together text level analysis with wider contextual issues. Finally the following section discusses the way cultural/media studies was identified in the critical literacy literature for its influence on the value placed on particular kinds of texts (especially those of
the ‘canon’) and how it introduced new ways to explore popular culture texts and multiple ‘new’ forms of literacies.

In the early 1990's, many publications on teaching using a ‘critical literacy’ approach in the high school English classroom in Australia were produced. Teacher resources (Mellor, 1989; Mellor, Patterson & O’Neill, 1991; Moon, 1990; Morgan, 1994) were published introducing the concept ‘readings’ (particularly ‘dominant’, ‘resistant’, and ‘alternative’ readings), which aimed to ‘disrupt’ the ways students read texts and illustrated the ways texts can be cultural, social and political. These textbooks contained critical literacy approaches heavily influenced by poststructuralist views on textuality. Poststructuralist and postmodernist views on text, knowledge and power have been integrally tied to a critical literacy approach (Luke & Baker, 1991), as reflected in the view that reading is influenced by historical moments, ideological positionings, gender, class and a myriad of other factors that make up the subjectivity of the individual reader. The meaning of the text is placed in the hands of the reader, rather than being an ‘elusive’ single author dictated meaning as is reflected in traditional Leavisite/cultural heritage approaches which believed “the text, duly pondered, will yield its meaning and value to an adequate intelligence and sensibility” (Leavis, 1953, p. 163). As discussed in the introduction chapter, these views on ‘new’ ways to approach text in the high school English classroom also received a great deal of attention by media writers such as Donnelly (1990, 1992) and began an open debate surrounding critical literacy approaches in scholarly journals such as English in Australia4.


from various works in this era that illustrate critical literacy's challenge of neutral notions of literacy, their politicisation of the term literacy, and their challenge of notions of reading that did not see ‘text’ as ideological constructions. The words and phrases that have been highlighted in the extracts below have become synonymous with critical literacy style approaches:

Do we want our students to achieve self understanding through personal growth or do we want them to achieve political and ideological understanding through discourse analysis? Do we aim to enrich the souls of children through individualist discourses which have till this date constituted remarkably homogenizing practices, or do we aim to equip students with the necessary means of analysing the ways in which readers, texts, teachers and pedagogies are positioned through social, cultural and institutional practices? (Patterson, 1990, p. 71)

All texts are motivated - there is no neutral position from which a text can be read or written. (p. 193)...Critical literacy practices include an awareness of how, why and in whose interests particular texts might work. (Luke and Freebody, 1997, p. 218 and p. 193)

who constructs the texts, whose representations are dominant in a particular culture at a particular time; how [do] readers come to be complicit with the persuasive ideologies of texts; whose interests are served by such representations and such readings; and when such texts and readings are inequitable in their effects, how these could be constructed otherwise. (Morgan, 1997, p. 2)

These extracts are indicative of theoretical shifts defining literacy practices in Australia in the 1990s using critical literacy discourses.

Several authors focused on the links between postmodernist paradigms and critical literacy, in particular the view of texts, language and literacy as important social practices. It was argued that "critical literacy discourses acknowledge the crucial link between language and social practice, and they support a critical investigation into the way language practices can transform social practice" (Gilbert, 1993, p. 57). The notion of ‘social’ was of such significance in early definitions of critical literacy that authors such as Luke labelled his ‘alternative’...
discourse, as compared to the mainstream discourses regarding reading at the time, ‘critical sociology of reading’, ‘critical social literacy’ and/or ‘critical literacy’ (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c; Luke & Baker, 1991). Conceptions of text, discourse and meaning in critical literacy reflected the idea from these ‘post’ movements that “there is no final meaning for any particular sign, no notion of a unitary sense of a text” (Rosenau, 1992, p. 119). This influence meant critical literacy discourses challenged metanarratives or ‘grand narratives’ (Lyotard, 1984), traditional views on ‘literature’ (or what became known as ‘texts’) (Eagleton, 1983), and the position of the author. Gilbert argued that poststructuralist theories on textuality influenced approaches to reading and the author in critical literacy discourses because of the ways they exposed “the openness and infinite plurality of texts as fields of signification, and challenges the notion that texts can be sites of predetermined, stable meanings” (1992, p. 189). In addition, Gilbert (1993) and Lankshear and McLaren (1993) argued the decentralisation of the author (and the reader) had been a key influence on the development of critical literacy. Some authors (see for example Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Green, 1991, 1997, 1998; Lankshear, 1998; Morgan, 1997; Mortley, 1991) also identified the importance of Derrida’s work on deconstruction to critical literacy arguing that it created new ways to conceptualise textual meaning, demonstrated how to break a text apart to expose hidden ideologies and illustrated the ‘constructed’ nature of texts (and systems).

Research literature during this era also suggested Foucault’s (for example 1972, 1980) work was significant in the development of critical literacy discourses. Green (1997), Luke & Luke (1990), Misson (1998a) and Morgan (1997) discussed his influence particularly in relation to his views that discourses are only ever temporarily fixed and that power relations are made up of a complex interweaving of factors specific to historical and cultural context, gender and the way a subject transforms their experiences into their everyday being. Authors such as Gilbert (1992, 1994), Kamler and Comber (1996) and Luke (1993) argued that having a more complex understanding of power allowed opportunities for power relations to change which is reflected in critical literacy, particularly when discussing the social justice aims of challenging disempowerment of groups in societies.

Barthes (1977) text ‘Death of the Author’ was a particularly influential document (Gilbert, 1993)
While these authors argued postmodernism and poststructuralism had positive influences on the construction of critical literacy discourses, some also pointed to the complexities these paradigms created for critical literacy classrooms and theory, and situations where particular views did not neatly align with practical needs. For example, Green (1997) and Lankshear and McLaren (1993) identified the challenges the notions of a complete dismissal of metanarratives and instability of unitary meaning caused when attempting to define critical literacy in any way for practical and theoretical purposes. They also suggested these notions created limitations when attempting to challenge disempowering discourses through shared voices and experiences of particular social groups. As Lankshear and McLaren argued “How can we construct narratives of cultural difference that affirm and empower and that do not undercut the efforts of other social groups to win self-definition?” (1993, p. 388). This statement reflects one of the weaknesses of postmodernism/poststructuralism that critical literacy theorists and practitioners struggled with, and aligns with feminist (and other emancipatory movements) criticisms of these paradigms.

Critical pedagogy, particularly Freire’s (1970) work, was also discussed in the literature as being highly influential on the construction of critical literacy in Australia in texts from this era (see for example Lankshear, 1994; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Luke, 1991b, 1992; Peters, 1994; Peters & Lankshear, 1996). Freire’s notions of transformative education for social justice and critical consciousness (Freire, 1999; Freire & Macedo, 1987) were reflected in critical literacy literature from this era, as evident in the following view that critical literacy was “grounded in the ethical imperative of examining the contradictions in society between the meaning of freedom, the demands of social justice, and the obligations of citizenship” (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993, p. 425). These authors expanded this idea by arguing:

  because of the serious threat to social justice inherent in the polarized economy and free market ethos which currently besets us, it is essential that schools promote literacy conducive to keeping the ideal of social justice alive and equipping citizens with the capacity and commitment to pursue it. (1993, p. 158)
The provision of transformative literacy practices and a commitment to social justice were emphasised as being essential inclusions in schooling, and having a critical literacy agenda could promote a ‘critical literacy’ as opposed to a ‘naïve literacy’ (Lankshear, 1989). In addition Green (1993, 1997) concurred that a view of social justice for the critical literacy classroom needed to be based on critical reflection on historical lessons from paradigms such as postmodernism/poststructuralism, critical pedagogy and feminism. He argued “the task is to reclaim that history, then, so as to use it in the service of education possibility and the reconstruction of English teaching within a (re)new(ed) rhetoric of social justice, freedom and critical democracy” (1997, p. 24), hence reflecting the importance of Freire’s (and Macedo’s) views on the need to develop ‘critical consciousness’.

Another major influence from critical pedagogy reflected in Australian literature on critical literacy was Freire and Macedo’s (1987) notion of reading the word requiring an emphasis on reading the world (Luke, 1991b, 1992). Luke identified, as justification for this emphasis, that “sources as diverse as Freire and Macedo (1987), Halliday (1988), and Edelsky (1990) argue that reading and writing the word is about learning to read and write the world” (1993, p. 139). In addition, Lankshear and McLaren argued that this view on reading was a key component of critical literacy:

Among other things, critical literacy makes possible a more adequate and accurate ‘reading’ of the world, on the basis of which, as Freire and others put it, people can enter into ‘rewriting’ the world into a formation in which their interests, identities, and legitimate aspirations are more fully present and are present more equally. (1993, p. xviii)

While Freire and Macedo’s influence was clear, not all literature in this era was as positive towards this particular concept, with Christie and Misson arguing that their notion of “enable students to ‘read the word and the world’” (1998, p.12) was idealistic and rather simplistic. Christie and Misson did, however, concede that this concept "does provide a serious, attractive and challenging vision of what literacy teaching might achieve" (ibid), suggesting their views aligned with Freire's ideological position on the goals of literacy.
The Australian literature in this era also reflected critical pedagogy's emphasis on challenging authoritarian discourses, particularly government discourses encouraging 'ideological hegemony', and the political, social and community role of the teacher as a critical literacy educator and reflective learner. For example, Luke emphasised “as Freire continually reminds us, whether we consciously tackle the matter or not, all teaching is intrinsically political” (1991b, p. 136). Misson (1989b) also argued that teachers needed to not only incorporate critical literacy into their practice to ‘apprentice’ students into an ideological world, but also that they themselves needed to be critically literate, and understand the ideological nature of teaching rather than viewing it as “value-neutral” (p. 108). Lankshear viewed the promotion of critical literacy as being “the educator's first calling” (1989, p. 181) arguing that “as Freire shows so well, in enabling a critical reading of social reality, critical literacy provides an essential basis for unveiling and resolving the most demanding problems of our times” (ibid). This suggested the use of critical literacy approaches in education could ‘solve’ particular societal ills, and it was the responsibility of the educator to incorporate these into their classrooms. In addition, Luke (1991b) and Alloway and Gilbert (1997) represented the view that the role of the teacher in critical literacy classrooms was to develop student-focused dialogic relationships between teacher and student, encourage “critical deconstruction of ‘the self’” (Alloway & Gilbert, 1997, p. 58) including critical interrogation skills, and be a critically reflective and egalitarian teacher and learner themselves. These views highlighted the expected role of the teacher/educator within critical literacy frames. In these accounts, critical literacy represented more of a philosophical undertaking than simply requiring the inclusion of a series of activities.

Both critical literacy academic and teacher resource literature in this era also began to reflect links to other emancipatory movements such as feminism and post-colonialism. Previously mentioned teacher resources such as From the Margins (1997), Gendered Fictions (1995),

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6 As reflected in US critical pedagogy literature by authors such as Apple (1995) and Aronowitz and Giroux (1991).

7 Evident in critical pedagogues work such as Aronowitz and Giroux (1991), Freire (1999) and McLaren (1995).
*Reading Fictions* (1991) and *Studying Poetry* (1998) included activities that challenged normalised representations of gender and race. In the academic context Gilbert argued:

> Literacy practices are inevitably gendered practices – and indeed racist and classist practices – and language classrooms are therefore inevitably involved in the discursive construction of gender, race and class...the apparent innocence of classroom storying needs a more critical framing; that it is not defensible to treat texts as separate from their cultural production. (1992, p. 198)

The critical literacy discourse in these texts challenged teachers to rethink their literacy practices by including more 'critical framing' to produce more socially just outcomes. Other specifically feminist influences on critical literacy in this era were challenges of the notion of 'empowerment' (Code, 1995; Ellesworth, 1992; Frankenberg, 1993; Gore, 1992), a term central to critical pedagogy, as evident in literature such as by Luke and Walton (1994) and Patterson (1990). In addition O'Brien (1994a, 1994b, 2000) and Simpson (1996) argued that feminist notions regarding the multiplicities of subjectivity, the ways subjectivity influences reading (writing/producing/speaking) and its challenge to essentialist ways of thinking impacted on constructions of critical literacy and in particular those variants underpinned by feminism.

In addition some authors furthered discussion on 'empowerment' in a critical literacy class in relation to particular 'danger' topics that connected to issues of social justice. While this area was not widely discussed by critical literacy theorists in Australia, some authors identified issues with the use of critical literacy approaches with difficult topics. Patterson (1990) discussed a specific teacher's reaction when a class raised topics such as 'friendship groups' and 'bullying'. Comber observed similar issues in a classroom stating:

> the teacher felt they were getting onto dangerous ground because they were beginning to explore ethical and moral questions and she was unsure how to proceed. This raises some questions about where teachers’ reading of texts fits into a critical literacy curriculum, and what teachers might do with the debates and contradictions that emerge. (1993, p. 81)
Misson also raised these issues for teachers who wished to address issues of sexuality and homosexuality in the classroom saying "these indeed can be dangerous lessons. If particular teachers feel that they cannot handle the issues comfortably, then it is probably better that they leave it to others...Mishandling of matters of sexuality may well be worse than not confronting them at all" (1995, p. 31).

While there were concerns, Luke and Freebody suggested that critical literacy had “moved from a status of a ‘heretical discourse’ – a family of unruly and dangerous practices pushing the boundaries of school and university orthodoxy – to the status of an authorized discourse” (1997, p. 13) and commented on how critical literacy had “moved from the margins to become part of the official knowledge of state curriculum, a concern of teacher educators, professional developers and inservice educators, policymakers, regional consultants, and school administrators” (ibid). This ‘naturalisation’ of critical literacy plays down the concerns of the other authors regarding critical literacy presenting possible ‘dangerous practices’ for teachers. While there may be disagreement in the literature, it is interesting to note that the experienced teachers in this study included open unplanned discussions in their classrooms, either with the whole class or small groups, relating to issues such as sexuality, suicide, and terrorism.

the commonplace notion that children must first learn to read and write and only later learn to be critical” (1996, p. 4) and Luke emphasised:

it is possible to teach those rudimentary "functional" genres and competencies so that students aren’t victimized and exploited, while at the same time laying the basis for those kinds of reading and writing that will enable critique and analysis, that will enable students to posit alternative possibilities of discourse, thought, and action. These kinds of literacy are not mutually exclusive. (1991b, p.137)

These authors argued that because of CDA/CLA’s influence, critical literacy incorporated the skills needed to learn to read, write and function linguistically in a critical way.

The final significant theoretical influences discussed relate to the postmodernist and cultural/media studies challenge of traditional notions regarding the valuing of certain texts and text types over others (Green, 1995; Luke, 1991c; Misson, 1998a, 1998b). Green (1995) and Luke (1991c) argued to critically read our own world(s) popular culture texts that were part of that world needed to be studied. Green elaborated further saying this involved:

drawing on and seeking to integrate into a dynamic, strategic synthesis the currently evolving and ever-mutating discourses of critical pedagogy, cultural studies and postmodernism, within which notions of popular culture, textuality, rhetoric, and the politics and pleasures of representation become the primary focus of attention, in both ‘creative’ and ‘critical’ terms. (1995, p. 400)

This acknowledged the influence of perspectives and key concepts from combined theoretical discourses on Green’s construction of critical literacy. Some literature focused specifically on the use of popular culture texts in critical literacy classrooms (Misson, 1994, 1998a, 1998b; Morgan, 1997). Misson pointed to the importance of using these texts saying, “the case for looking at popular texts is very easy to make. Popular texts are ubiquitous and, without question, very powerful” (1998a, p. 54). He also argued that it was important in a critical literacy classroom when using popular texts to “show their ‘constructedness’, to show that they are not an innocent representation of reality but have been created for a particular purpose” (1998a, p. 56). These authors identified the important place of cultural texts within
critical literacy approaches. Misson continued the discussions asking that the inclusion of these texts be done with sensitivity due to individuals attaching themselves so passionately to certain forms of popular texts. His concern was that in attempts to analyse these texts using critical literacy teachers could destroy any pleasure the students may have had through the text. He was wary of some approaches used in critical literacy classrooms towards popular culture arguing that “when you treat my favourite program, tread softly, because you tread on my dreams” (Misson, 1998a, p. 55) and that when dealing with texts of significance in students’ worlds it was important to “acknowledge and understand its attractiveness” (ibid).

Misson’s (1998a, 1998b) and Morgan’s (1996, 1997) work in this era on popular culture often focused on pleasure and aesthetics and their place within critical literacy classrooms. Other than these authors very few in Australia explored connections between what was traditionally the focus of literature study, pleasure and enjoyment, and critical literacy. Misson’s point was that “it is important that students should analyse the ways in which the text is producing pleasure, because giving pleasure is a fundamental way a text has of positioning the reader” (1998b, p. 109). The kinds of questions Misson argued should be asked of texts in relation to ‘desire’ were “what is the text assuming that we know and/or value?”, “What kind of experience is the text offering us, and what is its purpose in putting us through that experience?” (1998b, p. 113). Morgan empathised with teachers concerns surrounding conflicts between critical literacy and taking “personal aesthetic pleasure in our great literary texts” (1996, p. 43). Her response to this concern was that

aesthetics also inevitably involves politics – disputes over who gets to define ‘the’ literature that counts, and whose literature gets excluded; debates over what world-views are made normal by being promoted in these ways...in critical literacy classrooms teachers and students might be reading literary texts with great pleasure and engagement as well as inquiring into the structures and practices that define and defend the category of literature...When you think of it, it is an odd idea that pleasure and desire, and pity and fear – all the emotions we are encouraged to get from literature – are somehow to be divorced from the conduct of our social, that is, political, lives. It is a peculiar way of devaluing the very texts that we value, by enclosing them in a separate realm. (1996, p. 44)
Even though Morgan thought it “an odd idea” to “divorce” critical literacy approaches from pleasure, and Misson believed “people, curiously to me, seem to think that analysis lessens the enjoyment, but if we like something, we inevitably want to know more about it” (1998b, p. 109) the bringing together of critical literacy discourses and discourses on pleasure has not been reflected in curriculum policy or teacher discourses to the same extent as other critical literacy concepts.

Identifying ‘Variants’ Of Critical Literacy

Many critical literacy theorists in this era identified the multiplicity of the critical literacy, a view that aligned with poststructuralist/postmodernist thought on the heterogeneity of knowledge. For example, Kamler and Comber argued, “critical literacy does not stand for a single approach” (1996, p. 1), and Comber argued:

what critical literacy is or how it is to be constructed are still very much matters of contestation. That critical literacy remains problematic and changing is perhaps exactly as it should be as long as teachers are part of the debate. We need to document multiple cases of critical literacies developed in different contexts” (1993, p. 74)

The ‘multiple cases’ of critical literacies Comber mentioned above have been argued to stem from various theoretical influences (Lankshear 1994, 1997; Luke and Freebody, 1999b; Luke & Walton, 1994; Morgan, 1997). Academic literature in this era not only demonstrated evidence of these influences, but also included articles dedicated to identifying ‘variants’ by linking certain approaches to some theoretical paradigms more than others.

When tracing theoretical influences on critical literacy, several authors identified historical approaches to ‘critical reading’, existing prior to ‘critical literacy’, which were impacting on curriculum design at the time and public/media perceptions on reading. Luke and Walton (1994) identified two conventional variants being “reader affective response to texts” (1994, p.1194) and a psycholinguistic pedagogical emphasis on ‘higher order’ thinking or cognitive skills. In addition, Lankshear (1997) added ‘liberal rationalist’ constructions to Luke and Walton’s list. These were discussed as ‘conventional’ approaches to reading ‘critically’ and
Luke and Walton's (1994) article identified many limitations of these approaches. It is important to acknowledge these historical representations of ‘critical reading’ as they can add to the complexity of interpreting ‘critical’ discourses evident in curriculum documents and teacher voices. These authors also explored ‘critical social’ variants and their foundations. Luke and Walton (1994) outlined two major critical social variants they believed existed at the time. First they identified ‘critical pedagogy’ approaches which tied into a Freirean approach to social justice through education. They argued these approaches had been criticised by feminists and poststructuralists due to limited representations of ‘voice’ and experience. Second they identified discourse analytic approaches, which they suggested had most significantly impacted on the Australian context, and were influenced by poststructuralist discourse theory, functional linguistics and neo-Marxist cultural studies. They also identified a sub category within the discourse analytic approach based on Gee’s (1990) ‘discourse critique’ definition of critical literacy which “requires access to and facility with multiple discourses in order to read, critique, second-guess, and reconstruct other discourses, particularly those of dominant cultural groups and texts which tend to be taken as ‘truths’ beyond criticism” (Luke & Walton, 1994, p. 1197). These variations and identified conflicts illustrate some of the diverse origins influencing constructions of critical literacy in the current context.

Several variations were also identified during this era in the work of Lankshear (1994, 1997) and Morgan (1997). Lankshear argued that critical literacy could involve any or all of:

(a) knowing literacy (or various literacies) critically
(b) having a critical/evaluative perspective on particular texts
(c) having a critical perspective on – ie being able to make ‘critical readings’ of – wider social practices, arrangements, relations, allocations, procedures, etc which are mediated by, made possible, and partially sustained through the reading of texts. (1994, p. 10)

and further argued in his later publication that in addition to the Freirean and discourse analytic critical social literacy variants identified by Luke and Walton (1994) other
approaches could be added deriving “from systemic functional linguistics, on the one hand, or from the gamut of poststructuralist, postmodern, postcolonial, etc. constructions of textuality and ‘reading/deconstructing texts’ on the other” (1997, p. 41). This suggested a spectrum of approaches to critical literacy existed in practice and aligned with Luke and Walton’s (1994) identification of diverse theoretical influences. Morgan (1997) identified connected ‘strands’ of critical literacy that existed in Australia at the time. The first strand linked to feminist and poststructuralist ‘resistant’ approaches to texts which she argued could be seen in work of educators such as “Colin Lankshear, Pam Gilbert, Allan Luke, Bronwyn Davies, Ray Misson, Bill Corcoran and Jack Thomson [who] have popularised socio-political views of language and texts by their accessible writing and presentations at English teachers’ conferences” (p. 23). This strand was also reflected in teacher resource publications by authors such as Mellor (1989), Morgan (1994) and Martino and Mellor (1995). She further argued a second strand merged critical literacy with cultural media studies approaches, however suggested in a multimodal/multiliteracies environment this strand would be difficult to identify. The final contributing strand she discussed stemmed from the influence of functional linguists such as Kress, Thredgold, Kamler and Woods who she linked to the sociolinguistic work of Fairclough (1989, 1992) through critical discourse analysis and critical language awareness and as used by educators such as Janks (1994, 1999). Hence, various Australian academics during the 1990s established several key theoretical influences contributing to variations in critical literacy approaches.

The Development Of Literacy Models Incorporating Critical Literacy

Several authors in the 1990s developed literacy models which incorporated ideologies from critical literacy discourses. Understanding their origins and debates about their efficacy provides links between curriculum constructions and teacher voices, and succinct examples of theoretical attempts to represent practical applications of critical literacy. The two most influential models created in the Australian context were the four resources model (Freebody & Luke, 1990) and the three dimension model (Green, 1988). These models since their creation have influenced professional development packages/resources for teachers (for example see Simpson, White with Freebody & Comber, 2012), academic publications (see section on the 2000s) and constructions of critical literacy in curriculum and teacher practice.
not only in Australia but also in countries such as Canada (Sinfield & Hawkins, 2006; Levin, 2008; Luke, 2012c).

Freebody and Luke (1990, also see Freebody, 1992; Luke, 1992) developed the four roles of the reader or four resources model for reading. Luke (1992) argued that critical literacy cut across all resources, which they labelled ‘code breaker’, ‘meaning maker’, ‘text user’ and ‘text analyst’. In Freebody and Luke’s words, a simplified explanation for each of these categories was “code breaker (‘how do I crack this?’), text participant (‘what does this mean?’), text user (‘what do I do within this, here and now?’), and text analyst (‘what does all this do to me?’)” (1990, p. 7). While these four resources were intended as being used in an interweaving manner and all emphasised the sociocultural nature of reading (Freebody & Luke, 1990), this interpretation did not always translate into practice with the text analyst role often being ignored (Durrant & Green, 2000; Luke & Freebody, 1999b). For this reason, Luke and Freebody (1999a, 1999b) revisited the four resources model in the latter part of the decade, relabelling them as a “family of practices” (p. 3) in an attempt to “foreground how literacy as a social practice is necessarily tied up with political, cultural, and social power and capital. ‘Cracking the code,’ ‘constructing meaning,’ ‘participating in literacy events’ -- each involves the use of power and knowledge in social fields” (p. 4). Part of the initial interpretative difficulties around this understanding may be linked to Freebody and Luke’s (1990) early definition of the text analyst role as “an expanded notion of what has traditionally been called critical reading” (p. 13) and not enough emphasis on how the four roles were intricately linked, which the 1999 publication sought to rectify.

Another model of importance, particularly to curriculum construction in Queensland, developed in 1988 and influencing the construction of the 1994 Queensland curriculum English documents, was Green’s 3D model. This model was initially developed for “literacy, writing and school learning” (Durrant and Green, 2000, p.101) and included the categories of operational, cultural and critical, which Green described in the following way:

operational refers to turning ‘it’ on, knowing what to do to make ‘it’ work; the cultural involves using ‘it’ to do something meaningful and effective, in particular situations
and circumstances...critical entails recognising and acknowledging that all social practices and their meaning systems are partial and selective, and shaped by power relations. (1998, p. 43)

In a similar vein to Luke and Freebody, Green emphasised the ‘interdependence’ of these three dimensions stating that

a critical-holistic, integrated view of literacy in practice and in pedagogy addresses all three simultaneously; none has any necessary priority, practically, over any or either of the others. It’s important to resist the temptation and the tendency to approach these developmentally, incrementally, or in a linear step-by-step fashion. Rather, they must be understood within an integrated framework, and taught accordingly. (1998, p. 43)

Outside of Queensland, this model received less attention than the four resources model, however it was still influential and, as was argued in Durrant and Green (2000), while congruent with Luke and Freebody's four resources model the two do not map exactly onto each other. When revisiting the 3D model in 2000, Durrant and Green were critical of the way implementations of Luke and Freebody's four resources model in practice and literacy programs often focused on code breaking and text-participant, and rarely moved beyond these to the role of text-user and were even less likely to include the role of text analyst. Despite authors’ best efforts, educational models can be used developmentally, or in a piecemeal fashion. Durrant and Green (2000) found this to be the case with the four resources model, however this could also be an observation made of the practical implementation of the 3 D model.

Another area of tension relating to the four resources model and critical literacy (first identified in the late 1980s) was the notion of ‘reading’ as being a more dominant area for consideration in ‘critical’ approaches to literacy. As was noted by Gilbert (1991b), Green (1998) and Misson (1998a, 1998b) early constructions of critical literacy approaches mostly aligned to reading, hence explaining the development of metalanguage such as ‘dominant readings’ and ‘resistant readings’ (Martino & Mellor, 1995; Mellor & Patterson, 1996; Mellor, O’Neill & Patterson, 1991; Moon, 1998). This metalanguage became a part of literacy discourse affording development of critical literacy in the ‘reading’ domain, but limiting its
development in the ‘writing’ domain. As the four resources model (alternatively labelled four roles of the reader) was developed “with particular attention to reading” (Freebody & Luke, 1990, p. 7) and because of its popularity with policy makers and curriculum planners, critical literacy became associated more with reading than writing. Even though Freebody and Luke argued that while reading was the focus “we would argue that many of our observations apply at least indirectly to writing as well” (1990, p.7) the model had a significant impact on ‘reading’ approaches, but very little on writing approaches.

THE 2000S – THE IMPACT OF CONSERVATIVE TIMES ON THE EVOLUTION OF CRITICAL LITERACY

The Political Climate

The data for this research was collected in 2009 making this era especially pertinent to the context surrounding constructions of critical literacy in curriculum and teacher discourse, and the kinds of affordances teachers had during this time. In education internationally (Delandshere, 2006; Goodwyn, 2003) and in the Australian political context (Cambourne, 2006; Sawyer, 2006), a push towards standardised testing, particularly in literacy, became more prevalent. Policies such as President Bush’s controversial and highly criticised ‘No Child Left Behind’ policy (Petrosky, 2003,2006; Sawyer, 2006; Taylor, 2003) were impacting on educational perspectives across the globe. In Australia a backlash against critical literacy became evident in political and media discourse in the years under Prime Minister Howard until the election of a Labor government in 2007. The Labor party, led by Kevin Rudd, promised major changes in relation to democratic principles and equity. Prior to discussing literature specifically relating to constructions of critical literacy, it is important to explore the educational political scene in more detail to understand its impact on those working in the critical literacy field (both academically and in practice) in Australia.

Bush’s ‘No Child Left Behind policy’ was controversial. It was argued that this program implemented at the beginning of 2002, and designed around ‘evidence-based’ logic encouraged ‘scripted’ pre-packaged knowledge for teachers (Petrosky, 2006), testing as opposed to learning (Taylor, 2003; Petrosky, 2003) and caused a decrease in student reading growth scores, particularly among the Hispanic, African American and Native American
students (Sawyer, 2006). While this policy was heavily criticised at the time (and still is), the then Federal Minister in Australia for Education, Science and Training, Dr Brendan Nelson, expressed the view that it was a good ‘model’ of ways to improve literacy (Sawyer, 2006). Nelson cited letters from educational psychologists as evidence that there was a literacy crisis in Australia, despite Australian students testing well in literacy in PISA and previous reviews of literacy (Cambourne, 2006). The Minister announced in 2004 that Australia was in need of a review of reading founded mostly on a concern that phonics was not being taught explicitly to children (Cambourne, 2006; Gale, 2006). The findings of this report were described as being reflective of “a 1950s view of reading” (Cambourne, 2006, p. 187) because of a favouring of ‘basics’ grammar over higher order thinking such as encouraged by critical literacy approaches.

Nelson’s impact on educational priorities and their influence on critical literacy in Australia did not stop at the review of reading. In 2005 he officially stated his view and criticisms of ‘socially critical’ and postmodern approaches to literacy. This represented the party line as the Prime Minister himself, John Howard, expressed his criticisms to the media (when visiting Queensland) of what became labelled postmodern ‘mumbo jumbo’ approaches used in English classrooms (Luke, 2008; Topsfield, 2007). Following the government’s lead, the major media outlets in Australia embarked on “one of the most persistent and public attacks on Australian school education that I can recall since entering the teaching force nearly thirty years ago” (Durrant, 2006, p. vii). The majority of these attacks were directed at literacy/English teaching and standards, and many specifically targeted critical literacy/postmodern style approaches to English teaching. These political and media responses to critical literacy positioned any approaches labelled in this way in a negative light.

The political situation in Queensland and Victoria during this era was also affected by the Federal government’s conservative agenda and the media backlash against critical literacy. As

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8 For example see Donnelly's book *Why Our Schools are Failing: What parents need to know about Australian education* (2004) and *Dumbing Down: Outcomes-based and politically correct – the impact of the Culture Wars on our schools* (2007) launched by Prime Minister Howard, as well as articles/editorials such as Devine, 2005; Donnelly, 2005a; Slattery 2005a, 2005b, 2005c. Also see Snyder’s (2008) discussion of the media treatment of literacy in *The Literacy Wars*. 

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mentioned in the previous section, critical literacy advocate and academic Luke was appointed the Deputy Director General of Education for Education Queensland (1999-2000) and Chief Education Advisor to the Queensland Education Minister (2000-2003). He instigated curriculum reform in Queensland that incorporated his views and values on critical literacy (discussed further in 2.4.2). Gale discussed the political context in this state, where critical literacy was the favoured approach, at the time of federal and media criticisms of critical literacy:

The latest altercation is currently being played out in Queensland where the Minister for Education (Rod Welford) has ‘vowed to clean up his state’s controversial English syllabus and to remove post-modernist ‘mumbo jumbo’ from the classroom’ (Slattery 2005: 1), despite its apparent usefulness in helping students to value difference and critically read the society in which they live. (2006, p. 103)

These federal and state public criticisms directed specifically at Queensland curriculum and teacher practice are what make this state particularly interesting for this project. In Victoria, the neoliberal conservative Kennett government initiatives from the 1990s (Gale, 2006; Collins & Yates, 2011) which encouraged corporatisation of education, continued to have an impact on schools.

The political and public ‘attacks’ during this time were not met without resistance from the English teaching and teacher educator community in Australia. Some labelled these attacks as pushing ‘anti-theory’ or ‘anti-intellectual’ agendas particularly in relation to critical literacy (Doecke, Howie & Sawyer, 2006). Responses to political and public discourses such as these can impact on policy/curriculum and influence teachers’ choices. The Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE) produced several publications during this era in their ‘interface series’. These books focused on the professionalism of English teachers/academics and the links between theory and practice. The most notable in relation to responding to the public criticisms of critical literacy approaches in English was Only Connect: English teaching, schooling and community, published in 2006.

This book included chapters counteracting dichotomies represented by the media such as “reading for pleasure and moral development as opposed to critical literacy: reading/deconstruction, truth/scepticism, excitement/boredom, tradition/postmodernism,
worthy/unworthy, profound/relativistic, canonical/radical” (Howie, 2006, p. 226). Chapters by Doecke, Howie and Sawyer (2006), Green (2006b) and Howie (2006) defended critical literacy approaches arguing that English needed to ask big questions, critical citizenry was an essential goal to strive for (requiring more than just functional or traditional literacy), critical literacy should not be set as a binary to grammatical understanding of language, and that ideological inquiry of texts should be a part of every English classroom. Green argued that he saw critical literacy as “the relationship between English teaching and critical pedagogy, or socially-critical English teaching” (2006b, p. 372) and that

I still want to insist on an openly ideological, praxis-oriented role for English teaching. That aspect is curiously both overstated these days – to the point, indeed, of becoming something of a new orthodoxy – and undervalued. But it is something nonetheless that I feel must be revisited, and re-affirmed. To be sure, this should not be at the expense of learning or pleasure, or reflection, and not everything needs to be turned into an occasion for what might be called conspicuous politics. All the same, politics matters, as integral to English teaching, and education more generally. (2006b, p. 372)

Despite the media and political attacks, these authors felt critical literacy was essential for the English classroom, and Green’s defence above contributes to the construction of the approach in this era, the focal point for the remainder of this section.

Defining And Validating Critical Literacy

The shift in politics in 2007 appeared to reduce the media attention on critical literacy. Slattery (2008c) commented on Freebody’s appointment to oversee the development of a national curriculum for English, but there were very few criticisms in media discourses apart from this. Tensions from years of political and media backlash meant that publications focused on critical literacy not only continued to define approaches, but also included discussion addressing criticisms and validating its use in the English/literacy classroom. The following discussion reviews definitions and validations in the literature, followed by a focus on the ways criticisms were addressed.

Even though literature on critical literacy had by now existed for almost two decades, there continued to be an emphasis for most of this decade on defining the approach and the
influence of key paradigms particularly in relation to variations of critical literacy. The focus on these areas may be explained by Green’s (2006a) observation that despite the ‘transforming’ that had occurred in education due to multiliteracies and critical literacies, an ‘official literacy’ with a functional emphasis prevailed in policy and practice. Green (2006a) further argued that despite work towards defining and modelling approaches in the 1990s, this work was not being recognised in policy and practice. In addition, several within the field of critical literacy, including Green (2002), began to question the usefulness of the label ‘critical literacy’ (Misson & Morgan, 2006), arguing for the need to revisit aspects of critical literacy and possibly re-label the theoretical discourse or redefine parts of it.

While this was the case, the term continued to be used with authors arguing for its validity because of the fact that English teaching was “political and cultural work” (Comber, 2001, p. 100) that needed to interfere “with preconceptions, naturalised understandings, a desire for an easy life” (Misson, 2004, p. 38). The ideological underpinning of critical literacy was emphasised by many authors in this era with Mellor and Patterson (2004) arguing that this was what set critical literacy apart from previous morally formative goals of English, and Freebody and Baker (2003) defining literacy and texts as historically positioned ideological, political and cultural practices that “serve the interests of some groups and not others” (p. 231). Freebody (2008) identified the ideological nature of texts by revisiting Foucauldian views on the relation between ideology, power and dominant practices in society. In addition Misson and Morgan argued that critical literacy required understanding that texts are deeply implicated in the cultural contexts in which they are produced and read. It means identifying the ideology inscribed in any text, determining who benefits from the very partial representation of the world offered in that text, resisting any invitations to comply with worldviews that are socially unjust, and taking verbal or other action to redress such injustices. (2006, p. 3)

Luke also expressed similar views identifying common aims linking to an understanding of how texts worked ideologically; “(a) see how the worlds of texts work to construct their worlds, their cultures, and their identities in powerful, often overtly ideological ways; and (b) use texts as social tools in ways that allow for a reconstruction of these same worlds” (2000, p.
The ideological nature of critical literacy can, however, create tensions in practice as illustrated by Misson’s warning that teachers needed to avoid becoming the “ideological traffic police” (2004, p. 39).

For students to achieve an understanding of the ideological nature of texts, Luke (2000) argued teachers needed to assist students in developing ‘critical vocabularies’ on the ways texts and discourses work in reading and writing. He suggested they also needed to ensure the agenda in classrooms “sets out to teach students to read backwards from texts to the contexts of their social construction (i.e., economies of text production), and to write forwards from texts to their social use, interpretation and analysis (i.e., economies of text use)” (2000, p. 453). For the classroom setting he defined this to mean asking questions such as “which/whose version of events and the world is foregrounded? Which other versions are excluded? Whose interests are served by this representation? How (e.g., lexically, syntactically) does the text construct ‘reality’? How does the text try to position you in relation to its messages?” (Luke, 2000, p. 457). Considering Luke’s influence in Queensland and other states through the four resources model, these kinds of practical suggestions could have had an impact on policy and practice.

Luke (in Hunter, 2001) also revisited the social justice commitment of critical literacy, arguing that despite political pressures working against social justice, Australian English/literacy teachers had maintained a focus on social justice through a critical literacy agenda. This view linked back to the influence of Freire on constructions of critical literacy, which several publications in this era re-emphasised. Luke (2000) argued that Freire and Macedo’s (1987) view that the reading of texts by necessity involved reading the world was an “axiom that grounds approaches to critical literacy” (p. 451). In addition Morgan and Wyatt-Smith (2000) contextualised Freire’s influence on English courses in Queensland when describing the rationale behind the teaching goals of the English Extension (Literature) course. They argued the goals included a “vision of induction for mastery by critical literacy teachers” (2000, p.132) which involved teachers “coaching student-apprentices to learn different skills of (re)reading the wor(l)d and speaking and writing differently to help reconstitute it” (ibid). They referred to this process as being “captured in Freire’s (1970) term ‘conscientization’”
and further argued that the aim for *English Extension (Literature)* was to encourage a Freirean style critical citizenry by developing an understanding of how language could be used as a tool to bring about social justice, or to disempower (Morgan & Wyatt-Smith, 2000). While these discussions were positive towards Freire's goals and how his work related to critical literacy, Freebody (2008) identified issues with Freire's early work such as it only being interested in class to the detriment of other socio-political contexts, it ignored new textual environments and their impacts and, tying into the first point, ignored contemporary issues in postmodern and postcolonial experiences. This illustrated Australian academic's agenda to re-envision critical literacy beyond the initial definitions of the 1990s.

**Critical Literacy In Practice – Furthering Discussion On Variations**

This decade also included a furthering of the discussions from the 1990s on variations of critical literacy in practice. Misson and Morgan (2006) argued that critical literacy was more commonly apparent in Australia than North America or United Kingdom and identified three ‘strands’ that were evident across these nations. They labelled three strands: critical pedagogy (citing Luke's and O'Brien and Comber’s work as examples); Australian and New Zealand ‘species’ incorporating critical pedagogy but stopping at analysis rather than including the social/political endpoint; and a strand influenced by critical linguistics (citing Fowler, 1986 and Kress & Hodge, 1979), critical discourse analysis (citing Fairclough 1989, 1995), critical language awareness (citing Fairclough, 1992), and critical applied linguistics (citing Pennycook, 2001). They argued the Australian ‘species’ influenced by critical pedagogy had

a social justice agenda, and sometimes a left-leaning politics, [which] is for the most part covertly assumed rather than openly debated. Analysis is often thought to be the sufficient endpoint of critical literacy and its justification; political activism is considered beyond the scope of English teachers. (2006, p. 16)

They also argued the third CDA/CLA strand “has not had much impact on curriculum in mainstream classes” (ibid) and was not evident in Australia, rather it was most prevalent in South Africa as evidenced through Janks’ (1994, 1999) work. This view, however, was not shared by others in the critical literacy field as is discussed further below.
Unlike Misson and Morgan (2006), Luke (2000), Luke, Comber and Grant (2003) and Luke and Woods (2009) argued critical linguistics, CDA and CLA had influenced Australian constructions of critical literacy. Luke used his research in Queensland classrooms to provide evidence of how teachers incorporated aspects of Hallidayian functional grammar and “teach aspects of pronominalisation, mode, modality, and transitivity (Fairclough, 1989) to prepare students to (a) identify, analyse, and reconstruct identifiable textual genres; and (b) analyse how these same texts construct potentially ideological versions of the world” (2000, p. 454). He also argued critical literacy had traces of critical discourse analysis, which was influenced by Bakhtin’s notions of heteroglossia, Foucault’s views on discourse, Derrida’s ideas on multiple possible ways of reading texts, Bourdieu’s discussions on cultural capital and Freire’s view that literacy had the power to enable individuals to ‘reposition’ themselves in society (Luke, 2000). Luke, Comber and Grant (2003) argued that Janks’ (2000) notion of critical literacy as being a process of deconstruction to reconstruction to deconstruction, had influenced critical literacy making it “necessarily more than an analytic project; it also involves formulating, designing and producing textual action in actual situations” (p. 24). This kind of work is evident in Kamler’s (2001) text *Relocating the personal: A critical writing pedagogy*. Hence, these authors viewed critical linguistic approaches as evident and important to Australian constructions.

In addition, later discussions by Luke and Woods (2009) argued that while critical literacy approaches may “differ in philosophic assumptions and pedagogic emphases, they share a commitment to the use of literacy for purposes of equity and social justice” (2009, p. 16) identifying two major approaches to critical literacy, which they called critical pedagogy and text analyst models. They argued critical pedagogy models, which they identified as being most prevalent in Venezuela, Peru and Mexico, focused on

having students engage in critiquing ideology by exposing, second guessing, and reconstructing dominant versions of the world provided in literature, literacy textbooks, and everyday texts and interaction (Shor, 1987). To varying degrees, this orientation runs through all approaches to critical literacy, but it features strongly in explicitly political approaches to “critical pedagogy”. (2009, p. 12)
They also argued critical pedagogy approaches in the Australian and Canadian contexts had been influenced by critiques of these approaches particularly those raised by poststructuralist feminists and postcolonial and critical race studies in relation to ideological and patriarchal representations of women and issues of ‘voice’ representations.

The text analyst model they identified, which they argued had versions developed specifically in Australia, were based on critical discourse analysis (and critical language awareness) of the kind promoted by Fairclough (1992, 2001). This again contradicted Misson and Morgan’s (2006) arguments about this strand’s prevalence in Australia. They defined text analyst approaches as being focused on “texts as mechanisms of power and knowledge, as semiotic technologies for constructing the world and for positioning readers in relationship to the world. While critical pedagogy focuses on dialogic interaction, text analytic models entail the introduction of specific ways of analyzing, parsing, and constructing texts” (2009, p. 15) and that they entail the developmental engagement with the major texts, discourses, and modes of information in the culture. It attempts to attend to the ideological and hegemonic functions of texts, just as in critical pedagogy models, but it augments this by providing students with technical resources for analysing how texts work and how they might be otherwise represented by both authors and readers in a process of redesign (2009, p. 15)

They also argued there were models in Australia that linked to “the direct application of feminist, postcolonial, and poststructuralist deconstructive models of reading and literature” (2009, p. 15), citing work by Mellor and Patterson (1996) and Morgan (1997).

Also of importance to conceptualisations of critical literacy in the late 2000s was Freebody's (2008) publication. His work identified variations in critical literacy using different categories to past discussions (such as by Lankshear 1994, 1997; Luke & Walton, 1994; Luke & Woods, 2009 and Misson & Morgan, 2006). He instead used categories based on anthropology, sociology and applied linguistics. Anthropological ‘orientations’ were defined as focusing on diversity in culture and language in local and global contexts, the impact of socioeconomic and
sociopolitical factors on young people's futures, and the colonisation of knowledge. He also argued that while this orientation expected some critique of ideology it did not specifically focus on this area (in comparison to other approaches where this was central). In relation to the sociological approaches, he defined these as having “their roots in critical theories, mostly Marxian or poststructuralist and have developed to address questions from within sociology and political economy concerning schooling as a social, cultural, economic, and political formation” (2008, p. 111). They also tied to critical pedagogies in the ways they interrogated systems that maintained the ideologies of the ‘ruling class’. Freebody's discussion on the 'applied linguistics' category aligned with previous literature on the influence of CDA/CLA particularly through Halliday and Fairclough's conceptualisations. He argued the focus in these kinds of approaches contrasted to the predominant approach in sociological orientations that focused "on the effects of the consumption of official school texts" (2008, p. 114). Instead

applied linguists have emphasized the transformative effects of the production of texts by students (Martin, 1999). This focus offers one possible productive positive thesis—’how the different strands of work in language and social justice can be brought together to emphasise power as productive' (Janks, 2000, p. 184)—for critical literacy education: the remaking of knowledge. (2008, p. 114)

Freebody’s discussion offered a contemporary view on various applications of critical literacy in practice.

As a way to re-frame critical literacy for the 2010s in the second half of his publication, Freebody suggested that disagreements between the various disciplines outlined above had to be overcome. He viewed them as being unproductive for the continuation of critical literacy education. He outlined the debates between these groups in the following way:

Anthropologists object to the preemptively normative practices that emanate from sociological and most linguistic accounts; sociologists object to the absence of a theorization of power in anthropological and most linguistic accounts; applied linguists object to the lack of ideological agency attributed to learners in sociological
versions of critical literacy education, and to the lack of appreciation or use of durable ideological formations as explanatory devices in anthropology. (2008, p. 115)

He saw the outcome of these disagreements as creating unclear relationships between the three. This, he argued, resulted in teachers, curriculum designers and politicians trying to make sense of the debates with multiple options to choose from of which “the most comfortable...amount to versions of reader response theory with its teeth showing, a conservative resort to critical or higher-order thinking” (Freebody, 2008, p. 115). Freebody emphasised future work on critical literacy practices needed “to be based in a firm theorization that locates critical literacy in a collection of skills, understandings, and dispositions urgently needed by students to face the contemporary and future vocational, civic, and domestic experiences lying in wait for them” (ibid). He suggested this theorisation needed to address “the question of which approach to language and semiotic analysis best inform a critical literacy education program” (ibid). Thus implying critical literacy approaches required further work on defining and clarifying the boundaries, and addressing conflicts that have arisen due to the various epistemological foundations.

One of the most recent discussions on critical literacy in practice and variations was Misson's (2009) paper in which he outlined two ways critical literacy had often been implemented in Australian classrooms. He argued the first approach viewed critical literacy as only related to reading and “something you did in period three on a Thursday” (p. 4) using approaches such as those identified in the text analyst approach from Freebody and Luke’s (1990) four resources model. He also identified this version as tending to be largely defensive in its aim to right ideological wrongs. An alternative approach that he suggested was often implemented by advocates of critical literacy and teacher educators in the critical literacy field, was to view it as “[having an] all informing role...an ontology...an epistemology...and a political agenda” (2009, p. 4). This alternative had theoretical principles such as the following at its core:

- Language is an inherently social phenomenon;
- Texts are built out of discourses;
- Discourses frame the world in different ideological ways;
• We only know the world (and ourselves) through discourses;

• Texts (and discourses) put us into subject positions and try to shape who we are;

• It is through discourses that social disadvantage is established and entrenched (Misson, 2009, p.4)

Both Misson and Freebody raised concerns regarding some of the ways critical literacy had been implemented in schools, suggesting they believed these particular approaches were not understanding the core principles of critical literacy.

These variations identified by Freebody, Luke and Woods, Misson and Misson and Morgan illustrated the influential paradigms, key conceptual understandings and possible tensions arising from disagreements in relation to critical literacy implementation. The next section explores research literature that addresses some of these tensions and criticisms directed towards critical literacy.

**Addressing Criticisms And Tensions**

Many authors in this era began to identify limitations of critical literacy and the literacy models designed in the 1990s that incorporated these approaches. These discussions contributed to new constructions of critical literacy as they suggested ways to address criticisms. In relation to literacy models, Luke (2000) and Freebody (2007) revisited their goals for literacy and critical literacy, identifying gaps in implementation of the four resources model. Luke (2000) was critical of uses of the four resources model in a developmental and decontextualised manner. In particular he addressed the ways all four were intended to link together and how a critical literacy agenda, which recognised the role of power, ideologies and various contexts in socially situated discourses, was necessary across the introduction of the codes of language, text-meaning practices and the pragmatics of text. He argued “all text uses a variety of textual devices to (a) textually construct reality (a possible world) and (b) position readers (in a relationship of power to that possible world)” (Luke, 2000, p. 456),
hence emphasising the importance of critical literacy in all processes of reading. In a later publication Freebody (2007) suggested practical implementations of literacy were not adequately aligning technical literacy skills with the higher order literacy skills evident in the text analyst role. He also criticised theories of literacy education for not adequately preparing students for contemporary society, let alone the kinds of literate demands they may be faced with in the future. He argued various elements were missing such as encouraging an understanding of the semiotic relationships between graphic, visual and language elements of texts and how to teach readers and writers to control textual structures. Several questions were posed in relation to what needed to be addressed to adequately incorporate critical literacy agendas for classrooms of the future;

How do learners come to appreciate, manage and exploit the ways in which literacy is used to shape public and private ideologies, to advance the interests of some groups over others by making those interests appear to be realities? How do teachers convey the basic knowledge that some textual strategies distract readers systematically from the insistent political, economic, cultural and environmental realities and contradictions they face? (Freebody, 2007, p. 67)

While these concepts were featured in literature across all eras, these authors believed gaps continued to exist in understanding how to effectively teach the ways textual constructions link to larger ideological systems. They did not believe the possibilities of critical literacy theory had been explored or implemented to its full potential.

Other areas of tension were also raised in publications from this era. Mellor and Patterson (2004), Misson, (2009) and Misson and Morgan (2005, 2006) discussed areas of concern relating to the commonly used concept ‘readings’ in critical literacy. Misson and Morgan (2006) criticised classroom approaches that included teacher directed ‘re-interpretation’ of a text, teacher ‘prescription’ of political and ideological ways to resist or ‘read against the grain’, and/or limiting writing practices to be ‘with’, ‘across’, or ‘against’ the text. They argued that certain reading (and writing) practices encouraged in a critical literacy classroom could become highly prescriptive and simply reflect the ideological agenda of the teacher suggesting ‘teachers may direct students’ readings towards the one holistic interpretation and not
legitimise the dynamic shifts and interplay of response along a continuum between alignment and resistance” (Misson & Morgan, 2006, p. 108). They also identified classroom approaches that always assumed there were those who ‘oppress’ and those who were ‘oppressed’ rather than encouraging an understanding of the complex power relations in play. They argued these kinds of approaches led to an emphasis on constructing ‘resistant’ readings and reductive classroom activities such as “spot the oppressed” (ibid).

In addition, they raised concern that “prescriptive practices”, such as those identified above, meant critical literacy was “close to becoming an orthodoxy, and risks hardening into a dogma” (Misson & Morgan, 2006, p. 18). They asked for a more complex understanding of reading within a critical literacy frame saying that “our reading responses (developing, changing, sometimes ambivalent, even oscillating) are more multiple than these” (Misson and Morgan, 2006, p. 188) and that “total acceptance or rejection is rare, so it is mostly modify; we modify by bringing to bear the perspectives of other discourses” (Misson & Morgan, 2006, p. 71). Acknowledging influences from postmodernism they argued for the importance of continuing to see texts as multiple and unstable, but also recognising “that texts and reading practices nudge readers towards particular readings” (Misson and Morgan, 2006, p. 109).

These authors expressed the belief that the way forward for critical literacy was to revisit and redefine the relationship between the critical and an appreciation of texts, taking into account postmodernist and poststructuralist teachings. In relation to approaches to ‘readings’ in the classroom they suggested teachers needed to

acknowledge and value the complexity and dynamism of our own responses to a range of texts, including responses that are ‘incorrect’ in some way. It makes for much more interesting work in classrooms to pluralise readings and see how they play out. This means being explicit, as far as one can, about the sources of and reasons for one’s preferences. It means teasing out the affective and cognitive grounds, the aesthetic and ideological ones, and allowing for interplay among these. (Misson & Morgan, 2006, p. 109)
The view expressed in this text was that critical literacy activities would be more beneficial if teachers encouraged a more complex understanding of the multiple ways to read a text, which, by their accounts, was not the approach commonly used.

Another criticism of critical literacy, directed at publications by Freebody, Gilbert, Hunter, Luke, and Patterson, was that it was “largely critical and sometimes dismissive of mainstream English teaching, especially in its more literary manifestations” (Green, 2002, p 26). Green argued that some of the political and media criticisms previously identified against the Queensland emphasis on critical literacy were a “backlash” (ibid) to these kinds of views. He suggested there needed to be a more ‘critical’ (and balanced) approach to writing about critical literacy which acknowledged influences from past movements. Possibly in response to Green’s criticism, Mellor and Patterson (2004) published a paper in which a critical discussion about the dismissal of past approaches was addressed. They argued that their views on critical literacy had evolved and that “now we believe that a long-established pedagogy that invites students to problematize and adjust their readings towards a more acceptable interpretation operates in ‘critical literacy’ as it did in earlier models, albeit with different ‘targets’” (2004, p. 94). They further identified the emphasis in critical literacy as being similar to previous moral goals of social justice, however the methods to achieve this differed, as did the hoped outcomes. They also argued there was a stronger focus on deconstruction of ideological representations in critical literacy approaches.

This era also continued discussions from the 1990s addressing tensions between the ‘aesthetic’ and critical literacy, specifically through the work of Misson (2003, 2004, 2005, 2009) and his work with Morgan (Misson and Morgan, 2005, 2006). Misson and Morgan’s 2006 publication Critical Literacy and the Aesthetic was dedicated to bringing together these two components of English teaching. The emphasis in some of these publications was on how the creative act of writing constructed “a particular version of the world (and all worlds are only versions)” (Misson, 2003, p. 34) which ‘frames’ the world by favouring some perspectives over others, could be used as a bridge to deal with difficult topics (Misson, 2004), assisted in understanding the ‘constructedness’ of texts (Misson, 2009) and helped shape who we are (Misson, 2003, Misson & Morgan, 2006). Misson (2003, 2004) also argued that...
bringing together critical capacity and imagination in the English classroom would allow a recovery of “the complexity of feeling and being that education tends to bleach out” (Misson, 2004, p. 38). In addition he felt this would work towards developing “strong, ethical, critical imaginations” (Misson, 2003, p. 32).

This was one of the major criticisms made by Misson and Morgan (2005, 2006) and Misson (2009) of mainstream definitions of critical literacy. They suggested these definitions divorced imagination, pleasure and aesthetic appreciation of texts from critical work with texts as these factors are considered to “distract us from the ideological work it’s doing. That’s why critical literacy tries to head off students at the pass before they’ve experienced such potentially corrupting pleasure, why it encourages a resistant reading, a reading ‘against’ the grain of the text” (Misson & Morgan, 2005, p. 22). While this criticism may appear to align with arguments suggesting critical literacy completely ignored the aesthetic and the cultural heritage value of ‘great literature’ made by populist media authors such as Donnelly (2005a), Misson (and Morgan) were advocates of critical literacy and presented more considered and scholarly views on the issues. They expressed the view that critical literacy was crucial, but approaches needed a more complex inclusion of aesthetic considerations. Misson argued imagination was a key component of critical literacy pedagogy saying “common questions suggested in critical literacy textbooks is to ask what other possible views there are of a particular situation that a text is representing. To answer these questions requires an act of imagination” (Misson, 2009, p 7). He suggested more useful ideological work with texts needed to include an understanding of how texts worked by being aesthetically pleasing. These authors believed common definitions and usages of critical literacy in Australia needed to be expanded, and that these needed to work “critically and creatively and passionately with the aesthetic and its rich contribution to our sense of human possibilities” (Misson and Morgan, 2005, p 25). These ideas also represent the most contemporary and divergent attempts at calling for a redefinition of critical literacy.
2.4 CURRICULUM, TEACHERS AND ‘CRITICAL’/‘CRITICAL LITERACY’

INTRODUCTION

This section of the literature review shifts the focus from historical perspectives on critical literacy to views expressed on the ways it has or has not been translated into official policy or curriculum documents. It also focuses on the ways teachers interact with these official documents. While there is a substantial amount of literature on the ideological nature of government mandated curriculum and curriculum design, particularly in relation to hidden curriculum and the United States context (for example Apple, 2000, 2004; Giroux, 1983 and McLaren, 2007), there is comparatively little research literature discussing the ways critical literacy is constructed in government mandated curriculum and policy documents (particularly relating to the Australian context). In addition there is little available on the ways these documents can provide affordances, or limitations on teachers’ professional identities and implementation of important theoretical approaches to teaching. While this is the case, the perspectives available and discussed in this section have assisted this thesis to address the research questions and develop a better understanding of these issues. The first part in this section reviews existing academic publications on difficulties translating critical literacy (and ‘critical’) into official policy/curriculum documents and views on the usage of these terms/concepts when they were apparent. The second part reviews literature that investigated the ways teachers related to these official documents, possible factors influencing this and ways to develop documents that foster productive relationships.

POLITICISING CRITICAL LITERACY – TRANSLATION OF CRITICAL LITERACY INTO CURRICULUM POLICY IN AUSTRALIA AND THE USE OF THE CONCEPTS ‘CRITICAL’ AND ‘CRITICAL LITERACY’

As most approaches to critical literacy have ideological and political orientations, various authors, internationally (for example Apple 2000, 2004; Giroux, 1992 and McLaren, 2007) and in Australia (for example Green, 1997, 2002; Luke, 2000; Misson and Morgan, 2006; Morgan, 1997, 1999) have discussed the complexities involved in attempting to transfer critical literacy from research and pedagogy across to official policy documents. Green argued
that due to curriculum being a social practice “discourse, subjectivity, power and ideology become of particular relevance” (Green, 1993, p. 203) when theorising any curriculum and influences on curriculum design. For the Australian context, Morgan argued that tensions in this translation in relation to critical literacy are to be expected suggesting “it would be naïve to expect that the state would endorse a pedagogy which proclaims its intention to undermine the economic status quo and legitimacy of the present practice of government” (1997, p. 24). Green (1993) and Misson and Morgan (2006) also argued that tensions arose because of a lag between theory and policy/practice, particularly in relation to critical literacy. Green expressed the belief that this could be attributed to the fact that the critical literacy project “questions some of the basic assumptions driving and informing normative mainstream schooling and its associated educational ideologies, and thereby challenges the expectations and investments of those ‘external publics’” (1993, p. 4). These authors’ arguments suggested certain incongruence between critical literacy style approaches and formal mandated policy documents.

In addition, authors such as Luke and Morgan expressed doubts in relation to curriculum writers’ affordances to represent critical literacy to its full potential in mandated documents. Luke, reflecting on his experiences in policy creation in Queensland, asked “can one move an educational project that engages with critique of the worlds of work, community life, government, media, and popular and traditional cultures into the mainstream of state mandated curriculum?” (2000, p. 459). Morgan suggested attempts to represent critical literacy into the public policy forum transformed it into a ‘deradicalised’ version because of constraints, packaged ‘official’ training, and regulation. Therefore, inserting critical literacy “into the structures of official governmentality” meant “critical literacy in Australia can become not so much an oppositional practice as one utilised to carry out a government agenda of social justice” (Morgan, 1997, p. 25). Both Luke (2000) and Morgan (1999) added to this view suggesting the politicisation of critical literacy in Queensland and other states across Australia resulted in a ‘watered down’ version or ‘orthodoxy’ (Morgan, 1999) designed to fit into a political regime of literacy testing and measurement. Green presented a slightly differing view suggesting that out of two policy positions to literacy, ‘official literacy’ and ‘critical literacy’ “notwithstanding research supporting the latter, it is ‘official literacy’ that
seems to prevail” (2006a, p. 11) suggesting that critical literacy has had little impact on policy or curriculum construction.

There was also criticism of an ambiguous use of the term ‘critical’ in policy and curriculum documents without clear positioning within a discourse (Lankshear, 1994, 1997; Luke 2012a), hence increasing variance between implementation of curriculum in relation to critical literacy (Matters & Masters, 2007). Lankshear argued that the ways ‘critical’ was used in curriculum and policy discourses represented two “complicating syndromes”, called the “magic bullet” and “everybody’s baby” syndromes (1994, p. 4). The magic bullet involved the insertion of the word ‘critical’ into curriculum and policy documents with little attempt to theorise or define ‘critical’. In this ‘syndrome’ the insertion of ‘critical’ was intended to act as a way “to meet educational goals and overcome existing problems” (Lankshear, 1994, p. 5, 1997, p. 41). The ‘everybody's baby' syndrome used the term ‘critical’ in a way that had too much meaning in that “the development of a critical acumen is a perennial educational ideal” (p. 5) which could eventuate in multiple perspectives or ‘variants’ (Lankshear, 1997). It was suggested that these multiple ambiguous usages of ‘critical’ in mandated curriculum could result in “representatives of quite different and often incompatible views claim for their respective values, purposes, and practices the status attaching to ‘being critical’. These views encapsulate, however, different sets of criteria and standards” (p. 6). In addition, Lankshear raised further tensions in relation to the bureaucratic treatment of ‘critical literacy’. He argued policymakers, curriculum developers and teachers ended up having two positions available, either they were asked to encourage critical literacy without knowing what was meant by the term, or they had access to a large number of variants labelling themselves as critical literacy “without knowing which particular variant is being championed within a given syllabus or curriculum document, or on what basis they might choose among the various options available or construct approaches of their own when the field has been left open” (1994, p. 6). These tensions and ambiguities indicate contradictions in practice could occur when implementing critical literacy.

Also complicating teacher interpretations of ‘critical’ was the way it was used in policy to imply links to ‘critical thinking’ discourse without clear identification of this intention. Luke
and Woods argued that, “there is an ongoing tension between educational definitions: (1) those that define the critical in terms of scientific rationality, deep thinking, or problem solving, and (2) those that focus on the critique of social life, material conditions, and political ideology” (2009, p. 10), the latter approach aligning with critical literacy. Confusion can arise because of similarities between the approaches and the language used. Both value ‘reasoned’ arguments, being open minded and considering the ways emotion and prejudice can distort one’s own view (Cervetti, Pardales & Damico, 2001). Important differences, however, are that critical thinking in theory is seen as something that leads to a ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answer achieved through using rational scientific methods (Scriven & Paul, 1987; Paul, Elder & Bartell, 1997; Cervetti, Pardales & Damico, 2001; Elder, 2007) and “includes a set of technical terms such as *argument, premise, conclusion, induction,* and *deduction,* for its validity and soundness” (Cohen, 2009, p. 6).

Critical literacy on the other hand “places in the foreground issues of power and explicitly attends to differences across race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and so on…critical literacy educators examine these differences not as isolated occurrences but rather as part of systemic inequities or injustices” (Cervetti, Pardales & Damico, 2001, p. 7). In relation to curriculum (and bureaucratic expectation of ‘accountability’ and ‘evidence’) Mellor and Patterson (2005) and Freebody (2008) argued that critical thinking was viewed as providing approaches that allowed ‘objective’ measurement as compared to critical literacy which did not. In situations where curriculum does not clearly indicate influencing discourses, or the term ‘critical’ is used ambiguously, variability in skills being implemented and assessed increase and create a far from ‘objective’ outcome.

There was also pessimism expressed in the literature in relation to the capacity of Australian schools and systems to productively incorporate critical literacy. Luke and Gale argued that there was more “emphasis on generic critical thinking and problem solving skills” (Gale, 2006, p. 110) and that the teaching of ‘critical reading’ ended up being “a reasoned approach to identifying author bias; approaches to comprehension focus on the multiple possible meanings derived from the interaction of background knowledge and textual message” (Luke, 2012a, p. 6). To develop ‘critical reading’ activities representative of critical literacy Luke suggested classrooms needed to take an extra step, otherwise the resulting classroom activities demonstrated “little recognition that texts and curriculum necessarily engage particular cultural and political standpoints. Nor is there emphasis on the ways that text
selection and the shaping of what counts as reading can serve cultural and social class-based interests” (Luke, 2012a, p. 6). These authors suggested that the appearance of ‘critical’ within curriculum and policy was more representative of critical thinking discourses than critical literacy, and that critical reading applications in classrooms did not take text analysis far enough.

This variability in English teaching was also identified by Doecke (2004) who argued English teaching is not necessarily consistent or agreed upon between states and regions and that there was evidence suggesting many English teachers “still see themselves as ‘Preachers of Culture’ (Mathieson 1975), passionate defenders of Shakespeare and other canonical writers” (Doecke, Locke & Petrosky, 2004, p. 107), influencing their implementation of official English curriculum policy documents. In addition Durrant and Green conducted a study into English teaching in Australia and found, in relation to Green’s 3D model discussed earlier and critical literacy, that most practice they viewed “concentrated on operational activities, only sometimes taking effective account of the cultural dimension and rarely addressing the critical” (2000, p. 157). This is an interesting finding considering the influence this model had on the 1994 English curriculum design in Queensland. Similarly, Comber and Reid (2006) also argued that ‘traditional’ models of literacy remained dominant to the detriment of multiliteracies and critical literacies.

While the above publications identified tensions and gaps in curriculum and policy in relation to critical literacy, they did not provide deconstructed examples of curriculum language to justify their views. In fact, there is very little research literature available discussing specific examples of the use of the concepts ‘critical’ and ‘critical literacy’ in official national and state based Australian policy/curriculum publications. There was a brief mention of this language use in curriculum in a research report by Matters and Masters (2007) (and a subsequent publication by Matters (2009)), and some discussion in an article by Sommer (2006). Matters and Masters (2007) conducted a national study into commonality and assessment comparing senior school subjects across the states. In this, they found the senior English courses had a large variation in teaching which was “because teachers can select the texts and teaching methods that they consider appropriate for their own students, there is little restriction on
what may be represented in the classroom” (Matters & Masters, 2007, p. 30). In relation to critical literacy representations, they argued that “the wording of any of the English curriculum documents can be interpreted as including critical literacy” (p. 85). Both the Matters and Masters (2007) and Matters (2009) publications stated that a teacher who valued critical literacy could “find support in the curriculum documentation for making this [critical literacy] a focus in the classroom” (Matters & Masters, 2007, p. 85), or, on the other hand, it could be excluded if they viewed critical literacy as irrelevant.

In saying this, they did, however, identify an anomaly in the data in relation to critical literacy, arguing that the English Extension (Literature) course in Queensland was unusual in its “unambiguous ‘critical literacy’ approach, manifest in its discourse of ‘reading practices’ and ‘expanding notions of literature’” (ibid) with these approaches being explicitly linked to assessment criteria. They argued that this course was very different to others across Australia and compared it to its Victorian equivalent saying “It is virtually impossible to compare the demands on students in the QLD English Extension course and the VIC English course because they appear to have so little in common” (2007, p. 167). Matters also argued because of the subjective nature of English, as evidenced through the possible variability in critical literacy interpretations, “it is worth questioning whether teachers have been given too much choice about what to teach (i.e. include or exclude). Where there is complete choice, perhaps one cannot be surprised if curriculum content degenerates into a lowest common (or populist) denominator” (2009, p. 171). These documents identified variability in the privileging of critical literacy across state mandated curriculum documents and suggested English curriculum policy documents needed more commonality and direction to eliminate highly subjective teacher enactments.

The use of ‘critical’, and the aligning discourses, in specific state based curriculum and policy documents was also analysed in an article by Sommer (2006). In this article he identified sections of the South Australian (SA) SSABSA and SACE documents that contained three

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9 SSABSA: Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia, SACE: South Australian Certificate of Education.
varied usages of critical. He listed these as ‘critical as disposition’, ‘critical as social purpose’ and ‘critical approaches as a framework’. He argued the first set up a critical approach as emphasising “rigour, clarity and intentionality. It encourages the taking up of positions” (p. 44) being in line with theoretical views on critical thinking mentioned earlier. The second, as evident in the SACE Student Qualities underpinning all SA curriculum documents, he suggested represented critical as having a social purpose, of the kind that Freire (1970), Janks (2010), Luke, (1999) and Shor and Freire (1997) ascribed to critical literacy. The final category viewed ‘critical’ in light of constructions in frameworks such as Freebody and Luke's (1990) four resources model and Green’s (1988) Three Dimensions of Literacy Model, which Sommer acknowledged however he did not analyse explicit examples. He concluded by arguing that (in relation to ‘critical’) teachers needed to “acknowledge the fact that the use of the term is ubiquitous and deliberate in curriculum statements” (p. 47) which, in comparison to Matters (2009), he represented positively as a way of opening discussion rather than being “prescriptive or doctrinaire” (p. 47). The brief nature of the article meant it presented a surface analysis of limited sections of curriculum text, with only two examples from English. As identified, the research in this area was minimal. This suggests analysis of specific uses of ‘critical’ and representations of ‘critical literacy’ in English curriculum documents, one of the aims of this research, is a gap yet to be filled.

THE ‘RELATIONSHIP’ BETWEEN TEACHERS AND OFFICIAL POLICY/CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS

This section reviews existing publications linking to the curriculum focus of this research. These publications develop an understanding of the relationships that exist between teachers and official policy/curriculum documents as well as what constitutes ‘effective’ relationships and effective curriculum design. These understandings assist in analysing the impact curriculum design and teacher relationships with curriculum can have on the construction and implementation of critical literacy. The review begins by looking at general views on ‘effective’ curriculum and the relationship between curriculum and teachers. It then discusses perspectives relating specifically to the case of English and critical literacy.
Effective Curriculum And Factors Influencing Teachers’ Relationships With Curriculum

There have been various publications discussing general views on the kinds of curriculum designs and curriculum conditions needed for effective teacher engagement with these documents (Eisner 1990, 1982; Schwartz, 2006). Schwartz argued curriculum writers were focusing on the wrong thing saying “the focus of curriculum-writing should be shifted away from directing the students, and towards engaging, and even educating, teachers” (2006, p. 452). Both Eisner (1990) and Schwartz (2006) suggested the intended curriculum (official documents) needed to be designed with an intention to educate, engage and empower a teacher as well as provide affordances for teachers to ‘amplify’ (Eisner, 1990) their teaching skills rather than constrain them. Schwartz argued curriculum should give teachers “food for thought, in inspiring them to think about their own teaching in new ways, in offering them opportunities to add their own voice to the discussion at hand [and] motivate the teacher to learn as well” (2006, p. 453). For Eisner (1982, 1990) efficient intended curriculum designs had allowances for those teachers who required a great deal of guidance and direction as well as meeting the needs of those who needed less guidance and required more complex stimuli. He further argued for curriculum designers to construct curriculum in this way they needed to make decisions about what to include and exclude, ensure the curriculum was challenging for both teachers and their students, make connections across subjects and to real life, incorporate various representations of material and provide assessment options, without the document become cumbersome. Without providing affordances and carefully considering the above factors, the impact on the relationship teachers had with curriculum documents would result in less effective implementation.

In relation to the impact of mandated/official curriculum on teacher practice, regardless of the design, various views were evident. Luke (2010, 2012) suggested official curriculum can be ignored by teachers who choose to do so, arguing that official curriculum can only ‘name’ skills and knowledges and that “there is no direct ‘hypodermic’ effect between the official curriculum and the enacted curriculum” (2010, p. 1-2). Barnes (1975) saw a difference between what he called ‘intended’ curriculum and ‘enacted’ curriculum, arguing that there was often a gap between what was officially expected and what actually happened in the
classroom. He saw this as being attributed to local differences, which opened space for negotiation between curriculum designed for homogenous populations and the actual heterogeneous realities of classroom spaces. In a similar vein, Eisner (1990) used the terms ‘intended’ and ‘operational’ curriculum, with operational used in the same sense as Barnes’ ‘enacted’, and emphasised the influence of ingrained school systems on the gap between intended and operational curriculum. Two additional concepts of relevance in this area were Argyris and Schon’s (1974) ‘espoused theory’ and ‘theories-in-use’. Argyris argued:

One can differentiate between espoused theories of action and theories-in-use. Espoused theories of action are those that people report as a basis for actions. Theories-in-use are the theories of action inferred from how people actually behave...Most individuals studied seem to be able to detect the discrepancies between their espoused theories and theories-in-use of others, but were not able to detect similar discrepancies in themselves. (1976, p. 367)

When placed into the context of teachers, curriculum and teaching, the concept ‘theories-in-use’ can be interchanged with ‘enacted’ (Barnes, 1975). This thesis uses the term ‘enacted. The concept ‘espoused theory’, however, is individual to Argyris and Schon (1974). This concept is useful because it “encompasses the world view and values upon which people believe their behaviour to be based” (Jones, 2009, p.177) and provides a missing link between intended and enacted curriculum. This thesis uses this concept to describe teachers’ ‘espoused’ curriculum.

Others commented on how intended/official curriculum influenced teacher enactment (for example Delandshere, 2006; Doecke, 2004; Doecke & Parr, 2011, Misson & Morgan, 2006; Petrosky, 1998 and Luke 1991b, 2005b), and identified contexts surrounding the complex relationships that existed between teachers and official curriculum such as the media, politicians, existing knowledge, academic publications and professional learning opportunities. Doecke & Parr (2011) emphasised that mandated policy mediated teacher behaviour and was not something that could be dichotomised as being ‘external’ to one’s enacted curriculum, hence disagreeing with Luke’s (2010, 2012) view outlined in the previous paragraph. Luke did, however, argue in an earlier article that educational discourse “can be
seen as a system of signs and representations which traverse laterally through a synchronic grid: from the academic article, to the policy document, to the curriculum specifications, to staffroom ‘common sense’, and to the classroom text and student worksheet” (Luke & Luke, 1990, p. 79) suggesting he believed there to be a relationship between academic texts, official curriculum and practice.

Several publications went into further detail on the contextual factors impacting on the extent to which curriculum influenced teacher’s enacted curriculum. Charalambous and Hill (2012), Hill and Charalambous (2012) and Lewis & Blunk (2012) argued a teachers’ ability to fill gaps in curriculum varied depending on their established content knowledge. The less content knowledge they had, the more they needed to rely on the curriculum documents and if the gaps were significant, teachers would rely on what Shkedi (1998) called their curriculum ‘stories’ to make interpretations. Also Eisner (1990) argued a lack of training, resources and support can limit a teachers’ ability to develop content knowledge and creative ‘operational’ curriculum. Without time or resources to develop their skills and explore educational discourses, teachers can become reliant on the agenda of bureaucracies. This was reflected in Misson and Morgan’s comment “syllabuses and curricula, resources (books, worksheets, textbooks, and the like), and assessment regimes encourage or require teachers to conform to the norms of their school and their profession. Busy teachers are not expected to read, reflect, theorise, and ‘translate’ those activities into classroom activities” (2006, p. 21). The contexts surrounding teachers and schooling can impact on their relationships with curriculum documents, their understanding of their particular area of teaching and educational discourse in general.

Pressure from government and the impact this pressure had on constructing critically engaging curriculum was also addressed in several publications. Doecke and Parr (2011) and Kostogris and Doecke (2008) argued that pressure from governments to meet testing requirements in relation to literacy benchmarking created scenarios where teachers had to ‘fill the gaps’ in curriculum in uncritical ways. What this meant for teachers was that
it becomes increasingly difficult to say that we are merely complying with directives imposed by an external authority, as though we had an alternative option: to close the classroom door and create a space that somehow remains unaffected by mandated policies. Through implementing national tests and all the other practices that they involve, we are enacting neo-liberal ideology, even when we might be personally at odds with it. (Doecke & Parr, 2011, p. 15)

It was also argued by Kostogris and Doecke (2008) that attempts to deviate from 'neo-liberal' ideologies to create 'alternative' implementations of curriculum continued to be influenced by entrenched views about what English should look like. They suggested English teachers “have been forced to acknowledge that the difference between what ‘is’ and what ‘ought to be’ can be bridged only through the most complex mediations between established institutional practices and alternative approaches” (Kostogris & Doecke, 2008, p. 261), making mandated curriculum and policy directives increasingly influential on enacted curriculum. Morgan (1999) suggested that these kinds of agendas created conflict for English teachers sympathetic to critical literacy and that they struggled to match assessment requirements with critical literacy in practice.

The impact of these political directives on schooling has been argued to have de-professionalised the teaching industry by taking away teachers’ autonomy and intellectual engagement with teaching. Delandshere suggested “such positioning might have dramatic consequences for how teachers perceive themselves and their professional responsibilities, and how they are perceived by others” (2006, p. 79). In a similar vein, Howie argued that even though Morgan (1997) suggested the Australian context did allow for professional autonomy, the political and media criticisms on critical literacy and English teaching in the early to mid 2000s “clearly indicates that such autonomy is now under threat” (2006, p. 233). He suggested the purpose of these criticisms was “to bring the subject to order: to impose a particular model of English on teachers and, in the process, both securely corral the professional identity of English teachers and impose severe limitations on the nature and extent of their control over their own work” (ibid). Doecke, Locke and Petrosky (2004) and Kostogris and Doecke (2008) agreed with Howie’s (2006) concerns arguing that politicians and media discourse created ‘moral panics’ about English curriculum in this country and
positioned English teachers as ‘voiceless objects’ requiring monitoring. They also criticised these sources for encouraging a curriculum that privileged uncritical transmission of dominant cultural ideologies.

Another factor influencing teacher relationships with curriculum discussed in the research literature was their involvement in the process of mandated curriculum construction. Petrosky (1998) identified positive feedback from teachers, who he called ‘insider’ teachers, involved in official curriculum and policy change arguing that this process was viewed as valuable professional development. These were not the sentiments reflected, however, by those teachers ‘outside’ of the process who viewed curriculum documents as final, rather than valuing the ‘process’. In addition Doecke, Locke and Petrosky (2004) and Gale (2006) argued that those teachers on the ‘outside’ were not given space to engage jointly in the process of official curriculum and pedagogy development, and felt their voices were not heard during official ‘consultation’. This meant they “become increasingly sceptical of information sessions that allow them to have a say only to find that their ideas and concerns are not reflected in the final outcomes” (Gale, 2006, p. 117). This suggested for these teachers the perception of having curriculum designed ‘for’ them rather than ‘by’ them created tension between teachers, the mandated documents and the implementing bureaucratic systems.

Teacher Engagement With Critical Literacy Curriculum

Research exploring the ways teachers engaged with critical literacy curriculum and theory suggested teachers had the capacity to transform these into practice (Luke, 2000; Comber 2006), but that attempts to mandate critical literacy approaches were not always effective (Luke, 2000). Luke argued “the capacity of teachers to engage with theory and the capacity of intellectuals - educationists, linguists, sociologists, psychologists, feminists, literary theorists - to talk theory in accessible ways has been crucial” (2000, p. 459) in transforming teachers’ abilities to incorporate critical literacies in creative, local and innovative ways. Comber (2006) argued her research suggested teachers were not fearful of theory, policy or diverse student populations and managed to use their personal and professional identities to intellectually explore ways to incorporate critical literacy into curriculum designs. She also argued these teachers enjoyed opportunities to engage with like-minded teacher researchers,
university educators and school leaders, rather than seeing them as being ‘outsiders’ to their experiences. Forming relationships such as these are not always possible for all teachers.

There was also reflection on the mandating of critical literacy in curriculum, particularly by Luke (2000) in relation to Queensland’s incorporation of dominant critical literacy discourse into official curriculum documents. He suggested this kind of mandated emphasis ‘forced’ teachers to use critical literacy in particular ways as regulated by the government and argued this may not have been the best approach for the enactment of critical literacies in classrooms. He concluded that “perhaps it is not a question of whether and how government might bring ‘critical literacy’ under an umbrella of state curriculum policy, but rather a matter of government getting out of the way so that ‘critical literacies’ can be invented in classrooms. Perhaps it is absence and silence from the centre that enables” (2000, p. 459). In Luke’s view, mandating critical literacy limited teachers’ opportunities to design creative critical literacy curriculum appropriate for their contexts. He also emphasised that once placed in teachers’ hands, curriculum transformed. This meant teachers created hybrid approaches depending on “students’ and teachers’ everyday relations of power, their lived problems and struggles, and... on educators’ professional ingenuity in navigating the enabling and disenabling local contexts of policy” (Luke, 2012a, p. 9). Hence his overall position indicated the view that overly prescriptive curriculum privileging critical literacy may not produce the intended outcomes as teachers re-construct these documents to fit within the boundaries of their local contexts.

**Conditions For Critical Engagement With English Curriculum**

Several authors have also argued for their vision of how official curriculum/policy in the Australian context could coexist with teachers’ lives and practice in a more productive, critical and efficient way. Beavis and O’Mara (2006) and Howie (2006) argued that it was important to recognise that classroom curriculum development and pedagogy are connected to teachers’ social perspectives, professional identity and sense of professional autonomy. Therefore, it was argued that teachers needed to be seen as producers of educational knowledge, not simply consumers (Gale, 2006). In addition they needed to be given spaces to develop reflexivity, reconceptualise knowledge and become ‘intellectual workers’ who approached the
teaching of English in a way that went beyond reproducing the status quo and instead demonstrated an ethical commitment to social change (Doecke, Locke & Petrosky, 2004; Doecke & Parr, 2011). Howie suggested this kind of reflexivity needed to make “critical literacy an embodied, lived professional experience” (2006, p. 228) to ensure teachers could resist unofficial attempts at regulating the teaching of English (specifically by the media). Doecke and Parr (2011) further argued that for teachers to be critically engaged practitioners who could look beyond the kinds of literacy politics represented by politicians and media, there were three points English educators needed to consider. The first point was understanding the importance of “cultivating a reflexive awareness” (p. 16) as this would allow an educator to take a stance “within the policy environment in which we are obliged to work” (ibid). Then it was argued they needed to use this reflexivity to consider the historical dimensions of subject English and use this understanding to evaluate curriculum development and implementation. Finally educators needed to critically evaluate ‘jargon’ used in policy documents to understand their ideological positioning and their implications.

In relation to teachers’ abilities to become critically engaged educators, Doecke and Parr (2011) and Luke (2010) argued that becoming a critically engaged educator was highly dependent on the provision of support and resources that opened possibilities rather than forcing a narrowing of enacted curriculum. Without these conditions teachers would not have space to engage in intellectually critical implementation of official curriculum policy documents. Professional learning is one example of support that is often provided when new curriculum and curriculum reforms are officially mandated, and was discussed by Luke (2005a) in relation to critical literacy in Queensland. Both Gale (2006) and Luke (2005a) argued these kinds of ‘official’ examples of professional learning often follow a ‘compliance’ approach where the professional development is done on the teachers rather than with the teachers, suggesting that the intersection between the individual teachers and the larger structures delivering the ‘professional learning’ may not always be productive.
The literature reviewed in this chapter assists in analysing and understanding the constructions of critical literacy in curriculum and teacher discourse, and their relationship with each other. There are gaps in the literature, however, which this thesis addresses, being research into current enactments of critical literacy across contexts in Australia; how teachers’ relationships with voices/texts (in particular curriculum and theoretical texts) influenced their ideological positioning towards/against critical literacy; teachers’ relationships with the ways critical literacy is represented across states in curriculum documents, and state based differences arising as a result; and current research into tensions teachers may experience between critical literacy discourses and other influential discourses on the teaching of English. These areas all contribute to understanding the construction of critical literacy in this country.

The findings and theoretical developments by the various authors in this chapter provide a starting point for continued work into contemporary constructions of critical literacy and the complex relationships that exist between teachers attempting to define critical literacy for their practice and mandated curriculum. As was evidenced in discussion by Freebody (2008), Green (2006a), Luke and Woods (2009) and Misson and Morgan (2006) to name a few authors, there is still important work to be done in this area, particularly in light of the changing curriculum context in this country. This thesis develops an understanding of relationships English teachers can have with curriculum that approaches critical literacy in different ways, how they construct their own critical literacy discourses and what influences these constructions, and areas of tension with critical literacy theories and enactment. This thesis adds new understandings to the existing literature on an approach to literacy that is considered to be of great importance to English teaching in Australia.
CHAPTER THREE – METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As was outlined in the introduction of this thesis, the aim of this research was to investigate the place of critical literacy in current Australian contexts by analysing constructions of critical literacy for the context of high school English in Australia. The major research questions used to explore this aim were:

- How has critical literacy been constructed in Australia in curriculum and by high school English teachers?
- What is the relationship between theory, curriculum and teacher discourse/practice in relation to critical literacy?

To address these questions a comprehensive literature review of critical literacy theoretical texts for the Australian context was conducted and two sets of data were collected; English curriculum documents and interviews with and observations of high school English teachers working with their constructions of critical literacy in their classrooms. This chapter discusses the methodological considerations in the project set up, data collection, data translation and analysis.

3.2 POSITIONING THE RESEARCH IN A QUALITATIVE DISCOURSE

Qualitative approaches to research must acknowledge the socially constructed nature of society and knowledge, and the researcher’s subjective position/involvement within this system (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Onwuegbuzie, Leech & Collins, 2008). Education, and research within this field, will always be value laden. As Freebody argued, "there is no sense in pretending that studying education allows values, norms or ideologies to be set aside, however temporarily" (2003, p. 2). What is required is a postpositive approach that takes into account the researcher’s position in all stages of the research, does not to claim
to be able to produce objective results and recognises that it is impossible to capture and represent the research situation in a neutral way. The researcher needs to demonstrate awareness that they are a part of the research. This means all stages of the research will be influenced by their interpretations of reality in a particular time and context, it will always be partial and it will be influenced by the various socio-cultural influences in the lives of the researcher and participants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002; Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001). They need to embrace, what has been labelled by many in qualitative methodology, self-reflexivity or reflexivity (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Lather, 1991; Phillips & Hardy, 2002; Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002; Wetherell, Taylor & Yates, 2001).

Reflexivity involves the researcher taking into account their socially and culturally constructed knowledge and the effects these have on the kind of knowledge they produce through research data (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002). It recognises that the researcher is a part of the research. Phillips and Hardy identified and discussed eight dimensions of reflexivity:

   Acknowledge that language constructs rather than reveals, ground research in historical processes, allow different voices to pervade the text, acknowledge that not all possible voices appear in the text, and those that do are not expressed on equal terms, engender multiple meanings and alternate representations, engage in debate among and between theoretical communities, take responsibility for our texts, be aware of political aspects of research. (2002, p. 85)

This research covers the eight dimensions discussed by Phillips and Hardy in several ways. I acknowledge that this research does not make objective claims to knowledge or truth. It is presenting snapshots of critical literacy and recognises that while there may be similar findings in other contexts, the teachers and the curriculum analysed represent specific moments in time. In addition, I fit the label of an ‘insider’ researcher (Asselin, 2003; Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Kanuha, 2000). Asselin argued, an insider researcher "shares an identity, language, and common professional experiential base" (2003, p. 100) with participants in the study, in this case high school English teachers. This ‘insider’ status comes as a result of my membership in the high school English teaching community and as an educator who is passionate about critical literacy approaches. As part of this community I have predisposed
views about critical literacy and its use in classrooms. The selection of this research topic directly reflects my interest area and membership. A positive effect of being an insider member is that it “provides a level of trust and openness in your participants that would likely not have been present otherwise” (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 58). This is important when discussing an approach that has been publically criticised which means teachers may be wary of showing their ‘critical literacy’ practice to ‘outsider’ researchers who may hold views reflected in some of these criticisms.

I also recognise that the social realities represented through the language use of the teachers, and my interpretation of this language, are also constructions. The research acknowledges that these constructions represent some, but not all voices in critical literacy debates in Australia. Also taking into account the historical processes at play in the research, the thesis analyses links between voices, as well as outlining historical and political contexts relating to constructions of critical literacy in Australia, Queensland and Victoria. The final three of the eight dimensions of reflexivity have also been considered for this research. The design recognised and engaged with the various debates among and between the theoretical communities that have influenced constructions of critical literacy. As Phillips and Hardy (2002) suggested, by addressing all dimensions of reflexivity the final dimension allows the researcher to come full circle and “acknowledge that, as users of language, we use it to construct what passes for knowledge” (p. 84). All stages of the research project have taken these aspects of critical reflexivity into consideration.

------------- DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS – CASE STUDY RESEARCH -------------

At the early stages of designing this research project a decision was made that the research was more interested in studying an issue, the place of critical literacy in Australia in current contexts, rather than detailed documentation of a small number of specific cases. Hence, traditional case study design did not suit the aims. The research data needed to consist of more than just a small number of teachers with each being their own case, or focused on a particular school, or a particular policy, or a state’s educational policy. To achieve the research aims of analysing constructions of critical literacy in high school English and
relationships contributing to these constructions, the data needed to cross contexts. There are many views regarding the boundaries of case studies and what a researcher is required to do to produce effective case studies (Freebody, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990; Stake, 2005; VanWynsberge & Khan, 2007). Stake's (1995, 2005) classifications and discussions on qualitative case studies provided clarification of a relevant case study approach required for this kind of research design. In particular his description of 'instrumental case study' suited the purposes of this research.

Stake defined instrumental case study as being the use of cases “to provide insight into an issue or to redraw a generalization” (2005, p. 445). The case is used to “help us understand phenomena or relationships within it” (Stake, 1995, p. 77). Within the ‘instrumental’ focus, the case supports investigation and is secondary to the understanding of the issue (Stake, 1995, 2005). In this research, cases were used to provide insights into the construction of critical literacy in high school English in Australia. Two states were selected to investigate the issue, and several sources of data were selected from each state to make up the case. This data was in the form of teacher interviews, observation of their practice (recorded on video) and English state based mandated curriculum documents from years 7-12. Using multiple forms of data to make up the two ‘cases’ allowed triangulation (discussed in 3.2.4) and a rich understanding of the issue. Stake also argued research needs to recognise that “issues are not simple and clean, but intricately wired to political, social, historical, and personal contexts” (1995, p. 17). In addition to the analysed data, background reading was conducted in relation to the political and historical contexts of each state, as was outlined in the literature review, and revisited in the curriculum analysis chapter. This developed a better understanding of additional voices and contexts surrounding those texts analysed and the influence these had on constructions of critical literacy.

One limitation of case study research is that it cannot make claims, or generalise about larger populations. Burns (1997) and Yin (2003) argued that generalisations made from case studies are to theories, not statistical populations. Stake (1995) argued that in case study research some outcomes could be described as “petite generalizations” or “assertions” rather than “grand” generalisations (pp. 7-9). If researchers make generalisations or ‘assertions’
from case studies, as is a part of interpreting data, it is with the aim to advance theoretical understandings, not to attempt to place narrow categories on larger populations. As VanWynsberge and Khan argue “generalizations have been recognised as contextual. They have half-lives (Cronbach, 1975) and require continuous updating as the context changes” (2007, p. 85). ‘Assertions’ in this thesis do not exist as generalisations do in a positivist sense, in that researchers attempt to make universal claims from the research. Instead the cases are used to make contextualised and tentative observations and analysis which may apply beyond the cases themselves. In this research the cases were used to provide snapshots from which limited generalisations could be made about a theoretical approach to education.

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**JUSTIFICATION AND COLLECTION METHODS FOR THE CASES AND DATA**

The cases and data for this project have been selected in a way that assisted in addressing the research aims and offered an "opportunity to learn" (Stake, 2005, p. 451). In relation to the cases, these were selected by initially canvassing all state’s curriculum documents to see if there were noticeable similarities and differences in the ways critical literacy discourse was evident. It was important to include an initial surface level assessment of each state’s English mandated curriculum as “achieving the greatest understanding of the critical phenomena depends on choosing the case well” (Stake, 2005, p. 450) and “in instrumental case study, some cases would do a better job than others” (Stake, 1995, p. 4). In addition, some reading was conducted relating to views on critical literacy in each state as represented in media and political texts. Since, as already identified, this research was interested in an issue and the cases were going to be used to develop a better understanding of the issue, the states needed to provide interesting examples of how critical literacy was constructed in Australia. While all states provided evidence of critical literacy discourse in their curriculum, two states provided an interesting contrast. These states were Victoria and Queensland. In addition, and providing a further reason to select Queensland, in the mid 2000s there were several criticisms made by the media and politicians specifically directed at the emphasis on critical literacy in Queensland curriculum (Gale, 2006; Slattery, 2005c). Also, another reason for selecting Victoria was because of ease of access to data as this was the state in which the researcher resided.
Once the states were selected, the process of deciding on sets of data for the cases commenced. To begin with, the project focused on high school English as this was the area of the researcher’s expertise and interest. Hence, to best investigate the place of critical literacy in high school English within Queensland and Victoria the research needed to incorporate documents that could demonstrate this in both policy and practice. This meant the data needed to include both mandated curriculum documents and teacher voices. The curriculum documents selected were all of those in use by high school English teachers in the two states relating specifically to ‘English’ studies at the time of data collection in 2009 for years 7-12. The English courses included were *Queensland English Essential Learnings, Queensland Senior English, Queensland English Extension (Literature), Victorian Essential Learning Standards, Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) for English, VCE Literature* and *VCE English Language*. The links to critical literacy discourse evident in these documents were analysed (see 3.3 for further discussion on analysis methods).

For the selection and collection of teacher data a combination of criterion, theory-based, opportunistic sampling and, out of necessity, an element of convenience sampling (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990) were used. To enable the project to analyse teachers’ constructions of critical literacy it was necessary to have a sample of teachers from Queensland and Victoria who were using or had ideas about the approach. Therefore they had to fit the criteria of being a high school English teacher who had some knowledge about, and had tried to use, critical literacy. To recruit participants advertisements were placed in the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English (VATE) and the English Teachers Association of Queensland (ETAQ) Newsletters. This method was used as the members of these associations were likely to be knowledgeable and have views about using critical literacy approaches, and would have possibly attended professional development on critical literacy approaches run by these associations. Also I had strong ties and networks in VATE and ETAQ, as I had been a long time member of English teaching associations and worked as an education officer for VATE. The ETAQ president distributed the advertisement through their written and email newsletters and VATE placed the advertisement in their online newsletter. I had several responses from the ETAQ distribution but no responses from the
VATE advertisement and so further advertised for Victorian teachers through an online literature discussion board set up for senior English teachers in Victoria\(^\text{10}\). Two of the three Victorian teachers involved in this study contacted me through this discussion board.

Sampling of the participant teachers was also theory based, meaning particular texts or participants are selected that demonstrate an aspect of a theoretical construct and allow an analysis to occur of that construct (Patton, 1990). Considering the cases needed to provide insight into the ‘issue’ it was important that these cases could be used alongside theoretical understandings of critical literacy. This was also why the literature review of critical literacy theoretical texts served the dual purpose of identifying gaps as well as assisting with the analysis. In addition there were two cases of opportunistic sampling (Patton, 1990), one in Brisbane and one in Melbourne. In Brisbane I was approached by an English Head of Department while collecting data from another teacher at her school. She presented some interesting views in relation to the project aims, and was used to contextualise some comments from the teacher at her school. The Melbourne teacher identified her interest in critical literacy while I was interviewing her for a separate research project I was working on as a research assistant. She was interested in participating. I took the opportunity to involve both teachers in the research as they had strong views about the enactment of critical literacy. Finally convenience sampling was used because of the limited number of teachers who responded to the advertisements. This raises one of the limitations of this research. The initial intention was to sample six teachers from each state, with mixed gender, various years of experience and from different school types\(^\text{11}\), and then select the most relevant/interesting. The decision to limit the number to six was in light of time and resource restrictions. A lack of teacher volunteers meant three teachers, rather than six, in each state were included in the data collection. In addition, one of the Brisbane teacher’s classroom observations could not be included as she was unable to obtain permission for me to video her class. Instead she

\(^{10}\) This site is designed for high school teachers teaching the senior English study called ‘Literature’, however the space is often used to discuss middle school as well as other senior English course issues (so is not solely used by ‘Literature’ teachers).

\(^{11}\) There are three ‘sectors’ of schooling in Australia. These being the public (fully government funded), catholic and independent sectors (the last two are privately run but partly funded by the government).
conducted a ‘mock’ class which, while it was a limited representation of her classroom practice, allowed some insight into the critical literacy discourse in her enactment. In addition, there were limitations on the collection of the teacher data, relating to the cost and time for interstate collection. These various limitations, however, did not stifle the interpretation and analysis stage of the research as the data collected provided rich and detailed examples of construction of critical literacy by high school English teachers in each state. A brief outline of each teacher’s context (using pseudonyms) is included below.

**Table 1. Teacher contexts at the time of the interview/classroom observations in order of years of teaching experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Queensland</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helen</td>
<td>John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Based in Townsville</td>
<td>• Based in Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Experienced teacher (Head of English) who had taught in excess of thirty years</td>
<td>• Experienced teacher who had taught in excess of thirty five years, was nearing retirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Was teaching in a Catholic girls’ college</td>
<td>• Was teaching in a Catholic boys’ college, which had a strong focus on social justice and educating disadvantaged boys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassie</td>
<td>Fay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Based in Brisbane</td>
<td>• Based in Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Experienced teacher who had taught in excess of fifteen years</td>
<td>• Experienced teacher who had taught in excess of twenty five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Was teaching in a public co-educational school</td>
<td>• Was teaching in a public co-educational school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucy</td>
<td>Lauren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Based in Brisbane</td>
<td>• Based in Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Experienced teacher who had taught in excess of ten years</td>
<td>• Experienced teacher (English Co-ordinator) who had taught in excess of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Was teaching in an</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ethical considerations and ensuring the trustworthiness of research extend beyond procedural processes such as providing informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, fully disclosing the aims of the research and participants' involvement, allowing participants to withdraw from the study, and identifying the researcher's role. In relation to ethics, Brinkmann and Kvale suggested there needed to be consideration of both the microethics (as just listed) as well as macroethics which consider “how the knowledge produced will circulate in the wider culture and affect humans and society” (2005, p. 167). In addition, to ensure research is trustworthy it needs to meet various criteria. These concepts and the ways this research addresses them is the focus of this section.

All research projects involving human subjects are required to go through an ethical approval process. This usually involves the researcher/s providing documentation to an ethical review board outlining how their research project is conforming to institutional and national codes of ethics. Ethical approval for this project was provided through the University of Melbourne’s Human Research Ethics Committee as well as the Catholic Education Offices in Melbourne, Brisbane and Townsville, and the government education departments in Melbourne and Brisbane. Research steps were taken to ensure all information about the research relevant to the participants’ involvement was disclosed through plain language statements and informed consent was received through the use of consent forms. Pseudonyms have been used throughout this document and University protocols have been followed in relation to the storage of data to protect participants’ privacy. Also only data that has been collected for the purpose of this project has been used and member checks were utilised in an attempt to avoid misrepresentation of the data. In addition, my own positioning (or subjectivity) in the
research has been identified, as well as consideration of the way power works in interviews and analysis, which is suggested as important to ethical integrity by several in the field (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Lather, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Olesen, 2005). These considerations all relate to the microethics (Kvale 2007) of the research. In relation to the macroethical considerations (Kvale, 2007) for the research, summaries of analysis will be provided to the teachers involved in the project once the thesis is finalised.

Closely related to ethical considerations is the need to address issues of 'trustworthiness' and 'triangulation'. Mischler (1990) argued that validation in qualitative work relates to the kinds of judgements made about the 'trustworthiness' of the research. In the design of this research Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) criteria for establishing trustworthy research (see the table below) was considered.

Summary of Techniques for Establishing Trustworthiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion Area</th>
<th>Technique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>(1) activities in the field that increase the probability of high credibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a) prolonged engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b) persistent observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(c) triangulation (sources, methods, and investigators)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2) peer debriefing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3) negative case analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4) referential adequacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(5) member checks (in process and terminal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transferability</td>
<td>(6) thick description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td>(7a) the dependability audit, including the audit trail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ideally, using all techniques mentioned by Lincoln and Guba to their full extent would ensure the best ethical and trustworthy outcomes. These techniques, however, are not always feasible, particularly with constraints on research such as budget and geographical distance. This research project encountered such constraints. As prolonged engagement and persistent observation, to the level Lincoln and Guba discussed, was not possible, triangulation between multiple sources of data, member checks and thick description (as thick as possible in written representation (Stake, 2005)) were critical and are discussed further below. These also assisted in the auditing process as did the feedback from several supervisors and critical colleagues.

Triangulation in qualitative postmodern research is particularly essential especially in light of views on the existence of multiple realities (Stake, 1995). While reality is subjective, this does not mean misrepresentation and misunderstandings do not occur. Triangulation needs to be used to minimise these. Hence, triangulation was utilised on multiple levels in this research. As Stake (2005) argued, member checks form an important part of the triangulation process. Further to this, ‘data source triangulation’ (Stake, 1995, 2005) was used in two ways. First, the research included both an interview of the teacher participants about their constructions of critical literacy as well as an observation of their implementation. This allowed the researcher to look over the data sources and analysis to check if the constructions of critical literacy carried “the same meaning when found under different circumstances” (Stake, 1995, p. 113). Second, triangulation also occurred between and amongst the differing sets of data. Not only can this confirm similarities but can also demonstrate multiplicity in the construction of critical literacy, which was apparent across all data sets. Triangulation in qualitative research is about being able to identify the multiple, rather than singular, nature of reality (Stake, 1995) and is a central component of the aims of this research. As Stake argued, “the qualitative researcher is interested in diversity of perception, even the multiple realities
within which people live. Triangulation helps to identify different realities” (2005, p. 454). These methods allowed the research project to be designed in a way that included considerations of ethics and trustworthiness.

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### INTERVIEW, OBSERVATION AND TRANSCRIPTION ISSUES

The methods for data collection of the teachers’ constructions of critical literacy were in the form of observations of their classroom practice (one session informally observed and another video recorded) and an interview after the video recorded class. There are many issues to consider when designing and conducting interviews, and trying to find an appropriate transcription method. Thus the research followed the advice of Kvale (1996, 2007), Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) and Mischler (1986) when investigating the issues and considering how they would/did impact on this research.

As the aim of the teacher case studies was to examine constructions of critical literacy with those practicing the approach, it was important that my interviews did not shut down possible multiple views on critical literacy. As Stake argued, “the interview is the main road to multiple realities” (1995, p. 64). In addition, Mischler (1986) identified many factors in an interview that can impact on the ways a participant presents themselves, such as the structure of the questions, the ways they are asked and their sequence, the characteristics of the interviewer and the ways the interviewer responds to the participants’ answers both physically and verbally. The impact of the interviewer on participants’ comfort and involvement in an interview was also discussed by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) and further studied by Knapik (2006). They argued that an interviewer’s bodily and verbal responses “can act as positive or negative reinforcers” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 172) and participants who felt objectified or unappreciated during the process could shut down and become resistant towards the interview and interviewer. To address some of these possible issues it was decided that the video recording would only be used for the classroom observations, and voice recording rather than video for the teacher interviews, as it was felt this would be less intimidating for the teachers.
For a research project such as this one in which there may be multiple ‘realities’, it is important to ensure the interviewee is able to present their own perspective through what Kvale (2007) and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) called the ‘inter-view’ process. An ‘inter-view’, they argued, takes the form of a professional conversation rather than being viewed as a formal collection of data with strictly followed interview questions. What this means is that the interviewer may have main areas he/she wishes to cover in the interview and some sample questions, but they direct the conversation, not control it. This allows an exploration of the interviewee’s perspectives to better understand how phenomena are constructed in their world. Kvale described the qualitative interviewer as a traveller who “walks along with the local inhabitants, asks questions that lead the subjects to tell their own stories of their lived world” (1996, p. 3). This was the approach used for the interviews in this research.

While the interview questions were thematized (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) to ensure they addressed the aims of the research, they were also open ended to a certain degree to allow the participants to discuss critical literacy in their own contexts. A semi-structured interview (Burns, 1997; Freebody, 2003; Kvale, 1996, 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) was used which allowed for flexibility in the questions and prompting questions depending on the direction in which the interview was heading. The interview was what Kvale and Brinkmann labelled a conceptual interview as the aim was to explore the participants conceptions of critical literacy and “uncover respondents’ discourse models, that is, their taken-for-granted assumptions about what is typical, normal, or appropriate” (2009, p. 151) when using a critical literacy approach to subject English.

Within postmodern qualitative research projects it is also important to reflect on one’s own subjective position within the interview, during the transcription stage, and during the analysis of the transcription data. As was discussed earlier, critical reflexivity was employed because of my own constructions of critical literacy, my experiences with the approach and teaching of English. It was important to consider how much background ‘insider’ information should be provided to the participants and additionally it was important to ensure statements or judgements that would impose my own views about critical literacy onto the participants were avoided. This required a fine balance of portraying myself as knowledgeable about critical literacy, but not positioning and influencing their views about the approach. In
addition, to increase teacher’s comfort in the interview there needed to be a level of familiarity established between the interviewer and interviewee prior to the interview. As was argued by Kvale and Brinkmann, “the interviewees will want to have a grasp of the interviewer before they allow themselves to talk freely and expose their experiences and feelings to a stranger” (2009, p. 128). To develop this familiarity several points of contact were made; initial email contact, followed by phone conversations, and finally an informal meeting at their schools. There were two participants from Victoria who were already familiar to the researcher, but the same methods of contact were used.

One final consideration in relation to the collection of interview data was the teacher from Townsville. For this teacher all initial contacts were made except the face to face informal meeting, which was instead conducted over the phone. In addition, the interview was also in the form of a recorded phone call. To improve familiarity for the teacher in Townsville more contact was made via phone and email prior to the classroom observation and interview to build up a better rapport. Out of all of the teachers, she was the most interested in the research project, meaning it was not difficult to create a rich interview experience.

The data in this research project also consisted of observations of teacher practice. These were intended to work as a triangulation tool to compare the teachers’ constructions of critical literacy in their interviews to their practical implementation. The observations consisted of one informal unrecorded visit to the class and one video recorded session. In the video recorded session, a digital recorder was set up at the back of the room and an audio recorder as a back-up was at the front of the room. This enabled both their language and physical positioning to be recorded. As the focus was on the teacher, not the students, the camera followed the teachers’ movements. One of the major issues with observational data is the impact the observer can have on the ‘normal’ functioning of the activity being observed (Burns, 1997; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990). Even though the use of recording equipment can improve the quality of the observation as it can be viewed several times (Patton, 1990), the visibility of the equipment can make the teacher and students even more conscious of their actions. Students can become nervous and nonresponsive, or they can become disruptive and attention seeking; both unrepresentative of how the class would
usually function. The teacher may also unintentionally or intentionally prepare a class that they feel represents what the researcher wants to see, rather than what they would usually do. As Lincoln and Guba argued “thus observation not only disturbs but it shapes...Not only is there reaction and indeterminancy, there is also interaction, especially when both investigator and respondent are human beings” (1985, p. 98). When positioning the camera and the tripod care was taken to ensure it was as ‘invisible’ as possible. It was set up to face the backs of the students, and in the back corner of the room. I sat behind the camera and used an extension if I needed to move it to follow the teachers’ movements. The video data was also transcribed and sent to the participants for member checking.

In addition to issues relating to the interviews and observations, there were also several considerations to take into account in the transcription stage. When transcribing the interviews and classroom observations decisions had to be made regarding the kind of information to include that would allow adequate analysis in relation to the research questions. Transcriptions are re-presentations (Stelma & Cameron, 2007) of the interview event and are in effect translations (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Rapley, 2007) of what transpired. When transcribing, the researcher’s aims can influence the way interview data is translated into transcript form. As was argued by Mischler, “different transcripts are constructions of different worlds, each designed to fit our particular theoretical assumptions and to allow us to explore their implications” (1986, p. 271). Many aspects of this interaction cannot be presented and so the ‘real’ event is inevitably stripped of these, as was identified by Tripp when he argued transcription “exposes, discloses, obscures, and deletes certain information” (1983, p. 35) when the social interaction is presented in writing. To counter these transcription issues, member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Stake, 2005) was used. I also ensured the transcriptions used easy to understand symbols and language and a key for the symbols was provided to assist the participants. Further, the transcript was set out in table form with a column for their feedback and comments, making it easier for them to add, modify or clarify statements.
3.3 ANALYSING AND INTERPRETING THE DATA

APPROPRIATING BAKHTIN’S CONCEPT OF ‘IDEOLOGICAL BECOMING’

Bakhtin’s notion of ‘ideological becoming’ was appropriated for the context of this research. This concept describes the complex process humans go through when engaging with external voices and the influence this has on one’s views about the world. It was useful for this research as it provided a framework to interpret and analyse the teachers’ constructions of critical literacy in their social contexts, and understand relationships between them, curriculum texts and other voices. Bakhtin’s theoretical discussions and examples, however, mostly concentrated on literary analysis. Therefore this concept had to be appropriated for the context of this research. Gutierrez & Vossoughi described appropriation as “the process of reinventing or making a strategy or practice one’s own” (2010, p. 106). The interpretation and analysis in this thesis has taken the concept ideological becoming, which Delp argued “is the core of Bakhtinian theory” (2004, p. 203), and developed an understanding of it befitting an educational context. The use of this concept aligned with the focus of this research as it provided a way for the researcher to explore the complex nature of knowledge construction and representation. An understanding of how these interrelationships occurred was required to better understand the construction of critical literacy represented across and between voices in high school English in Australia. Many of Bakhtin’s concepts required unpacking to appropriate this notion as a frame for the research.

The starting point towards understanding ideological becoming is recognising Bakhtin’s version of the concept ‘ideology’. Bakhtin’s use of ‘ideology’ (or ‘ideologiya’) derives from his Russian heritage. It does not have the political edge of the English term ‘ideology’, however it does acknowledge political implications (Freedman & Ball, 2004). Morris described Bakhtin’s ideology as referring “in a more general sense to the way in which members of a given social group view the world” (1994, p. 249). This is not to say that the social group’s view of the world is necessarily received in an uncontended way by members of the group, or that there are not tensions and struggles. Within and beyond the social group there are what Bakhtin (1978) called “ideological environments”. These environments contain a large diversity of voices, of which an individual can choose which dialogues to engage with, which to dismiss.
and which ones to partly engage with/partly dismiss. As Bakhtin (1978) argued, ideological creation "is not within us, but between us" (p.8). It is this "process of selectively assimilating the words of others" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 341) that Bakhtin labelled ideological becoming. This thesis focuses on the ideological becoming of a particular social group - Australian high school English teachers (more specifically from Victoria and Queensland).

To further understand a teacher's ideological becoming, or the process of relating to the voices of others (including their own), there are several underlying principles about the nature of knowledge construction that need clarification. Bakhtin held particular views on the social nature of language, meaning and subjectivity. His conceptualisations of discourse as 'dialogic' (coined dialogism by Holquist, 1990) emphasised the social nature of language, and recognised language as dynamic and involving multiple sources surrounding language moments. In Bakhtinian approaches to language and meaning, discourses are always dialogic, in that discourse is a socially interactive and living process between the voices of speaker/writer and listener/reader. This concept of dialogism underpins an understanding of the ways ideological becoming functions. Bakhtin's view of discourse was not limited to the 'word' level (although it was inclusive of word/s) but instead he argued it was a social phenomena "throughout its entire range and in each and every of its factors, from the sound image to the furthest reaches of abstract meaning" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 259). The social nature of discourse and the contextual factors surrounding it create a situation in which meaning will never exist in a singular unitary state. Bakhtin stated "between the word and the speaking subject, there exists an elastic environment of other" (1981, p. 276) and that

The word, directed towards its object, enters a dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment of alien words, value judgements and accents, weaves in and out of complex interrelationships, merges with some, recoils from others, intersects with yet a third group: and all this may crucially shape discourse. (1981, p. 276)

This "tension-filled" environment is what this research is interested in. It investigates some of the "interrelationships" attributing to various constructions of critical literacy as a result of this ideological process.
When Bakhtin (1981, 1986) referred to ‘others’ in the process of ideological becoming, he was not only referring to those voices externally surrounding an individual, but also what he called the individual’s own ‘internally persuasive’ voices. The theoretical voices, curriculum voices and teacher voices included in this research come into dialogic contact with each other (and other voices such as the media), creating internal dialogic struggle for the teachers as implementers. Some voices become assimilated unchallenged, others are dismissed, and others are modified. In the case of critical literacy utterances they “weave[s] in and out of complex interrelationships, merge[s] with some, recoil[s] from others” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 276). Internally persuasive discourse is often difficult to ‘see’, however in the teacher interviews and practice traces of this struggle were verbalised and thus made visible. By investigating the relation teachers have with ‘other’ voices that are apparent through their use of language, an analysis of this ‘struggle’ for meaning construction (their ideological becoming) and the resulting outcome was possible. As Freedman and Ball argued

the role of the other is critical to our development; in essence, the more choice we have of words to assimilate, the more opportunity we have to learn. In a Bakhtinian sense, with whom, in what ways, and in what contexts we interact will determine what we stand to learn. (2004, p. 6)

The kinds and variety of voices available in a teachers’ environment will influence their ‘learning’ and hence constructions of teaching approaches such as critical literacy.

In order to frame an interpretation and analysis around teachers’ processes of ideological becoming it is also important to understand Bakhtin’s views on the kinds of forces at play in discourse. Within a Bakhtinian framework, a teacher’s ideological environment involves multiple forces colliding; some trying to create stable, classifiable meanings (such as the labelling of core concepts defining critical literacy) and others trying to invent and individualise them. There is a constant dialogic negotiation of meaning within and between other voices and a teacher’s when they attempt to stabilise an understanding of critical literacy. In addition, this ‘stability’ is under constant challenge. These negotiations, which Bakhtin (1981) argued also have historical relations with each other, can account for the multiple variations of critical literacy that existed at the time of this thesis being written.
They demonstrate the dialogic negotiation of meaning that happens in discourse and the complexity of one's ideological becoming in particularly contested spaces such as literacy education.

Bakhtin’s (1981) concept ‘heteroglossia’ assists in explaining the contested nature of discourse and how these forces work. Of particular interest for this thesis are discourses surrounding the notion ‘critical literacy’. He argued a variety of forces are in perpetual tension in dialogic discourse, those acting against a singular meaning (centrifugal forces), and those acting to unify meaning (centripetal forces). The social nature of discourse means that individuals, organisations and any entity attempting to construct meaning will struggle to create a unitary meaning for themselves, and for others. For a subject to create meaning in their lives they attempt to create categories and unity. Holquist explained: “I can make sense of the world only by reducing the number of its meanings – which are potentially infinite – to a restricted set” (1990, p. 47). It is difficult, however, to individualise meaning because of decentralising centrifugal forces. Utterances exist in a social language and a true unitary meaning can never exist no matter how much one tries. Bakhtin argued, “every utterance participates in the ‘unitary language’ (in its centripetal forces and tendencies) and at the same time partakes of social and historical heteroglossia (the centrifugal, stratifying forces)” (1981, p. 272). Utterances are individualized for the context of the user, they are contested and come into contact with ‘alien’ words and others’ voices over their historical existence. All of these things leave “a trace in all its semantic layers, complicate its expression and influence its entire stylistic profile” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 276) and will be reflected in the teacher’s utterances and enactments.

A person’s view of their world is constructed through their dialogic interactions with texts and with themselves. As argued by Freedman and Ball “Bakhtinian theories support the study of social processes, not isolated individuals” (2004, p. 29). Constructing meaning for critical literacy happens through social processes, which this thesis analyses using samples from influential texts in the process (mandated curriculum texts and teacher interviews/practice). Bakhtin’s conceptualisation of language and meaning represents the complex relationships that exist between these texts as the individuals/authorities attempt to create stability for
themselves and others. These various forces form a complex matrix through space and time and mean that discourses not only reaffirm social systems but also contribute to the renegotiation and change of systems (Lemke, 1995) such as those that attempt to define critical literacy.

Ideological becoming for subjects, which for this research are teachers, includes struggles to create meanings based on the “stratified and diversified” (Maybin, 2001, p. 65) language of their own context, generation, experiences, historical moment and ideological being that intertextually intertwine in their inner persuasive discourse. Individuals for whom curriculum does not provide affordances in line with their internally persuasive discourse can struggle and have conflict with these externally persuasive texts. This is particularly the case because texts such as mandated curriculum act as an ‘authority’ on teaching and assessment, in this regard they reflect Bakhtin’s (1981) notion of ‘authoritative discourses’. If the outcome of teachers’ dialogic negotiation with these texts is one of conflict they may challenge these texts. As Morson argued

> every authoritative word is spoken or heard in a milieu of difference. It may try to insulate itself from dialogue with reverential tones, a special script, and all the other signs of authority fused to it, but at the margins dialogue waits with a challenge: you may be right, but you have to convince me. Once the authoritative word responds to that challenge, it ceases to be fully authoritative. To be sure, it may still command considerable deference by virtue of its past, its moral aura, and its omnipresence. But it has ceased to be free from dialogue and its authority has changed from unquestioned to dialogically tested. Every educator crosses this line when he or she gives reasons for a truth. (2004, pp. 318-319)

Mandated curriculum documents may appear to be monologic and authoritative, but the moment they are put into a teacher’s hand they become dialogic. The effect of this is that, “each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life; all words and forms are populated by intentions” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 293). Using this logic, and the supporting discussions on curriculum in the literature review, if curriculum does not provide affordances for teachers to be agents of change, it may not ‘convince’ them to willingly
use the documents or engage in positive dialogue with them. Freedman and Ball suggested “the nature of our struggles with an authoritative discourse depends on our relationship with it” (2004, p. 7). The teachers’ discussions on mandated curriculum documents and the ways they implemented them or not should reflect the kind of relationship they have with these texts.

Freedman and Ball also argued, after conducting a study on teachers’ professional development, that “according to Bakhtin, the internally persuasive discourse of these teachers would be open and subject to change and would constantly interact with other ideas in ever-evolving ways” (2004, p. 13). The teachers’ ideological becoming through the meeting of voices in their internally persuasive discourse may reflect the voices/words of critical literacy proponents in certain moments of history as well as their refracted state in English curriculum documents. Through the process of ideological becoming the teachers refract the combination of voices/words as they “struggle to produce [their] own meaning out of the myriad connotations and associations of the words [others] use” (Maybin, 2001, p 67). Bakhtin (1981, 1986) labelled the outcome of this mixture of voices/discourses in language creation ‘hybridization’. In other words, the teachers’ representations of voices/words they have refracted are hybridizations constructed to fit their contexts and needs. Freedman and Ball’s research also found that certain extremes of “struggle and conflict can lead to the hardening of ideas” (2004, p. 19) which correlates with Bakhtin’s (1981) argument that some words are dismissed, some accepted, some partly dismissed/partly accepted. In relation to this research context, and as identified in the literature review in chapter two, teachers can feel devalued by certain approaches to mandated curriculum change which does not involve them as professionals. This is one area to look for in the interviews of the teachers; are there situations where teachers demonstrate a ‘hardening of ideas’ because of constant struggle and conflict with certain voices, such as those reflected through mandated curriculum change?

The final concept of relevance to the interpretation and analysis framework used in this thesis is ‘utterance’. Bakhtin (1981,1986) used this term to describe the meaning units individuals and groups create in dialogue. This meaning is reflected through the speaker's social choices in the use of language in specific situations, which brings about the utterance. The meaning of
language can only be understood when it is linked to the social situation in which it is used, “language, when it means, is somebody talking to somebody else, even when that someone else is one’s own inner addressee” (Holquist, 1981, xxi). The utterance is a part of live or active speech (which includes verbal, written and read speech), and always implies a response or action. As Bakhtin argued, “any utterance is a link in a very complexly organized chain of other utterances” (1986, p. 69). This term is used in the analysis when discussing a combination of words leading to a meaning unit in both the curriculum and teacher analysis.

Representations Of Ideological Becoming In The Teacher Data – Developing Focal Points And Sub-Questions

To appropriate Bakhtin’s concept of ideological becoming, a framework needed to be developed in which this concept could be used to address the research aims and questions. In relation to the teacher data, the research questions were: How has critical literacy been constructed by high school English teachers in Victoria and Queensland? And what is the relationship between theory, curriculum and teacher discourse/practice in relation to critical literacy (recognising it is a social process, however for the purpose of this thesis, located at the teacher)? To answer these questions I focused on utterances representing struggle (with other discourses, with curriculum, with change, with critical literacy), utterances representing critical literacy discourse (both reflective of the literature review and that they identify as ‘their’ view), utterances relating critical literacy to a larger picture of subject English and utterances representing a relationship between their ‘views’ on critical literacy and other voices. In addition, a further step needed was to ask what do these utterances ‘say’ about all of the above and how do they work together to develop a teachers’ ideological becoming in relation to constructions of critical literacy? To frame these requirements in a way that could assist with the interpretation and analysis of the teacher data, research sub-questions relating to the teachers’ ideological becoming were developed and are listed below:

- What kinds of discourses (and tensions with/assimilation of these discourses) existed in the teachers’ ideological environments and how did they influence the teachers’ constructions of critical literacy?
- What was the impact of teachers’ constructions of critical literacy on their perception of English and their ‘ideological becoming’?

- What hybridized forms did critical literacy take?

Utilising Bakhtin’s concept of ideological becoming, and related conceptual understandings, allowed me to develop a better picture of the ways the English teachers in this study constructed critical literacy in particular social contexts, and how academic voices and mandated English curriculum texts were a part of this dialogic process.

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**APPROPRIATING GEE’S TOOLS WITHIN A BAKHTINIAN FRAMEWORK**

A number of Gee’s (2005, 2011a, 2011b) suggested ‘tools’ for discourse analysis were selected to complement the Bakhtinian framework underpinning the interpretation and analysis of this research. Specifically these were his ‘situated meaning’, ‘deixis’, ‘sign systems and knowledge building’ and ‘politics building’ tools. These tools were appropriated in circumstances where a concrete approach, as compared to Bakhtin’s conceptual, was useful. Gee (1996, 2004a, 2004b) used Bakhtin’s views on language and meaning in his own conceptualisations of discourse analysis, constructing clear links between his work and Bakhtin. One of the limitations of Bakhtin’s work is that concepts such as ‘ideological becoming’ do not aid analysis of texts where the interaction of voices is not clearly represented. This was particularly the case when analysing the condensed and often ambiguous government mandated curriculum documents to answer the research question; ‘How has critical literacy been constructed in Australia in Queensland and Victorian mandated English curriculum documents developed for the high school context?’ Hence other analysis tools were drawn on to assist with the analysis of these documents. Curriculum documents, particularly those developed by government, are a mixture of what Gee called (a term borrowed from Bakhtin) ‘social languages’ (Bakhtin 1981, 1986; Gee, 2005). Each social language has specific nuances in language that tend to characterise the discourse and those who identify with it. As literacy is a broad area, mandated literacy/English curriculum documents will, more often than not, include a mix of languages from these discourses. Gee (2005) appropriated Bakhtin’s concept ‘hybridize’ to describe this process as it occurs in
these kinds of texts, resulting in evidence of multiple represented voices. In relation to English curriculum and critical literacy, certain language ‘choices’ made in the development of these documents construct critical literacy in various ways, and can, depending on the ‘mixture’ of languages (or hybridization), privilege particular value judgements on critical literacy approaches.

Gee’s appropriation of Bakhtin’s concepts as outlined above, provided a useful way to transfer these concepts across to an educational context. This research has also applied the process of appropriation to Gee’s work to strengthen its analysis. As Moi argued, “all intellectual statements...require rethinking in new circumstances. We always read with an eye to what we need and what we can use...Intellectual life is appropriation” (1999, p. 256). When used to complement Bakhtin’s concept of ‘ideological becoming’, the tools listed earlier improved the ‘intellectual’ work required to address the research aims. Only those that were needed and could be used were drawn on. The remainder of this section outlines his ‘situated meaning’, ‘deixis’, ‘sign systems and knowledge building’ and ‘politics building’ tools, and how they were appropriated for this research in light of the underlying concept of ideological becoming.

The first tool appropriated was the ‘situated meaning tool’ (Gee, 2011a, 2011b). Gee suggested using this tool enables the researcher to focus on how, from a range of possible meanings, context determines an assumed or expected meaning for a reader/listener. The ‘deixis tool’ (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) partners this tool as it refers to the mechanics behind the ways certain words require contextual information to determine a meaning. Usually deictic words fit the categories of person, place and time. Gee defined deixis as referring to “words whose reference must be determined from context” (2011b, p. 8) and argued that there are words outside of the categories of people, place and time that can take on deictic-like qualities. This was the meaning appropriated for this research to investigate how the term ‘critical’ was used in the selected curriculum documents to take on deictic-like qualities and requiring the reader to ‘situate’ a meaning from the context in which it was used. Gee also pointed out that when words take on deictic-like qualities their “reference shifts with each different context of use” (2011b, p. 8), hence requiring the reader to have an understanding of what the word is
referring back to (for example previous statements, assumed pre-existing knowledge, larger cultural discourses).

In tandem, these two tools were used to illustrate the way curriculum documents can represent concepts such as 'critical' in multiple ways depending on the surrounding language used to contextualise the concept. The question was asked of these documents, were there utterances in which the use of 'critical' required the reader to read around the word, or make their own inferences, as to the 'intended' meaning of the word. In addition did these meanings require the reader to refer to critical literacy discourses, other discourses for understanding, or provide such limited contextual information that no links to any discourses were possible, thus relying heavily on readers’ existing ideological environments and pre-existing ideologies? They were also drawn on to illustrate the relationship the teachers in this study had with curriculum documents, and therefore assess the amount of influence these documents had on the teachers’ ideological becoming in relation to views on critical literacy.

The ‘sign systems and knowledge building tool’ and ‘politics building tool’ (Gee, 2011a, 2011b), another two tools that work in tandem with each other, were relevant when analysing the ways the selected curriculum documents ‘positioned’ critical literacy and possibly influenced teachers’ ideological becoming in this area. Gee defined the ‘sign systems and knowledge building tool’ as relating to the ways speakers/writers use language to privilege some sign systems and knowledge over others, which in turn privileges some ‘social goods’ over others. He clarified ‘social goods’ as meaning "anything a social group or society takes as a good worth having" (2011b, p. 118). For the purpose of this thesis I am mostly interested in privileging of knowledge evident through language inclusions. In saying this sign systems, which Gee (2011b) defined as communicative systems, are of interest within the larger context of the positioning of critical literacy versus other literacy discourses and various ‘camps’ within critical literacy.

In relation to social goods, Gee further argued "language, sign systems and ways of knowing the world are so important to people and distinctive for human beings that we separate them
out as particularly important social goods over which people negotiate and contest the world” (2011b, p. 137). Literacy is a highly contested space, and this can be attributed to debates surrounding which various ‘social goods’ should be valued and represented in both intended and enacted curriculum. This is integrally linked to the ‘politics building tool’ which is concerned with the ways language can be used to build (and destroy) social goods, and can create situations “where the distribution of social goods is at stake” (2011b, p. 118). Gee emphasised the connection between the sign systems and knowledge building tool and the politics building tool saying they are “clearly closely related” (2011b, p. 136) and that “this is so because the mastery, use, and maintenance of languages, dialects, sign systems and ways of knowing the world are, for the people who ‘own’ them, social goods.” (ibid). Gee defined the politics building tool as being concerned with “how words and grammatical devices are being used to build (construct, assume) what count as social goods and to distribute these to or withhold them from listeners or others” (2011b, p. 121). These tools focus on the privileging that can occur in discourse, and suggest an understanding of the political nature of society requires a researcher to analyse what sign systems and knowledge are being constructed or assumed and which are being dismissed.

These tools were appropriated when analysing the curriculum documents to answer questions such as;

- Which discourses and their sign systems/knowledge in relation to ‘critical’ literacy (using ‘critical’ in a broad sense) were evident;
- Was the term ‘critical literacy’ included;
- How did supporting material (such as glossaries and reference lists) position critical literacy?

In addition, and tying to previously discussed concepts of importance from Bakhtin, if particular ‘social goods’ were privileged over others in English curriculum documents and did not align with English teachers’ views on social goods, how might this influence the relationship these teachers have with the curriculum documents, their enacted curriculum and their ideological becoming?
This chapter has outlined the methodological considerations made in the design, implementation and analysis stages of this research. The research utilises postmodern qualitative methodology and frames the analysis through the appropriation of Bakhtin’s ‘ideological becoming’ and complements these with several useful tools from Gee’s (2005, 2011a, 2011b) discourse analysis. Within these paradigms, the processes of research require the researcher to be critically reflexive. This research included steps to ensure critical reflexivity was evident across all stages, allowing adequate consideration of trustworthiness and triangulation. The next chapter begins the analysis stage, analysing the construction of critical literacy in the selected mandated curriculum documents in Victoria and Queensland.
4.1 INTRODUCTION

In Australia the design and implementation of mandated curriculum is the responsibility of the states. The state based documents and associated priorities are influential on the development of planned and enacted curriculum in all Australian schools. These texts also reflect the political era in which they were created and influence the representation of particular ‘social goods’ (Gee, 2005, 2011a, 2011b). As was discussed in the introduction and literature review, critical literacy was receiving negative media attention at the time the selected curriculum documents were being constructed. This section begins by outlining various contextual events surrounding the development and roll out of the mandated curriculum documents for each state, not already addressed in the literature review. This positions these ‘social languages’ (Bakhtin, 1981; Gee, 2005) within a context allowing a better understanding of the ‘deictic-like’ use of the word ‘critical’ and possible ‘intended meanings’ behind the ‘building or destruction’ of particular ‘sign systems and knowledge’ (Gee, 2005, 2011a, 2011b) that tend to characterise critical literacy. It also allows the development of a better understanding of how circumstances surrounding the development of these mandated curriculum documents play a role in the teachers’ ideological becoming, particularly in relation to critical literacy. The specific documents analysed in this chapter were the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) and associated Progression Points for levels five and six in the English domain and the senior years Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) courses in English/ESL, Literature and English Language. For Queensland the equivalent courses selected were the Queensland Essential Learnings (QELS) (end of year 7, end of year 9), and for the senior years English Senior and English Extension (Literature). These courses are summarised in the table on the following page.
Table 2 – Summary of curriculum documents analysed from Victoria and Queensland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Years</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
<th>Queensland</th>
</tr>
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| 7-10         | • Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS) English Level 5 (years 7-8) and Level 6 (years 9-10). In Victoria year 7 is the first year of high school.  
• Progression Points documents for VELS English Level 5 and Level 6 | • Queensland Essential Learnings (QELS) for English end of year 7 and end of year 9 documents. In Queensland year 8 is the first year of high school. |
| 11-12        | VCE English/ESL  
VCE Literature  
VCE English Language  
Each Victorian course is a stand-alone course which can be studied separately or in tandem with each other. | English Senior  
English Extension (Literature) – only available in year 12 as an extension course for English Senior |

The structure and purpose of these courses is outlined the context section for each state.

Once the context for each state is set, the construction of critical literacy in each curriculum document is analysed drawing on Gee’s tools previously discussed and theoretical representations of critical literacy discussed in the literature review. The analysis focuses not only on overt uses of utterances characteristic of critical literacy discourses, but also the covert uses, ambiguities and exclusions that provide evidence of knowledge and sign systems being privileged. These uses situate English within particular literacy discourses. The analysis of the curriculum documents covered under two headings;

- deictic uses of ‘critical’ and situating meaning, and
- the politics of privilege - sign systems, knowledge and social goods.
The curriculum at the time of data collection for years Prep-10 in Victoria was an evolution from the first outcomes-based curriculum; the *Curriculum Standards Framework (CSF)* introduced in 1995, and revised in 2000 (*CSF II*). The move to the *Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS)* began in 2004. At this time, states in Australia were beginning to move away from outcomes-based education to what was labelled 'essential learnings'. This signified a shift from more process orientated learning towards curriculum that reflected a mixture of discipline-based and outcomes-based designs. Lawson and Askell-Williams argued this shift could be partly attributed to political and media criticisms of perceived variability in the practical implementation of outcomes-based education and their ‘packaging’ of outcomes-based education “together with constructivism, post-modernism and progressivist education” (2007, p.3). In relation to the critical literacy agenda, these kinds of public criticisms were similar to the media criticisms of English and literacy curriculum in Australia during the 2000s, in that they often criticised ‘postmodern’ influences and ‘progressivist’ views (Devine, 2005; Donnelly 2004, 2005b, 2006a, 2006b; Slattery, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c; Topsfield, 2007). In addition, they illustrate the political struggles Gee (2011a, 2011b) identified as existing in discourse to ‘build’ or ‘destroy’ social goods through the privileging of particular sign systems over others, in this case attempts to dismiss those belonging in constructivist, postmodernist and progressivist approaches.

With regard to the Victorian context, the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA), began drafting the *Victorian Essential Learning Standards (VELS)* at the beginning of 2004. In April 2004, the VCAA released a consultation paper titled the *Victorian Curriculum Reform 2004*, and invited feedback from curriculum leaders, principals, key stakeholders, focus groups, parents and individuals (VCAA, Aug 2008). This document promoted a view of curriculum that aligned with the ‘progressivist’ approaches criticised by the media around this time by valuing social goods (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) such as deep thinking/learning, life-long learning and active citizens who could “contribute socially, economically and culturally to the society in which they live” (p.2). In addition, this overarching document outlined the values
underpinning the curriculum framework (and hence all VELS curriculum documents) as “tolerance and understanding”, “respect”, “responsibility” and “social justice” (p.4). The privileging of these ‘goods’ is often reflected in critical literacy discourses and sits comfortably within the variety of approaches identifying themselves with critical literacy. In particular, deep thinking/learning, life-long learning, active citizenry and social justice link to the influences from emancipatory movements such as critical pedagogy, feminism and postcolonialism. An individual who values and practices these skills would match the kind of ‘citizen’ described by Freire as having “critical consciousness” (1999, p. 8). In relation specifically to subject English, these goods match Green’s call for “the reconstruction of English teaching within a (re)new(ed) rhetoric of social justice, freedom and critical democracy” (1997, p. 24). Considering these “goods worth having” (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) underpinned VELS, one may assume this emphasis will be reflected in the VELS English document, which is analysed in the following section.

The feedback received from the consultation paper reported that “overall, there was a strong level of endorsement for the proposal” (VCAA, 2008, p. 5). The initial VELS (Victorian Essential Learning Standards) document (which included ‘English’), released at the end of November 2004 involved the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English (VATE), the representative body for high school English teachers in Victoria, in the initial drafting and consultative feedback stages (McCurry, 2005). This organisation conducted their own forums on VELS English providing an alternative voice to that of VCAA. The view represented by this organisation was that high school English teachers were positive about the ideologies represented in the VELS English curriculum. Hayes (2005a) argued the VATE forums were well attended and “the audience was largely sympathetic…No disgruntled teeth gnashing about another reform delivered from on high, but rather a sense that this one had a touch of realpolitik about it in that it was trying to address significant issues about curriculum and pedagogy” (Hayes, 2005a, p. 8). The evidence provided by VCAA and VATE suggested teachers viewed these documents as aligning with their ideological positions on the political nature of subject English. After a year of validation, VCAA made minimal changes and released the document for implementation in schools (VCAA, 2008).
While this evidence suggested there was little resistance, and indeed much optimism, towards the implementation of the “realpolitik” VELS English domain, teachers were resistant to and voiced concerns about the design in 2006 of a supporting assessment document. Initially this document was known as the English Continuum (DE&T) before being relabelled The Progression points (DE&T and VCAA). The Department of Education & Training (DE&T) website argued the purpose of this document was to “assist teachers in making on balance judgements about student progress towards a standard for the purposes of reporting to parents using the New Student Report Card” (2006). As identified in the ’VATE response to VCAA call for feedback on the English Progression Points’ English teachers voiced several concerns about this document. The main concerns identified in this document were that there had not been enough time allocated for teachers to complete the online feedback form, the progression points would lead to narrow assessment tasks, students were being placed into a reductive continuum, and the language in the document was often vague and ambiguous (VATE Curriculum Committee, 2006). The feedback from VATE suggested teachers viewed this document as limiting teachers opportunities to encourage critical intellectual engagement with texts and that “the two frameworks emerge from quite different educational philosophies and one cannot be ‘laid’ over the other” (VATE Curriculum Committee, 2006, p.1).

After much negative feedback to VCAA, it was revealed to VATE that the ‘Literacy Continuum’ had not been designed to function as an English curriculum, but instead its initial purpose was to act as a cross curricula literacy document, “VATE was informed that this document actually began life as a literacy continuum but is now being forced, with real pedagogical and philosophical difficulty, into the mould of a curriculum and assessment support document for English” (Houghton on behalf of VATE Council, 2006). There was also miscommunication between the government departments DE&T and VCAA, (Curriculum Committee, 2006; de Laps, 2006) which created confusion and negativity in the high school English teaching community and eventuated in the full responsibility for the English Progression Points design and revision being handed to the VCAA with representatives from VATE being employed as consultants (Curriculum Committee, 2006; de Laps, 2006). The voices represented through VATE and VCAA dominated the struggle in relation to this document resulting in the English Progression Points changing to become aligned to the VELS English general statements. Hence,
these two documents reflect the same valuing of particular social goods, which is analysed in more detail in the next section.

The layout of the VELS English (and Progression Point document for English) was in six levels (and a beyond Level 6 as a later addition). It was expected that an ‘average’ child would demonstrate Level 5 by the end of year 8 and Level 6 by the end of year 10. As this research focuses on the high school years the documents for these two levels were analysed. The VELS was structured with the overarching subject areas being labelled ‘Domains’, in which there was a learning focus statement for each level, and within each level statements outlining the standards (which in the English Domain were ‘Reading’, ‘Writing’ and ‘Speaking and Listening’).

CONTEXTUALISING ENGLISH IN THE SENIOR YEARS IN VICTORIA

The mainstream senior English course for university entrance in Victoria at the time of data collection was the VCE English/ESL course. This was followed in popularity by VCE Literature and VCE English Language, both courses which were viewed as conceptually more difficult than VCE English/ESL. Students could enrol in any of these English courses separately (or in combination). This meant all three courses were important to analyse. Also, VCE Literature had historically been the subject in which students focused on canonical texts and other challenging pieces of literature. VCE English Language was a relatively new subject (accredited in 2001) developed by academics in the linguistics field in partnership with high school English teachers (Mulder, 2007). While VCE English/ESL was the main subject discussed by the teachers interviewed in this study, the notable differences in constructions of critical literacy between the two minor courses and the mainstream course is considerable, hence the reason for their inclusion in this analysis. All courses are generally audited every three years.

The auditing process and course design of the VCE English/ESL course analysed in this thesis received criticism by the media and teachers (Eunson, 2006; McCurry, 2005). The course was due to be completed ready for implementation in 2005, but several factors in the design of the course delayed its implementation. The auditing process for VCE Literature and VCE English
Language did not have complications, which is important to note considering the higher concentration of language reflecting critical literacy skills in these courses. Considering VCE English/ESL was the mainstream 'literacy' course, and not presented as being as academically challenging as the alternative courses, the public and media concentrated its focus on the ways this course was designed to cater for the majority of the population. The study design underwent a complete revision with three separate review panels assigned before the government approved the document. In relation to the kinds of public criticisms of the course, they concentrated on what was labelled the “dumbing down” of English (Donnelly, 2006b, 2006c), poor ‘literacy’ (referring to traditional notions of grammar) (Eunson, 2006) and the postmodernist influence on English Education (Donnelly, 2006b, 2006c; Slattery, 2005a, 2005b). The ‘postmodern’ influences apparent in both the VCE Literature and VCE English Language courses were not raised as an issue in any of the media criticisms.

Communication with the general high school English teaching community relating to the design of the VCE English/ESL document was minimal as can be seen from a VATE curriculum report;

the revision of the English/ESL study design was not so straightforward, and the teaching community is still waiting to hear the reasons why the recommendations of the first Review Panel were ‘set aside’, or information about the recommendations of the group which was formed subsequently and who reported to the Board before the end of last year. (McCurry, 2005, p. 2)

This statement suggests limited ‘dialogic’ interactions occurred between the teaching community and the curriculum designers. As indicated by McCurry’s comment, the decisions were viewed by some as undemocratic and politically motivated due to public pressure. This process did not encourage a positive relationship between the teachers, the curriculum design process or the curriculum text. It instead reflected the kinds of criticisms of the de-professionalisation of English teachers as was discussed in the literature review by Doecke, Locke and Petrosky (2004), Kostogris and Doecke (2008) and Howie (2006). The contexts discussed in this section also illustrated the ideological environment (Bakhtin, 1986) surrounding the teachers prior to and during the period of data collection.
4.3 ANALYSING THE VICTORIAN CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS

INTRODUCTION

The analysis of the Victorian curriculum documents begins with the deictic uses of critical and situated meanings and then analyses the evidence of knowledge and social goods reflecting critical literacy discourses. Before moving into these sections of analysis it is important to identify the exclusion of the phrase ‘critical literacy’ across all Victorian curriculum documents used in this study. This could be partly attributed to the political and media contexts, discussed in the literature review, during the mid 2000s at the time of their development. As discussed in the literature review, during this time there was a media backlash against critical literacy and criticism of its ‘proponents’ influencing subject English. By excluding the term ‘critical literacy’ in both the VELS and all senior VCE documents included in this study, yet not excluding all of the concepts, the curriculum writers created documents that were less overt in the ways they invited particular identities that could be tied directly to critical literacy discourses, which were viewed as contentious by powerful voices in politics and the media. This exclusion reflected a subversive ideological environment in relation to promoting ‘critical literacy’ as a preferred approach to the teaching of English.

DEICTIC USES OF CRITICAL AND SITUATING MEANING

The word ‘critical’ appeared to act as a floating signifier (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985) in the various curriculum documents sampled, and took on deictic-like qualities (Gee, 2011b) in that the meaning of the word changed depending on the context in which it was used, and in some cases relied solely on the readers’ own previous knowledge. The main interest for this thesis is how these deictic uses of ‘critical’ influenced teachers’ ideological becoming in relation to critical literacy and, relating to this, their relationships with the curriculum documents. Hence this section identifies these uses and analyses the ways language was used to invite one to draw on particular discourses (including one’s own) to situate meaning for this concept.
Overall, the shifting use of ‘critical’ was evident in two ways in VELS. At times it pointed to one or more established theoretical meanings suggesting the reader needed to ‘situate’ a meaning from a combination of references from the utterances surrounding the term and their own contexts. There were also examples in which the words and utterances surrounding ‘critical’ provided little or no contextual reference, reflecting Gee’s example “if I say ‘He likes it,’ you have no idea who ‘he’ is or what ‘it’ refers to” (2011b, p. 9). Contexts such as these, relying solely on teachers’ ideological positions to situate meaning, can create ambiguity and struggles for teachers within their internally persuasive discourse.

Before looking at specific utterances, a noticeable placement of this term (regardless of deictic meanings) in the various structural levels is important to consider as it suggests a situated meaning within a developmental frame which represents ‘critical’ as a higher order skill. Across the overarching VELS English statement, levels 5 and 6 of the English domain and the Progression Points statements the word appeared 26 times. Across the two documents it was used five times in the introductory overarching statement, seven times in Level 5 and 14 times in Level 6. In addition, after scanning the level 4 English documents, intended for pre-high school students, the word ‘critical’ only appeared twice. This suggested that curriculum writers used the word as a developmental ‘marker’, and privileged it as being a sign (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) more focused on in the later years of high school. The physical placement of ‘critical’ was mostly evident in the ‘Reading’ strand, occasionally appeared in the ‘Speaking and Listening’ strand but was excluded from the ‘Writing’ strand. This was consistent with Misson’s findings (2003, 2004, 2009) that critical literacy discourses have often been promoted as relating more to reading than writing or speaking and listening (particularly in the influential four resources model designed by Freebody and Luke (1990)). The surface level dispersion of the word ‘critical’ into specific categories in this document implies that the inclusion of critical skills was more suitable for specific ages and are most relevant within the area of reading.
When moving into a more detailed analysis of specific instances in which the word ‘critical’ was used, the examples reflected three major theoretical discourses; Leavisite/cultural heritage literary criticism, critical thinking and critical literacy. Each of these theoretical paradigms historically has influenced the social goods valued when designing intended and enacted curriculum in Australia for English (Misson & Morgan, 2006). To briefly revisit the views of the first two influences, when situating the word ‘critical’ into critical thinking discourses it reflects meanings “based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness” (Scriven & Paul, 2007, p. 1). It signifies a ‘scientific’ tag, or connotations, which creates a sense of objectivity, rationality and evidence based teaching and learning. Also, as discussed in the literature review, critical thinking approaches are viewed as allowing ‘objective’ assessment (Freebody, 2008; Mellor & Patterson, 2005).

Leavisite/cultural heritage approaches entailed “explicating the literary text under consideration: interpreting it, explaining what it ‘really’ meant deep down ...evaluating the worth of the text based on the way its literary features enhanced or made that meaning” (Misson & Morgan, 2006, p. 3). These approaches tend to imply texts have a fixed meaning dependent on the author's intentions. Also, as the analysis below illustrates, the examples providing some contextual references were minimal. This reflects Lankshear’s (1994, 1997) comments regarding ‘critical’ being used as a “magic bullet” or existing as “everybody's baby” resulting in “representatives of quite different and often incompatible views claim for their respective values, purposes, and practices the status attaching to 'being critical’” (1997, p. 6).

The small inclusions had some contextual clues which could be used by teachers to validate their interpretations of several ambiguous uses of the word.

The analysis of these utterances begins with those in which deictic use could best fit critical literacy discourse. There were five uses in four utterances which were most clearly located within a critical literacy frame. Three of these were located in the overarching introduction to each level which was called the “Learning Focus” ('critical' and relevant contextual markers are highlighted in italics):
They develop a *critical understanding* about the ways that writers and producers of texts *try to position readers* to *accept particular views* of people, characters, events, ideas and information. (Learning focus, level 5, p. 41)

Their focus is on a close examination of the *critical* and *sociocultural dimensions* of language, and they learn to be *critical* and *independent users* of texts and language *appropriate to situations* in school, in their daily lives and in the workplace. (Learning Focus, Level 6, p. 42)

They develop a *critical* understanding of the *contextual factors* involved in the *construction and interpretation* of texts, including the role of audience in *shaping meaning*. (Learning Focus, Level 6, p. 42)

And

*critical* analysis of *social, historical and/or cultural values* presented in texts. (Progression Point 6.75, Reading, p. 18)

Here the use of ‘critical’ combined with other key words/phrases builds connections to the kinds of critical literacy discourses discussed in the literature review that argued for the consideration of contextual factors and social, historical and cultural values when looking at the ways texts are constructed and readings produced (for example Luke, 1992; Freebody, 2008). In addition the language used in these statements link to Freebody (1992), Green (1997) and Misson’s (1998b, 2003) views that for students to become critically literate they needed to be able to identify the ways readers are positioned by texts as well as the influence of sociocultural contexts on the meaning making process. The first and second examples also align with the ‘text analyst’ role in Freebody and Luke’s (1990) four dimension model, which emphasised the sociocultural influence on reading and asked “What does all this do to me?” (Freebody & Luke, 1990, p. 7). These central concerns tie to the emphasis in the extracts above on encouraging an understanding of the role the audience plays in shaping meaning and that text producers attempt to position their audiences. When paired with “critical”, utterances such as “social, historical and/or cultural values” reflect the ideological emphasis
Mellor and Patterson (2004) argued was what distinguished critical literacy from previous approaches to English. Finally, the third example implied a link to poststructuralist voices adopted by critical literacy theorists (Gilbert, 1992) in the ways it positioned the important role of reader in determining meaning.

The VELS English documents also contained one example that best reflected critical thinking discourses. This was found in the utterance “students begin to respond in *more detached and critical* ways to a wide range of print, visual, electronic and multimodal texts” (Learning Focus, Level 5, p. 41). In this utterance associating the adjective ‘detached’ with the term ‘critical’ points to a teaching of reading requiring a rational and objective approach. Luke and Walton (1994) identified these representations of approaches to reading as ‘conventional’ approaches to ‘critical reading’. The remaining uses of the word ‘critical’ provided less dominant links to specific discourses. When words are used deictically, Gee argued the ‘speaker’, in this case the curriculum writers, assumes the reader knows “from context or previous knowledge” (2011b, p. 10) what they are referring to. When curriculum has few referential clues, neither through utterances surrounding the word nor introductory position statements, readers draw from their ‘previous knowledge’ and ideological environments to situate a meaning. This means the context of use for these instances becomes located at the reader, hence the “reference shifts” (Gee, 2011b, p.8) in meaning rely heavily on the reader. The following discussion provides examples of these uses and possible interpretations based on the surrounding utterance and the dominant discourses that have influenced English as identified earlier.

The first example of this kind of deictic use of ‘critical’ is in the following utterance from the introduction section for the English domain:

> introduce *critical* approaches to the ideas and thinking contained in texts and support students in the development of *critical* understanding about the ways writers and speakers control language to influence their listeners, readers and viewers. (English introduction, p. 37)
The opening language in this utterance asks the teacher to introduce critical approaches, assuming readers have an understanding of multiple ways to teach ‘critical’ skills. In the first half of the utterance, there is also a suggestion that ideas and thinking are ‘contained’ in texts and that the multiplicity of undefined critical approaches can be used to extract these ideas and thinking. The notion of ideas and thinking as being ‘contained’ in the text as opposed to a postmodernist view that the writer and reader negotiate meaning as located at the reader, could imply an intended critical approach in line with Leavisite/cultural heritage and New Critical theory. Leavisite approaches to ‘critical’ analysis included making value judgements on the ways an author used technical devices to present insightful moral messages. Yet, when taken in context with the second half of the sentence, the utterance suggests a critical understanding that includes an awareness of language and power reflective of the critical discourse analysis influences on critical literacy (Carrington & Luke, 1997; Luke 1992, 2000; Luke & Walton, 1994; Luke & Woods, 2009). Leavisite approaches did not extend to critiquing the ways language influenced readers, rather they remained focused on the messages the ‘author’ was conveying. Hence taken in the context of the complete utterance the use of ‘critical’ implies deictic referencing to critical literacy discourses. This example illustrates, however, that the use of utterances such as ‘contained in texts’ could invite alternative associations for readers, such as the need to teach traditional Leavisite and New Critical traditional literary criticism essay responses, especially if their ideological position to critical analysis aligns with these historical discourses.

Further examples of utterances that rely mostly on the readers’ referential positioning of ‘critical’ are, “critical analysis of relationships between texts, contexts, speakers and listeners” (Progression Point 5.5, Speaking and Listening p. 16), repeated in level 6 as “analyse critically the relationship between texts, contexts, speakers and listeners” (Level 6, Speaking and Listening, p. 43). These utterances could be positioned within critical thinking and critical literacy discourses. Critical thinking discourses describe communication as “a dialogic event which requires some level of mutual awareness and cooperation between communicants” (Petress, 2004, p.463), hence linking to the relationship described in the curriculum utterance. In the critical literacy context authors such as Lankshear and McLaren (1993) and Morgan (1997) identified the importance of these concepts for critical literacy. Lankshear
and McLaren’s description of reading implied it needed a critical understanding of the ways it
can be “shaped by social positionality...intertextuality determinations (readers’ experience of
other texts), and culturally determined genre expectations” (1993, p 391). These views
demonstrate the way both discourses value the importance of developing students’ skills to
conduct an in-depth and carefully considered analysis of the intertextual relationship between
“texts, contexts, speakers and listeners”. Utterances such as these illustrate the shifting nature
of the word ‘critical’ throughout this document. Limited contextual clues do not assist
teachers to situate the curriculum document’s intended meaning for the word ‘critical’.

There are also utterances that surround ‘critical’ with such limited contextual clues that
readers would rely solely on their understandings from other uses in the document and their
own pre-existing knowledge. Examples such as “critical analysis of and responses to a wide
range of imaginative, informative and persuasive texts” (Reading progression point 5.5, p. 15),
“critical responses to a range of spoken texts dealing with complex subject matter” (Speaking
and listening progression point 5.75, p. 16), “critical analysis of ideas, themes, characters and
settings presented in a range of literary texts” (Reading progression point 6.5, p. 18) and
“exploration and critical analysis of key ideas, characters and themes” (Reading progression
point 6.75, p. 18), do little to place ‘critical’ in any particular discourse and provide no
contextual clues for teachers to construct a reference point for meaning. The foregrounding of
“ideas”, “themes”, “characters” and “settings” in relation to “critical analysis” could lead a
reader towards an interpretation representative of traditional Leavisite discourses. While
this may be one outcome, the document on the whole does not attempt in any way to provide
contextual information for ‘critical analysis’ or ‘critical responses’. The shifting range of
possible meanings as determined by the reader could result in various and possibly quite
different skills being associated with the operationalisation of these particular utterances.
Another possible outcome is that these utterances are seen as empty descriptors and are
ignored.

The most important finding from this analysis linking to the aims of this thesis is that the VELS
English and the Progression Points for English include predominantly deictic uses of ‘critical’
that rely heavily on the readers’ ideological stance. When this is taken in context with the
main curriculum document, as is illustrated in the next stage of analysis, the associations with specific discourses, particularly critical literacy, is evident but not overt. In addition, there is no theoretical positioning section, statement of intention, or rationale to identify the discourses drawn on in the construction stage of the document or to invite the teacher to place uses of ‘critical’ within particular theoretical frames. This confirms Lankshear’s (1994, 1997) concerns regarding the insertion of ‘critical’ into curriculum documents. While the minimal uses of ‘critical’ reflecting multiple theoretical discourses may create ideological struggles for teachers if they position themselves passionately with particular discourses, the alternative of clearly associating the use of ‘critical’ within one discourse could result in some teachers dismissing mandated curriculum if it did not align with their ideologies. By constructing documents in which the teacher is required to infer a meaning for overarching terms such as ‘critical’ using their own views allows the minimising of possible resistance to the documents. It may also, however, impact negatively on the teachers’ positioning of these documents as being able to provide valuable guidance for their enacted curriculum.

VCE English, English Language And Literature Documents

Out of the three senior English documents, the inclusion of the word ‘critical’ was most prolific in VCE Literature (16) followed by VCE English Language (four) and then VCE English/ESL (only appearing twice). In both the VCE English/ESL and VCE English Language documents the deictic use of the word, like most uses in VELS English, provided little direct references to specific discourses in the utterances. As is explained in the following paragraphs, if one, however, had an understanding of the larger purpose of VCE English Language and placed ‘critical’ into the context of the entire document, the discourses these uses refer to would become clearer. The extent of contextual clues in the larger document of the VCE English/ESL document was not on the same scale. The VCE Literature document included both direct uses in utterances that implied connections to critical literacy discourses and some that required the reader to use larger contextual clues. When viewing VCE Literature as a whole text, language and concepts aligned with critical literacy discourse were more prevalent than the two other senior English documents. This section analyses the deictic uses of ‘critical’ in, what could be argued, the more influential senior years documents to assist with an understanding of how these contribute to teachers’ ideological becoming in relation to critical literacy.
The two deictic uses of ‘critical’ in the VCE English/ESL document both appear in Unit 3, which is completed in the first semester of year 12 (the final year of high school). The first instance was in the skills description of Area of Study One ‘Reading and Responding’ (AOS 1), which essentially culminates in a text response essay. The second was in the skills description of Area of Study Three ‘Using Language to Persuade’ (AOS 3), which focuses on the study of persuasive language used in media texts. The two utterances (critical is italicised) were; “this area of study focuses on the reading of a range of literary texts to develop critical and supported responses” (AOS1, p. 24) and “techniques for critical analysis of ideas, arguments and evidence presented in persuasive texts” (AOS 3, p. 26). In the same way as the final examples discussed from VELS English, the utterances surrounding the term critical here could lead to a traditional Leavisite reading, especially in relation to literary texts, however considering there are very few contextual clues for the reader as to the discursive origins for critical or the intended meaning an interpretation of ‘critical’ in these contexts would rely heavily on the readers’ ideological positions on the teaching of English. In addition there is no evidence in the document as a whole to define the “techniques” required for “critical analysis”, again leaving the interpretation open to the reader.

De-contextualised use in this way could lead to multiple interpretations of what “critical responses” and “critical analysis” might mean. For teachers ideologically positioned towards Leavisite/cultural heritage style literary criticism, analysis may include making judgements about the worth of the narrative features of the text and the author’s intentions, particularly in AOS 1, which included a traditional style assessment task, the text response essay. This particular AOS, however, also included the most prominent utterances reflecting critical literacy discourses. For example it included the same kinds of emphasis on context and values as was evident in some of the VELS English statements linking to the previously discussed emphasis in theoretical critical literacy texts on ideology and social, historical and cultural values. In addition, the example from AOS 3 focused on persuasive techniques used in media...
texts. This reference cut ties to Leavisite/cultural heritage interpretations as advocates supporting this tradition would argue against the use of media texts as they were viewed as contributing to the cultural impoverishment of English (Ball, Kenny & Gardiner, 1990). Connections could also be made to a critical thinking discourse through the combination of the word “techniques” with “critical analysis”. This language is characteristic of scientific discourse which may imply to some teachers that an objective technical approach to critique, of the kind available through critical thinking discourse (Cervetti, Pardales & Damico, 2001), was required.

VCE English Language

The four examples included in the VCE English Language were all in the Aims section at the beginning of the document. Considering the context surrounding the creation of this subject there were clearer deictic locations of meaning within discourses such as critical linguistics (Fowler, 1986; Kress & Hodge, 1979), systemic functional linguistics (Halliday & Mathiessen, 2004) and critical discourse analysis/critical language awareness (Fairclough, 1989, 1992, 1995; Janks, 1994, 1999). The linking of “linguistic analysis” and “critical reflection” in the following utterance demonstrates one example of these ties “use English effectively and creatively through activities which involve linguistic analysis and critical reflection as key components” (p. 8). Views on language in these traditions emphasised its social nature by connecting the mechanics of language with context, and in CDA/CLA approaches also included an interrogation of the ways ideology and power worked through language. Considering the influence these paradigms had on critical literacy (Luke, 2000; Luke, Comber & Grant, 2003; Luke & Woods, 2009), teachers ideologically in favour of CDA/CLA style variants of critical literacy may draw on voices from all of these discourses for understanding.

When analysing the other utterances, further links between the mechanics of language and context in the meaning making process reflecting CDA/CLA critical literacy variants was evident in the following two examples, “investigate relationships between structure, function, context and meaning in English texts, and to describe, reflect upon and comment critically on these” (p. 8) and “expand their descriptive, analytical and critical skills in dealing with language data produced in a variety of contexts” (p. 8). The use of the words “descriptive”,
“analytical” and “language data”, often associated with scientific discourses, however, could mean critical thinking discourses may also be drawn on by teachers. The final example “reflect critically upon attitudes to language and language use” (p. 8) implied links to the ideological focus in CDA/CLA and critical literacy discourses by suggesting that language in context has ideological implications (Carrington & Luke, 1997; Luke 1992, 2000; Luke & Walton, 2009).

The use of critical in these examples provides much clearer associations with particular discourses than those in the mainstream VCE English course. There were conflicting views on the influence of these specific paradigms on curriculum in Australia as illustrated in the literature review. Morgan and Misson (2006) argued CDA/CLA versions of critical literacy were not evident in Australian curriculum, whereas Luke (2000), Luke, Comber and Grant (2003) and Luke and Woods (2009) argued they were of importance and Luke and Woods (2009) labelled these kinds of approaches “text analyst models”. When considering why these particular paradigms were more clearly evident in this course as compared to the mainstream it could be linked to two things; first the perception that these skills are developmental, a view critiqued by Luke (2000) and Freebody (2007), hence the ‘optional’ courses could include them; and second, since these courses were optional they were not as publicly scrutinised as the mainstream course.

VCE English Literature

The VCE English Literature course was also optional, and is considered to be more challenging than the mainstream course. The course, as mentioned in the introduction to this section, had the most inclusions of the word ‘critical’. While many of these provided little immediate surrounding contextual information, when placed into context with the other instances, the surrounding paragraphs and complete document, and the suggested resources for teachers list, the context of these uses can be argued to mostly refer to critical literacy discourses. Examples of the kinds of utterances with little immediate contextual clues were “students respond to a range of texts personally, critically, and creatively” (Unit 1 overview, p. 12) and “students develop critical and creative responses to texts” (Unit 2 overview, p. 16).

Utterances such as these surrounded the word ‘critical’ with general, non-discourse specific
language that provided little in the way of interpretive direction, however, as is discussed in more detail in the following section, these instances were surrounded by other utterances such as “this variety of approaches to reading invites questions about the ideas and concerns of the text” (Unit 1 overview, p. 12) and “they understand the ways their own culture and the cultures represented in the text can influence their interpretations and shape different meanings” (Unit 2 overview, p. 16). The kinds of poststructuralist underpinnings of critical literacy such as understanding the multiplicity of reading, questioning texts and ideological factors influencing meaning making (Gilbert, 1993; Lankshear & Mclaren, 1993; Luke, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c) are evident in these utterances.

There is also an example in the overall aims of the course which could be interpreted as referring to Leavisite/cultural heritage or critical literacy discourses. In the early years of development Literature courses in England and Australia had the aim of developing an appreciation of canon texts (Beavis, 1996), compared to the role of the subject English which focused more on the development of language, grammar and moral standards (Ball, Kenny & Gardiner, 1990, p. 48). Literature courses historically reflected Leavisite/cultural heritage approaches to literary analysis, which continue to influence perceptions on approaches to teaching and studying literature represented in populist media to this day (for example Donnelly, 2005a, 2005b, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c) creating tension in both public and teaching discourses on ways to include, define and analyse literary texts across all English related subjects. In light of this historical tradition, it may be possible that teachers interpret the use of critical in the utterance “read closely and engage in detailed critical analysis of the key literary features” (p. 7) to refer to students making judgements based on the author’s skills with literary features (Misson & Morgan, 2006, p. 3). Again, however, in light of some of the key concepts and language used later in the document, it would seem more likely that teachers would interpret this statement as requiring the type of ‘critical analysis’ discussed in critical literacy discourses, such as examining the ways the key literary features are used to ‘position’ readers (which is the focus in some utterances in later sections of the document).

There are also deictic uses of ‘critical’ in the overall aims section, Unit 1 AOS 2 and Unit 2 AOS 1 that can also be interpreted as referring to critical literacy discourse. These utterances
combined ‘critical’ with a focus on contextual considerations and the ways these are 'represented' in text as can be seen in the examples below:

Develop a critical awareness of cultures past and present, as they are represented in literature (p. 7)

the student should be able to analyse and respond both critically and creatively to the ways in which one or more texts reflect or comment on the interests and ideas of individuals and particular groups in society (Unit 1, p. 13)

On completion of this unit the students should be able to analyse and respond both critically and creatively to the ways a text from a past era reflects or comments on the ideas and concerns of individuals and groups at that time (Unit 2, p. 16)

These statements imply teachers need to develop students’ awareness of the ways texts are social practices (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Freebody, 2008; Luke & Baker, 1991; Misson & Morgan, 2006) that ‘reflect’ or construct views and values of groups in particular historical contexts. By suggesting they need to ‘critically’ and ‘creatively’ respond to texts in this way the utterances are reflecting a focus represented in critical literacy theoretical texts on the importance of enabling students to look beyond the text to the issues of the time, and how the authors constructed the texts to represent particular interests and agree with, question, or comment on cultural norms/values (Freebody, 2008; Freebody & Baker, 2003; Green, 1998; Luke, 2000). These skills are also evident (see the next section) in statements within AOS 1 and AOS 2 throughout the whole document.

Finally, another use of the term critical of interest in light of the way its “reference must be determined from context” (Gee, 2011b, p. 8) was in the final Unit (Unit 4, the last unit in their final year), AOS 1. This particular Unit focused on imaginative techniques used in texts and required the student to ‘re-create’ a literary work. The utterance surrounding the use of the word critical stated “students also reflect critically upon aspects of the text on which their own writing is based, and discuss the purpose and context of their response” (p. 25). Within
the context of this Area of Study this statement suggests teachers should aim to develop students who have knowledge of the way they, as authors, can use aspects of other author’s texts to re-construct their own texts for particular purposes and contexts. Two discourses could be reflected in these statements, namely reader response theory (Iser, 1978; Rosenblatt, 1938, 1978) and critical literacy theories. Reader response theory introduced an alternative view to the kinds of Leavisite approaches emphasising the role of the author and instead foregrounded the importance of the reader’s role in imagining, responding to and constructing texts. This theory was highly influential on English teaching in the 1980s. In critical literacy theoretical texts, these kinds of skills were reflected through their focus on understanding the intertextual nature of the construction of writing (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993). In addition they echo Luke, Comber and Grant’s (2003) discussions on the productive nature of critical literacy as being a process of deconstruction to reconstruction to deconstruction (drawing on Janks’ (2000) work). These two discourses are complementary and could be drawn on separately or in combination by teachers.

Looking Across The Documents

The deictic use of ‘critical’ in these documents varies. In some instances the surrounding utterance/s and the document on the whole point to references to particular discourses over others, while in other examples discussed this is not clear. The documents in which the term ‘critical’ was not as evident and the links to ‘critical’ discourses were less distinguishable were the mainstream courses, being the VELS English and the VCE English/ESL. As discussed in the analysis of the VELS English this may reflect a desire to avoid conflict with or resistance by teachers by being too specific. Without providing discursive references, however, ‘critical’ has limited value (Lankshear, 1994, 1997). It may also reflect the historical tradition of mainstream English courses being designed for the ‘workers’ (Ball, Kenny & Gardiner, 1990), where basic reading and writing skills rather than ‘critical’ acumen was the focus. The importance of these findings for this thesis is that they will provide a reference point when reflecting on the Victorian teachers’ voices in relation to their views on curriculum constructions of critical literacy and whether they feel these align with, or contribute to their ideological becoming and/or hybridization of critical literacy.
The ways the sampled curriculum documents include knowledge relating to critical literacy, hence pointing to particular social goods, contributes to an understanding of the kinds of constructions intended. As Gee (2005, 2011a, 2011b) argued, “language, sign systems, and ways of knowing the world are so important to people and distinctive for human beings that we separate them out as particularly important social goods over which people negotiate and contest the world” (2011b, p. 137). The ways words were used within the curriculum documents to construct what counts as social goods in relation to critical literacy could contribute to the ways the teachers negotiate their views on, and enactment of critical literacies. Considering the deictic use of ‘critical’ in the VELS English and the VCE English/ESL documents was in most cases reliant on the pre-existing knowledge from the reader, it was important to analyse other usages of language that positioned critical literacy approaches in particular ways. This would not only give an indication of the social goods given precedence from critical literacy discourses, but also how it was (or was not) privileged as an important sign system for the teaching of English/literacy.

VELS English Document

Of the knowledge and social goods aligning with critical literacy from the theoretical texts discussed in the literature review, some appeared to be more evident than others in this document. They aligned more with the kinds of critical literacy variants such as those influenced by postmodernism/poststructuralism and critical discourse analysis, hence suggesting particular knowledge and associated social goods were privileged more. This can be seen through key word combinations and concepts concurring with particular critical literacy academic discourses.

One of the key understandings from critical literacy that was common in the theoretical texts from the literature review was that texts are ‘constructed’ by authors to represent particular ideological positions (Luke & Walton, 1994). This idea was apparent in discussions about Derrida’s influence through ‘deconstruction’ on critical literacy (Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Green 1991, 1997, 1998; Morgan, 1997; Lankshear, 1998) and Foucault’s influence
through his views on ‘discourse’ (Luke, 2000). Luke argued, in relation to Foucault’s influence, that “practically, this translates into a classroom focus on identifying the dominant cultural discourses—themes, ideologies, registers—in texts and discussing how these discourses attempt to position and construct readers, their understandings and representations of the world, their social relations, and their identities” (2000, p. 453).

Several utterances in the VELS English used the term “construct” implying teachers needed to develop an understanding in students that texts are deliberate constructions. In most of these examples, however, the term (like the use of critical) relied mostly on the reader to make inferential connections to particular discourses on knowledge. For example “students learn to use formal language to construct spoken and written texts for a range of purposes and audiences” (Learning Focus, Level 5, p. 41), “knowledge of the structures, features and conventions used by authors to construct meaning in texts” (Progression Point 6.25, Reading, p. 18) and “exploration of how meaning is constructed through written language and visual images” (Progression Point 6.75, Reading p. 18).

An utterance included in the Speaking and Listening strand that could be argued to use ‘construct’ to link more closely to critical literacy discourses shifts the focus from author to audience. It stated students needed to develop an “awareness of the influence of audience on the construction and presentation of spoken texts, and of how situational and sociocultural factors affect audience responses” (Level 5, p. 43). This privileged the kind of knowledge evident in the critical literacy theoretical texts that argued the listener/reader contexts influences not only the ‘construction’ of texts, but also their responses. It also privileged the kind of social goods valued in critical literacy classrooms that focus on “multiple possible readings of texts” (Luke, 2000, p. 453). It does not, however, extend the skills to another inclusion Luke argued was important, examining the ways “possible readers are silent or marginalised” (ibid). There was a focus on what can be seen rather than what is omitted.

The VELS English levels 5 and 6 documents also included several utterances using other language that suggested teaching students to understand that texts can have multiple reading positions was considered to be “a good worth having” (Gee, 2011b, p. 118). These utterances again linked to critical literacy theoretical texts that argued textual meaning is plural, not
stable (Gilbert, 1992) and is influenced by factors such as one’s association with a social group (or discourse), sociocultural ‘factors’ or choices in text construction (Green, 1997; Luke & Luke, 1990; Misson, 1998b; Morgan, 1997). This was evident in both the overall learning focus documents in levels 5 and 6, and the ‘Reading’ progression points for each level in the following utterances (the relevant part of each utterance is italicised);

They examine how situational and sociocultural factors affect audience responses. (Learning Focus, level 5, p. 42)

understanding of how variations in language, form and context affect interpretations of texts. (Reading 5.5, p. 15)

explore and interpret different perspectives on complex issues, analysing how different texts are likely to be interpreted by different groups. (Learning Focus, level 6, p. 42)

discussion of the influences on different readers’ interpretations of texts. (Reading 6.5, p. 18)

discussion and comparisons of possible interpretations of texts supported by evidence from the texts. (Reading 6.75, p. 18)

The inclusion of these skills within the reading strands reflects a trend in the document to privilege critical literacy sign systems in reading rather than other areas of literacy. This trend was discussed in criticisms of early theoretical approaches to critical literacy by Gilbert (1991b), Green (1998) and Misson (1998b).

Another key area of knowledge evident in critical literacy theory and reflected in two of the VELS English utterances is the understanding of how texts are constructed to present particular ideological positions and influence/’position’ readers (Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Lankshear, 1998; Morgan, 1997). The two utterances linking to this knowledge were
"critical understanding about the ways that writers and producers of texts try to position readers to accept particular views of people, characters, events, ideas and information" (Learning focus, level 5, p. 41), and "use a range of language techniques to try to position readers to accept particular views of people, characters, events, ideas and information" (Level 6, Writing, p. 43). These statements reflect the view that "the positioning of the reader is not only topical: It is intrinsically ideological" (Freebody, Luke and Gilbert, 1991, p. 442). This was evident in the utterances through the combination of "position" with "accept particular views" in both examples. In addition, the emphasis on language techniques in the second example reflects the knowledge privileged in critical literacy discourses influenced by CDA/CLA (Carrington & Luke, 1997; Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Lankshear, 1994; Luke 1992; Luke & Walton, 1994; Misson, 1998b; Morgan, 1997). The framing of a critical literacy approach that incorporates these views was reflected in Luke's suggestion for "a model of critical literacy which also explicitly stresses the understanding of the complex lexicogrammatical devices that texts use to portray the world and to position and construct their readers" (Luke, 1992, p. 16). This critical literacy sign system (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) was also privileged, with a slightly different emphasis, in one utterance through the ways it connected power to language. The 'Learning Focus' of level 5 asked that teachers "explore the power of language, and the ways it can influence roles and relationships and represent ideas, information and concepts (Learning focus, level 5, p. 41) with their students.

The findings of the VELS English domain levels 5 and 6 analysis suggest the social goods valued in relation to critical literacy sign systems favours approaches that may reflect poststructuralist/postmodernist and CDA/CLA variants. The utterances do not imply that students should engage in social action in their communities or delve into global issues of social justice and ‘empowerment’ as evident in approaches influenced by critical pedagogy (Luke & Walton, 1994; Patterson, 1990) or as the values underpinning the Victorian Curriculum Reform 2004 document suggested would be included. Incorporating knowledge and social goods privileged in these utterances may lead to what Lankshear (1989) called ‘critical literacy’ as opposed to ‘naïve literacy’, however the language did not suggest students should be encouraged to challenge or try to change textual representations and ideologies.
As with the deictic uses of ‘critical’, out of the three Victorian senior English courses VCE English/ESL had the least noticeable utterances reflecting critical literacy discourses, followed by VCE Literature and VCE English Language. Reflecting the VELS English inclusions, these aligned mostly with critical literacy approaches reflecting poststructuralist/postmodernist and CDA/CLA influences. The VCE English/ESL curriculum document was 73 pages, including a section for each ‘Unit’, a short glossary, advice for teachers, and a resource list. The main focus for this analysis was on the curriculum descriptors for each Unit, the associated knowledge, skills and assessment tasks, the glossary and suggested resource list. The VCE Literature document was 50 pages, including a section for each ‘Unit’, advice for teachers and a suggested resource list and the VCE English Language document was 53 pages including a section for each ‘Unit’ and an advice for teachers section. The resources list for this subject was supplied as a separate document. An analysis of the construction of critical literacy in these documents is provided in more detail below.

VCE English/ESL

One notable language inclusion connecting to knowledge from critical literacy discourses in the VCE English/ESL document, apart from the term ‘critical’, were prevalent uses of the term ‘construct’ and its derivatives in one Area of Study (AOS 1). In AOS 1 students were expected to conduct close textual analysis of novels, short stories, film and/or poetry. The term ‘construct’ implied a shift away from a cultural heritage view of text analysis which, as discussed earlier, could be defined as evaluating the author’s use of narrative techniques to convey themes without critique of the influence of values or ideologies. The use of this term demonstrated the same links to poststructuralist/postmodern influences on critical literacy as the VELS English uses in that they decentralised the importance of the author and recognised the role of the reader, opening up the possibility for multiple interpretations. The ways this term was contextualised throughout this document is characterised in the following two examples;

readers construct meaning from texts through, for example, an awareness of context and purpose, and their knowledge of other texts (Unit 1, AOS 1, p. 13)
Students identify, discuss and analyse the structures, features and conventions of a range of texts to explore how these elements have been chosen by authors in order to construct meaning and how they affect interpretation. In identifying and analysing explicit and implied values embodied in texts, students examine the ways in which readers or viewers are invited to respond to the texts (Unit 4, AOS 1, p. 29)

These utterances combined 'construct' with the social goods of having “awareness of context and purpose”, understanding intertextuality (“knowledge of other texts”) and understanding that authors deliberately select narrative and language ‘elements’ to ‘invite’ the reader to side with their ideological positions on issues. In the same way as the VELS English use of this term, even though these social goods aligned with underlying principles of critical literacy (Gilbert, 1991a), they did not extend to an examination of what is/who are missing from texts, argued to be an important inclusion in critical literacy approaches (Luke, 2000).

Along these same lines, and again reflecting skills valued in the VELS English, there were utterances implying the valuing of similar knowledge relating to developing students' understanding of the multiplicity of textual readings, the ways ideologies weave through texts and the ways social, historical and/or cultural values can be seen in texts. These utterances were also placed in AOS 1 and were phrased in the following way (with italics highlighting the relevant language):

Students...examine the ways in which texts are open to different interpretations by different readers...They explore and use strategies for identifying the point of view and values of the author (Unit 2, AOS 1, p. 18)

The ways in which readers’ interpretations of texts differ and why (Unit 4, AOS 1, p. 29)

They describe and analyse the way in which social, historical and/or cultural values are embodied in texts (Unit 3, AOS 1, p. 24)
Since this AOS concentrated on analysis of traditional forms of texts (novels, short stories, plays, poetry and film), these skills were valued in the application of reading of these kinds of texts. As with the previous examples, these utterances also tended to focus on inclusions rather than omissions. Although depending on a teachers’ interpretation of the utterance, when identifying why readers’ interpretations of texts differ, this could focus on the ways readers are marginalised.

Also as was evident in the *VELS English*, this document contained the use of the word ‘position’ and the knowledge that texts are ‘persuasive’. These were located within AOS 3 ‘Using language to persuade’. This part of the course was specifically designed to investigate persuasive language and focused heavily on popular culture texts, such as media articles/cartoons, social media sites, sms communication and other multimedia texts. While these text types were emphasised in several discussions by critical literacy authors (for example Misson, 1998a, 1998b; Luke, 1991c; Luke, O’Brien & Comber, 1994; Luke & Woods, 2009), the links to critical literacy discourses in this section of the course were much less explicit than the previous ‘text response’ section. There were three utterances that could be interpreted as privileging knowledge from critical literacy discourses (structurally the utterances for this section of the course are almost unchanged across the whole document);

Students identify and discuss how language, verbal and non-verbal (including visual), is used in the chosen texts to position readers and viewers in particular ways (Unit 1, p. 16; Unit 2, p. 21, Unit 3, p. 26)

language used by authors of texts to persuade readers and viewers to share the point/s of view presented (ibid)

language is designed to position readers and viewers (ibid)

The concept “position” and the use of “persuade” commonly appeared in critical literacy discourses (Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Luke, 1992; Morgan 1997) as discussed in the *VELS English* analysis. While there are only a limited number of examples making these connections, the title of this Area of Study links immediately to studies of persuasion in texts.
This means teachers who have had contact with critical literacy voices and are sympathetic to their aims could view AOS 3 as a key location in the curriculum document for critical literacy enactment.

A section of the document that appeared to contain the least privileging of critical literacy knowledge was AOS 2 ‘Creating and Presenting’. This AOS focused on writing texts, and hence the skills involved in the production of texts. While this area of the course was structured around ‘Contexts’ in which the students were required to situate their writing and used the term “construct” several times, the utterances in this section focused more on process and genre. The closest statement that could be interpreted to link to critical literacy discourses was “they will reflect on the ideas and/or arguments suggested by these texts, explore the relationship between purpose, form, audience and language, and examine the choices made by authors in order to construct meaning” (Unit 3, AOS 2, p. 25). This statement implies authors make deliberate decisions when they "construct" texts as discussed in previous analysis of the use of this term.

Most of the utterances in this AOS across the course reflected a combination of process and genre studies discourses. In process discourses the focus is on teaching writing processes, for example planning, drafting, editing, which was reflected in the following utterance from this AOS “use appropriate strategies to review and edit texts for fluency and coherence” (AOS 2, Unit 3, p. 26). A criticism of this approach is that the same process is applied no matter what the text type (Badger & White, 2000). Genre approaches in Australia have been influenced by Halliday’s systemic functional linguistics (Hyon, 1996) which focused on “linking form, function and social context” and “both global text structure and sentence level register features, associated with field, tenor, and mode” (Hyon, 1996, p. 697). This was evident in the following utterance “the relationship between purpose, form, language and audience in a range of print, non-print and multimodal text types, with close attention to authors’ choices of specific structures and features; for example, style, images, design, point of view, tone and register” (AOS 2, Unit 3, p. 26). Discussions in both discourses remained located in the production (or writing) of texts (Badger & White, 1999; Hyon, 1996). The minimal links to critical literacy social goods in this particular area of the course reflects its absence in the VELS English writing domain and can be linked to criticisms by Gilbert (1991b), Green
(1998) and Misson (1998a, 1998b) about a lack of attention in critical literacy discourses towards writing. There was no evidence of valuing the kinds of ties between writing and critical literacy as discussed by Kamler (2001), Misson (2003, 2004, 2009) or Misson and Morgan (2006) in this AOS.

Finally, when looking across the document inclusions, the VCE English document also included a glossary and resources list. These inclusions could give some indication of the discursive location of knowledge and privileging of sign systems through the definitions of terms and expected reading for teachers. In this document the glossary included only one term aligning with critical literacy discourses, the definition of ‘author’ within a postmodern context stating the term was “used in the broadest sense, to mean the creators of print, non-print and multimodal texts” (p. 34). The resources list included seven out of 47 texts with links to critical literacy including several teacher resource books produced by writers in the mid to late 1990’s, also identified in the literature review, such as Martino and Mellor’s (1995) *Gendered Fictions*, Mellor and Patterson’s (1996) *Investigating Texts*, Mellor, Patterson and O’Neill’s (1991) *Reading Fictions*, Moon’s (1998) *Studying Poetry* and Munro’s (1993) *Reading Literature*. All of these texts, with the exception of Munro’s, were published by Chalkface Press, which also published other texts that reflected critical literacy discourses during this era. In addition to these teacher resources Lankshear’s (1997) *Changing Literacies* was included. This resource list reflects the emphasis in the 1990s on publishing teacher resource texts on critical literacy. The inclusion of these texts may direct some teachers to critical literacy discourses, but the low number (and the age of the resources) could mean teachers would not place a considerable value on them.

In relation to the construction of critical literacy through privileging particular knowledge and social goods from these discourses, the VCE English/ESL document incorporates utterances focusing on mostly the poststructuralist/postmodernist influences. These revolve around teachers developing students’ understanding of texts as constructions, and the ways authors can position audiences. There is little evidence of Freirean, CDA/CLA or feminist influences on critical literacy in the included utterances. Nor is there evidence of ties between writing and critical literacy, thus representing a narrow range of inclusion of social goods represented in theoretical texts on critical literacy.
The *VCE English Language* course includes a larger proportion of utterances privileging knowledge from critical literacy discourses than the *VCE English/ESL* course. In addition, within the group of utterances, this non-mainstream course privileges knowledge reflective of CDA/CLA variations of critical literacy, which Misson and Morgan (2006) argued did not traditionally have currency in Australia. When considering the context surrounding the creation of the course (as discussed earlier), this focus represents its linguistic nature.

Several utterances reflected a variant of critical literacy Luke and Woods labelled “text-analytic”, which they argued were “based upon critical discourse analysis, an explicitly political derivative of systemic functional linguistics” (Luke & Woods, 2009, p. 15). These utterances revolved around the understanding emphasised in Unit 1 of the course “that language is never a neutral and transparent means of representing reality” (p. 14). The social goods evident in the following utterances reflected the need for teachers to educate students to understand that “language, texts, and their discourse structures are more than neutral or factual representations of the world. Texts are a means for construing, shaping, and reshaping worlds in particular normative directions with identifiable ideological interests and consequences for individuals and communities.” (Luke & Woods, 2009, p. 9). For example:

> language choices are always *influenced by the situational and cultural contexts* in which they occur, and are based on the conventional understandings and traditions that *shape and reflect our view of the world.* (Unit 1, p. 14)

*Through language we communicate information, ideas, attitudes, prejudices and ideological stances* (Unit 3, p. 24)

And

*Students consider how texts are influenced by the situational and cultural contexts in which they occur* (Unit 3, p. 24)
These utterances aligned with Luke and Woods (2009) privileged social goods and match the language used in their quote as is evident through the combination of language italicised in each example.

There were also utterances included in this course, setting it apart from VCE English/ESL and the VELS English courses, that combined the concepts “language”, “power”, “relationships”, “structures” and “purpose” with “inclusion” and “exclusion”. In relation to critical literacy sign systems, this could reflect multiple discursive origins, such as poststructuralist/postmodernist, CDA/CLA, critical pedagogy or feminist (Freebody, 2008; Lankshear, 1994, 1997; Luke & Walton, 1994; Luke & Woods, 2009; Misson & Morgan, 2006; Morgan, 1997). These utterances were:

They examine the ways that multilingual speakers use code-switching to mark identity as a powerful means of inclusion or exclusion (Unit 2, p. 19)

And

They learn how language can be indicative of relationships, power structures and purpose – through the choice of a particular variety of language, and through the ways in which language varieties are used in processes of inclusion and exclusion (Unit 3, p. 24)

The social goods linking to poststructuralist/postmodern variants can be traced to a deconstructionist emphasis on a study of the ways texts exclude and omit (Morgan, 1997). CDA/CLA approaches reflect Luke and Woods previously identified ‘text analyst’ version through the ways the utterances focus on “texts as mechanisms of power and knowledge, as semiotic technologies for constructing the world and for positioning readers in relationship to the world” (2009, p.15). In relation to social goods tying to Freirian or feminist sign systems (Gilbert, 1992, 1994; Luke & Woods, 2009; Morgan, 1997) these utterances could be interpreted as requiring readers to problematise ideological representations that marginalise particular groups based on social relations such as gender, race or class.

Further evidence of the linguistic nature of the course, hence privileging CDA/CLA critical literacy knowledge systems over others, was found through the use of language specifically relating to Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). If a teacher was to connect this inclusion to the already
analysed utterances, they may draw on critical literacy discourses influenced by SFL and critical linguistics to locate meaning. The use of SFL terminology (italicised) was evident in the following utterance:

Students learn that the situational elements of a language exchange, such as function, field, mode, setting and relationships between participants, influence language choice. Cultural factors, such as the values, attitudes and beliefs held by participants and the wider community, also affect people’s linguistic choices (Unit 1, p. 14)

The concepts ‘field’, ‘mode’, ‘setting’, ‘relationships between participants’ and connecting these with ‘cultural factors’ is taken from Hallidayian SFL (Halliday, 1985; Halliday & Mathiessen, 2004). In addition, when coupled with other utterances in the course, privileging of CDA/CLA versions of critical literacy become more pronounced. Utterances that emphasised the fluidity and changing nature of language as being dependent on the user and their ideologies again reflected these critical literacy sign systems, and also tied to postmodern notions of language and meaning. Two examples of this from the course were “languages will continue to change to meet the needs and reflect the values of their users” (Unit 2, p. 18) and “people’s choice of language reflects and constructs their identities” (Unit 4, p. 31).

When combining these utterances with the glossary and the inclusion of texts on critical linguistics in the separate resources list, the VCE English Language document privileged critical linguistics and a CDA/CLA variant of critical literacy discourses. The glossary mainly consisted of linguistic terminology focusing on the mechanics of language, privileging this understanding. The list of resources and the additional list of sample texts for analysis contained several texts reflecting the knowledge and sign systems valued in critical literacy discourses, particularly CDA/CLA variants. For example, Janks’ seminal texts in this area Language, Identity and Power (1994) was one inclusion on the list, as was a teacher resource book, But Wait...There’s More...A Critical Literacy Anthology (Smith, 2006), specifically valuing critical literacy. In addition, there were ten texts listed in the list of resources that tied to issues of power represented through language, postmodern discourse and sociolinguistics. These included titles such as Forbidden Words: taboo and the censoring of language (Allan & Burridge, 2006), Gender and Discourse (Tannen, 1994), Language, Power and the Press (Berchervaise, 1996), Politically Correct Bedtime Stories: modern tales for our life and times (Garner, 1995), The Cultural Politics of English (Pennycook, 1994). The texts specifically on sociolinguistics included An Introduction to Functional Grammar (Halliday and
Mathiessen, 2004), *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics* (Holmes, 2008) and *Sociolinguistics: an introduction to language and society* (Trudgill, 2000). While the language and other inclusions in this course did invite a privileging of CDA/CLA variants, this does not mean teachers working with this course will always interpret the document in this way. The inclusion of various utterances and resources pointing specifically to SFL discourses could mean teachers whose ideological becoming has been influenced by voices from this discourse could enact a curriculum where the dominant approach is reflective of Hallidayan sociolinguistics. This will be a consideration when analysing teacher discourses in relation to views on language, linguistics and critical literacy.

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**VCE Literature**

The language used in the *VCE Literature* course, including the use of ‘critical’, provide links for teachers to the knowledge and social goods valued in critical literacy discourse. While the *VCE English Language* curriculum document appeared to privilege the CDA/CLA influences, the social goods valued in the *VCE Literature* course aligned more clearly to the poststructuralist/postmodernist influences (including the earlier reader response theories) underpinning critical literacy discourses. The first examples of utterances implying these links were the structural categories for each Area of Study. These headings tied to already identified knowledge from critical literacy that texts can have multiple readings influenced by contexts (Gilbert, 1992; Green, 1997; Luke & Luke, 1990; Morgan, 1997), for example Unit 1, AOS 1 ‘Readers and their responses’, Unit 2, AOS 1 ‘The text, the reader and their contexts’. Also valued was the idea that activities in literacy classrooms include the re-construction of texts (Luke, 2000; Luke, Comber & Grant, 2003), as suggested in the title of Unit 3, AOS 1 ‘Adaptations and transformations’. In addition, other headings also linked to theoretical discussions on critical literacy by implying a more specific focus on ideological factors influencing readings, and the social good that students can consider viewpoints other than their own (Freebody, 2008; Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Lankshear, 1998; Misson, 2004; Morgan, 1997). This was evident in the titles of Unit 3, AOS 2 ‘Views, values and contexts’ and Unit 3, AOS 3 ‘Considering alternative viewpoints’. The language in the remaining titles ‘Ideas and concerns in texts’ (Unit 1, AOS 2), ‘Interpreting non-print texts’ (Unit 1, AOS 3), ‘Comparing texts’ (Unit 2, AOS 2), ‘Creative responses to texts’ (Unit 4, AOS 1), and ‘Close analysis’ (Unit 4, AOS 2) could imply several discursive influences. For example ‘Close
analysis’ could suggest Leavisite/cultural heritage text analysis. This would, however, be using these utterances without consideration of the larger context, which, as discussed further below, provided evidence of a privileging of the kind of critical literacies influenced by poststructuralist/postmodern discourses.

Unit 2 (second half of year 11) and Unit 3 (first half of year 12) included the most prolific use of language combinations representative of social goods evident in the critical literacy theoretical literature. The general description for these two units placed an emphasis on the students developing an understanding of the tools writers use to construct texts, how views and values position readers and that there are multiple factors influencing the ways readers construct their own interpretations from texts (Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Green, 1991, 1997, 1998; Lankshear, 1998; Luke, 2000; Luke & Walton, 1994; Morgan, 1997). These skills are italicised in the examples below:

The focus of this unit is on students’ critical and creative responses...They understand the ways their own culture and the cultures represented in the text can influence their interpretations and shape different meanings (Unit 2, p. 16)

This unit focuses on the ways writers construct their work and how meaning is created for and by the reader. Students consider how the form of text...affects meaning and generates different expectations in readers, the ways texts represent views and values and comment on human experience, and the social, historical and cultural contexts of literary works (Unit 3, p. 20)

While these statements reflect social goods evident in all of the already analysed Victorian English curriculum documents, the language in these extracts constructed a more overt connection to critical literacy sign systems than is present than the mainstream courses. In addition they privileged broader textual analysis than specific language analysis as is evident in VCE English Language. There was also a stronger emphasis in these utterances than those analysed in the mainstream courses on the role of the reader in shaping meaning.
The representation of the construction of textual meaning as a joint process inviting multiple interpretations was also evident in the following utterance from Unit 3 "students should be able to evaluate views of a text and make comparisons with their own interpretation" (Unit 3 ‘Considering alternative viewpoints’, AOS 3, p. 22). The privileging of this social good continued across the whole of Unit 3 as can be seen in the italicised sections of the following utterance:

This area of study focuses on considerations of the views and values in texts and the ways in which these are expressed to create particular perspectives of the world. Students consider the issues, ideas and contexts writers choose to explore and the way these are represented in the text. Students also consider how these representations may be shaped by and reflect the cultural, social, historical or ideological contexts in which they were created. Students enquire into the ways readers may arrive at differing interpretations and judgements about a text and the bases on which they are developed (Unit 3 ‘Views, values and contexts’, AOS 2, p. 21)

The VCE Literature inclusions linking to critical literacy sign systems were more extensive with developed explanations of what the social goods entailed. Rather than some inclusions spread throughout the course (and in VCE English and VELS English these were mostly located in areas of ‘reading’), critical literacy knowledge underpinned complete Areas of Study, particularly in Units 2 and 3.

An emphasis on building the relevance of the connection between textual construction, reader interpretation and contextual considerations was also evident in Unit 2, as italicised in the following two utterances:

This area of study focuses on the interrelationships between the text, readers and their social and cultural contexts. Students reflect on their own background and experience in developing their response to the representation of social and cultural concerns and values of a text from a past era (Unit 2 'The text, the reader and their contexts, AOS 1, p. 16)
how contexts (cultural, social, historical or ideological) may influence the construction of the text; the ways in which the text may reflect, reveal, or provide a critique of aspects of human behaviour, social convention or society; the ways contemporary beliefs and values influence the students’ interpretations; how the writer’s construction of the text can influence interpretations, for example the choice of characterisation, social and historical setting, structure, point of view, imagery and style (Unit 2, ‘Comparing texts’, AOS 2, p. 21)

These utterances include language combinations that have direct links to key concerns of critical literacy discourse, such as texts are social constructions which can be located in specific contexts and are ideological, writers have ‘ideological’ agendas and can position readers, and that readers develop their own interpretations based on factors in their lives (Freebody, 2008; Luke & Walton, 1994; Mellor & Patterson, 2004; Misson, 2004). When combined with the titles of Units 2 and 3, ‘The text, the reader and their contexts’ and ‘Considering alternative viewpoints’, valuing of these social goods evident in the critical literacy theoretical literature become even more apparent, suggesting teachers, particularly those aware of critical literacy approaches, would be more likely to situate meaning reflecting these discourses.

The Unit 3 section of the VCE Literature curriculum document also valued the social goods evident in critical literacy theoretical texts of developing students’ abilities to find “gaps and silences” in texts (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Freebody & Freiberg, 2011), and that texts can “serve the interests of some groups and not others” (Freebody & Baker, 2003, p. 231). These social goods reflect those represented in the VCE English Language document relating to “inclusions” and “omissions”, and were skills largely absent from utterances in the VCE English/ESL and the VELS English curriculum documents. The utterances from the VCE Literature course describing these skills were:

students should be able to analyse, interpret and evaluate the views and values of a text in terms of the ideas, social conventions and beliefs that the text appears to endorse, challenge or leave unquestioned (Unit 3 ‘Views, values and contexts’, AOS 2, p. 21)

And
This area of study focuses on how various interpretations and judgements about a text can contribute to the students’ interpretations...they explore the underlying values and assumptions of these viewpoints. They consider what is questioned by the text, for example the text’s representation of gender, socioeconomic status, place and culture. Students also discuss what remains unquestioned and the implications of the gaps and silences. Students show how the content is shaped and structured, and how they are positioned by the writer's choice of language (Unit 3 ‘Considering alternative viewpoints, AOS 3, p. 22). These language inclusions suggested these italicised parts of the VCE Literature document have intentionally drawn on on critical literacy discourses.

While Unit 1 and Unit 4 did not have the same concentration of skills reflecting critical literacy discourse, the language was still evident. For example, the common understanding across all Victorian English documents that texts are not neutral and represent social and cultural contexts was reflected in the following utterances “students come to understand how non-print texts, like print texts, are not neutral but represent a point of view” (Unit 1, AOS 3, ‘Interpreting non-print texts’, p. 14) and “this area of study focuses on the ideas and concerns raised in texts and the ways social and cultural contexts are represented” (Unit 1, AOS 2, ‘Ideas and concerns in texts’, p. 13). Unit 1 also encouraged “prediction” activities which are common features of critical literacy teacher resource texts (Martino & Mellor, 1995; Mellor, Patterson & O’Neill, 1991; Moon, 1990) through the utterance “they may predict and hypothesise about developments in a text and discuss the effect when their predictions are confirmed or challenged” (Unit 1, AOS 1 ‘Readers and their responses’, p. 12).

Unit 4, which incorporated creative writing and close analysis of texts, also included utterances continuing an emphasis on developing students understanding of the constructed nature of text, the importance of contextual factors and the possibility of multiple interpretations. These social goods were evident in the following objectives; “students consider the context of their responses to texts as well as the concerns, the style of the language and the point of view in their re-created or adapted work” (Unit 4, overview p. 25) and “this area of study focuses on detailed scrutiny of the style, concerns and construction of a text. Students attend closely to
textual details to examine the ways specific features and/or moments in the text contribute to their overall interpretations” (Unit 4, AOS 2 ‘Close Analysis’, p. 26). What was not evident, however, in the creative writing section of this course (as was an omission identified in the earlier analysis of the VCE English/ESL curriculum document) was a connection between the creative and critical of the kind discussed by Misson (2003, 2004, 2009) and Misson and Morgan (2006).

The VCE Literature list of resources had comprehensive inclusions relating specifically to critical literacy and postmodern/poststructuralist discourse, further suggesting this knowledge was of great relevance to the teaching of the course. In addition there were also two texts focusing on reader response theories and two on structuralism/semiotics, which preceded/related to postmodern/poststructuralist discourses. In total there were 71 books and audiovisual texts listed. Out of these 18 had direct links to critical literacy discourses either through the title of the text or the author, for example Gilbert’s (1994) text *Divided by a Common Language? Gender and the English Curriculum*, Lankshear’s (1994) text *Critical Literacy*, all of the Chalkface Press series of teacher resource texts influenced by critical literacy discourse, such as by Misson (1994), Morgan (1997) and Muspratt, Luke and Freebody (1997) as well as the teacher video and reading resource produced by Morgan, Gilbert, Lankshear, Werba and Williams (1996) titled *Critical Literacy: readings and resources*. In addition, 27 of the texts had links to postmodernist/poststructuralist, cultural studies, feminist theory or Marxist theory. For example Ashcroft, Griffiths et al (1995) *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, Culler’s (1983) *On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism*, Eagleton’s (1976) *Criticism and Ideology: a study in Marxist literary theory* (among other well renowned texts by Eagleton), Gee’s (1990) *Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideology in Discourses*, Linn’s (1996) *A Teacher’s Introduction to Postmodernism*, Rosenblatt’s (1978) well known text *The Reader, the Text, the Poem: the Transactional Theory of the Literary Work*, Weedon’s (1987) *Feminist Practice and Poststructuralist Theory*, and a text influential on Luke’s (1989) early publications, Eco’s (1981) *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts*. Much of the remaining 26 titles were general introductory books on literary theory, and were all published after 1980. Considering the influence of postmodern discourses on literary theory in the mid to late 1900s, particular views from this paradigm would be present in the views of these texts (if not paramount). The dominance of texts aligning with critical sociocultural representations of knowledge in
this text list, when combined with the curriculum contents, would imply an expectation that teachers value this knowledge and incorporate it into their enacted curriculum.

LOOKING ACROSS THE VICTORIAN COURSES

When comparing the English courses offered in Victoria there appeared to be variations in the privileging of critical literacy discourses. These documents distributed the goods differently presenting varying views on what is important to particular social groups, reflecting Gee’s argument that “we build viewpoints about how we think social goods are or should be distributed in society” (2011b, p. 120). There were more explicit connections to concepts underpinning critical literacy theoretical discussions as well as a privileging of either postmodernist/poststructuralist or CDA/CLA variants in the non-mainstream courses compared to the mainstream VCE English/ESL and VELS English courses. The links to critical literacy discourses in the VCE English/ESL course were most evident in Area of Study One (text response) and to a small extent, Area of Study 3 (analysis of persuasive texts) and for the VELS English the links were located mostly in the ‘Reading’ strand. The utterances in the curriculum of these mainstream courses reflected concepts that were identified in the theoretical literature on critical literacy as central tenets for all variations. The VCE English Language linked mostly to the CLA/CDA stream of critical literacy, contradicting Misson and Morgan’s (2006) view that these were not evident in Australia and instead aligning with Luke (2000) and Luke and Woods (2009) discussions on the importance of these variants for Australian enactment. The VCE Literature course included explicit language, especially in Units 1 and 3, and resources connecting to many common underlying knowledge and sign systems represented in critical literacy discourses, in particular tying to postmodernist/poststructuralist influences. The less overt inclusions in the VCE English/ESL and VELS English curriculum document could be attributed to the public and political nature of the mainstream course, as already discussed. It may also, as discussed in the analysis, relate to a positioning of critical literacy skills as being developmental, a concern raised by Luke (2000) and Freebody (2007), reflecting the perception that the students who enrol in the non-mainstream courses have more control of ‘basics’ and thus can demonstrate, or learn these skills.
In relation to teachers enacting critical literacy discourses in the mainstream Victorian English course, a great deal depends on the ideologies the teachers bring into their classrooms, persuasive voices around them, and how these influence their interpretation of the curriculum documents. While someone who has completed extensive studies and reading on critical literacy may create links between the curriculum documents and critical literacy, this does not mean teachers who are not as familiar with theoretical constructions of critical literacy or the VCE English Language or VCE Literature course will also create those links. These issues demonstrate the importance of analysing teacher voices to develop a better picture of the impact curriculum has on the enactment (or not) of critical literacy discourses.

4.4 – THE QUEENSLAND CURRICULUM CONTEXT

CONTEXTUALISING THE QUEENSLAND ESSENTIAL LEARNING STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH

The Queensland Essential Learning Standards for English (QELS English) levels analysed in this thesis were 'Essential Learnings by the end of Year 7' and 'Essential Learnings by the end of Year 9'. There were no documents for year 8, and the QSA website stated Year 10 was considered a part of the senior years (however this was not evident in the senior year documents). The Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) began trialling the QELS 1-10 Syllabus and assessment model (the Queensland Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting framework – QCAR) for English from semester 1, 2006 in selected schools. The authority stated that after a period of consultation and feedback from these schools the document would be redrafted and available for open trial in 2007, with the implementation of the QELS for curriculum design and assessment in 2008 (QSA, 2006, p. 6). The final version of the syllabus was not released until 2009, and differed greatly from the initial draft released in semester 2, 2005 (QSA, 2005), suggesting a shift in the valuing of social goods. The initial draft was structured around Green’s 3D model (1988) with strands labelled operational, cultural and critical and included a discussion on theoretical and pedagogical influences on the design of the document. The redrafting in 2007 removed these structural elements. When explaining the changes in the Queensland curriculum newsletter the QSA stated the changes included “using
plain English and focusing more on the teaching of reading, spelling, grammar and punctuation...The cultural, operational and critical dimensions currently used as strands will now be embedded in the syllabus outcomes” (2007b, p. 7). The final syllabus, released in 2009 and the document analysed in this thesis, removed the explicit links to Green's 3D model as well as the comprehensive preamble on theory and pedagogy that originally began the document. The removal of these contextual ties to underpinning influential theoretical discourses and models created a document with less overt valuing of knowledge and ideologies that were evident in the critical literacy theoretical texts discussed in the literature review.

The QSA provided no explanation as to the circumstances surrounding the need for major changes to the curriculum document, however it also coincided with the timing of revision of the mainstream senior English curriculum document. The revision of the senior year’s document included a proposed change in language removing the section with dominant links to critical literacy discourses (discussed in the next section). In addition, these changes were around the time the media and Prime Minister Howard (Luke, 2008; Slattery, 2005c; Topsfield, 2007) were critical of ‘postmodern’ approaches influencing English curriculum, with specific criticism directed at Queensland. These tensions signify the kinds of struggles apparent in Queensland in relation to critical literacy at the time of data collection.

Contextualising English in the Senior Years in Queensland

In Queensland at the time of this study there were two senior university entrance English courses, English Senior and English Extension (Literature). English Senior, the mainstream course and the comparable course to VCE English/ESL, was first implemented in 2002 and due for revision in 2007, not long after the media and political attacks on English teaching throughout 2004-2006 (Doecke, Howie & Sawyer, 2006; Gale, 2006; Snyder, 2008). The new course was to be implemented in trial schools in 2009 and 2010, with general implementation commencing for Year 11 students in 2011. Therefore, the document under analysis in this study was the 2002 version which teachers were using while the research was conducted. While this is the case, the proposed changes to the mainstream course are important to
outline as they were impacting on and creating tensions for the teachers in this study and their connections to critical literacy.

In 2007, a report commissioned by the QSA (2007a) was released titled ‘An investigation into the English Senior syllabus (2002)’ which recommended major modifications to the section of the syllabus that highlighted critical literacy skills (Criterion 3 ‘Knowledge and application of the constructed nature of texts’). The President of the English Teaching Association Queensland (ETAQ) published a statement in an ETAQ newsletter informing English teachers that “A special meeting of the SAC (Syllabus Advisory Committee) was held on Monday 16 July to provide a response to the report prior to its being sent to the minister although it was pointed out that the report was final and would not be changed” (Collins, Sept 2007, p. 4). The report was developed by an investigation team appointed by the QSA and allowed little dialogic communication with the teaching community. The findings of the report, in line with the changes made to the QELS English document, implied a shift in the valuing of social goods representative of critical literacy discourses. It stated that “Criterion 1 and Criterion 2 should remain in their current configuration. Criterion 3 should be extensively revised to clarify and broaden its dimensions, so that its current narrow focus on the socio-cultural element is rectified” (p. 3). It also argued that “the socio-critical is the major approach to the teaching of English that is represented in the English Senior Syllabus 2002...The socio-critical approach is commonly referred to as critical literacy” (p. 6) and that “a further finding of the investigation was that the current generation of teachers does not have a sufficient understanding of some of the approaches and associated pedagogies outlined in the syllabus Rationale” (p. 6). The first utterance suggested critical literacy was the dominant approach in the 2002 syllabus. When the three utterances are connected the findings in the report implied pedagogies and approaches associated with critical literacy discourses were not understood (and perhaps not valued) by English teachers.

This view was further evident in their argument that teachers were confused about the terms “discourse” and “critical literacy” and that they were “ill-equipped” to connect approaches they were familiar with (without explicitly stating what these familiar “approaches” may be) to the kinds of “new concepts” in the syllabus such as “representation”, “positioning” and
“constructedness” (p. 7). This suggested critical literacy approaches had not contributed to English teachers ideological becoming, even though there had been a strong critical literacy academic presence in the Queensland academic context (Luke, 2000; Misson, 2009) since the 1990s. The document also stated that critical literacy discourses reduced “the opportunity for the appreciation of the aesthetic in texts” (p. 7), reflecting Misson and Morgan’s (2006) discussions regarding the tendency for critical literacy approaches to exclude the “aesthetic”, which Misson and Morgan (2006) argued were in fact integrally linked.

The ETAQ response to the QSA’s intended changes painted a different picture in relation to the valuing of social goods represented in critical literacy discourses. Collins, responded on behalf of the ETAQ to the then Queensland Minister for Education Rod Welford on September 13, 2007. His comments reflected concern about the major overhaul of Criterion 3 and the treatment of “two of the most potentially valuable innovations in English teaching...critical literacy and functional grammar” (p. 2). He argued that the potential of critical literacy in schools had not been fully realised because of “the result of well-intentioned but unbalanced implementation in some schools” (p. 2). His letter was also critical of the report’s representation of critical literacy approaches as being more appropriate with popular culture texts than others. Instead Collins argued “critical literacy is certainly not the only lens to bring to bear on texts, but it can indeed be appropriate for all sorts of texts” (p. 3). The letter ended with a plea to the Minister;

In summary, we urge you to ensure that the revision of the syllabus involves:

a. **critical literacy** (referred to in the report as the ‘socio-critical approach’) being endorsed as a legitimate approach to the study of texts provided that it does not dominate all teaching and assessment tasks. (p. 4)

The Minister’s response to the letter was that the government report “identifies a perception by members of the community that the socio-critical approach of the current syllabus dominates teaching and assessing tasks” (2007, p. 4). Who the “members of the community” consisted of was not clear. While this was the case, the Minister acknowledged Collins’ concerns and clarified the government’s position on “the socio-critical approach” saying it “has a place in a balanced approach to teaching and assessment of English” and assuring that
“these clarifications indicate that critical literacy will not be lost” (2007, p. 4). With this reassurance from the Minister there were no further responses from ETAQ until the next draft was released in April 2008.

The 2008 draft not only overhauled Criterion 3, but had also modified the first two criteria to remove most links to a critical literacy approach, hence appearing to have ignored requests in the letter from ETAQ to maintain social goods of value to the association and their teacher members. Again Collins responded to the draft in a letter outlining a disapproval of the changes. Collins argued that “by excising the critical rather than finding an accessible and acceptable way to represent it, the syllabus has the potential to promote superficial, culturally-skewed ways of teaching English” (2008, p. 4) and that the “Context-Text model” had been of central importance in Queensland curriculum since the late 1980’s with critical literacy representing a more sophisticated version of this model (Collins, 2008). Further Collins acknowledged many of the perceived problems surrounding the 2002 syllabus related to Criterion 3 but felt that “technical terms such as constructedness, discourse, selective construction, positioning, and reading ‘positions’” (2008, p. 5) had “potential” for the English classroom and needed to be retained, even if phrased differently.

He expressed the view that the new draft was ignoring the benefits of critical literacy (or the “critical socio-cultural” model) and was not an educational improvement for students’ learning as evident in the following two paragraphs:

In spite of misunderstandings in some school sites, this model has been employed in powerful and flexible ways by English teachers in classrooms throughout the state, enabling students to analyse and critically evaluate texts and develop deeper understandings about language and language in use. As a model that has a demonstrable positive effect on student achievement it needs to be retained and strengthened. A better outcome will be achieved by appropriate professional development rather than removing the coherent central idea of the current syllabus. (Collins, 2008, p. 3)

And
it is difficult to see how the draft syllabus has added much to the original set. However, the telling thing is that the following 2002 Aims have been removed:

1.1 Knowledge of the relationship between language and culture
1.2 Ability to reflect on the ways language is used in a wide range of cultural contexts and social situations to shape meanings.

ETAQ contends that the removal of these two aims does not constitute an improvement. It is difficult for students to have a worthwhile understanding of literary texts without some knowledge of the sort of society in which they were produced. (Collins, 2008, p. 4)

These comments suggested QSA’s earlier representation of critical literacy approaches as being unfamiliar to English teachers did not match the state associations’ view. Instead, Collins’ arguments implied issues relating to poor enactment of the intended curriculum had more to do with professional development, and the removal of critical literacy knowledge would destroy students’ access to skills valued by the Queensland English teaching community.

This feedback and ETAQ member’s involvement in meetings regarding the syllabus led to the redrafting of the syllabus several times (Collins, 2008). The third draft syllabus was released on the QSA website in August 2008 for open implementation trials in 2009 and 2010 for general implementation in 2011 (QSA, 2008). The 2008 version of the syllabus had again removed much of the explicit language and concepts (including the two aims identified in Collins’ statements) that tied to critical literacy originally contained in criteria one, two and three. These tensions around critical literacy at the time of data collection were impacting on the Queensland teachers’ relationship with the curriculum documents and their ideological positions towards critical literacy. At the time of data collection teacher action against the draft syllabus was still occurring. The teaching battles between the teaching association in Queensland and the state government curriculum body reflected the kinds of battles also discussed in the Victorian section. The Queensland context, however, was more concerned directly with critical literacy and associated skills (including labelling them as such) than Victoria.
While the development of the *English Senior* course was surrounded with conflict, these struggles were not as publicly dominant in the development of the optional course, *English Extension (Literature)*. This was an optional course only available to students in their final year and had to be taken concurrently with the mainstream *English Senior* course (unlike in Victoria where students could study *VCE Literature* and/or *VCE English Language* in year 11 and/or 12, and did not have to also study *VCE English/ESL*). Critical literacy advocate, Morgan, was influential on the construction and implementation of the course and described it as departing “from more traditional literature courses in senior English in that it focuses on contexts and conditions, theories and practices of reading, rather than ‘the text itself’. It is, in fact, a course and a curriculum context profoundly influenced by post-structuralism” (Macken-Horarik & Morgan, 2011, p. 134). This emphasis in the course made it an interesting inclusion in an analysis investigating constructions of critical literacy. It was also an important inclusion in the analysis to allow a comparison to the Victorian courses. The edition of the syllabus being used during the data collection was implemented in 2004 and not due for revision until 2010.

As with the Victorian literature course, *VCE Literature*, little media attention or debate was evident specifically relating to the *English Extension (Literature)* course, however, Macken-Horarik and Morgan (2008, 2011) suggested the poststructuralist influence evident in the course was “attacked” by the media:

> This theoretical orientation has bought the course and the intellectual enterprise of post-structuralism itself under attack in Australia…Media critiques in conservative Australian newspapers have claimed that theory is ‘bad for English’ and confusing for students (see for example, Donnelly, 2007; Slattery, 2005b). These relate to critiques that have emerged from the academy itself which dismiss theory as fashionable ‘post-modern’, ‘post structuralist’ or ‘critical literacy nonsense’ (Abbs, 2003; Bloom, 1987; Turner, 2007). (p. 134)

A struggle between academics, the ETAQ and public/government voices relating to the inclusion of critical literacy approaches is evident across all Queensland English curriculum contexts. The various debates represent a conflict in what knowledge was deemed important for students’ success
in English subjects (and in life). In comparison to the Victorian debates, which focused heavily on the lack of transparency and communication, critical literacy discourses appeared to be central to the Queensland struggles. This suggests the curriculum and teacher discourse between the states could vary in relation to the privileging of these discourses and the impacts they have had on the teachers’ constructions of their ideological identities.

4.5 ANALYSIS OF QUEENSLAND CURRICULUM DOCUMENTS

INTRODUCTION

As with the Victorian analysis, the analysis of the Queensland curriculum documents draws on Gee’s (2011a, 2011b) deictic, situated meaning, sign systems and knowledge building, and politics building tools. Considering the ideological environment in Queensland at the time of collecting the data, as evident from the contextual discussion above, analysing the representation of knowledge and social goods from critical literacy discourses were particularly important to the aims of the thesis. Developing an understanding of what was represented and how provided a picture of constructions of critical literacy curriculum in this part of Australia. It also contextualised the Queensland English teachers’ discussions regarding their views on the curriculum documents. Prior to moving into the two sections of analysis, the omission of ‘critical literacy’ across the Queensland English curriculum documents needs to be noted. In the same way as the Victorian omissions, the media and political debates outlined in the context section provide possible reasons for this choice. The Literature (Extension) course, however, included the use of the term ‘socio-critical’, a term Collins (2007) argued referred to ‘critical literacy’. This inclusion is discussed further in the following analysis section.
The deictic use of ‘critical’ in the curriculum documents in Queensland had clearer associations to critical literacy discourses than in the Victorian utterances. While in the Victorian examples, in particular the VELS English and VCE English/ESL, the reference tended to “shift with each different context of use” (Gee, 2011b, p. 9), the utterances surrounding the inclusions of ‘critical’ in the senior courses and the larger contexts of the documents invited a privileging of critical literacy approaches, situating meaning within these discourses. There was a disjuncture, however, between the senior curriculum documents and the years 7-10 documents not only in the use of critical (it is notably absent), but also the representation of knowledge (discussed in the second analysis section). These inclusions/omissions of ‘critical’ are discussed in further detail below.

Queensland Essential Learning Standards English

Unlike the senior English courses, or the Victorian equivalent VELS English, the QELS English curriculum document, contains no uses of the word ‘critical’. The omission of this term may imply to the readers (teachers) that ‘critical’ approaches are not valued in the early years of high school. Without including this term, situating discursive influences in the document relies solely on other concepts and utterances used throughout the document (analysed in the second analysis category). In addition, by excluding this term teachers who are ideologically in favour of critical approaches to literacy may view the document in a negative light.

English Senior

The English Senior curriculum document included the word ‘critical’ six times. When comparing this to the mainstream equivalent from Victoria, VCE English/ESL, the term was more prevalent in the Queensland course. In addition, when placed in the context of the whole document and the utterance/s surrounding the term, meaning was more clearly situated within particular discursive frames. As the document incorporated utterances and language connecting overtly to critical literacy knowledge and sign systems, social goods from these discourses were not as covert (as is discussed further in the analysis of language inclusions). This is also an indication of why the whole document (55 pages long) only used...
the word ‘critical’ six times, as it privileged critical literacy discourses across all sections. As is identified in the analysis in both this section and the next, if a teacher were to also read the glossary, use the suggested resources list and the three assessable criteria, the use of ‘critical’ in the context of this document could be clearly linked to critical literacy discourses.

This section of analysis begins with three uses that included non-specific contexts not linking to any particular discourse. As Gee (2011b) argued these kinds of uses require the reader to draw on broader contexts, in this case the document as a whole, and their own knowledge rather than the utterance surrounding the term. These utterances reflected the examples of inclusions in the VCE English/ESL document. All of the non-specific examples in the document are under the heading ‘Sequencing’ and the sub-heading ‘Planning a unit of work’:

integrates writing, speaking/signing, listening, reading, viewing and critical thinking. (p. 17)

Experiences early in units usually involve students in reading, viewing, writing, listening, speaking/signing, and thinking critically as they review current knowledge, negotiate activities, and encounter texts, new resources and ideas. (p. 17)

In this phase students are encouraged to read, view, write, speak/sign, listen, and think critically as they continue to build on understandings that will access and process new knowledge and refine and develop skills. (p. 18)

In the context of their placement in the document these statements act as an end summary of the developmental phases students should go through in the course. Encouraging students to ‘think critically’ are goals of all literacy discourses, however, by this stage of the document critical literacy discourses have been established by the glossary and initial language inclusions privileging this situated meaning of the word ‘critical’ within this context, which is discussed in further detail in the second analysis category.

The other inclusions of ‘critical’ provide clearer evidence of the privileging of critical literacy discourses. These are both placed in the Global Aims at the beginning of the document. The
first states “creative and critical engagement with texts, to explore the students’ world and worlds beyond their own” (Global Aims, p. 4). This statement could be linked to influences from critical pedagogy on critical literacy (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993), in particular Freire and Macedo’s (1987) view reflected in critical literacy theoretical texts that “reading and writing the word is about learning to read and write the world” (Luke, 1993, p. 139). Similar influences were evident in another use of “critical” from the ‘Global Aims’ section: This aim referred to the development of students’ “ability to use language appropriately, effectively, purposefully, aesthetically and critically to participate in communities and cultures and contribution to their enrichment” (Global Aims, p. 4). The utterance surrounding the use of “critical” in this context suggested students needed to be encouraged to develop social goods valued in critical literacy discourses, particularly by critical pedagogy variants, such as understanding the importance of social justice and “the obligations of citizenship” (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993, p. 425). When connecting the two utterances included in the aims, privileging of critical pedagogy strands of critical literacy discourses are evident in that students are expected to be critically active members of “cultures” and “communities”. It is interesting to note, however, that the “aesthetic” and “critical” have been included as separate skills, not unlike the divorcing of critical literacy and creative writing evident in the omissions of these skills in the VCE English/ESL ‘Contexts’ section and the VCE Literature creative writing section. The privileging of certain discourses over others in this way links to Misson and Morgan’s (2006) arguments that there is often a perceived gap between critical literacy and discourses on pleasure and aesthetics.

The final inclusion of the term ‘critical’ in the English Senior curriculum was in the ‘Minimum requirements – mandatory written categories’ section. This section outlined the tasks that were required to be in the students’ “verification folio” used for assessment. The utterance surrounding the use of critical pointed the reference towards poststructuralist influences through the suggestion that texts “position” their audiences (Freebody, 1992; Green, 1997; Misson, 1998b, 2003); a concept used across curriculum documents in both Queensland and Victoria. The assessment task required the inclusion of “one analytical exposition in response to literature, e.g. an analysis of how Australian identities are constructed through selections of poetry; a critical comparison of the ways the viewer has been positioned in two film versions.
of a play or novel that has been studied” (p. 30). In addition, the example assessment task included in this utterance also pointed to the critical literacy social good that students develop an understanding of the ways texts ‘construct’ cultural representations and identities (Luke, 2000; Misson & Morgan, 2006).

The deictic use of ‘critical’ in the *English Senior* document implied the valuing of knowledge from critical literacy discourses, in particular those influenced by poststructuralist and critical pedagogy paradigms. As Gee (2011a, 2011b) argued providing contextual clues around words narrows the range of meanings possible, which is reflected in the treatment of ‘critical’ in these documents. In addition, the valuing of the concepts ‘position’ and ‘construct’, when situated with ‘critical’ in all curriculum documents across the two states, suggested these two key concepts used critical literacy discourses as the reference point for meaning (Gee, 2011a, 2011b), and had been accepted as normal discourse for English studies.

Like the Victorian context, the *English Extension (Literature)* curriculum document contained the most uses of ‘critical’ in the Queensland context with 12 inclusions (and one inclusion of ‘socio-critical’). As Macken-Horarik & Morgan (2011) argued, the dominant influence in the design of the course was the poststructuralist challenge of traditional values placed on texts, as was evident in the following extract from the Rationale; “the central focus of the syllabus is an in-depth consideration of the ways that current understandings of reading practices and of what literature can be, have called into question historical notions that literature is a corpus of highly regarded texts” (QSA, 2003, p. 1). While this is the case, because the course is structured around a chronological historical critique of four approaches to reading the deictic use of ‘critical’ often depends on the section in which it is used. In the case of this subject even though the “reference shifts with each different context of use” (Gee, 2011b, p. 9), the building of particular knowledge over others points to the intended valuing of these uses. Not only are the reading approaches outlined in chronological order, but the older approaches are critiqued more than the recent approaches. In addition, the introduction to the ‘Approaches’ section outlined the purpose of the ‘Reading Approaches’ section:
Because each approach tends to emphasise either author or text or reader or world-context, there is correspondingly less emphasis on the other three. For example, in the world-context-centred approach the focus on socio-critical aspects of meaning making may lead to less emphasis on particular textual features or on the variability and individuality of readers’ responses. (p. 7)

While it argued that the emphasis varies, the analysis in the following section suggests the discussions on each reading approach favoured the underpinning poststructuralist discourses influencing the design of the course. This was also the utterance in which the term ‘socio-critical’ was used which, as already discussed, was often used to refer to critical literacy. This utterance positioned this term within the ‘world-context-centred’ approach, suggesting critical literacy was the central focus for that particular section.

The four approaches in the ‘Approaches to reading practices’ section were titled ‘author-centred’, ‘text-centred’, ‘reader-centred’ and ‘world-context-centred’ and each section contained an explanation of the history of the reading approaches followed by ‘contemporary’ views relating to text, reader and world-context. An example of the deictic use of ‘critical’ was evident in the text-centred approach in the utterance “the New Critics advocated ‘close reading’ and ‘practical criticism’ — academically rigorous techniques for critical analysis. They claimed that such disciplined reading was ‘objective’ or ‘impersonal’ — very different from the impressionistic appreciation of older critics or the very personal responses of less well instructed readers” (p. 14). The utterances surrounding ‘critical’ in this case provided the contextual references required to place this use within the discourse of ‘New Criticism’.

While these uses of ‘critical’ placed them within the context of each historical approach, as already stated, this did not mean the document as a whole presented a privileged view of these approaches. The “contemporary” contextualisation included in each section provided a postmodern/poststructuralist critique of each approach, and framed the intention of the curriculum, with suggested ways students could “apply contemporary approaches to their own range of reading practices” (p. 1). The use of “contemporary” was defined in the document to refer to “the ideas about reading and reading practices that presently have
currency, rather than to the time in which they originated” (p. 1). This meant that even though uses of “critical” within these sections may have referred to historical approaches, the critiques privileged the kinds of knowledge from poststructuralist/postmodern paradigms that underpin “contemporary” critical literacy discourses. For example, while the “author-centred” approach did not include ‘critical’ it did mention views of “social critics” from the era. The description of this approach, even though it did not use the label, reflected the skills evident in Leavisite/cultural heritage approaches, and listed influential figures such as Arnold, Bradley and Leavis. The contemporary critique of this approach de-valued traditional views on the author’s status:

Contemporary approaches to the author problematise past assumptions. Many of the challenges come from more recent reader and world-context-centred approaches, and there are various overlapping dimensions to these critiques. Author-centred approaches no longer regard the author as the ultimate arbiter of the text’s meaning.

(p.10)

The “author-centred” section also included an extended discussion on Barthes’ and Foucault’s views. These kinds of inclusions are discussed in more detail in the next section of analysis.

There were also uses of “critical” outside of these sections, which further privileged poststructuralist discourses underpinning critical literacies and linked directly to suggested approaches evident in the literature review of critical literacy theoretical texts. For example, several utterances in the document placed the word ‘critical’ within activities characteristic of critical literacy teacher resource texts which Gilbert identified as tending to focus on “how reading positions are constructed and how students might better recognize different reading practices” (1991a, p. 209) and were the kinds of approaches that allowed “social and critical literacy” (ibid) to become the “proper focus of language classrooms” (ibid). These social goods were evident in the “defence” assessment task. The utterances below include the introduction to the “defence” and further clarification provided in the task description section:

In these early units, students are introduced to the defence (see 8.2.2) which allows them to make explicit their knowledge and understanding of how reading practices are used to produce different readings. A defence requires that students “step outside”
the reading produced and *critically* reflect on the reading practices involved”
('Sequencing a course of study', p. 28)

Framing of the first task should be informed by the need to have students become conscious of different reading practices and of their own reading practices as socially constructed and intertextual ('8.2.2 Task descriptions', p. 39).

The contextual placement of “critical” in the first utterance points to the critical literacy focus identified by Gilbert (1991a). In addition, later in the document “critical” was used in the ‘Learning Experiences’ section in the context of describing “critical reflexivity”. This concept was defined as referring to “students reflecting on how they read, how they have become the kind of readers they are and how they can expand their repertoire of reading practices. The point of reading from a range of approaches is to discover that ‘how you see is what you see’” ('Learning Experiences', p. 31). This refers to the skills evident in the literature review that reading is influenced by sociocultural factors and that teachers need to develop students’ understanding of how the interpretation of a text is influenced by their own ideological positions (Gilbert, 1992; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Luke, 2000; Morgan, 1997).

**Looking Across The Documents**

When considering the deictic uses of critical across the two senior curriculum documents, the contexts in which they were used point to a clear influence of poststructuralist knowledge underpinning critical literacy discourses as discussed in the literature review. In addition, the English Senior curriculum document also included some uses that linked to critical pedagogy variants of critical literacy. The dominance of these discourses surrounding the concept of “critical” may have influenced teachers’ views on the importance of these critical skills to the extent that they would apply these understandings to their teaching of the lower years of high school even considering the term was omitted from the QELS. The next section takes a closer look at the privileging of these discourses through the ways knowledge and social goods were represented.
As was identified in the analysis of the Victorian documents, this section draws on Gee’s
(2011a, 2011b) ‘knowledge and sign systems tool’ and ‘politics building tool’. As identified in
the introduction to this chapter, these two tools work in tandem and were used to develop a
better understanding of which knowledge and social goods from critical literacy discourses
were being privileged in the curriculum documents. Considering there were no usages of
critical in the QELS, looking for other clues on constructions of critical literacy in the
utterances was needed to address the aims of the research. In addition, this analysis
complements the deictic analysis category which focused on uses of ‘critical’ in the English
Senior and English Extension (Literature).

QELS English

The links to critical literacy in the QELS English curriculum document were on the most part
similar to the VELS English inclusions, particularly through the use of the concepts “construct”
and “position”. Structurally the two documents differed, implying possible differences in
approach, with the VELS English revolving around the domains of ‘Reading’, ‘Writing’ and
‘Speaking and Listening’, whereas the QELS English was structured under the main
“processes” ‘Ways of Working’ and ‘Knowledge and Understanding’ which include the sub-
headings ‘Speaking and Listening’, ‘Reading and Viewing’, ‘Writing and Design’, ‘Language
Elements’ and ‘Literary and Non-Literary Texts’. Even though this was the case, the language
used in both documents appeared to represent similar valuing of particular social goods from
similar critical literacy discourses, however, the concentration of this language was more
prevalent in the QELS English and the privileging of these social goods was more evident.

The kinds of social goods valued in the utterances surrounding the term ‘construct’ mirror the
same skills as those identified in the analysis of VELS English, as well as additional skills not
evident in the Victorian document. Across the two levels analysed (which are five pages each)
the term was used nine times in the year seven document and eleven times in the year nine
document, including the “assessable element” of “constructing texts”. There were several
general uses, as was seen in the VELS English, which provided little immediate contextual
clues, such as “time order, the expansion and compression of time, and a consistent narrative point of view can be used to construct a plot” (Year 9, ‘Literary and non-literary texts’, p. 5). In these circumstances this term was used to refer to students’ creation of texts, however when compared to the other uses the discursive origins of this term, and the knowledge associated with it, becomes clearer. For example, the social goods valued in the VELS example linking to the importance of understanding the influence of ideological factors on the construction and reading of texts (Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Green, 1991, 1997, 1998; Morgan, 1997; Lankshear 1998; Luke, 2000) were also evident in the following utterance from the QELS English curriculum: “students use their imagination, creativity and world views to interpret and construct English texts that share their ideas, persuade audiences and address issues and events in their own lives and communities” (Learning and Assessment focus, Year 9, p.1). In addition this utterance links to critical pedagogy variants through its emphasis on considering larger contexts evident through world views and community issues (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993). It is also interesting to note, the inclusion of “imagination” and “creativity” alongside “persuade” in this example. This suggests there is an intention that these skills can work together, as Misson and Morgan (2006) argued, however there are no further utterances contextualising this view in more depth.

The most common use of “construct” in this document represented the kinds of knowledge and goods identified in the literature review as being characteristic with CDA/CLA sign systems (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) that influenced approaches to critical literacy. This was also apparent in a limited way in the VELS English and reflected the same social goods in that the utterances “explicitly stress[es] the understanding of the complex lexicogrammatical devices that texts use to portray the world and to position and construct their readers” (Luke, 1992, p. 16). For example, several utterances, including heading descriptors, in the year nine document contextualised “construct” by using language such as “manipulating language elements” and “position”:

Interpreting and constructing texts involve manipulating grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, audio and visual elements, in print-based, electronic and face-to-face modes (speaking and listening, reading and viewing, writing and designing) across
local, national and global contexts. (introductory descriptor for ‘Language Elements’, p. 4)

They individually and collaboratively interpret and construct texts by understanding and manipulating language elements to position the audience and suit their subject matter and purpose. (Learning and Assessment focus, Year 9, p. 1)

construct literary texts by planning and developing subject matter, and manipulating language elements to present particular points of view. (Ways of Working, Year 9, p. 2)

The combinations of these concepts in the above utterances reflect the need to teach skills such as understanding the connection between power (through manipulation) and language. These were evident in discussion on CDA/CLA variants of critical literacy, in the ways they identified that “texts have histories, ideological bases, authorial biases, and cultural standpoints and effective text analysts can identify the ways in which texts bid to define the world, position and, potentially, manipulate readers” (Luke, Dooley & Woods, 2011, p. 157) as well as “providing students with technical resources for analysing how texts work and how they might be otherwise represented by both authors and readers in a process of redesign” (Luke & Woods, 2009, p. 15). This suggests these are valued skills for teachers to develop in students.

The privileging of these particular social goods linking power to language was also evident in the utterances contextualising the use of the term “position”. This concept appeared 10 times in both the year seven and year nine documents. The utterances were again similar to the kind used in the VELS English document, for example, “Statements, questions and commands can use language that positions and represents ideas and information” (‘Knowledge and understanding – speaking and listening’, Year 7, p. 2) and “Words and phrases, symbols, images and audio affect meaning and position an audience e.g. This was a tragic incident – tragic positions the audience to feel sympathy” (‘Knowledge and understanding – Writing and designing’, Year 7, p. 3). There were utterances, however, that extended students understanding in this age group to include the knowledge, as discussed in critical literacy.
theoretical texts, that texts can ‘exclude’ information and hence further position readers in particular ways (Luke, 2000; Misson, 1998b; Morgan, 1997). This was evident in the utterance, “reflect on and analyse how language choices position readers/viewers/listeners in particular ways for different purposes and can exclude information” (‘Ways of working’, Year 9, p. 2). This example provided clear connections to critical literacy discourses by linking positioning through language choices to the idea of “gaps and silences” existing in texts (Morgan, 1997; Mellor, Patterson & O’Neill, 1991). The notion of exclusion (and inclusion) was also evident in the Year seven document, when it stated “reflect on and compare how the language choices made across texts include and exclude certain groups and individuals” (‘Ways of working’, p. 2) reflecting Luke’s identification of the critical literacy social good that students understand how “possible readers are silent or marginalised” (2000, p. 453).

The use of the concept ‘position’ also linked to a catch-cry of critical literacy, that language and texts are not neutral (Freebody & Baker, 2003; Green, 1997; Luke, O’Brien & Comber, 1994; Morgan & Wyatt-Smith, 2000). This requires teachers to assist students in understanding that:

reading and writing are social activities...All texts are motivated – there is no neutral position from which a text can be read or written. All language, all text, all discourse thus ‘refracts’ the world; bending, shaping, constructing particular versions and visions of the social and natural world that act in the interests of particular class, gender, and cultural groups. (Luke & Freebody, 1997, p. 194)

The privileging of this knowledge was evident in the year 9 document in the utterances “audiences can be positioned to view characters and ideas in particular ways and these views can be questioned” (‘Knowledge and understanding – literary and non-literary texts’, Year 9, p. 5), “speakers make assumptions about listeners to position and promote a point of view, and to plan and present subject matter” (‘Knowledge and understanding – speaking and listening’, Year 9, p. 2) and “texts can reflect an author’s point of view, beliefs and cultural understandings” (‘Knowledge and understanding – literary and non-literary texts’, p. 5). These utterances reflected the intended understanding that constructors of texts make judgements about their audiences and “promote” “views” or ideologies that align with their
own agendas. The first utterance also connected this idea with reader affordances to question the author’s representation, hence privileging the skills represented in critical literacy academic texts of being able to challenge ideological representations in texts (Freebody, 2008; Luke, 2000; Misson, 2004; Misson & Morgan, 2006).

While this document included less overt links to critical literacy discourse than the original draft and its predecessor, which used Green’s 3D model as a frame, there was evidence of utterances that privileged several poststructuralist ideas underpinning critical literacy, as well as social goods characteristic of the CDA/CLA and critical pedagogy influenced streams identified by critical literacy academics. Teachers who had taught the senior courses in English in Queensland would equip students, particularly year 10 students and those students wanting to do English Extension (Literature) in year 12, with the kinds of critical literacy skills they would need to survive these courses. The QELS middle school curriculum, used at the time of the teacher interviews, had not been mandated for long and the drafting of a prep-10 national curriculum was nearing completion. The curriculum environment surrounding the implementation of QELS suggested it was a transition document with limited value. The process of its construction and its language inclusions/exclusions, however, created tension in the enacted space as was evident in the teacher interviews, hence it was a document of significance for teachers and enacted critical literacy discourses.

Analysis Of English Senior And English Extension (Literature)

Compared to their Victorian equivalents, the privileging of knowledge and social goods from academic critical literacy discourses were considerably more evident in both the English Senior and English Extension (Literature) documents. These two Queensland documents illustrated what Gee called “politics building” (2011b) in the ways language was used to ‘build’ and value social goods identified in critical literacy theoretical texts. For the purpose of this analysis, and because of the size and lexical density of the documents, the most relevant parts of each senior document were analysed. For the English Senior these were the ‘Rationale’, ‘Global Aims’, ‘General Objectives’, ‘Course Organisation’, ‘Learning Experiences’, ‘Assessment’, ‘Glossary’ and ‘Resources’. An indicator of the documents’ positioning on approaches influencing the English Senior document came from the glossary, placed at the end.
of the document, as there are many terms present that reflect critical literacy discourses. These terms (and others common to critical literacy discourse) saturate the ‘Rationale’, ‘Aims’, ‘Objectives’ and ‘Assessable Criteria’ (called “exit criteria”). The *English Extension (Literature)* analysis focused most attention on the categories of approaches. There were also many suggested resources in both documents that had critical literacy as their focus, or were written by critical literacy proponents, as is discussed towards the end of each analysis.

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**English Senior**

The *English Senior* syllabus (2002) used by the teachers during the data collection had four general objectives underpinning the course; ‘Affective objectives’, ‘Knowledge and control of texts in their contexts’, ‘Knowledge and control of textual features’ and ‘Knowledge and application of the constructedness of texts’. Out of these four objectives the last three were linked to the three assessable exit criteria for the course. As mentioned above critical literacy discourses were clearly evident throughout this document, particularly through the use of associated terms defined in the glossary and several others indicative of critical literacy approaches. Across the whole document concepts aligning closely to academic critical literacy discourse (particularly when placed in the context of the glossary definitions) were used on numerous occasions, these being “discourse” (6), “social practices”/“culture”/“cultural context”/“assumptions”/“attitudes”/“values” (40), “intertextuality” (4), “not stable or fixed”(1), “readings”(13), “positions”(11), “represent”(9), “constructed”/“shape” (28), “power”/“influence” (7) and “privileging”/“backgrounding”/“inclusions”/“omissions” (3). Some of these terms were defined in the glossary which is the starting point for the analysis.

The glossary in the *English Senior* document was the most comprehensive out of all included English glossaries across the two states, and framed the use of language throughout the document. The glossary included terms that built direct links to critical literacy discourse - these being ‘discourse’, ‘intertextuality’, ‘positioning’, ‘readings’, and ‘representation’ aligning with postmodern discourse. It is interesting to note, however, that ‘ideology’, a key concept used in critical literacy discourses, is not defined or used in the document. Also included were definitions of key concepts from systemic functional linguistics, ‘field’, ‘mode’, ‘register’ and ‘tenor’, which also featured in the *VCE English Language* course and as was previously
discussed have influenced critical literacy discourses. The identification of these terms as being central to the teaching of the course privileged the need for teachers to understand them, as well as ‘build’ (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) this knowledge and associated social goods for students. The language used in each definition privileging critical literacy discourses is analysed in further detail below.

The definition of ‘discourse’ in this document situated meaning within CDA/CLA influenced critical literacy paradigms by aligning with Gee’s (2005, 2011a, 2011b) definition of ‘Discourse’. Luke and Walton argued that Gee “defines critical literacy in terms of discourse critique” (1994, p. 1197), illustrating the influence of Gee within critical literacy discourses. Gee defined ‘Discourse’ as being:

ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and often reading and writing that are accepted as instantiations of particular roles (or ‘types of people’) by specific groups of people...Discourses are ways of being ‘people like us’. They are ‘ways of being in the world’; they are ‘forms of life’. They are, thus, always and everywhere social and products of social histories (1996, p viii)

The definition in the glossary mirrored this utterance stating that discourse related to the cultural and social use of language, and the ways individuals and groups defined themselves through this language. It was described as providing “ways of being, thinking and acting and of using language so that individuals and groups can identify themselves or be identified in social and cultural networks...At any one time or place, a number of diverse or even competing discourses may be available to language users” (p. 47). By situating language and discourse as social in this way this definition privileged integral knowledge underpinning critical literacy discourses as identified by academics in the field (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Gilbert, 1993; Luke, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c; Luke & Baker, 1991) and built connections for the reader to critical literacy discourses and particularly poststructuralist and critical discourse analysis influenced approaches.

The definition of ‘representation’ in the glossary further reflected the understanding that language and text are socially constructed. It stated that “texts do not mirror or reflect
transparently the real world; they re-present or construct the relationships and identities of individuals, groups, times and places, mediated by the attitudes, beliefs, values or world view of the writer, shaper, speaker (and of the reader, viewer, listener)” (p. 49). The connection of “re-present” and “construct” with the notion that the ideological position of the constructor of the text influences representations in texts is reflective of valued sign systems and knowledge in critical literacy discourses as illustrated in the following utterance: “language, texts, and their discourse structures are more than neutral or factual representations of the world. Texts are a means for construing, shaping, and reshaping worlds in particular normative directions with identifiable ideological interests and consequences for individuals and communities” (Luke & Woods, 2009, p. 9). In addition, this term was often used in conjunction with ‘positioning’ and ‘readings’ throughout the document, which were other key terms from critical literacy discourses also defined in the glossary.

The included definitions for ‘positioning’ and ‘readings’, and the choice to incorporate these key critical literacy concepts into the document and glossary, should provide clear indications for the reader of the influence of critical literacy discourses on the valued knowledge and sign systems represented in the document. There could be little doubt that the ‘social group’ who constructed this curriculum document viewed these as “social goods worth having” (Gee, 2011b, p. 118). These two concepts were intricately connected in discussions by critical literacy academics (Mellor & Patterson, 2004; Morgan, 1997) and critical literacy teacher resource texts (Martino & Mellor, 1995; Mellor, 1989; Mellor, Patterson & O’Neill, 1991). This connection was evident in the way the glossary defined the term positioning as referring to “how texts influence readers to read in certain ways. Readers are positioned or invited to construct particular meanings in relation to the characters, the arguments, or the groups in the text” (p. 48). This definition also reflected the use of ‘position’ in the QELS and Victorian documents.

The concept ‘readings’, however, was not included in either the QELS or the Victorian documents, suggesting that this term which was used in critical literacy theoretical and teacher resource texts had not been as widely accepted in the English teaching social group as ‘construct’ and ‘position’. The glossary not only provided a definition of ‘readings’ that
reflected critical literacy discourses, in particular approaches Morgan (1997) labelled feminist and poststructuralist resistant approaches, but also included categorisations of the concept only found within critical literacy discourses (for example Mellor, 1989; Mellor, Patterson & O'Neill, 1991; Moon, 1990; Morgan, 1997). These categories in the document were “reading with the text”, “reading across the text” and “reading against the text” (p. 48), which were further labelled “invited readings”, “alternative readings” and “resistant or oppositional readings” (p. 48). This overt inclusion privileged the use of a ‘prescriptive’ approach to readings which was criticised by Misson and Morgan (2005, 2006). They argued that while “texts and reading practices nudge readers towards particular readings” (2006, p. 109), “our reading responses (developing, changing, sometimes ambivalent, even oscillating) are more multiple than these” (2006, p. 71). They expressed concern that approaching readings in such a prescriptive way would construct critical literacy as an “orthodoxy” (2006, p. 18). How this inclusion would relate to Queensland teachers’ enactment of critical literacy and the ways they developed their “ways of knowing the world” (Gee, 2011b, p. 137) was an important consideration for the aims of this thesis.

The glossary also included a definition of ‘intertextuality’ that reflected its use in critical literacy theoretical texts. Lankshear argued intertextuality, or the “readers experience of other texts” (1993, p. 391), influences the readings audiences construct of texts. In addition it was a central concept used in critical literacy discourses (Luke, 1991b). The definition included in the glossary stated “no text occurs in isolation, but must be understood in the context of the web of texts that precede and coexist with it” (p. 48). This connected to postmodern and critical literacy voices that argued against the possibility of a true and pure meaning and the idea that all texts have the taste of texts preceding or surrounding it (Bakhtin, 1981; Gilbert, 1992; Kristeva, 1986; Lankshear, 1993, 1998; Luke, 2000; Lyotard, 1984; Rosenau, 1992). In relation to the ways the politics building tool considers “how words...are being used to build (construct, assume) what count as social goods and distribute these to or withhold them from listeners” (Gee, 2011b, p. 121), the separation of these particular concepts into the glossary positioned them as particularly important to the teaching of English in Queensland.
When analysing the ‘Assessable General Objectives’ and ‘criteria’ with these definitions in mind, the utterances provided further evidence of the ‘building’ and valuing of knowledge representing various approaches to critical literacy. Two out of the three assessable objectives and associated criteria demonstrated the dominance of these discourses; “Knowledge and control of text in their contexts” and “Knowledge and application of the constructedness of texts”. The titles alone indicated the privileging of critical literacy discourses, with the emphasis on understanding the place of texts within contexts, and through the inclusion of the key term “constructedness”, which was a phrasing of ‘construct’ used in the reviewed critical literacy theoretical texts by authors such as Misson (1998b, 2009) and Lankshear & McLaren (1993). The other ‘Assessable General Objective’ ‘Knowledge and control of textual features’ included language more characteristic of systemic functional linguistics. These three objectives are discussed in more detail below. Prior to moving on to this analysis it is interesting to signpost that the course also contained non-assessable ‘affective’ objectives, which it stated “encourage students to develop positive attitudes to the study of texts, the learning of language and the development of a wide range of literate practices” (p. 5). These “permeate the other objectives” (p.5) and are described in terms of “enjoying”, “engaging”, “relating”, “appreciating” and “playing”. Considering the gaps between aesthetic aspects and critical literacy identified in the analysis of the Victorian documents and QiELS, the physical separation of these objectives from the more privileged assessable criteria, even if they were supposed to “permeate” these criteria, creates a situation “where the distribution of social goods is at stake” (Gee, 2011b, p. 118). This needs to be considered when analysing the teacher data.

The first general objective ‘Knowledge and control of text in their contexts’, when combined with the associated criterion (criterion 1) valued the teaching of the relationship between text and context, which is apparent across all analysed curriculum documents. The criterion stated “this criterion requires students to interpret texts and construct their own texts, taking account of the way that meanings in texts are shaped by purpose, cultural context and social situation” (p. 29). As discussed in earlier analysis, this language is representative of the underpinning influence on critical literacy from poststructuralist thought on textual construction and discourse (Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Green, 1991, 1997, 1998;

Out of the three Assessable General Objectives, the one with the most overt connections to and privileging of critical literacy discourses was ‘Knowledge and application of the constructedness of texts’ and the associated criterion, criterion 3. This was the criterion that created most tension in political discussion surrounding changes to the course, as was discussed in the context section of this chapter. The way critical literacy was represented as a sign system (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) in this part of the course, and political attempts to remove these links, demonstrated the wider implications of contestation around omissions and inclusions in mandated curriculum. Prior to the proposed changes, the concepts and language were clearly associated with critical literacy discourses. The term “constructedness”, used in the objective title, was coined by voices in critical literacy academic discourses (for example Misson, 1998b, 2009; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993). Misson contextualised the term in the following ways; “work on popular texts in a critical literacy framework, as on any text, is that we need to show their ‘constructedness’, to show that they are not an innocent representation of reality but have been created for a particular purpose.” (Misson, 1998a, p. 56); and that “writing is valuable in critical literacy...If you take a text and rewrite it, then you are pointing up the constructedness of the original text (and your own)” (Misson, 2009, p. 7). When marrying the objective with the criterion, Misson’s descriptions of this term become more relevant, suggesting clear links to the knowledge represented by this view of critical literacy. Criterion 3 stated:

This criterion requires students to recognise that discourses available in the culture affect the representations in, and readings of, texts. It requires students to identify how readers, listeners and viewers are positioned by the choices that writers, speakers and shapers make about what to include in and exclude from the text. Students apply this knowledge in the production of their own texts by making choices about what to represent and how to represent it. (p. 29)
This description also aligned with the various utterances including “critical” in this document as discussed earlier, and mirrored some of the utterances used in the Victorian VCE Literature course. The language in the Queensland mainstream English course is more comparable to the Victorian VCE Literature course than VCE English/ESL in relation to the dominance of critical literacy discourses. One of the major differences, however, is the use of “constructedness” and valuing of the concept “discourse”, which politically builds (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) stronger ties to critical literacy discourses and suggests these are more valued in Queensland curriculum contexts. “Constructedness” is not included in any of the Victorian courses. “Discourse” is used in the VCE English Language course but in the context of traditional linguistic definitions such as representing speech or in relation to the mechanics of language. When this particular English Senior objective and criterion are combined with the larger political context, that is the Queensland Studies Authority’s suggestion that this criterion needed to be modified to tone down an over privileging of the “socio-cultural” or “critical literacy” approach, it is clear that the construction of this section of the course in this version of the English Senior document intended to value the skills promoted in critical literacy discourses as social goods.

The second objective, while it still valued critical literacy skills, used language in a way that placed systemic functional linguistics (SFL) as the privileged sign system (Gee, 2011a, 2011b). This objective was titled ‘Knowledge and control of textual features’. Along with the title, the italicised language in the criterion description reflects the emphasis in SFL approaches; “this criterion requires students to gain knowledge, understanding and control of how different language systems (written, spoken/signed, visual, nonverbal, auditory) work in texts and to select textual features appropriate to purpose, genre and register” (p. 29). By including these skills in the title and the main descriptor the valuing of SFL influenced approaches was foregrounded. While this was the case, the objective discussion included five out of eight dot points which linked to the social goods identified in the previous criterion and critical literacy academic texts. These included the importance of understanding what is meant by “cultural contexts” and “social situations”, how these factors influence the creation of texts, and how they influence the meanings made. Considering the dominance of critical literacy discourses weaving through the rest of the syllabus, teachers may interpret this criterion as linking to the
kind of critical literacy stream that Luke (1992) and Luke and Walton (1994) identified as being influenced by Hallidayian/critical linguistics. It could also suggest that the distribution of social goods from both sets of discourses were considered important.

The final section of the course analysed for the privileging of sign systems and knowledge was the resources list. The ratio of texts representing critical literacy discourses in the English Senior list was higher in comparison to the Victorian mainstream senior English. The English Senior suggested resources list contained 51 texts (including videos), slightly more than VCE English/ESL, of which 17 linked directly to critical literacy through title or author. These included titles such as Changing Literacies (Lankshear, 1997), Constructing Critical Literacies: Teaching and learning textual practice (Muspratt, Luke & Freebody, 1997), Critical Awareness Series (Janks, (ed.), 1993), Critical Literacy in the Classroom: The art of the possible (Morgan, 1997), Critical Literacy: Readings (video), Gendered Fictions (Martino & Mellor, 1995), Investigating Texts (Mellor & Patterson, 1996), Reading Fictions (Mellor, Patterson, & O’Neill, 1991) and The New Literacy Challenge? (Green, 1999). In comparison, the VCE English/ESL course included seven titles. There were also resources that linked to postmodern/poststructuralist discourses. The resources list reflected the building of critical literacy discourses as being important “ways of knowing the world” (Gee, 2011b, p. 137) which was evident through the rest of the Queensland English Senior document.

English Extension (Literature)

As with the English Senior course, the English Extension (Literature) course had four objectives, with three going towards assessment - ‘Knowledge and Understanding of Texts and Approaches to Reading Texts’, ‘Application of Knowledge and Understanding of Reading Practices’, ‘Control of Language Choices According to Cultural Contexts and Social Situations’ and the non-assessed ‘Affective’. The course varied considerably from the VCE Literature course in content and purpose. To begin with it was specifically designed as an optional extension to be taken alongside English Senior. In addition, as discussed earlier and identified by Macken-Horarik and Morgan (2011) the course was a poststructuralist influenced examination of historical approaches to reading literature. It was also a course in which Morgan was a major contributor (Macken-Horarik & Morgan, 2008, 2011), and her voice was reflected
Luke and Walton identified Morgan’s (1997) critical literacy ‘version’ as reflecting “the direct application of feminist, postcolonial, and poststructuralist deconstructive models of reading and literature” (2009, p. 15) and the privileging of these underpinning sign systems is evident throughout utterances in this course. As this course was an extension of the English Senior course, in relation to knowledge and sign systems, the social goods valued in the mainstream course can be viewed as having relevance for this course as well. The categories for the reading approaches identified in the previous analysis section are the focal points for this analysis. These categories were “author-centred” (cultural heritage), “text-centred” (‘New’ critics and structuralism), “reader-centred” (reader response/personal growth) and “world-context-centred” (Marxist influenced critical literacy/pedagogy discourses).

The representation of knowledge and social goods in the “author-centred approach” was briefly discussed in the previous analysis of the deictic uses of “critical” in this document. The knowledge included in these sections was both historical and contemporary. The “good[s] worth having” (Gee, 2011b, p. 118) were evident in the contemporary interpretations of the historical approaches. As previously discussed this section included a critique of the valuing of the author common to Leavisite/cultural heritage approaches and instead argued “if there is no single ‘message’ but rather a series of different, even competing meanings, none can be identified simply with the author” (p. 11). This section also included a discussion on Barthes’ (1977) “Death of the Author” and Foucault’s (1977) response in “What is an author?” (p. 11). By valuing these poststructuralist debates, labelling the historical views as “problematic” (p. 11) and arguing that “the relationship between reader and author has now shifted, and the concept that authorial authority limits and delegitimizes readers’ interpretations has now been challenged” (p. 12), the poststructuralist knowledge on authorial positions in texts is set up as the preferred view on understanding the function of texts. This reflects the version of critical literacy identified above by Luke and Woods (2009).

The discussion on “text-centred approaches” followed a similar line, outlining similarities between structuralism and poststructuralism and then a discussion on the modification of knowledge in the historical approach brought about in light of poststructuralist views. This
again foregrounded the views from this paradigm as the preferred way to critique texts. In addition the work of “deconstructionists” (although Derrida is not directly referenced) and “deconstruction” are included, and defined as “the ways in which the text comes undone, or deconstructs itself, by identifying its gaps, silences and contradictions. And they press the text until it yields multiple meanings” (p. 15). Deconstruction featured in the work of Green (1993) and Luke (for example Baker & Luke, 1991) when discussing approaches to critical literacy. Also by valuing deconstructive approaches this document privileges the kind of ‘poststructuralist deconstructive’ model of critical literacy that Luke and Walton (2009) identified. The ways these theoretical positions were discussed in this document directs teachers towards poststructuralist paradigms and particular variants of critical literacy, encouraging them to introduce these ideologies to their students.

As the reading approaches discussed moved closer to “contemporary” times, critiques of the theoretical paradigms lessened, pointing the reader towards a favouring of knowledge from these sign systems. This became evident in the “reader-centred approaches” section, which, as the title suggests, focused on views from theoretical texts “on the reader’s central role in the meaning-making process” (p. 17). In addition personal growth pedagogy, referencing Dixon (1967), was featured and described as important because these approaches “recognise the cultural experiences a reader brings to the text” (p.18). Several utterances in this section privileged the knowledge and social goods from poststructuralist theory discussed in the literature review and in the previous analysis as underpinning critical literacy approaches. For example, Gilbert argued that poststructuralism influenced critical literacy through the identification of “the openness and infinite plurality of texts as fields of signification, and challenges the notion that texts can be sites of predetermined, stable meanings.” (1992, p. 189). This understanding was represented as a social good in various ways throughout all curriculum documents analysed in this study. In this document, however, it was more overt and explained in more detail, as is evident in the italicised sections in the following two utterances from this part of the course:

Meanings are continually renegotiated in the interactions between text and reader throughout the entire reading process. Readers bring their knowledge, experiences, habits, expectations, beliefs and values to the transactions between text and reader. The
knowledge, beliefs and expectations of readers change over time, and this leads to a shifting relation between readers and texts. (p. 18)

A key point about a reader-centred approach to reading is the notion that different readers produce different readings of the same text. The same reader also could “renegotiate” his/her prior readings of a text on re-reading it. However, it is also important to note that although readers might produce what seems to be a reading that comes from a personal perspective, groups or communities of readers (interpretive communities) also produce readings that are similar because they emanate from related experiences (Fish, 1980/1990). (p.19)

Ensuring students develop an understanding of the plurality of texts, and the complex relationship between readers, text and contexts when constructing “readings” was clearly viewed as social goods in these utterances. In addition, this section also included concepts relating to this understanding such as “filling gaps”, “alternative”, “resistant”, “invited”, “multiple”, and oppositional “readings”, which were featured in the “readings” definition of the English Senior glossary. These terms were characteristic of some of the teacher resource publications using critical literacy approaches published in the late 1980s to mid 1990s (Martino & Mellor, 1995; Mellor, 1989; Mellor, O’Neill & Patterson, 1991; Moon, 1998), and were particularly evident in much of Morgan’s (1994,1996, 1997) publications for teachers.

While this section of the curriculum document focused on personal growth pedagogy rather than socio-critical approaches the document makes connection between the two stating an “overlap” existed between reader-centred approaches and the final (and privileged) world-context-centred approach. This was explained in the following utterance:

The practices generated by reader-centred approaches enable readers to begin to challenge textual ideologies through examining (mis)matches between personal ideologies and those of the text (Thomson, 1992). Reading practices generated from the world-context-centred approach allow more radical challenges to the text’s invited readings, by facilitating a challenge to the text’s cultural assumptions. (p. 19)
The reader-centred approaches were represented as a “beginning” for “contemporary” reading practices, however the inclusion of the words “allow” and “facilitating” portrayed the world-context-centred approaches as affording students more sophisticated practices for reading and challenging texts and suggested the latter approach was valued more highly. Possessing the ability to challenge textual representations was a social good identified as an important goal of critical literacy pedagogies by several critical literacy theorists (for example Comber, 1999; Freebody, 2008; Mellor & Patterson, 2004; Patterson, 1990), and was illustrated by Luke when he argued that “our aim is to get students to construct and to challenge texts, to see how texts provide selective versions of the world” (1991c, p. 519).

The valuing of these skills became more evident in the final section on the “world-context-centred approaches”. As discussed in the previous analysis section, the term “socio-critical” was used in the introduction to the four approaches in reference to world-context-centred approaches. The utterances and language included in this section further represented suggested knowledge and sign systems from critical literacy discourses, presented them as highly valued and implied they were the most appropriate approaches for analysis of text. This was evident in the way the historical and contemporary discussions contained no critique, rather instead focusing on defining the approaches and listing important figures. The contemporary discussion incorporated outlines of the evolution of Marxism and feminism, and the influence of postcolonialism and queer studies on approaches to reading. These approaches have all been identified as influential on the development of critical literacy variations (Lankshear, 1994, 1997; Luke & Walton, 1994; Luke & Woods, 2009). The utterance outlining the postcolonial discussion is an example of the ways the text valued these approaches:

They assert their right to name the world of their experiences in their ways, and reassess notions of “centre” and “margins”. That is, the colonial centre (of power, knowledge, culture and society) is challenged and alternative centres are identified in marginalised indigenous cultures. (p. 22)
The use of “assert their right” and “their experiences in their ways” presents this discourse in a non-critical way, especially considering this section did not contain any discussions on tensions within or beyond these discourses.

This section then described the commonalities between the above world-context-centred approaches with a summary that read as if it was drawn from a critical literacy text, and again reflected the poststructuralist variant of critical literacy identified by Luke and Woods (2009) as discussed earlier. The summary reads (with language characteristic of critical literacy discourses that have already been identified across the analysis of all curriculum documents italicised):

world-context-centred approaches focus on the ways a text constructs or represents the world; the ideologies underpinning this construction and shared by particular cultural groups; the discourses drawn into play; the silences that make an invited reading possible but which may also be used to produce an oppositional reading; the political consequences of taking a particular view of the world as ‘natural’ or preferred; an awareness of what is to be gained by asking the question ‘whose interests are served by these representations of the world in texts? (p. 23)

Taken in its entirety, this utterance outlined many common key areas of knowledge from critical literacy discourses – texts are ideological and cultural constructions, readers are positioned (invited) to take on a particular view however factors surrounding their lives may lead to other readings, and texts are political and created for particular purposes. It echoed Luke’s argument that the kinds of questions needing to be asked in a critical literacy classroom were “which/whose version of events and the world is foregrounded? Which other versions are excluded? Whose interests are served by this representation? How (e.g., lexically, syntactically) does the text construct ‘reality’? How does the text try to position you in relation to its messages?” (Luke, 2000, p. 457). This again points the reader to situate meaning within these discourses and privileges poststructuralist influenced critical literacy approaches as the favoured sign system to draw on when analysing texts.
The world-context-centred section in the document contained the most overt privileging of critical literacy discourses out of all of the mandated curriculum documents, clearly situating meaning within a critical literacy frame. The suggested resource list continued this privileging of critical literacy and poststructuralist discourses with 10 out of 86 texts having direct links to critical literacy through title or author such as *Constructing Critical Literacies: Teaching and learning textual practice* (Muspratt, Luke & Freebody), *Critical Literacy in the Classroom: The art of the possible* (Morgan, 1997), *Gendered Fictions* (Martino & Mellor, 1995), *Investigating Texts* (Mellor & Patterson, 1996), *Studying Literature* (Moon, 1990) and a further 45 having links to postmodernism/poststructuralism, feminism, cultural studies and critical discourse analysis such as *Critical Language Awareness* (Fairclough, 1992), ‘Death of the Author’ (Barthes, 1977), *Feminism: A reader* (Humm, 1992), *Social Linguistics and Literacies: Ideologies in discourses* (Gee, 1996), *The Kristeva Reader* (Kristeva, 1986), *The Reader, the Text, the Poem* (Rosenblatt, 1987) and ‘What is an Author’ (Foucault, 1977). The remaining texts covered the historical content in the course with titles such as *Growth Through English* (Dixon, 1967), *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad* (Leavis, 1964), *Shakespearean Tragedy: Lectures on Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth* (Bradley, 1988) and *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, linguistics and the study of literature* (Culler, 1988). When this list was combined with the rest of the *English Extension (Literature)* document, the prerequisite *Senior English* curriculum document and glossary, there were very few gaps for teachers to fill. Macken-Horarik and Morgan summed up their views on the benefits of the course by arguing:

> the structure and intellectual challenge of this Queensland course enables students to take up a sophisticated form of ‘multi-voicedness’ or polyphony. The expanded range of voicing options we observed in students’ texts, we think, were a consequence of their careful introduction not only to plural readings but also to the theories that helped them understand these. Our hunch is that voicing is a site where students’ intellectual engagement with post-structuralism becomes visible and the benefits of this engagement demonstrable. (2011, p. 134)

While this course is an optional course, hence the majority of English teachers in Queensland will not have taught it, considering the strong presence of poststructuralist feminist critical literacy theoretical discourse, investigating the relationship Queensland teachers have with
the course will provide interesting data relating to the construction of critical literacy and teachers’ ideological becoming.

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**LOOKING ACROSS THE QUEENSLAND COURSES**

Social goods and knowledge from critical literacy discourses, and underpinning paradigms, are evident in the Queensland documents. In addition they are overt and dominant in both of the senior courses. The utterances in the *QELS English* years 7 and 9 documents include the privileging of knowledge evident in variants identified in critical literacy theoretical texts as being influenced by poststructuralism, CDA/CLA and critical pedagogy. The *Senior English* course reflects poststructuralist and critical pedagogy influences, and the *English Extension (Literature)* mostly reflects the variant Luke and Woods (2009) discussed as being influenced by feminist, postcolonial, and poststructuralist deconstructive models. The Queensland documents suggest critical literacy skills are highly valued in the senior years, and, as was discussed in the context section, attempts to “destroy” these “social goods” (Gee, 2011b, p. 118) can be met with resistance from the teaching profession. The dominance of this discourse further illustrates the importance of including Queensland in a study of the place of critical literacy in Australia.

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**4.6 CONCLUSION – LOOKING ACROSS THE TWO STATES**

Gee’s tools of analysis provided a framework to analyse the construction of critical literacy in selected curriculum documents from Victoria and Queensland. When combining the analysis drawing on Gee’s (2011a, 2011b) “deictic tool”, “situated meaning tool”, “sign systems and knowledge building tool” and “politics building tool”, the privileging and constructions of critical literacy became evident. The building of particular social goods from critical literacy discourses demonstrated the place of these discourses in the sample cases of Queensland and Victoria.

The analysis found that the privileging of critical literacy discourses was more dominant in the curriculum documents from Queensland than Victoria when comparing each state’s
equivalent courses. For both states, the inclusion of these discourses became more explicit in the senior year courses and, in particular, the ‘optional’ courses. When considering each state’s documents as a whole, the Queensland documents privilege critical literacy discourses over others by including more dominant representations of knowledge from these discourses. Also, the senior documents include more theoretical positioning and definitions of the knowledge (for example in the glossary) aligning with critical literacy discourses than the Victorian equivalents. This suggests teachers in Queensland would be invited to privilege ideological positions to the teaching of English that aligned with the social goods from critical literacy discourses represented in the state’s curriculum documents. In the Victorian case, while there was similar privileging of skills in the Victorian VCE English Language and VCE Literature courses, they were not in the same concentration as the Queensland documents. The connections built in the VELS English and mainstream VCE English/ESL documents were less overt. The Victorian documents provided less contextual information (and little to no theoretical justifications), and hence had more gaps for teachers to fill with their own interpretations of the intended meanings. These documents did not build critical literacy sign systems as the favoured way to view the world, which contrasted with the Queensland curriculum context.

In relation to the kinds of constructions of and social goods from critical literacy represented across the two state’s curriculum documents, there were several commonalities evident through the valuing of underpinning influences on critical literacy from postmodernist/poststructuralist paradigms. Key understandings from these discourses were:

- no text is neutral;
- authors construct texts to present particular views of the world and people; and
- interpretations of text are multiple and influenced by situational, sociocultural and intertextual factors.

These views often appeared in utterances where the terms “construct” and “position” were central to the meaning. This suggested teaching these concepts and this knowledge to students was viewed as teaching core social goods “worth having” (Gee, 2011b, p. 118) by the social group constructing English curriculum across these two states. In addition several
'variants' of critical literacy also appeared to be valued across the documents, some more so than others. In Victoria, apart from the poststructural/postmodern influences, there were utterances that reflected social goods valued in critical literacy approaches that were influenced by CDA/CLA and, to a much lesser extent, critical pedagogy. The CDA/CLA influence was especially evident in the VCE English Language course. In Queensland the CDA/CLA variant was also evident across all courses, in particular the QELS, with a less dominant influence from critical pedagogy variants. The theoretically dense English Extension (Literature) course reflected feminist, postcolonial, and poststructuralist deconstructive models of critical literacy more so than others, even though Morgan and Wyatt-Smith (2000) suggested the course was influenced by Freirean critical pedagogy. This influence was not dominant in the utterances or in light of the fact that the resources list contains no texts by Freire (or relating to critical pedagogy). From the context discussion it appeared the teachers and academic stakeholders in Queensland were more vocal about building critical literacy/sociocritical social goods through their inclusion in mandated curriculum than in Victoria. This could assist in explaining its dominance in curriculum in this state. In light of this difference, the analysis of the construction of critical literacy by teachers in these two states is the next important step to understanding the place of critical literacy in Australia. In particular to identify any possible differences in views and enactment due to variations in each state’s mandated curriculum documents. The next chapter analyses the ways a sampled group of teachers constructed critical literacy in Victoria and Queensland, with considerations of tensions and how critical literacy contributed to their ideological becoming as English teachers.
CHAPTER 5 – TEACHER VOICES IN VICTORIA AND QUEENSLAND

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to understand the ways critical literacy is constructed in Australian high school English contexts, an analysis of teacher discourses is imperative. This chapter addresses the research aims by analysing discourses from three teachers in Victoria and three in Queensland. The analysis revolves around the teacher interviews, with the teacher claims about their enacted critical literacy curriculum being tested using the classroom observation data. It draws on Bakhtin's theories to discuss the dialogic relationships teachers had with a variety of voices that contributed to their ideological becoming as English teachers. To revisit the methodology chapter, the specific sub-questions this chapter aims to answer are:

- What kinds of discourses (and tensions with/assimilation of these discourses) exist in the teachers’ ideological environments and how do they influence the teachers’ constructions of critical literacy?

- What is the impact of the teachers’ constructions of critical literacy on their perceptions of English and their ‘ideological becoming’?

- What ‘hybridized’ forms does critical literacy take?

To address these questions and understand the place of critical literacy in Australian English teachers’ lives in Victoria and Queensland the analysis is split into two categories: pre-existing ideologies and their ideological environments, and ‘hybridizations’. Each of these sections is further separated into a section on the Victorian teachers and a section on the Queensland teachers. Structuring the chapter in this way allows a state by state discussion of teachers’ constructions of critical literacy as evident through their “process of selectively assimilating the words of others” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 341). As discussed in the methodology chapter.
Bakhtin labelled this process ‘ideological becoming’ (Bakhtin, 1978) which in these data are reflected through the teacher’s dialogic relationships with the discourses surrounding them across time and their ‘hybridized’ (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986) forms of critical literacy.

### 5.2 TEACHER IDEOLOGIES AND IDEOLOGICAL ENVIRONMENTS

Analysing the ways teachers’ utterances “weave in and out of complex interrelationships” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 276) with ‘other’ voices (Bakhtin, 1981) leads to a better understanding of how they develop their “way of viewing the world” (Freedman & Ball, 2004, p. 5). A teacher’s ideological becoming is a complex process involving the interaction of ideologies from their internally persuasive discourse (Bakhtin, 1981) with various ‘other’ voices that they come into contact with in their ideological environments (Bakhtin, 1978). It involves making choices about which voices to dismiss/partly dismiss or accept/partly accept. Many factors influence and at times impose on their choices, such as personal and professional learning experiences and mandated curriculum requirements. Hence, the purpose of this section is to analyse the Victorian and Queensland teachers’ utterances that provide evidence of the path leading to the construction of their English teaching identities, specifically those relating to their views on critical literacy.

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### VICTORIA

The three teachers interviewed and observed in Victoria were John, Lauren and Fay. Each had extensive teaching experience in the area of English with John having taught for thirty five years, Fay for twenty five and Lauren for fifteen. As the analysis below illustrates, the constructions of critical literacy for each teacher were influenced by their dialogic relationships with various voices, (such as family, colleagues and academics) and theoretical discourses that existed within their ideological environments (Bakhtin, 1978). When comparing the teachers, contrasting views appeared in relation to how critical literacy contributed to their identities as English teachers.
John had been teaching English for thirty five years, was located at a catholic all boys school and had been a part of the state based marking team for the end of year VCE English exam in excess of ten years. He identified several ideological environments contributing to a positive identification with critical literacy. He discussed his father’s influence on his views about education, who he described as a “passionate teacher and principal”. His father’s voice was a major influential force on his developing ideologies towards English teaching and how to enact critical literacy. The ways John viewed his father’s contribution to his own construction of critical literacy was reflected in an anecdote about a time he briefly looked after one of his father’s classes while his father had to attend to an emergency in his role as the principal of the school. John reflected on how, as an untrained teacher at the time, he treated the reading of text at a surface comprehension level asking the students questions and expecting short, direct answers. Upon his return his father revisited every question. John stated he teased it all out, referred to the text, looked at it, looked at the pictures, he said, (seriously it’s critical literacy), he’d say why do you think there’s a photograph of a pig in the story, what has a pig got to do with it? Why would these, why would the people who are making the book stick a pig on that page besides.

While John’s view on this activity reflects the emphasis in academic critical literacy literature on analysing the deliberate nature of the constructedness of texts (Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Green 1991, 1997, 1998; Lankshear, 1998; Misson, 1998b, 2009; Morgan, 1997), his anecdote could also be viewed as simply analysing the features of the text. While this may be the case, this nonetheless anecdote is an important association for him in relation to his initial experiences of what he viewed was an example of a critical literacy activity. He felt his father’s approach looked “instinctive” and his association of this memory with critical literacy suggested it provided a pivotal moment not only in relation to views on implementing critical literacy in practice, but also his valuing of the importance of critical literacy approaches for English teaching. His assimilation of his father’s voice meant that by the time he first heard of ‘critical literacy’ (which he said was the mid 80s), he felt he already had established ideologies aligning with these discourses. For John, as he felt it was for his father, “it [critical literacy] is like a lifetime thing”, meaning that these discourses were a part of his philosophical existence.
In addition, he placed high value on the ideologies reflected through his cultural background and the Scottish education system. He argued that being critically and politically engaged with the world was an inherent part of Scottish identity, and that these kinds of discourses surrounded him during the development of his identity as a youth. This was reflected in the following utterance “in many ways Scots are particularly critical anyway... you’ll find people in pubs in Glasgow talking about politics anywhere, anytime. I think it’s honestly, it’s probably part of the racial makeup for god’s sake, they just like arguing”. When he moved to Australia he acted to surround himself with voices reflecting this ideological heritage. He furthered his interests in critical literacy education, postmodernism and culture by completing a Master of Education degree including an essay “on postmodernity and culture and education”. This focus suggests voices from the postmodernist and cultural studies paradigms were shaping his critical literacy discourse as they “weave[d] in and out of complex interrelationships” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 276) with the already existing ideologies in his internally persuasive discourse.

John identified influential voices from these postmodern paradigms such as Jameson and the critical pedagogues Freire, Giroux and Apple as contributing to his views about the world and English teaching. Identifying a dialogical engagement with these particular voices suggested his construction of critical literacy reflected the kinds of critical pedagogy variants of critical literacy discussed by Lankshear (1997) and Luke and Walton (1994). This kind of construction was evident in his utterances discussing these writers. John labelled Apple and Giroux “critical literacy writers”, and viewed their work as encouraging a “critiquing [of] the world”. He saw Freire’s mission as “making it as real as possible” and Apple and Giroux’s work as “revolutionary, I like the fact that someone’s going up to authority and saying you’re wrong, this is what works. ..what you’re doing you’re critiquing the world, you’re critiquing how it works”. Apple, Freire and Giroux’s voices focused on notions of power, disempowerment, social action and encouraging students to become critically reflexive members of society (Apple, 1995, 2000; Freire, 1970; 1987; 1999; Giroux, 1983, 1992). By arguing that this work was “revolutionary” John placed high value on these major figures in
critical pedagogy. He valued their ‘words’, meaning his contact with these voices contributed to his views on the world.

His actions towards affirming his valuing of critical literacy and privileging of a particular construction of critical literacy was also reflected in his association with particular members of the professional English teaching body VATE, and his positive views on his school. John discussed the importance of his critical literacy conversations and experiences with a select number of VATE colleagues. In particular he discussed a series of workshops he presented with a VATE colleague that he felt specifically linked critical literacy to Area of Study three, the issues analysis section, of VCE English/ESL. He argued that the workshops were “all about critical literacy to be honest, because that was what we were trying to do”. In addition, his contact with senior English teachers through committee membership and professional development experiences led him to the belief that “the majority of teachers at senior level would reckon they are doing critical literacy quite a bit, I’m sure they would. Almost innately”. This does not, however, concur with some of the academic literature that raised concerns about critical literacy enactment (for example Green & Durrant, 2000; Luke & Freebody, 1999a). John’s statement suggested that he had not come into contact with many English teacher voices that he had to ‘reject’ on the basis of their dismissal of critical literacy discourses.

The school John worked at also affirmed his ideological positioning towards social justice and critical pedagogy ‘variant’ of critical literacy, creating synergies between the ideological environment of his workplace and his already existing personal beliefs. He argued the founder of his school “was a critical thinker” who tried to “change the lives of these kids via education...it’s admirable”. His utterances suggested he valued the ways the school connected education to social action in the ‘real world’, an aim of critical pedagogy, through volunteer work. Through the school he worked with students outside on social justice projects, such as running a breakfast van for local disadvantaged children. He saw this as “empowering and it’s critical”. John’s representation of his ideological environment in his utterances suggested critical pedagogy influences were present and valued in his school and teaching community, however he demonstrated some struggle with his commitment to a ‘social action’ critical
literacy and limits on his time. John argued, while he was passionate about his social justice volunteer work, continuing this extra-curricula commitment was “killing me”. This frustration reflects possible reasons why “political activism is considered beyond the scope of English teachers” (Misson & Morgan, 2006, p. 16) in Australian variants of critical pedagogy.

The influences of critical pedagogy voices were also evident in John’s ideological struggles with bureaucratic voices. He identified these bureaucratic voices in his ideological environment as creating the above mentioned limits on his time as well as constricting space for collegial discussion and debate. His utterances reflected the kinds of criticisms Apple (2000, 2004, 2006) and Giroux (1992, 2010, 2012) voiced in relation to the US context, and Doecke and Parr (2011), Kostogris and Doecke (2008) and Luke (2010) discussed in relation to the Australian context. John argued that “quality” teaching was becoming “dissipated” due to bureaucratic requirements. Even though he suggested the underpinning values of the school privileged social justice, he felt “form filling and doing all the trivia that we didn’t used to do” took away time that could have been spent on professional discussion, reading and professional development. He expressed the view that “sometimes schools militate against good teaching” and that “education has become pretty bloody brutal”. He placed a high value on professional dialogue and professional theoretical reading “teachers need to go and read more, go and do more study...I think a lot of people are interested in it but they just don’t have the time anymore”. John felt teachers (and he included himself in this description) were “losing the spirit” to engage with theory. John’s utterances implied that he felt the authoritative nature of bureaucratic voices limited the kinds of choices English teachers could make about which ‘words’ to assimilate. As explained by Freedman and Ball (2004), these restrictions can limit teachers’ learning and development.

Lauren

The second Victorian teacher, Lauren, was also an experienced English teacher having taught in excess of fifteen years. At the time of the data collection she taught in an independent co-educational school. Like John, she also identified critical literacy approaches as aligning with her ideological priorities. She stated “it’s [critical literacy] in the water that I drink or something, yeah. It’s the way I am”. This utterance echoes Howie’s argument that critical
literacy should be “an embodied, lived professional experience” (2006, p. 228). Lauren identified several ideological environments, and voices from these environments, as having influenced her positive association with and constructions of critical literacy. Her first contact with discourses of relevance to critical literacy was in her undergraduate and postgraduate university studies. She had completed a double major in English, a Diploma of Education and then, several years into her teaching, a Master of Education. The theoretical voices from these environments were evident in her utterances and demonstrated her ideological becoming in relation to subject English and critical literacy, in that they demonstrated the “process of selectively assimilating the words of others” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 341). She didn’t recall the term ‘critical literacy’ being used during her studies, stating that she couldn’t really remember her University days, but “I would have heard of it in DipEd in 86”. She stated that her memories of university were that “the catch words were deconstruction, semiotics”. In saying this, however, when asked if she felt she was teaching using critical literacy approaches after finishing her studies she stated “Oh yeah, yeah, that’s the way, I mean I’m naturally, I mean deconstruction really suited me and I think that’s the link for me, that’s the bridge”. As identified in the literature review, postmodern concepts from Derrida’s deconstruction were influential on the development of critical literacy theory (Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Green, 1991, 1997; Morgan, 1997). For Lauren the metaphor “bridge” represented the link being made between what were “natural” pre-existing ideologies and the “words of others” (Bakhtin, 1981). Her assimilation of deconstructive discourses in relation to her views on critical literacy suggested her espoused curriculum (Argyris & Schon, 1974) may reflect the kinds of ‘poststructuralist deconstructive’ models discussed by Luke and Woods (2009).

This model was also evident through her assimilation of other voices from these past ideological environments. She stated that Eagleton showed her “the differences in different theoretical approaches to text, like Feminism and Marxism, Psychoanalysis, Deconstruction etcetera which I was interested in because what it does is allows students ways in”. For Lauren critical literacy was a “big umbrella” under which the “fundamentals” of each paradigm sat. She stated that she used these paradigms when incorporating “hybrid readings” and “multiple readings” of texts - approaches to text that she stated were influenced again by Eagleton as well as French theorists such as Ricoeur. The concept of “multiple readings” was also evident in academic literature defining critical literacy (for example
Gilbert, 1992; Green, 1997; Luke, 2000; Luke & Luke, 1990; Morgan, 1997) and all analysed Victorian curriculum documents. Lauren’s contact and assimilation of poststructuralist voices from these past ideological environments contributed to her individualised construction of critical literacy.

Lauren also identified other theoretical and collegial voices contributing to her constructions of critical literacy evident in her more current ideological environments. Her statements suggested theoretical voices, such as Luke and Freebody (through the four resources model) and Gee (his work on computer games), aligned with her pre-existing ideologies on the teaching of English. She argued they “really resonated with me, but it didn’t influence me, I kind of got there simultaneously. When I read their stuff and was like yep tick, tick, tick”. In addition to these ideological environments in which she engaged dialogically with theoretical voices, Lauren suggested voices within her teaching context had also influenced her construction of critical literacy. In particular her first Head of English and “his theory” influenced her views on critical literacy as well as the voices of her colleagues. She argued that her colleagues shared her positive views on critical literacy approaches and that “there’s no-one here who would say that’s [critical literacy] a load of bunken, I’m just reading this. There’s no-one who would take that odd approach that I have read about in the Queensland and New South Wales media, I just don’t know what’s going on there, I don’t understand it”. Utterances such as this one suggested voices dismissive of critical literacy approaches conflicted with her views on English to the point that she completely dismissed them.

As the Head of the Department for English at her school, the approach to English teaching she encouraged illustrated a valuing of poststructuralist/postmodernist theories. For example, she provided an example of how theory was used in the classroom by a colleague with the text *Shark Net*, a text in *VCE English/ESL, Area of Study* two (the ‘context’ section). She stated he approached the text “in terms of its existential meaning because he really sees that kind of harshness, the harsh existential reality of the Perth weather being very, very influential on all sorts of things within that text, and he’s comparing it to Sartre”. She identified this kind of theoretical engagement as “the sort of thing that’s going on in this department all the time”. She felt individuals in her school could use their theoretical interests without being “hounded
out” by the media, as compared to Queensland and New South Wales. In relation to student outcomes she argued these kinds of approaches provided enriching experiences for students “it’s wonderful for the students to have access to someone who can make such a connection and open up such an important area of philosophy”. By contrasting her ideological environment with what she suggested were more restrictive contexts Lauren constructed her space as one that allowed teachers the freedom to explore their own versions of critical literacy approaches.

The third Victorian teacher, Fay, was an experienced teacher working in a public co-educational school. Her utterances contrasted with the ideological position towards critical literacy and ideological environments evident in John and Lauren’s discussions. While both John and Lauren appeared to reflect Howie’s view of critical literacy as something that was “embodied” (2006, p. 228), Fay instead argued critical literacy was largely irrelevant for her practice stating “I’ve never had to actually think about it seriously for work”. While John and Lauren identified positive experiences in past ideological environments relating to critical literacy, Fay instead focused on tension with voices representing these discourses and positive associations with alternative discourses.

In relation to her contact with critical literacy voices, she identified conflict twice in her interview with views presented in a critical literacy workshop session organised by the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English (VATE). She suggested she had “read about critical literacy” and didn’t believe the workshop reflected the views in this material, however the statements made by the presenter during this professional development experience led her to believe “obviously some kind of group” argued this in critical literacy theory. It also reflected her belief that critical literacy “varies a lot depending on who you speak to”. She felt the presenter was “talking about how all opinions had equal validity” which she believed “was not something that should be done in a classroom” and “would be quite a dangerous concept in some of the types of classes I teach” so she “pretty much dismissed it at the time”. Fay suggested this notion was dangerous in the ways it challenged the teachers’ authority not only in relation to classroom behaviour, but also valid readings of texts. Her view was further
illustrated when she revisited this example at a later stage in the interview re-iterating her disagreement with the view that “a year 7 boy’s opinion or a teacher’s opinion or point of view has equal validity” and that it “might sound quite pleasant in some theoretical situations” but it was not suitable for her classes. She perceives critical literacy theory as being divorced from the realities of mainstream English teaching situations. In addition, even though she identified having read critical literacy work that contradicted the presenter’s view, out of the “myriad connotations and associations of the words” (Maybin, 2001, p. 67) used in critical literacy discourses, the voices from this workshop impacted most significantly on her construction of critical literacy. Her negative portrayal of critical literacy based on limited exposure to the discourse represented the impact of various influential forces in her life.

Two of these forces influencing her resistance to the term critical literacy were the ideological environment in her school and her perception on the requirements of the Victorian mandated English curriculum. She argued that in her “constant discussions” with her colleagues they agreed that critical literacy approaches were not privileged by English teachers in Victoria “I asked a number of teachers what they thought critical literacy was and I think most people (it doesn’t matter how much experience they had) it was the same they were responding to the requirements of what we’re doing, rather than looking into theory about critical literacy”. She further argued, because of the Victorian requirements, some of the teachers “aren’t aware about it because, we don’t, it’s not part, it’s a term that’s not actually used in the way we teach” and that “our emphasis in Victorian high schools is not on critical literacy”. While she did not associate critical literacy voices as being relevant to English teachers’ ideological becoming in Victoria she did, however, suggest they were for other states when saying “we are aware that it is a part of the New South Wales curriculum”. In addition, her use of the word ‘we’ constructs this view as an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ state based mentality, and the view that critical literacy was not a part of Victorian requirements not only contradicted the voices of John and Lauren, but also the utterances identified in the previous curriculum analysis chapter. This suggested that her dialogic interaction with critical literacy ‘words’ had the outcome of what Bakhtin (1981) discussed as “dismissal”, in that they “recoiled” from her pre-existing internally persuasive discourse. As is discussed in the next analysis section, there were, however, tensions between these views and her enacted curriculum.
Fay’s identification of ideological environments external to her school provided evidence of ‘other’ voices she chose to engage with. She listed two groups influencing her recent views on English. These were the Rudolf Steiner Teacher Training Centre through her completion of their literature course, and the other was a ‘Literature for Life’ group that she attended. Steiner philosophy focuses on non-denominational spirituality, developmental views on learning and reaching higher levels of consciousness (Gidley, 2007). The Steiner Education Australia website suggested Australian curriculum interpretations of his philosophy value the ‘classics’ of high aesthetic ‘quality’, have a strong focus on the creative and “connects the human being to him/herself, to others, to the natural world, to cultural heritage, to the past, the present and the future. The evolving human being stands at the centre of the curriculum in a Steiner school” (n.d.). In addition to identifying her association with this group, Fay expressed concern that the current generation of students “don’t have a great literary background like they used to” and that “that’s a challenge in itself with kids now who are coming in now without as much experience of literature as I found kids used to”. These utterances preceded a discussion on Romeo and Juliet, suggesting she placed importance on literature of high moral value and privileged Steiner (and cultural heritage) ideologies. The Steiner emphasis on spirituality and reflexivity was also reflected in the focus of ‘Literature for Life’ programs in Australia. These concentrated on the use of literature to teach students social and emotional skills to deal with difficult life situations12. Fay’s gravitation to these environments, and her rejection of certain critical literacy voices, suggested she viewed the development of certain aesthetic qualities as being in conflict with critical literacy approaches. This illustrates the kinds of conflicts and struggles Misson and Morgan (2005, 2006) and Morgan (1996) discussed in relation to disjunctures between an often ideological and resistant critical literacy approach and traditional approaches to literature that valued reading for pleasure and aesthetic appreciation of literature.

John and Lauren also identified ideological environments and voices surrounding English teaching and curriculum that conflicted with their already existing critical literacy ideologies. Both John and Lauren’s conflict with ‘other’ words contradicting their self professed embodiment of critical literacy illustrated Bakhtin’s view that the process of shaping discourse occurs in a “dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment” (1981, p. 276). As already discussed, Lauren’s contact with media criticisms of critical literacy approaches in NSW and QLD was met with feelings of bewilderment. In addition, she further expressed tension with voices devaluing critical literacy approaches during her involvement in the initial development of the *Australian Curriculum English*. Lauren’s utterances demonstrated her agitation regarding some dismissive views on the initial discussion paper framed by Freebody arguing “critical literacy was somehow some point of contention and dissension around the room” and that she felt that she had to act as “a bit of a peacemaker and I was thinking goodness me aren’t we all on the same side here?” The following utterance reflected Lauren’s valuing of critical literacy for her own theorising:

> it was as if critical literacy was some kind of method of over theorising, that’s the pejorative kind of view of it, it’s over theorising, but I’m actually all in favour of theorising, I mean that’s how we analyse, I mean we’ve got to turn it into theory at some point to test it and then we turn it back into practice to use it and if we’re going to be active readers and listeners we need to know what those tools are you know.

The voices Lauren encountered in this ideological environment that clashed with her own pre-existing ideologies were dismissed. For Lauren, critical literacy discourses were accepted and embedded within her internally persuasive discourse. Her utterances suggested that any dismissive views surrounding the validity of the approach were rejected as they did not align with her constructions of critical literacy.

John also discussed media environments constructing views of critical literacy which were creating tension for him at the time of the interview. He argued that columnists in newspapers such as the *Herald Sun* and *The Australian* “play games” and “don’t know what they’re talking about”. He suggested these outlets reflected cultural heritage values when he argued “they
think the canon is what matters”. His utterances also demonstrated frustration in relation to negative media attention on the drafting of the *Australian Curriculum English*. He felt dominant voices in the media were constructing critical literacy negatively “it's like *The Australian* and the constant reference to the National Curriculum and critical literacy, they don’t want it”. The construction of critical literacy through public voices were in such conflict with John’s pre-existing ideologies that he rejected their views completely. John also viewed the overuse of particular terminology characteristic to ‘critical literacy’ approaches as detrimental to its cause and impacting on curriculum decisions. He argued “It’s like cliché, like me mentioning before about empowering kids, you mention it long enough”. He viewed the media’s ‘lack of knowledge’ and the use of labels to the point of becoming “cliché” as impediments to positive curriculum change in relation to critical literacy. John’s reaction was one of disappointment and frustration in relation to the possible consequences of constructions of critical literacy that did not align with his own views.

Looking Across The Victorian Teachers

Ideologically, John and Lauren shared the view that critical literacy embodied their approaches to and understanding of English education. They both identified key figures in the development of critical literacy approaches within their past ideological environments as having influenced their constructions of critical literacy. For John critical pedagogy voices dominated, for Lauren the voices of poststructuralists and deconstructionists were valued. Fay, however, represented tensions with critical literacy as a result of her association of voices from colleague discussions and professional development experiences. Her representations of English suggested she had a strong sense of English as meaning the study of literature. This ideological position, and the belief that critical literacy did not adequately promote appreciation of important cultural texts, contributed to her construction of critical literacy as a theoretical discourse not relevant to her practice.
The three teachers interviewed and observed in Queensland were Helen, Cassie and Lucy. As with the Victorian teachers, each had extensive teaching experience in the area of English with Helen having taught for thirty years, Cassie for fifteen and Lucy for ten. The ideological environments surrounding the teachers in Queensland and that are apparent in the teachers’ utterances incorporated more focused attention on various critical literacy ideologies than those identified by the Victorian teachers.

Helen

Helen was the Head of English at an all girls’ catholic college. She had been teaching English for over thirty years and was active on state level marking and moderation committees. One of the most important ideological environments Helen identified as contributing to her construction of critical literacy was her hometown of Townsville. She stated “I was probably one of the very lucky ones because I was in Townsville”. She listed several academic voices she associated with critical literacy existing within this environment, being Pam Gilbert, Allan Luke, Bronwyn Davies, Bill Corcoran, Nola Alloway, Anita Jetnikoff, Dave King and Leanne Daly. This reflects Misson’s (2009) description of Townsville as the birth place of critical literacy in Australia. Her collegial association with these academics was such that throughout the interview she would often refer to them by first name. Her utterances suggested that she felt the educational environment in Townsville encouraged a symbiotic relationship between academics and teachers stating “Townsville’s small enough that you don’t get any credibility with schools unless you actually, if you’re an academic, unless you actually operate in collaboration with a school” and that Townsville was “the sort of place where if you’re not reading and up with it I’d say it’s frowned upon”. She suggested both academics and teachers had responsibilities to maintain links between theory and practice. Helen identified her ideological environment as one that afforded a large choice of critical literacy ‘other’ voices to assimilate, and hence increased the opportunity to learn (Freedman & Ball, 2004). In addition, her suggestion that academics needed to work in collaboration with teachers illustrated a possibility of renegotiation (Lemke, 1995) of critical literacy discourses. Helen valued dialogic relationships between theory and practice, to the extent that she contributed to publications with some of these academics. Specifically she discussed her work with
Gilbert on a text focusing on the enactment of critical literacy approaches called *Challenging the Text* (1994). In addition she had written papers focusing on critical literacy in the classroom, run professional development at state conferences and convened the 2009 ETAQ State Conference which was held in Townsville, and for which Misson was the keynote. Her continual reference in the interview to critical literacy academics working within her hometown environment suggested their voices were persuasive in the development of her ideological becoming as an English teacher.

Within this environment Helen suggested Gilbert’s voice was particularly influential on her ideological becoming through Gilbert’s supervision of her Master of Education and mentorship during this time. She completed her Masters in the early 1990s while working full time as the English Head of Department, being a panel chair and having young children. Her Masters focused specifically on critical literacy and her thesis “won an ACEL (Australian Council for Educational Leaders)” award confirming her belief in the value of critical literacy approaches. Gilbert’s ideologies were a powerful influence on the creation of Helen’s own persuasive discourses, as evident in her utterances “I’d always done a lot of work with Pam Gilbert” and that she felt “Pam was always extremely passionate”. Her utterances illustrated her own passion towards critical literacy especially through her argument that “the next century will be too frightening if kids aren’t critically literate”. She represented this time in her life as providing pivotal moments for her positive ideological position towards critical literacy theory and its importance in her life and teaching, “I always enjoyed academia, I enjoyed the whole idea but I really enjoyed teaching too that’s why I always stayed in the classroom”. Engaging with critical literacy discourses provided an avenue for Helen to remain connected to the academic environment that she held in high regard.

Her utterances further illustrated the importance she placed on critical literacy theoretical voices for practice by listing texts such as *Only Connect* (Doecke, Howie and Sawyer, 2006), *Reconstructing Literature Teaching* (Thomson, 1998), *Studying Poetry* (Moon, 1998), *The Literacy Wars* (Snyder, 2008) as well as Beavis’ work, the Chalkface series of texts, *English in Australia*, Fairclough’s work on critical discourse analysis, Martino’s work on gender, Misson’s work (and her relationship with him on a personal level) and *Wordsworth* (the Queensland
state journal). All of these texts and voices have links to influential critical literacy discourses for theory and practice, representing varieties influenced by postmodernism, poststructuralist feminism/postcolonialism, critical discourse analysis and critical language awareness. Her affinity with these texts and authors also reflected Luke’s comment that “the accelerated attempts by teachers to transform contemporary academic theory (e.g., poststructuralist feminism, systemic functional linguistics, critical multiculturalism) into classroom practice were and remain quite remarkable among Australian teachers” (2000, p. 452). This view, however, was not applicable to all teachers in this study, especially Fay. Helen's identification of these texts illustrated the importance of critical literacy discourses in the process of constructing her English teaching identity and represented the possible voices that may be reflected in the enactment of her ‘hybridized’ versions of critical literacy. While this was the case, she also argued that administrative forces were powerful influences on teachers' engagement with theory and enactments of critical literacy:

   It’s never going to work unless it actually works in the classroom. A lot of my work, I was an English HOD in probably 1984, so I've had a lot of years as HOD and I was always interested in how it translates into the actual classroom and you can have all the money in the world, but if you don’t have a supportive Principal and a supportive administration, nothing’s going to happen...I actually did some of my thesis on work showing that it was the HOD that just is the centripetal force in this you know and that the change factor. It has to happen at that level.

Helen identifies the importance, using Bakhtin's concept “centripetal”, on teachers attempts to construct a unified meaning for critical literacy. It also suggests, as an experienced Head of Department, she viewed herself as being an influential role model for teachers as they tried to make sense of critical literacy discourses “by reducing the number of its meanings” (Hoquist, 1990, p. 47). This comment also reflects Eisner’s (1990) findings that a lack of resources and support can be detrimental to a teachers’ higher engagement with their profession and creative and effective curriculum development.

In addition to her experiences in her hometown of Townsville, Helen suggested the voices she had come into contact with in the larger context of the state of Queensland had also
contributed to her construction and valuing of critical literacy. Since critical literacy was a core concern in Queensland at the time of this research, publications, professional development and colleague discussion, critical literacy discourses often dominated these texts. Her utterances reflected pride in what she believed was a strong bond between English teachers in Queensland saying the “camaraderie is just extraordinary between English teachers”. She expressed the view that in Queensland English teachers had a unified voice and resisted what she called an “avalanche of the move to the right in Queensland” and that “nobody knows where that’s coming from”. This resistant “camaraderie”, aligning with her beliefs and encouraged in critical pedagogy variants (Apple, 1995, 2000, 2004; Giroux, 1983, 1992; Lankshear, 1991; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993), helped validate her involvement in an English teaching community that valued the enactment of critical literacy discourses. She represented her voice in this community through running professional development and as a state panel chair for Senior English.

Her resistance to political and bureaucratic voices reflecting critical pedagogy influences was further evidenced in an utterance on a professional development event that she attended in Queensland relating to critical literacy, and specifically Freebody and Luke’s four resources model. Considering her own involvement in presenting professional development, she expressed concern about the ‘bureaucrat’ presenter who “hadn’t understood the first bit about it”. She placed teachers above “bureaucrats” arguing “the bureaucrats haven’t got a clue about what they’re talking about some of the time and that’s the sad bit. The people in schools know because they’ve done their own homework... teachers do that in their own time, they read the stuff”. Helen’s relationship with “bureaucratic” voices was one of distrust. She suggested they were dislocated from the schooling environment, and did not ‘read’ like teachers did, hence their understanding of important models such as the four resources model would be limited. Helen’s perception of the unified voice of the teachers was again evident when she stated the reaction of the high school teachers during the professional development, “all the secondary’s had to go outside. I looked at one of them and their face was white and I just had to stand in the car park you know, and I said to my deputy if you send me back to one of those I’ll have to wag it”. Helen’s utterances suggested she believed English teachers in Queensland “read in their own time”, understood educational theories and resisted
professional development on curriculum issues that they perceived as being ‘for’ them rather than ‘by’ them (Doecke, Locke & Petrosky, 2004).

Cassie

At the time of data collection Cassie was teaching in a co-educational public school and was into her fifteenth year of teaching English. Like John, she identified the ideological environments in her upbringing as developing principles underpinned by critical literacy ideologies. This was illustrated in her utterance “I grew up with it being modelled around me by teachers in my school at Woodend and by my parents” which meant by the time she heard the term it “was not at all revelatory”. This illustrated an early impact of influencing forces relating to critical literacy on her ideological becoming as a person and later as an English teacher. She also described the influence of voices in her school work environments as contributing to her views on critical literacy. Cassie first started teaching in the early 1990’s and stated this was the first time she heard the term ‘critical literacy’. This coincided with the early momentum in academia and practice towards theorising and enacting critical literacy in Australia. She recalled that her introduction to the label ‘critical literacy’ was “in work in the English faculty at this school” through the then Head of Department. This curriculum leader was “very influential” on her understanding of critical literacy and her development as an English teacher as was the Head of Department (Melinda) at the time of the interview. This was evident in her comment that rather than use the mandated English curriculum documents she relied “more on documents that are recommended to us, there might be a few photocopied pages or websites or something that our head of department would say these are good”. Her privileging her curriculum leaders’ voices suggested they were more persuasive in the shaping of her ideological becoming than the official curriculum and confirmed her pre-existing value of critical literacy ideologies.

In the interview Cassie also identified other influential voices on her thoughts about critical literacy. She mentioned a colleague in the education field who had been “hugely influential” which she described as “very scholarly and academic”, and a “big figure in Queensland in English curriculum”. Her valuing of opportunities to dialogically engage in “scholarly and academic” discussions around critical literacy was similar to Helen’s observations. When
Cassie was asked about the overall impact of colleagues voices on her construction of critical literacy she responded that critical literacy “became more and more current in discussion and I was given more ways to think about critical literacy, more ways to think about texts I certainly opened up my choices. So I think it [definitions of critical literacy] has definitely strengthened and broadened”. Within this schooling environment Cassie also identified the influence of Mellor’s work and booklets from Chalkface press. The Chalkface publications from the 1990s appeared to be seminal teacher resource texts in this area as they were also included in curriculum ‘suggested resources’ lists. These publications often reflected poststructuralist feminist variants of critical literacy with gaps and silences, readings and representations of gender, race and class often making up the central focus of text analysis (for example Mellor, O’Neill & Patterson, 1991; Mellor, 1989; Moon, 1990; Mellor, Patterson & O’Neill, 1991). Cassie’s utterances indicated that as critical literacy discourses developed currency she had more “choices” of words to engage with dialogically, thus strengthening and developing her knowledge/views around these areas. It allowed her to assimilate a variety of voices into her developing construction of critical literacy which contributed to the process of her ideological becoming as an English teacher.

When Cassie spoke of her own ideologies relating to critical literacy she stated, aligning with John and Lauren’s views, that it was more than just an approach to teaching for her. She argued it “permeates everything, it’s what we’re doing with the language”. She believed that “language is a tool for freeing, liberation and for oppression” and that critical literacy “is about giving people the intellectual tools to do something about that or to at least recognise and not be puppetted”. This utterance tied to what she identified as her reasons for teaching, to be able to teach students to “step back and critique it politically, socially culturally, not just in terms of the effects... And I want that to be an empowering thing for them”. Her emphasis on “empowerment” and language as being tied to “freeing, liberation” and “oppression” link to the kind of critical pedagogy framework underpinning certain variations of critical literacy (Lankshear, 1989, 1993; Lankshear & Knobel, 1998; Luke & Woods, 2009). She argued that while various forces impact on our lives, people were not simply inactive puppets, “because we can look up and we can see the strings that are moving it”. Her utterances also reflected CLA/CDA’s emphasis on closer analysis of discourse and power (Carrington & Luke, 1997;
Lankshear, 1994; Luke, 1992; Morgan, 1997) through her view that critical literacy showed “how language functions to achieve political ends whether they're conscious or unconscious”. Luke & Woods (2009) identified a weakness of critical pedagogy approaches as having a limited focus on textual close analysis, which was reflected in Cassie’s hybridized version of critical literacy (see next analysis section).

Lucy was an experienced teacher who was teaching in an independent girls’ college and identified similar ideological environments as Cassie influencing her constructions of critical literacy. She completed her Master of Education in 2004 externally through Deakin University in Victoria under the supervision of Beavis and Kamler, both critical literacy advocates. Her thesis focus was on the inconsistencies between the exit criteria and rationale of Senior English, in particular relating to the unassessed affective objectives and critical literacy. Lucy recollected reading many texts during this time by Misson, Green and discourse analysts in preparing to identify gaps between the two sections of the Senior English document. She had also come into contact with Green’s 3D model of literacy when studying the years 7-10 curriculum document for teaching. Lucy suggested Misson’s voice, however, was the most persuasive voice, in that she had read “a lot of Ray’s [Misson] work” and felt there was a definite link between critical literacy and the aesthetic, arguing that it was the aesthetic that “really positions you”. She chose to dialogically engage with an area of tension in critical literacy - the ways critical literacy approaches have been criticised for divorcing imagination, pleasure and aesthetic appreciation of texts from critical work (Misson & Morgan, 2005, 2006; Misson, 2009, Morgan, 1996). Her struggle with various voices relating to this concern contributed to her construction of critical literacy for practice and the development of her ideological becoming as an English teacher, and is discussed further in the hybridization section.

Lucy also discussed the influence of one of her curriculum leaders on her construction of critical literacy. She stated her first Head of English “gave me what I needed to read and told me where to look and what to learn”. She held this person in high esteem saying that he was “very well read theoretically. I think that’s had a huge impact on where I come from”. This
curriculum leader’s voice acted as persuasive force on her developing ideological self, and influenced the selection of theoretical voices that she interacted with. The voices he valued in critical literacy discourses became voices of influence for Lucy. She also expressed the belief that the process of being “mentored by other teachers” was “the most powerful thing for teaching” and felt that over her career she had effective mentoring in the sense that her colleagues had directed her to seminal texts on critical literacy. This collegial interaction reflects the positive views of Queensland teachers that Helen identified earlier as well as Helen’s comments regarding the influence of English Heads of Departments. In addition Lucy identified being in continual discussion with English colleagues beyond her school on critical literacy through her role as a district chair for the English Extension (Literature) course. Her utterances in relation to this engagement indicate her commitment to exploring the kinds of theoretical paradigms evident in the course “we usually start the day with a discussion of theoretical understandings”. These theoretical underpinnings, and the privileging of poststructuralist feminist variants of critical literacy illustrated through the earlier analysis of this document, suggested her involvement with the course at this level allowed her to engage with critical literacy conversations. Also contributing to Lucy's construction of critical literacy was her new role as one of the co-editors of the state ETAQ journal Wordsworth. Within this environment she stated she talked “quite a lot about these kind of things” (referring to critical literacy) with her co-editor. Lucy suggested within these various ideological environments she was afforded opportunities to interact dialogically with multiple voices that focused on critical literacy which helped her theorise her own constructions.

In addition, Lucy’s utterances reflected most of the other teachers’ analysed views that critical literacy ‘embeds’ English. She argued it was “something that infuses everything, I mean, I don’t think you can set it as something separate, but that doesn’t mean that it’s the only, the word complete is what I would argue against. It’s always there but it’s underpinning rather than the only thing”. This description was similar to the Victorian teacher Lauren’s description of it being an “umbrella”. Various critical literacy discourses had come into contact with Lucy’s pre-existing ideologies and acted as powerful voices on her developing views about English teaching. The assimilation of critical literacy voices was evident in her argument that critical literacy was a “fairly natural” thing for her, and that it “seemed like a
logical part of any good textual engagement or reading practice”. She didn’t feel that it was something that would disappear simply because it was removed from curriculum or the metalanguage changed. The positive representation of the critical literacy voices in Lucy’s ideological environments contributed to her belief that critical literacy was a “natural” and “logical” way to teach English.

Lucy And Helen’s Tension With ‘Other’ Voices

Both Lucy and Helen suggested they struggled with political ideological environments at the time of the interviews. They both described modifications to the existing English curriculum documents as creating “watered down” versions of what were theoretically sound courses. Helen argued that the “marvellous syllabus” that incorporated “critical literacy work” existing prior to the Queensland Essential Learnings English, had become “very, very watered down with the essentials”. She compared it to the Victorian documents, where she had worked briefly, saying “you know, in Victoria it’s there vaguely, they’re [QELS] not well written documents”. By comparing QELS to Victorian curriculum documents, which later in the interview she argued did “not even [have] a glimpse of critical literacy”, she was demonstrating a dismissal of curriculum that did not align with her ideological privileging of critical literacy discourses. She felt the result of the Victorian curriculum was that the “11’s aren’t writing as good as our year 8’s in a state high school”. Her experiences in the Queensland and Victorian ideological environments, which she viewed as considerably different in their inclusions of critical literacy and hence student outcomes, increased her resistance to forces working to remove critical literacy ideologies from curriculum. She stated that she believed the QELS were not valued highly in Queensland, again illustrating the perception of a ‘unified’ teacher voice, and that teachers were “all waiting for this National Curriculum”. By listing voices such as Freebody and Deriiewianka, which she labelled as “good people”, her inner conflict and struggle with QELS was partly resolved by the fact that theorists who had played a role in her ideological becoming were in positions of power and could influence the document that would replace QELS.
Lucy felt QSA's modification to embed Green's 3D model rather than include it overtly in QELS resulted in this model being "quite watered down". She also argued that she saw an uneven focus on the operational in the curriculum which

disenfranchises our top level kids... and I think even the lower level kids, they want to be extended you know that, everyone wants their intellect to be challenged in some way... you can't just do operational on its own... And to use it in real world contexts you've got to have some understanding of the cultural at least, you know the purpose for your writing.

This emphasis was raised as a concern by critical literacy academics in relation to Freebody and Luke’s four resources model (Durrant & Green, 2000; Freebody, 2007; Luke, 2000; Luke & Freebody, 1999a, 1999b), however the 3D model did not feature in these discussions. Lucy’s utterances suggested these concerns could also relate to Green’s literacy model. Her discussions in this area illustrated that, like Helen, she felt theory and curriculum were integrally linked and that curriculum “need[s] a theoretical underpinning... I think it needs to be explicit”. She argued that the removal of the theoretical rationale from the QELS decontextualised the use of some theoretical concepts which resulted in “the use of jargon for the sake of jargon” and “people don’t have that deep embedded understanding”. She reiterated that she would prefer “more explicit theorising not less” arguing that by removing “language frameworks” the documents became “implicit” and “they're hiding their own ideology and I think that's what leads to dodgy teaching basically, a lack of understanding of where this is coming from”. Lucy’s comments implied the changes to the curriculum documents had a hidden agenda, and limited the voices English teachers in the state could come into contact with. This reflects Freedman and Ball’s comment that “the more choice of words we have to assimilate, the more opportunity we have to learn” (2004, p. 6).

Both Helen and Lucy also demonstrated conflict with proposed changes to the Queensland English Senior document. As was discussed in the curriculum analysis chapter, these changes mostly involved removing explicit links to critical literacy, in particular the proposed removal of ‘criteria three’. She described the changes as “pretty frightening stuff” indicating the persuasive impact of critical literacy discourses on her views of English and leading her to
completely dismiss the discourses surrounding the changes. As the panel chair for *Senior English* in North Queensland and organiser of the 2009 State English teaching conference Helen argued that she had contact with numerous English teacher voices. She stated this experience led her to believe that “even though politicians would love it [critical literacy] to be more watered down” teachers were “doing more critical literacy than they ever have”. Helen clashed with these political voices (as reflected earlier in her comments about bureaucrats) as they represented powerful threats to her critical literacy ideologies. Her utterances here and in the previous discussion, however, represented teachers in Queensland as being a part of a critical literacy community who collectively resisted political calls for change in relation to critical literacy:

if any politician wants to take away critical literacy, teachers aren’t going to stop using it, we’ve been using it here in North Queensland for twenty years. This isn’t new curriculum you know, I mean we’ve been doing this stuff with Bjelke Peterson [former Queensland extreme right Premier] in the early eighties...when the documents come back as you know these transparent bureaucrats have had a slash at them, it won’t stop teachers from using what works.

While Helen’s recollection places critical literacy practices in Australia in the early 1980s, contradicting the extensive review of literature in this thesis, the important point from this comment is that she viewed critical literacy as having had considerable significance for her ideological development for decades. In addition she emphasised that Queensland teachers “do what works, you can take the tools away from the mechanic but he’ll still fix the car the best way he knows... critical literacy does make students think and it does make them become more informed human beings”. For Helen, voices from critical literacy discourses were such a persuasive force on her own internal discourse about what “works” for English teaching that she believed the Queensland English teaching community would actively resist change. When cross checking Helen’s interview data with her it appeared her perceptions about Queensland English teachers’ collective dedication to the enactment and assessment of critical literacy skills were founded, as they managed to ‘overthrow’ authoritative discourses that were initially providing little dialogic possibilities. She stated pilot schools trying to work with the revised *Senior English* document “found them unworkable” and hence “it has just been rewritten by English people and sense has been restored. Criterion 3 is back in there and the
criteria have become workable”. In light of Helen’s utterances and the historical emphasis on critical literacy, it appeared the critical literacy community in Queensland included powerful persuasive and collective voices that could influence curriculum choices at a state level.

Lucy’s discussion about the political ideological environment surrounding the proposed changes to the Senior English course aligned with Helen’s views in many ways. She too felt curriculum writers were trying to remove the critical literacy theoretical discourses underpinning the 2002 Senior English course which resulted in a “watering down” of the critical literacy elements. Unlike Helen though, she identified the cause of the changes as relating to critical literacy terminology in the 2002 Senior English document “frightening people”. She also commented on the ways criterion three (with the most focus on critical literacy) “created controversy” when the syllabus was first released. She felt teachers had a lack of understanding of how to implement the course and many, including her initially, tried to apply “checklist” teaching approaches as reflected in her utterance “it gives a formula for people to look at, you know people feel really comfortable when they've got a formula, ok here's the text, whose privileged, whose marginalized, what's foregrounded, where are the gaps, where are the silences, down the boxes”. This led to an emphasis on ensuring students were using certain terms, without necessarily understanding them, as was illustrated in one of Lucy’s previous utterances on “jargon”. She believed this led to “a trend a few years ago for everyone to throw discourse into every sentence” and that the course had been “badly taught in a lot of places”. This ideological environment created tension for Lucy as an advocate of critical literacy approaches. While she valued the inclusion of critical literacy social goods, she was concerned “checklist” approaches were being used rather than teachers drawing on theoretical understandings.

These comments by Lucy did not reflect a collective teacher critical literacy voice in the same way as Helen’s utterances, however Lucy’s sentiments about the removal of critical literacy skills she valued were similar to Helen’s. She expressed disappointment and argued that teachers using the new document “can in fact write a program with hardly any critical understandings and I think that’s a great loss, I think it’s throwing the baby out with the bathwater basically”. This idea was reflected in all of the sampled Queensland teachers’
discourses. Their comments suggested they were worried about the possible loss of these skills which were such an important part of their professional identity as English teachers. Lucy viewed the removal of links to critical literacy in the document as “a mistake” since “that’s the understanding that will empower us” in relation to both teachers and students. It was a part of the course that she felt was needed throughout all elements, and saw the changes due to ‘fear’ of language as a backwards step. However, at the same time, she believed the past syllabus was “deeply embedded now in people’s work programs” and teachers would resist making major changes to their tasks. Both Helen and Lucy’s tensions with the changing political ideological environment impacting Queensland English curriculum represented the kinds of struggles Morgan (1999) identified as existing between policy directives and the agendas of teachers who advocated and enacted critical literacy practices.

Looking Across The Queensland Teachers

When comparing the three Queensland teacher’s ideological environments and the impacts these have had on their views towards critical literacy, there were a number of similarities. All teachers identified their constructions of critical literacy as being influenced by critical literacy theoretical and textbook representations as well as local and state colleagues, which for Cassie and Lucy included mentorship from curriculum leaders. These created internally persuasive discourses for these teachers which reflected a firm belief in the advantages of critical literacy skills for students. Also, as features heavily in Helen’s discourse, there was a representation of a community of teachers in Queensland dedicated to promoting critical literacy ideologies and resisting political attempts to devalue them, more so than was evident in the Victorian teachers’ discussions. The next analysis section considers the impact of the voices within the identified ideological environments contributing to the six teacher’s ideological becoming on their espoused and enacted hybridizations of critical literacy.
5.3 CRITICAL LITERACY HYBRIDIZATIONS

Bakhtin argued that contact with others’ ideological voices influences a speaker’s utterances and leaves “a trace in all its semantic layers, complicate[s] its expression and influence[s] its entire stylistic profile” (1981, p. 276). Critical literacy discourses exist in social systems in which the various voices teachers come into contact with are renegotiated (Lemke, 1995) to “unite and centralize verbal-ideological thought” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 271) for their own contexts. Bakhtin argued:

The word, breaking through to its own meaning and its own expression across an environment full of alien words and variously evaluating accents, harmonizing with some of the elements in this environment and striking dissonance with others, is able, in this dialogized process, to shape its own stylistic profile and tone. (1981, p. 277)

In the case of this research context, the voices identified in the previous analysis section by the teachers, and curriculum voices contributed to their construction of critical literacy in their espoused (Argyris & Schon, 1974) and enacted (Barnes, 1975) curriculums. The relationships the teachers had with these voices in the process of their ideological becoming developed hybridized (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986) discourses on critical literacy approaches. This analysis section examines the Victorian and Queensland teachers’ utterances to develop a picture of their hybridized constructions of critical literacy. As a part of this it also analyses the relationship teachers have with mandated curriculum documents which Luke (2010, 2012b) suggested were dependent on teacher's pre-existing ideologies and contexts. He argued:

Specific knowledges and skills can only be ‘named’ in official curriculum documents at a level of technical abstraction. They are remade through the lenses and practices of teachers’ substantive world, field and disciplinary knowledge, then brought to life in classrooms in relation to teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge and students’ cultural scripts and background schemata...there is no direct ‘hypodermic’ effect between the official curriculum and the enacted curriculum. (2010, p. 1-2)

The hybridizations of critical literacy in the following teacher contexts provide snapshots of what critical literacy looks like for English teachers in Australia.
John

As identified in the previous analysis section, the ideological environments John identified in relation to his espoused theory of critical literacy were dominated by voices from postmodern and critical pedagogy discourses. Critical pedagogy views on critical literacy, as identified in the literature review chapter, linked critical literacy approaches to the ethical responsibility of teachers to address issues of social justice and to promote active citizenship (Freire, 1999; Freire & Macedo, 1987; Lankshear, 1989; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Luke, 1991b, 1992). Lankshear (1989) argued for the need to develop a ‘critical literacy’ as opposed to a ‘naïve’ literacy. This ideological position on literacy is reflected in John’s utterances. He argued, in relation to encouraging critical literacy in his students, “it’s my job as a teacher to make it explicit and to stretch them that little bit” and that his aim was that once students moved into their profession they would at least occasionally think “I should really look at a paper or I should know more about my local member”. He felt “even if it is only for 10 seconds and then they forget it” his teachings were “still changing a little bit of their life in some way”. These utterances reflected his espoused curriculum and construction of critical literacy aligning with the social justice and active citizenship emphasis in critical pedagogy hybridizations. Jim’s hope to create students who could demonstrate ‘critical consciousness’ (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Shor, 1987) even if it would be fleeting for his students, suggested these voices had persuasively influenced his own espoused hybridization of critical literacy.

John’s views on mandated curriculum reflected Luke’s (2010) comment in the introduction to this chapter and Freedman and Ball’s discussion in relation to the “hardening of ideas” (2004, p. 19). He identified himself as an experienced state exam marker for both the VCE English/ESL and the General Aptitude Test (GAT), positioning himself as an authority on assessment of English and general aptitude skills. He argued, in relation to responding to mandated curriculum requirements, “I know what the curriculum is anyway, and I think I know after the length of time I’ve been teaching I know how to do it pretty effectively” suggesting he viewed his own critical judgements on English curriculum more highly than the ‘official’ curriculum. John’s utterances in relation to his school’s implementation of the VELS
English documents and his views on the VCE English/ESL document further suggested he had little regard for mandated curriculum unless it reflected his ideological stance on English. He expressed the belief that for VELS “different schools do it differently. I don’t think we do it properly at all” and that in his school “year 9 and 10 is almost a preparation for critical literacy”. His interpretation of the VELS English documents was that there was no scope to ‘prepare’ students for critical literacy, and so his school inserted these skills into their curriculum. This perceived absence was an area of conflict John had with these curriculum documents which impacted on his relationship with them. The analysis of the VELS English document in this thesis suggested critical literacy approaches were evident, however there were very few utterances that reflected the kind of critical pedagogy influences that were ideologically espoused by John.

In relation to VCE English/ESL, he identified the issues analysis section (Area of Study 3) as being “all about critical literacy, yeah, undoubtedly”. This section of the course, as identified in the curriculum analysis chapter, had some links to critical literacy discourse, but the utterances did not suggest that it was “undoubtedly” focused on critical literacy skills, particularly of the kind that appeared to be most valued by John. This reflects the multiple voices possible when interpreting the ambiguities in VCE English/ESL, and John’s valuing of his own internally persuasive discourses over the state’s curriculum documents. His ideologies created a ‘lens’ with which he interpreted these documents to meet his own priorities. When considering his discussions reflecting his views on the ideological environment in relation to media representation of critical literacy and curriculum change, his ambivalence to the mandated curriculum documents represented a hardening of ideas (Freedman & Ball, 2004). Even if he did not believe his or his school’s curriculum met mandated curriculum requirements “properly at all” he would continue to teach skills he valued rather than allow them to be compromised by centrally controlled views of English.

John’s enactment of critical literacy in English also reflected the influencing figures and theories that had become a part of his ideological being and contributed to his hybridized construction. The observed class was a VCE English/ESL class which focused on brand awareness and advertising. To briefly contextualise the class, John asked his students to bring
in caps with logos and talk about the brand and what they knew about it. He then discussed several brands including people as brands (for example President Barack Obama and a local teenage celebrity Corey Worthington), and spent some time politicising the links between the recycling brand Visy, its ‘powerful’ owner Richard Pratt, advertising at the Australian Football League (AFL) games, Chris Judd (a prominent AFL player held in high esteem by his students) and why there were connections between these texts.

His introduction to the class stated that they would be examining “branding, how it works, why it works, for example, even in school... I’m showing you that language is everywhere and it’s there for a purpose, so what’s the purpose and who is the audience?” His enactment reflected his espoused curriculum in that he argued “I think you’re saying critically to kids, don’t just accept everything you see, dig deeper and find out what’s going on, because there’s bound to be a bloody reason”. Critical pedagogy influences on critical literacy were evident in this view in that he reflected Lankshear’s comment that “reading texts critically, including our own texts, is about bringing their theories about distributions (ideology) into the open, addressing our participation in or complicity with them, and working to ‘remove our moral complicity’ with them” (1998, p. 9). His overall focus on ideology, power and hidden agendas reflected the kind of critical literacy discourse particularly evident in not only critical pedagogy variants (Lankshear 1994; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993; Luke, 2000), but also in those influenced by poststructuralism, critical discourse analysis and postmodernism/cultural studies (Green, 1995; Lankshear, 1994, 1997; Luke & Walton, 1994; Misson, 1998b). His enactment and stated goal of “making it real for students” by connecting analysis to the world of students by using cultural texts of relevance to them was, however, more reflective of the voices dominant in his ideological environments. For example, in his class John linked Judd’s decision to sign with the ‘Carlton’ AFL team, then appearing in a four page spread of The Record (a publication available at football games) in which Judd discussed his recycling habits, to the then President of Carlton, Richard Pratt, also owning a prominent recycling company called Visy. John then asked the students “are you starting to see the connections guys?” with the aim of exposing hidden agendas and connecting the reading of texts to a reading of the world underpinning critical pedagogy approaches (Freire & Macedo, 1987; Luke, 2000). Critical pedagogy influences from authors such as Giroux (2010) and
Apple (2004), voices identified in his ideological environments, were also evident when he told students “there is big money in it” illustrating the ways power operates to manipulate and persuade characters, such as Judd, into having to endorse products. John’s series of utterances in this section of the class also reflected other critical literacy underpinnings through illustrating the intertextual and social nature of texts (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Gilbert, 1993) and encouraging an awareness of the ways ‘branding’ and advertising saturate and impact on people’s lives (Misson, 1998a, 1998b).

Lauren stated that for her version of critical literacy she “just intuited a meaning” and that “I don’t know if that’s the right meaning or not, but that’s how I interpret it”. These statements suggest that she was satisfied with her “intuited” hybridized version of critical literacy, rather than feeling the need to consult critical literacy communities which may promote a “right meaning”. While Lauren viewed her construction of critical literacy in this way, her interview illustrated an influence from voices in her past ideological environments which developed a hybridized approach mainly demonstrating CDA/CLA critical literacy style ideologies.

Lauren’s views on her role in the classroom reflected a Freirean critical pedagogy emphasis in that she argued “I see myself sort of as a role of consciousness raising”. Critical pedagogy variants of critical literacy emphasise the important role of the teacher as ‘apprenticing’ students into an ideological world (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991; Freire, 1999; Misson, 1998b). When translating this broad philosophical view into teaching practice she argued an important tool for a teacher to provide to students across all year levels in a critical literacy classroom was a “language toolbox”, which for her was “a work in progress”. She believed that this toolbox would help students “deconstruct” texts in that students would develop an understanding of the function of language and its relationship to meaning making. Focusing on the kind of deconstructive close analysis of language evident in critical literacy approaches influenced by CDA/CLA (Carrington & Luke, 1997; Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Luke, 1992; Luke, Comber & Grant, 2003; Morgan, 1997) appeared to be an important component of Lauren’s hybridizations of critical literacy. This was further evident in her interview discussions on developing students’ understandings of the role of the reader and the writer, ‘be aware, aware of the tools we use to construct meaning as speakers as writers and tools we
use to deconstruct meaning as listeners and readers”. She believed it was important to teach students that “people have different styles for different purposes and writers and speakers have different tricks of the trade for different effects, and for me that’s what critical literacy is”. These utterances reflected Luke’s (2000) observation that some critical literacy practices influenced by CDA/CLA incorporated aspects of Hallidayan work on textual genres and that they “analyse how these same texts construct potentially ideological versions of the world” (2000, p. 454). Her ideological focus was illustrated in her belief that “the best learning around critical literacy or learning to communicate is at the point of need and turning it on, that word critical, it means that suddenly instead of being a victim of language I’m a user of the language and that’s what I see the critical being”. The combination of these utterances suggested Lauren’s construction of critical literacy revolved around developing her students’ critical language awareness through linking close language analysis to the question raised by Freebody and Luke’s text analyst role “what does all this do to me?” (1990, p. 7).

The influence of voices Lauren identified in past ideological environments, such as Eagleton, were also evident in her espoused hybridization of critical literacy. Her assimilation of these voices was illustrated in her utterances on the concept ‘readings’. She argued that she favoured using multiple readings in her classes as this allowed one to “see different things with each reading”. The notion of ‘readings’ was a key concept in critical literacy academic texts (for example see Lankshear, 1994; Luke, 2000; Misson & Morgan, 2005, 2006, Morgan, 1997). She listed approaches to reading texts used in her classes such as “Feminism and Marxism, Psychoanalysis, Deconstruction” and that she “would actually teach them the fundamentals of Feminist criticism, of Marxist criticism”, reflecting the voices she discussed from her undergraduate education. Lauren’s use of the metaphor “you’re just turning a light on. Ok we’ll turn this light on what can we see, we’ll turn this light on what can we see?” to describe her view of readings was also similar to the metaphor of ‘wearing different lenses’ used in some critical literacy discourses (for example Misson, 2009; Morgan, 1997). There have been several criticisms of critical literacy approaches based on this concept. For example approaching reading through postmodern theoretical frames was one of the criticisms of critical literacy in Australian media (Donnelly, 2006c; Ferrari, 2006; Slattery, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c; Topsfield, 2007). In addition, some critical literacy theorists also
expressed concern about this concept in relation to the possibility of it being used in a way that prescribed ideological ways to resist texts (Mellor & Patterson, 2004; Misson & Morgan, 2006). Lauren did not illustrate tensions with the notion of multiple readings, or applying theoretical lenses to texts. For her this aspect of critical literacy was a valued part of the discourse contributing to her multi-voiced hybridization of the approach.

When asked about her understandings of constructions of critical literacy in the Victorian state mandated curriculum documents, her school did not use the VELS meaning Lauren designed the 7-10 curriculum resulting in her construction being foregrounded in this document rather than the VELS. As all schools in Victoria, however, are required to offer the state mandated senior VCAA documents, Lauren's utterances illustrated her interpretation of the construction of critical literacy in the VCE English/ESL course. She believed that the absence of the term did not mean it was not present. Instead she argued the curriculum writers had simply devised a new term to describe critical literacy skills, "I'd say metalanguage is the word they use instead of critical literacy". Lauren described metalanguage as being "language about language and that's how I see critical literacy" and felt whatever “we call it, in terms of critical literacy and metalanguage I don't really mind, again I'm a pragmatist...the next term will be brought in and that will be argued about as well". When asked if the VCE English/ESL course could produce critically literate students she replied "I think that's the intention". By interpreting the VCE English/ESL document as simply 're-labelling' concepts of importance to her she illustrated a dismissal of ideologies that may differ from her views on English teaching priorities. It meant she felt minimal tension between her already existing ideologies and the mandated curriculum aims. Her exploration of the link between 'metalanguage’ and critical literacy re-iterated her views on the importance of providing a "language toolbox" for students stating that critical literacy for her was about “tools, it's giving the names to the things that comprise speeches, articles, advertisements, it's all those components and parts and once you can name those component parts you have some ability and control to start discussing them and analysing them and talking about their effects”. Again, Lauren focuses here on the effects of word and text structure levels, pointing to the kinds of ideologies represented in CDA discourses.
Lauren also used the concept “principles” to describe what she viewed as important critical literacy skills. She saw the “principles” of “being aware that certain words put in certain orders will have certain effects” and that students are able to use this understanding “to manipulate for their own effect as well as notice when it is being used on them” as being evident in the senior English curriculum documents. These “tools” and “principles” reflect the “text analytic models” influenced by CDA/CLA discourses that Luke and Woods (2009) argued were evident in Australian contexts. As quoted in the literature review chapter, they described these models as focusing on “texts as mechanisms of power and knowledge, as semiotic technologies for constructing the world and for positioning readers in relationship to the world” (2009, p. 15) and “providing technical resources for analysing how texts work and how they might be otherwise represented by both authors and readers in a process of redesign” (ibid). These descriptions link to Lauren’s espoused hybridizations of critical literacy evident in her utterances.

Lauren’s enactment of critical literacy also aligned in some instances with Luke and Woods (2009) text analyst models. The observed class (Year Nine) focused on informative writing, and in particular newspaper writing. To briefly contextualise the focus of this class, it was one of the first in the sequence and was covering ‘hard’ news stories, in other words those stories that were considered ‘objective’. She identified her critical literacy aims for this and future classes in this unit as being to encourage her students to understand “the difference between informative and opinionative writing”, and that “it is not just about you as the writer it is about the reader receiving”. Lauren’s espoused curriculum reflected the “process of selectively assimilating the words of others” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 341) from her ideological environments that contributed to her ideological becoming. While this was the case, her enactment of her aims illustrated Argyris and Schon’s (1974) comparisons between enacted and espoused curriculum, in that the ideologies she believed were central to her practice did not dominate her actual practice. Her class focused on the technical aspects of ‘hard’ news stories such as headings, lexical and syntactic generic features with the aim of students deconstructing and ‘redesigning’ their own texts, however there were minimal discussions on ideology or power representations in media texts. In this particular enactment the utterances that had some connection to her espoused critical literacy approaches related to an
understanding that authors use tools to construct texts to appear neutral, when in fact they are ideological. This view linked to an idea underpinning critical literacy discourses that texts ‘position’ readers (Freebody, 1992; Green, 1997; Luke, 1991b, 2000; Misson, 1998b, 2003). When discussing the notion of ‘objectivity’ in news stories Lauren said to the students “that’s what it should be, now often hard news stories do sneak in quite a bit of subjectivity”, which she argued were illustrated through the “connotations of the words used”. She asked the students to “be careful, have your radar alert, what are the connotations and usually it will be in the adjectives describing the nouns”. Her description of the author’s ‘sneaky’ ways of inserting their ideologies into the text illustrated her belief that students needed to develop technical language skills that allowed them to identify gaps and silences (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Freebody & Freiberg, 2011).

Fay’s tensions with critical literacy discourses and her perception of mandated curriculum requirements resulted in a representation of ideologies that at times contradicted each other. Her utterances illustrated the dialogic nature of discourse and in particular Bakhtin’s view that “the word, directed at its object, enters a dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment of alien words, value judgements and accents, weaves in and out of complex interrelationships” (1981, p. 276). Her tension with the various “alien words” that she had come into contact during her teaching career became evident as she discussed various examples of her classroom enactments, her espoused curriculum and from an observed example of her enacted curriculum. While she argued on several occasions in her interview that critical literacy was not relevant in Victoria, she identified “informally” using some approaches that she stated may appear in classrooms in other states. This suggested her espoused curriculum was influenced by critical literacy voices of some kind, even though she identified conflict with the discourses. She further argued “there is not a specific focus on critical literacy with the kids” rather it “inform[s] teachers’ understanding and discussion” and that “I suppose I’ve chosen those things because I’ve got them in the back of my mind”. The combination of these views illustrated Bakhtin’s (1981) discussions on the nature of dialogism, in particular the way others’ voices become assimilated in one’s internally persuasive discourse as represented through one’s actions. These utterances reflected the tensions Fay identified in her various ideological environments between critical literacy
voices she had read, professional development she had attended and discussions with colleagues.

When discussing the VELS English curriculum requirements her utterances demonstrated some conflicts in ideology. She identified a lack of critical literacy discourse in the document, which correlated with John’s comments. Her views on this omission, however, contrasted with John’s in that she argued that her teaching reflected the requirements of the document which encouraged a focus on the “basics”, ‘genre’ study and that students “need to be literate before they can be critical”. Her utterances also reflected the belief that critical literacy was “not formally and explicitly discussed” and was only evident in the “advanced classes” where they might “discuss philosophical ideas at a much higher level”. This did to some extent reflect the analysis of the VELS English document in this thesis in that critical literacy skills appeared to be developmental, however there were representations of critical literacy skills which reflected CDA/CLA influenced critical literacy approaches. While she argued this was her focus, she also stated “our emphasis in Victorian schools is how language is used to persuade and influence people and how other people are using it to persuade and what effect that has on us” reflecting critical literacy discourses that argued “all users of language aim to persuade their hearers or readers, and all texts offer a particular angle on society and human interactions” (Morgan and Wyatt-Smith, 2000, p. 126). This suggests a conflict, which she does not appear to be consciously aware of, in her representation of what is required in Victorian schools. On the one hand she argued critical literacy discourses were not influential, however, her second statement aligns Victorian approaches with critical literacy ideologies. In addition she listed the informal approaches she included as being “different readings of texts depending on who’s reading it” such as “a feminist reading of something” and also a focus on “social context and why it’s written and what influences they’ve had and what effects that has”. These utterances by Fay suggested her approaches reflected critical literacy discourses such as: enabling the reader to understand that texts can be read differently, for example through a feminist lens (Luke & Woods, 2009; Mellor & Patterson, 1996; Morgan, 1997); and that considerations need to be made in relation to social contexts surrounding the reader and writer, writer’s purposes for constructing the text, and the impact of these factors on the reader (Freebody, 2008; Freebody & Baker, 2003; Gilbert, 1993; Green, 1998; Lankshear &
Mclaren, 1993; Luke, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c). Her espoused curriculum goals contrasted with her view that critical literacy discourses were only “informally” included and subconscious.

This contrast was further evident in her expanded discussion on specific examples of the “informal” inclusion of critical literacy approaches in her “advanced” classrooms. She used an example from a year 10 class and from her year 11 VCE English/ESL class. In her year 10 class she spoke of using perspectives represented in the song by Bob Dylan’s called ‘Hurricane’ and the ballad ‘The Highwayman’. She argued that she selected these texts because “they weren’t the official points of view at the time”. Her focus with the students in the class on Dylan’s ‘Hurricane’ was “who he was and a little bit of the historical context and social context and a little bit about the civil rights movement”. In addition she argued that she addressed how these texts were read by people differently depending on their own associations with the characters being represented which included “who’s got the voice, you know power and politics”. Again, her focus on context, the possibility of multiple interpretations, power and politics reflected influential voices from Australian critical literacy discourses such as Freebody (1992, 2003, 2007, 2010), Green (1993, 1995, 2002), Luke (1991a, 1991b, 2000, 2005a, 2005b, 2008) and Morgan (1994, 1997, 1999). She then, however, argued “but also my job is to get them reading and writing in relation to the expectations in the Victorian curriculum...so we can’t spend much time on anything else” and that this work “centered around the text”. It would be difficult, however, to discuss concepts evident in her utterances such as social context, voice, power, politics and culture without including some discussion of the world outside of the text. Her statements illustrated inner conflicts impacting on her ideological becoming. They suggested she struggled to represent her teaching in a way that did not carry the ‘label’ of critical literacy, and that she felt further work on critical literacy skills were restricted by curriculum requirements.

This tension was also evident in her utterances relating to her VCE English/ESL class, in which she identified an activity where the students rewrite versions of texts such as Romeo and Juliet as evident in the utterance “written Star Wars version of Romeo and Juliet and all sorts of versions”. She argued that this particular example was used as a way to discuss Romeo and understand:
what he’s like in relation to a 16 possibly 16 year old today, so we discuss it, but mainly from within the text and, and in comparison to their own world.... looking at characters from different points of view and different settings...how would we see Romeo today, how was he then, what sort of, what are the social constraints he’s living in.

She also identified this classroom enactment of English involved analysing "how texts are constructed" with her students, a fundamental aspect of critical literacy enactment (Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Green, 1991, 1997, 1998; Lankshear, 1998; Luke & Walton, 1994; Morgan, 1997). Once again, however, Fay felt the need to clarify the focus as being “from within the text” (even though students were comparing it to “their own world”) and stated that this activity was used as a means to producing a traditional “theme based style response to a text”, rather than a response demonstrating critical literacy skills. Even though the students were asked to analyse and reconstruct a canonical text, consider different points of view and settings and look at power relations (social constraints), all skills characteristic of critical literacy discourses relating to the previous notion of texts as constructions, Fay emphasised the end assessment task was “as its always been done in Victoria”, a theme based text response essay. While her discussions on her included activities reflected both critical literacy voices and the links in the curriculum document, her utterances continued to suggest a conflict within her inner persuasive discourse between what she perceived as dominant ‘traditional’ discourses represented in the curriculum and the label ‘critical literacy’.

When Fay discussed the construction of critical literacy in the mandated VCE English/ESL curriculum document the heteroglossic nature of discourse (Bakhtin, 1981) was demonstrated. She argued some elements of critical literacy may have been evident in the course, however, as with the VELS English, “it’s not a prime concern”. She expressed the belief that critical literacy discourse could possibly be evident in AOS 1, ‘Reading and Responding’ and AOS 2 ‘Creating and Presenting’ as evident in her utterance “critical literacy is a part of a continued discussion to shed light on ideas and purpose and audience and etcetera”. Fay’s views contrasted to John’s and Lauren’s. Lauren believed VCE English/ESL was “all about critical literacy” and its “intention” was to develop critical literacy skills in students and John believed it was particularly evident in AOS 3, the persuasive language analysis. This is an AOS
that Fay did not identify as having elements of critical literacy. In addition, the analysis in this thesis found AOS 1 and AOS 3 contained the most links to language consistent with the literature review of critical literacy texts. These differences illustrate how curriculum interpretations “partake of social and historical heteroglossia (the centrifugal, stratifying forces)” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 272). These interpretations are not simply a matter of direct translation of the language within the documents. Rather, when each teacher reads these documents they become a part of their inner persuasive discourse and meaning is made from negotiations with external and internal discourses. As identified in the first analysis categories, the voices within each teacher’s ideological environments differed in relation to critical literacy. The outcome of this was demonstrated in their differing interpretations of where critical literacy discourses were evident in the VCE English/ESL document.

When observing an example of Fay’s practice, her view about critical literacy skills as being more relevant for advanced classes was illustrated. She stated her class was “one of the lower” year eight streamed classes at her school. When considering her discussion on her espoused curriculum, it may be expected that the lower streamed classes focused on ensuring students became “literate” rather than including more “advanced” “philosophical” skills she associated with critical literacy discourses. This and “immersing kids in literary experiences” were evident in the content of the class in that the activities revolved around developing generic understandings of poetry. Fay introduced the class by telling the students “a very famous saying that poetry is the best words in the best order so we’re working on getting the best words in the best order”. The class focused on the mechanics of poetry, in particular identifying the ways language was used to develop imagery in Pablo Neruda’s poetry. To do this Fay asked the students to identify various examples of imagery in two of his poems and then to “highlight three or four of the phrases or words that you would use if you were writing and Ode to a Tomato, the ones that you find most, the most vivid, that say the most about the tomato”. These were written on the board and the students were then asked to write their own Odes. Fay’s focus on language and imagery was illustrated in her discussions with a student on ways to improve their Ode:

Can you see how these things are still general compared to Pablo Neruda’s poetry aren’t they. When he said salt’s like a translucent [inaudible] rather than just saying
salt's tasty, now if you can get one step further and do something like, instead of writing beach what could you write that was very specific in, something that you can feel or touch. Yeah, gritty, something you can feel between your toes.

There were minimal utterances demonstrating connections to critical literacy. At one point while writing the imagery students had identified on the board she said “in salt it was looking in caves and different salt and looking at tables, looking from all sorts of different perspectives wasn’t he”. This briefly links to views on texts presenting multiple perspectives from critical literacy discourses (Gilbert, 1992; Green, 1997; Luke, 2000; Luke & Luke, 1990; Morgan, 1997). While this class aligned with her views on the purpose of English in Victoria, in that it required a focus on operational literacy and certain forms of literature, her earlier classroom examples suggested critical literacy discourses were apparent in her practice.

Looking Across The Three Victorian Teachers

When analysing the three Victorian teachers’ hybridized constructions of critical literacy they represented three quite different examples of critical literacy approaches. John’s espoused and enacted curriculum reflected the critical pedagogy voices from his past ideological environments, however his enacted hybridization did not extend to include the kinds of social action outcomes encouraged by critical pedagogues such as Apple (2000, 2006), Freire (1970, 1999) or Giroux (1983, 1992). Lauren’s construction of critical literacy reflected Luke and Walton’s (2009) “text analyst” models in that her espoused hybridization demonstrated ideologies evident in CDA/CLA, poststructuralist and deconstructionist discourses. She stated her main aim was for her students to develop a proficient understanding of how to “construct” and “deconstruct” language in particular generic forms. While this was her espoused aim, the observed enacted curriculum illustrated some evidence of the text analyst model, however there were minimal links to considerations of power or ideology in texts. This suggested her approach aligned more closely to traditional linguistic analysis in practice than her espoused CDA/CLA critical literacy hybridization. In some ways, this approach linked to Fay’s interests in developing an understanding of textual features to enable analysis. Fay’s espoused and enacted curriculum, however, suggested her hybridized version of critical literacy depended on the mainstream Victorian mandated curriculum inclusions. These emphasised the teaching of an understanding that texts are ‘constructed’ and that context and sociocultural
factors influence the reading of texts. It did not extend to considerations of power. This
analysis demonstrated how the process of 'becoming' (Bakhtin, 1981) for these English
teachers, particularly in relation to critical literacy, included a complex blend of theoretical
influences, colleague discussions, family backgrounds and curriculum interpretations. This
was illustrated in the evidence suggesting that their interpretations of the mandated
curriculum varied depending on the voices they valued and had assimilated from their
ideological environments (Bakhtin, 1978). They represented a multiplicity of ways critical
literacy can be constructed and implemented in practice depending on the voices present in
one’s ideological environments and their relationships with these voices.

QUEENSLAND

Helen

Helen’s utterances in the observed year 10 class and her interview relating to her enacted
approaches explicitly demonstrated her "mixing of various 'languages' co-existing within the
boundaries" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 359) of critical literacy discourses. The influence of critical
literacy theoretical voices and teacher textbooks were clearly evident in her enactment, which
may relate to her interest identified in the previous analysis section on the translation of
critical literacy from theory into practice. Both her espoused and enacted curriculums were
saturated with combinations of words and utterances commonly used in the bulk of the
critical literacy texts discussed in the literature review. This analysis begins by looking at
Helen’s language in the observed class which is followed by an analysis of further examples of
her classroom practice which she discussed in her interview.

When asked to reflect on what her aims for the class were she said “I wanted to look at some
examples of texts and talk about dominant and resistant readings and talk about some of the
gaps and silences in the text and just dealing with some of the concepts”. She also stated the
purpose of the class was to prepare them for an assessed supervised writing task in which the
students were going to examine “ideology, positioning, gender, resistant and dominant
readings on three of their texts”. This was evident in her introduction to the class when she
told the students “what we're going to be looking at first for our assignment is two teenage
texts that you enjoyed and we’re looking at discourses, foregrounded ideologies, gender, resistant and dominant readings in the text”. Here the use of “text”, “discourses”, “foregrounded ideologies” and “gender”, key combined concepts underpinning critical literacy discourses in both academic and teacher resource texts, along with “resistant and dominant readings” (Mellor, 1989; Mellor, Patterson & O’Neill, 1991; Moon, 1990; Morgan, 1994, 1997) created synergies between Helen’s espoused and enacted critical literacy discourse. In particular her focus on gender and ideology illustrated the influence of her mentor Gilbert’s (1989, 1992, 1993) voice on her teaching aims. This language also aligned with Helen’s criticism directed at the QELS English document, as her aims for this year 10 class reflected the Queensland Senior English curriculum construction of critical literacy, particularly the metalanguage from the glossary, more than the QELS English document.

The synergies between her theories of English, voices in her ideological environment and her practice were further evident in the observed class when Helen introduced the concept of “readings”. She introduced this concept through an overhead she had created that stated:

Reading practices are the processes and cultural assumptions which readers use in making sense of a text. Different practices applied to the same text will produce different readings. The choice of one practice over another depends upon the reader’s training, which is determined by social factors such as education, cultural background and beliefs…Readings can also be established ways of thinking about some aspect of the world.

This definition focused on the multiplicity of readings and why they exist. Language such as “cultural assumptions”, “practices”, “different readings” and “social factors such as education, cultural background and beliefs” placed this definition firmly within critical literacy theoretical discourses (for example see Freebody, 1992; Freebody & Freiberg, 2011; Freebody & Luke, 1990; Green, 1997; Luke, 2000, 2012a; Misson, 1998b, 2003; Morgan, 1997). It also, again, tied to the kinds of metalanguage apparent in the Senior English main curriculum document and glossary, and the language used in the theoretical voices identified in Helen’s discussion in the previous analysis category. This was further illustrated through her (and
her students’) use of the same categorisation of readings as were used in the *Senior English* glossary (as italicised):

Helen: Ok, now, we’re going to have a look at a *resistant reading* of something and an *invited reading*. So in your own words tell me what would be a *resistant reading*? What would we mean by that? It’s up there on the overhead, but, yep?

Student: Like something that would challenge...

Helen: Oh very good.

Student: the reading.

Helen: Ok, now as young people why is it part of our culture to challenge?

Student: Because we like to complain, like how to make things different for us.

Helen: Right it’s youth, it’s part of being youthful correct? As soon as we stop being resistant we’ve lost our youth. Ok. And we need our youth to bring us to focus on things you don’t like, ok, *resistant reading*. And what’s an *invited reading* then? Yep.

Student: Is that like a *dominant reading*, one that is accepted most by society.

Helen: [nodding head] very good, ok, yep, ok.

While Helen argued in her interview that some students struggled to understand concepts such as resistant and dominant readings, gender, ideologies and discourse, her unchallenged assimilation of these concepts was such that she continued to include them through the use of examples they could “relate to”, such as the discussion on “youth resistance” in the above
extract. In addition Helen continuously used examples for “readings” and other key concepts from critical literacy discourses throughout the class that related to students’ lives. Some of these were their views on school rules, resistant and dominant readings of gender in their lives, consideration of power and context through examples such as approaching the principal or prime minister compared to their friends, and discussions on their and others’ value systems to explain ideologies. She also used examples of the differences between the languages they may use when playing sport as compared to when they were working at McDonald’s to explain differing “discourses”. Her practice reflected a Freirean approach in that she connected reading of words to the students’ readings of the world (Freire & Macedo, 1987).

To illustrate the ways readers foreground and marginalise characters, Helen provided an example of a representation of a teacher in an extract from a student’s point of view written in the early 1900s. She asked the students to “fill the gaps” to develop an “invited” interpretation of the teacher, as reflected in the utterance “what’s he like? Because all he’s said is ‘now get on with it while I’m here to watch you. Hurry up and draw the margins’”. Many students responded by suggesting the teacher was domineering. Helen then asked the students for a “resistant reading”, reflecting the Senior English glossary definitions, by considering “whose perspective is foregrounded in the text?” Some of the responses were “she thought the teacher was being mean he was only doing his job as a teacher” and “the teacher is trying to teach her good presentation by asking her to draw margins to teach her how to have the skills to succeed in life”. The student responses here may suggest they are simply providing an opposite meaning rather than analysing how readers are positioned by a text. This kind of ‘prescriptive’ approach to readings was criticised by Misson and Morgan (2006) in that they suggested it limited opportunities for a more developed exploration of reader positioning. While this enactment of critical literacy may be interpreted in this way, out of all of the teachers involved in this research, Helen’s class and the students’ responses most explicitly aligned with the metalanguage and conceptual understandings used in critical literacy theoretical discourses and critical literacy teacher resource texts, going beyond the requirements of QELS English. This demonstrated the extended time Helen had been exposed to a variety of critical literacy voices, as identified in the analysis of her ideological
environments, and her complete assimilation of their ideologies within her own inner persuasive discourse.

The observed class also included one moment where utterances were used that challenged traditional ‘definitions’ of literature, reflecting the postmodern influence on Helen's approach to critical literacy. Her definition (read out by a student) drew on these discourses by positioning literature as being socially situated and ideologically implicated stating "what we consider literature has a lot to do with our personal beliefs about what is good writing and what is not...Decisions about what is and what isn't literature are always value judgements...society's definitions of literature are shaped by the views of specific groups of people". In addition this definition reflected the notion that specific groups can influence what is considered 'good' literature, indicating the influence of Misson and Morgan's (2006) view that the aesthetic is socially situated. Also linking to Misson and Morgan's (2006) voices were the representation that these are ‘value judgements’ and hence 'literature' is tied to ideology. Helen included a brief classroom discussion after the student read this piece on what influences one's view on ‘good writing’, such as one's values and ideologies, and later invited a student to reflect on what it was about a text that made it 'enjoyable';

Helen: You enjoyed that one.

Student: Yeah.

Helen: Why did you enjoy it?

Student: Um, well, I don't know it's just really touching and you actually feel as though you were there and you're going through what she's going through and because it's really descriptive how she um how she's going through cancer you feel sad for her.

Helen: Mmmm, you feel with her.
Helen’s classroom practice reflected Misson’s argument that “texts do a lot of their ideological work by positioning us, and putting us through particular emotional and intellectual processes” (Misson, 1998b, p. 106). Her encouragement of her students’ engagement with pleasure in a postmodern way was not only evident through these examples, but also because her students selected texts for analysis that they “enjoyed”. Helen’s practice suggested she had considered the relationship between critical literacy and discourses on pleasure.

Helen also focused on developing students understanding of the links between language, context and power - which represented the CDA/CLA influences she identified in the previous analysis category, in particular Fairclough’s (1992, 1995) work. The influence of this variant of critical literacy was evident in her discussion with the students on the ways texts position through the choice of character names – or not naming characters, choice of adjectives to describe characters and their impact, choice of verbs used for the characters and their impact, gendered positioning and the ways readers draw on cultural practices. For example when discussing the use of adjectives Helen asked the students to “note descriptions of characters’ bodies. Note whether body parts which feature in some descriptions don’t feature in others and the effect. The bodies of which gender are described most and why” and “identify the words you think operate to manipulate or position you to read the text in a particular way. For example her tight red dress or her bright brazen eyes”. Her utterances here reflect the aim of critical language awareness to highlight “how language conventions and language practices are invested with power relations and ideological processes which people are often unaware of” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 7). She also illustrated her position on the relationship between the construction of texts and reader contexts when she reminded her students to consider the gaps in the text. Texts often leave unsaid what readers are able to fill in. The text does not tell readers how to read Lucy Mae’s tight dress, it doesn’t have to. Readers fill gaps with culturally constructed beliefs and ideas and these differ amongst readers and change over time.

These utterances also reflect the influence of Gilbert’s voice, such as her view that “the way in which language works might become a major classroom focus” (Gilbert, 1991a, p. 208) assisting students to understand the ways in which “reading positions are constructed” (ibid).
When combining Helen's utterances they illustrate how multiple “languages within the boundaries of a single utterance” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 358) combine to construct a hybrid version of critical literacy that suited her teaching context.

Finally, the influence of critical literacy discourses on Helen's enactment of critical literacy and views of approaches for English was further evident through her explicit inclusion of the label “critical literacy” in her classroom when concluding her class. She asked the students, “why would critical literacy be really helpful here? How’s it helping you look at the world by talking about a whole range of these things?”, to which the students responded with comments such as “opened us up to the different perspectives that things can be perceived in”, “teaches you to not judge people and understand different cultures and how people around the world have different things to live by” and “If we’re faced with a decision, say later in life, then we can consider everybody else’s perspective, so you don’t only think about your own”. This all occurred within the one lesson and illustrated the saturation of ideologies coming from a large collection of critical literacy voices contributing to Helen’s hybridization of critical literacy over her career.

Helen’s discussion in the interview about other classroom enactments of critical literacy also indicated some of the other ways critical literacy was apparent in both the middle and senior years at her school. She argued that as the Head of the English department she organised the Year Eight curriculum to incorporate the notion of multiple perspectives, particularly Indigenous, to do “a bit of head rearranging as we call it”. Here Helen was suggesting that the students first exposure to critical literacy discourses happened in their first year of high school. Considering Helen’s disposition towards critical literacy discourses, the “head arranging” could be assumed to include critical literacy approaches aligning with her hybridized construction. The curriculum for the early years of high school also incorporated poetry as a way to “turn kids on through critical literacy”, as she felt it broke down the resistance they had to poetry “once they can use all their intertextual links and you know see the relevance”. She linked her thoughts on poetry to Moon’s (1990) teacher resource Studying Poetry which included multiple forms of poetry and activities for students such as re-constructing poetry, relating poetry to their own contexts and producing alternative/resistant
readings of poems based on gender. Many of the activities demonstrated influences from poststructuralist feminist variants of critical literacy. These approaches aligned with Helen’s practice in that she believed critical literacy could encourage an appreciation of traditional forms of texts, as was illustrated by Moon’s text.

Helen also discussed the ways critical literacy was apparent in a year eleven unit in which the English teachers focused specifically on deconstructing the students’ individual identities. This focus echoed Helen’s identified ideological association with authors such as Luke (2000) and Gilbert (1992, 1993, 1994) in that she stated this group of students were not only expected to deconstruct texts, but deconstruct themselves, the texts they surrounded themselves with and their relation to power systems in global societies. This was evident in her summary of the unit of work stating that the students were asked to look at how they are constructed by all the different agencies in their life and their construction through the media, through the sorts of music they listen to, to their films, to the books they read and, I’m an individual, I drink mineral water but then when we look at who actually owns the company and what sweat shops do they own.

Helen’s description reflected Luke’s argument that a common aim of critical literacy was to “see how the worlds of texts work to construct their worlds, their cultures, and their identities in powerful, often overtly ideological ways” (2000, p. 453). The influence of critical pedagogy on critical literacy was also evident in this utterance in that it encouraged a “critical literacy” rather than a “naive literacy” (Lankshear, 1989, p. 168) and that it demonstrated “the ethical imperative of examining the contradictions in society between the meaning of freedom, the demands of social justice, and the obligations of citizenship” (Lankshear & McLaren, 1993, p. 425). She also expressed the belief that in her school by the time the students completed a documentary unit in year 12, critical literacy skills had become ingrained and “their life’s never the same after that, they find it really difficult to turn it off you know because they realise that every single angle, every bit of lighting, every camera sound is positioning you in a particular way”. Hence, Helen believed, under her leadership as the Head of English at this school, her critical literacy goals were achieved.
The second Queensland teacher, Cassie, used a curriculum developed by her Head of Department (Melinda) for Years 7-9, which were the years covered by QELS English document. Considering Melinda viewed the QELS for English as “a dog’s breakfast basically” much of the critical literacy skills reflected in the school’s curriculum for these years came from Melinda’s views on the approach rather than direction from the curriculum documents. As Cassie used Melinda’s curriculum rather than QELS, this suggested she placed little value on the mandated curriculum documents which validated Helen’s comment about the influence of Heads of Departments on curriculum. Cassie identified the kinds of skills reflected in this document as emphasising students needing to learn about “different invitations” and the tools required to “articulate responses other than acceptance and if they are accepting to do it knowingly rather than without thought”. She also said the course encouraged students to see how “structures of sentences can shape the readers’ perception” and that in her classrooms she used “appraisal grammar” to make a point about “bare assertion and opening up dialogue and sourcing of material and that kind of thing” and “how language functions to achieve political ends whether they’re conscious or unconscious”.

The notion of “appraisal grammar” used in this context reflects an Australian movement called appraisal theory (Martin, 2003) which developed Halliday's systemic functional linguistics to provide “a comprehensive framework for analyzing evaluation in discourse” (Martin, 2003, p. 171) and initially concentrated on the study of narrative text (Martin, 2003). Luke identified the ways these kinds of discourses influenced Queensland classrooms arguing that from his observations some teachers “teach aspects of pronominalisation, mode, modality, and transivity (Fairclough, 1989) to prepare students to (a) identify, analyse, and reconstruct identifiable textual genres; and (b) analyse how these same texts construct potentially ideological versions of the world” (2000, p. 454). When combining the concept “appraisal grammar” with Cassie’s interest in teaching students how to interrogate the ways language can be used overtly or covertly to promote particular ideologies, Cassie’s classroom aims demonstrated influences from critical linguistics, CDA and CLA.
Cassie also illustrated tensions in the process of hybridizing critical literacy when discussing her views on the *Senior English* curriculum. Her discussions in this area demonstrated the “dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 276) between Cassie’s construction of critical literacy and the construction in the mandated curriculum. She initially represented the official curriculum document positively arguing that critical literacy was much more evident in *Senior English* than *QELS English* in the ways “critical literacy has much more purchase and is integral to what we’re doing in terms of the tasks and the ways they’re delivered”. This suggested the mainstream senior year’s English document was more clearly aligned to her hybridization of critical literacy than the *QELS*. Further comments, however, suggested she felt the document’s representation of the relationship between critical literacy and aesthetic appreciation limited exploration of how to assess the ways these merged. Her view of critical literacy was that “it relates to everything but there’s also things like aesthetic pleasure and, but with a critical literacy lens as well...really it’s hard to find anything that isn’t” related to critical literacy. When contextualising her view in relation to the course, however, she viewed the aesthetic as being omitted in the assessment focus;

I also sometimes feel a bit resentful of...assessment too, it seems to be...the tension seems to be coming back, but because it’s something one can critically assess more easily than one can assess the aesthetic appreciation of something I sometimes feel that it takes away from some of the pleasure, the pleasure of the subject, the intellectual discussion as well.

This utterance reflected Cassie’s views on the unbalanced representation of an ideological version of critical literacy in assessment to the expense of affective objectives. Cassie’s utterances suggested she was negotiating the kinds of conflicts Misson and Morgan (2005) identified that can be the result of privileging this kind of critical literacy variant;

critical literacy has worried about what happens when we submit to the pleasures that an aesthetic text offers – how they distract us from the ideological work it’s doing. That’s why critical literacy tries to head off students at the pass before they’ve experienced such potentially corrupting pleasure (2005, p. 22)

Her tension with critical literacy and the way it was represented in the Queensland English curriculum documents, especially *Senior English*, was further illustrated in her final utterance
in this discussion reaffirming her ideological position towards critical literacy saying “but I'm for it [laughs] very much so”. Her construction of critical literacy suggested that in her espoused curriculum she wanted to construct a hybridized approach that merged discourses on pleasure and critical literacy, however when it came to enacting the curriculum, particularly assessment, she felt the curriculum discourse limited these possibilities.

There were also tensions evident in Cassie’s utterances relating to specific critical literacy concepts in the *Senior English* course. In particular she felt students had difficulty understanding the use of the terms ‘discourse’ and ‘ideology’, which were also identified by Helen. She felt while she had an understanding of these terms they were theoretically complex and required lengthy discussions with students to allow them to understand their “shifting” nature. She argued "something as seemingly straight forward as ideology well it’s a belief system but then you’ll have someone in the news talk about the ideology of greed and you can see how yes, then the kids think well is it alright to talk about the ideology of dieting and you think [grumbling noise], is it really?" Cassie’s understanding of these concepts as “shifting” indicated the influence of postmodern discourses on her own definitions in that language is social (Gilbert, 1992; Lyotard, 1984; Rosenau, 1992) and concepts such as these had become “so stretched” that it was “difficult to say well this is what it means”. She believed “the kids are usually up to them if there’s time to do them properly, and the teacher has time to prepare and time to teach it in class, but you’re always running from one class to the next with interruptions”. Again, Cassie’s utterance suggested her espoused hybridization of critical literacy curriculum, which included sufficient exploration of the social nature of language and key concepts from critical literacy discourses, was limited in practice due to time limitations.

Cassie’s enacted critical literacy hybridization reflected the “appraisal grammar” style approach to critical literacy that she identified as her aim for Years 7-10 English. Her class focused on the ways authors use language to encourage “invited readings”, a concept also used by Helen and referenced in the *Senior English* glossary. She was also teaching the students how to improve the control of their own writing to make their narrative writing more powerful. On reflection in the interview Cassie outlined two aims for this specific class. First she wanted to make the students “aware of the power they have to affect the reader
perceptions or emotions by choosing to put their characters in particular situations which set up a whole lot of ideas or associations and how they’re structuring of a story can shape the reader’s response to it”. This aim illustrates Luke's (2000) identification of the CDA/CLA influence on Queensland classes in the ways she is connecting power to identifiable generic features of text. Her second aim was that students could look at their narratives “on a more close up level looking at their word choices, and how something that might seem like an instinctive choice is there in their heads because of this. I don’t teach this as the truth but there is current theory that has a lot to recommend it, but it’s there because society has placed that concept there as matching”. This aim links to a close analysis of word level techniques used to construct ideological representations in text, again reflecting CDA/CLA variants of critical literacy, which encouraged the development of students’ linguistic understanding of the ways language functions to influence the reading and construction of texts (Carrington & Luke, 1997; Freebody, Luke & Gilbert, 1991; Lankshear, 1994; Luke, 1992, 2000; Luke, Comber & Grant, 2003; Luke, O’Brien & Comber, 1994; Luke & Walton, 1994; Luke & Woods, 2009; Misson, 1998b; Morgan, 1997).

This focus was evident in her enacted curriculum in an activity where she discussed the links between word choice to invitations in narrative construction with her students and told them that these invitations “can be accepted or rejected”. This was evident in her classroom utterance “the invitation that you send through your choice of title, your choice of introductory words etcetera, etcetera, will be sending all sorts of messages about the style of story and it allows you to manipulate your audience and you might want to make choices.” To assist in developing their linguistic capacity to “manipulate” she then worked with the students on an activity that took a “bland” sentence such as “the people walked around the place” which was “not a particularly interesting invitation to us” and choosing words with greater thought to provide the reader with “a much more vivid invitation”. The point of this activity and class for Cassie was to enable the students to understand that word choices were important and the invitations that the author sends to readers can not only make the story more interesting, but, as she told the students, also provide “more subtle messages about what is normal or what is expected in the way the world works”. This example reflects Luke and Walton’s description of text analyst models of critical literacy which views “texts as
mechanisms of power and knowledge, as semiotic technologies for constructing the world and for positioning readers in relationship to the world” (2009, p. 15). Cassie’s hybridization of critical literacy in her aims and her enactment appeared to be mostly located within the boundaries of critical literacy variants influenced by CDA/CLA.

Lucy

As discussed in the methodology section, Lucy, the third Queensland teacher, was unable to obtain ethics permission from her students in her class. While this was the case, her discussions on the ways critical literacy was relevant for English teaching and examples from her classes illustrated her espoused hybridization of critical literacy and provided an insight into ways it may have been enacted in her classes. Her utterances demonstrated the same kinds of tensions Cassie and Misson and Morgan (2005, 2006) identified between critical literacy discourses and discourses on pleasure and aesthetics and illustrated the influence on Misson’s work on her own hybridization of critical literacy. She viewed the inclusion of critical literacy approaches as essential to English as evident in the following utterances; “it’s important that they [students] are critically literate and that they have those skills. I think that it gives them an understanding of their world” and that it meant students might be able to look at advertising that’s around them and say that, well I understand why I’m having this emotional response to that. It’s not necessarily because it’s true. It’s because it’s foregrounding these elements and using this language or you know something along those lines.

This view on teaching students to understand the ways everyday texts work emotionally echoes Misson and Morgan’s argument that “social justice outcomes are only likely to be achieved if teachers and students feel deeply that they matter, if we and our students are engaged emotionally as well as intellectually” (Misson and Morgan, 2005, p 25). Also aligning with Misson’s (1998a, 1998b, 2003, 2004, 2009) views, she felt critical literacy should not be seen as being “opposed to an aesthetic understanding of a text or to read a text and empathise”. Instead she believed the two could be combined when studying texts so that students could empathise and engage with the ideas on its own merits...understand where it’s coming from and engage with it...and then you can consider the intellectual perspective of the
text and the aesthetics of the text and the historical perspective and the cultural perspective and all of those and the emotional perspective which I think is quite significant too.

The influence of Misson's voice, such as the view that “the difference between good work and bad work of this ideological kind can come down to whether or not there is a recognition that the text is a piece of literature and working aesthetically” (2009, p. 108), was apparent in her classroom aims.

Lucy also felt students needed to have the chance to enjoy texts without feeling they ‘should’ be applying critical literacy skills, such as “when reading the Twilight series”. This reflects Misson’s argument that “the particular kind of immediate involvement of private reading or viewing cannot be recreated in the classroom, and it is ridiculous to believe that work on the text there can be based in any sustained way on that sort of immediate private pleasure” (1998b, p 106). Lucy did not want to destroy students’ “private pleasure” that they may get from the texts they selected outside of the classroom. Yet, as discussed in the previous analysis category, Lucy's belief that critical literacy “infuses everything” meant she interpreted it as being an integral way of viewing the world and the texts in it. Considering this definition, can one turn critical literacy on and off? Helen argued that once critical literacy skills were ingrained students' lives were “never the same” and they “find it really difficult to turn it off”. Recently, Misson (2012) argued that having both discourses operating at the same time did not mean it had to (or would) destroy one’s pleasure in reading/viewing/listening or constructing texts. Rather, he argued, it could increase one’s pleasure. In a similar way to Cassie, Lucy struggled to reconcile the “dialogically agitated...environment” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 276) that existed in her ideological environment between these discourses. Critical literacy for Lucy was an “embodied, lived professional experience” (Howie, 2006, p. 228), so her concern that analysing certain texts in the classroom may tread on students dreams (Misson, 1998a) was a tension she was struggling to reconcile in her hybridization of critical literacy.
When discussing the *Senior English* curriculum, this area of conflict was again evident as she viewed the course as de-privileging affective considerations. She viewed the assessable criteria as relating to students’ abilities to understand how power relations work in texts, the way characters may “naturalise a certain way of relating to each other”, whether things are accepted or challenged, “the way discourses shape and are shaped by language choices”, and the ways “readers are invited to take up positions in relation to the subject matter”. She argued the rationale in principle “sounds wonderful, it’s got the political and the critical perspectives, it does talk about the cultural perspectives, the historical perspective, the aesthetic, all of those things”. The decision, however, to include affective aims in the rationale, yet not as an assessable exit criterion conflicted with her ideologies, as illustrated by her Master of Education research on this omission. She felt, to a certain extent, students were being assessed on aesthetics, “we’re assessing them on the aesthetic, certainly when we give them a short story task, we’re assessing them on how well they’re doing that”, however what was missing was the opportunity for students to “evaluate how well a writer” used aesthetic tools. She suggested this omission in the curriculum may have been due to the intangible nature of the aesthetic (making it difficult to represent in criteria) as reflected in her utterance:

We don’t talk about it much because it’s not assessable and how you assess it is difficult except in the creative writing pieces. One of the things that’s difficult about the current syllabus is actually designing the creative pieces to meet the criteria. I mean it lent itself much more to things like construction of biographies because you show an understanding of the partiality of texts and things, um, it doesn’t necessarily lend itself to short stories unless you get students to write didactic short stories.

Assessment of the aesthetic was an area Misson (2003, 2004, 2009) and Misson and Morgan (2005, 2006) addressed. As identified by Lucy (and Cassie) assessing the use of aesthetic tools in a curriculum that has critical literacy running across all tasks is an area of possible struggle for teachers.

A further tension Lucy had with critical literacy constructions in the *Senior English* curriculum, and also reflecting Misson and Morgan’s (2005, 2006) views, was through its use
of the notion “resistance”. She argued that while she understood the aims central to the
document’s representation, which she stated was to ensure the students “won’t be inculcated
into the dominant world views, you know so they won’t be unquestioning drones”, she felt
there were issues with implementation and student understandings of the concept. She said
the document defined resistance in a narrow and overtly ideological way and argued “I don’t
want to teach a completely political version of literature, I do want consideration of the
aesthetic, you know literature as an art form and you know that idea of reader response as
well”. She wanted to create choices for students other than simply having to read against the
grain as reflected in her utterance “we don’t have to be resistant all the time as long as we
have an awareness of the possibility of resistance, and an awareness of perhaps that our
understanding is not the same as somebody else’s understanding”. She further argued

resistance assumes that you already have a received truth, and once you’ve got that
you judge everything against that received truth and if what you’re looking at doesn’t
match it then you’ll resist it...but of course that in itself is kind of an arrogant
perspective.

Lucy’s utterances on this concept reflected Misson and Morgan’s argument that “resistant
reading suggests that we take up a single, uncomplicated stance in relation to a text or part of
it. But it’s not so simple” (2005, p 22). Considering Lucy identified Misson as an influential
voice in her ideological environment, the similarity between Misson and Morgan’s statement
and her utterance demonstrated her assimilation of these critical literacy ideologies. The way
she approached text in her hybridized version of critical literacy was that she asked students
to “read with the text” initially, learn about the historical context and other factors involved in
a text, and then ask themselves “are there things that I really want to negotiate. Are there
areas I’m not comfortable with? Do I completely reject this text?” She believed the notion of
‘resistant reader’ needed to be reflective of a reader who was educated about the text before
making the judgement to possibly resist some of the views they saw as being promoted by the
text. She believed the Senior English document presented a limited view of the concept
“readings” and rejected their representation. Instead she drew on the voices such as Misson’s
in her ideological environment to present what she felt was a more complex understanding of
the concept.
Lucy also expressed the belief that the representation of concepts such as "readings" in a simplistic manner meant some English teachers "have turned their courses into political diatribes". She believed the misunderstanding of complex concepts, meant some classrooms became more of an exercise of "spot the oppressed group" in texts and that this kind of approach demonstrated "a lack of understanding of what the syllabus was trying to achieve". She also felt using critical literacy in this way would mean the students "would hate English". For her it demonstrated that a “deep and embedded” knowledge about critical literacy was missing for these teachers, suggesting she felt her interpretation of critical literacy, such as on concepts such as “resistance” and “readings”, illustrated a more complex understanding of the discourses. She argued that her approach to marginalisation and privileging went a step further and asked "why and what impact does that actually have on the text? And I would be asking questions which are text specific”. Her discussion on the ways she taught Margaret Atwood’s The Handmaid’s Tale provided an example of her enactment of critical literacy. She argued this text has as its focus the disempowerment of certain groups and individuals “to say who’s disempowered in this text, well it’s blindingly obvious because that’s the point of the text, that the character is disempowered”. Rather than using a “spot the oppressed” approach, her focus was on ”the real question...personal identity, how...is someone’s personal identity shaped by the way they are seen by those around them”. She felt this allowed a more developed discussion on “how power is a matter of exchange”, consideration of “the personal as opposed to the group” and construction of identity, reflecting Foucault and postmodernist influences on critical literacy discourses (Gilbert, 1992; Kamler & Comber, 1996; Luke, 1993) and some of the other voices identified in Lucy’s ideological environment.

Lucy was also teaching English Extension (Literature) at the time of the interview, which she “mostly” enjoyed teaching, however, she identified tensions with the way some knowledge was represented in the document. She described the positive aspects of the course as it being the place “where you do your Foucault and your Derrida and your Saussure, you know, postmodernism and these types of things” and that it was “heavily theoretical”. She felt the course “has also shown me a lot of where the concepts come from", suggesting it had been influential on her views on English. She enjoyed the opportunities the curriculum course design offered for theoretical engagement and validation of professional development (even
one's own reading) in areas she valued (critical literacy). She argued, however, that the concept “canon” was challenged “before we’re teaching them what it is, which is difficult”. She agreed with the premise that “the canon can and should be challenged”, reflecting postmodernist influences on critical literacy (Gilbert, 1993; Lankshear & McLaren, 1993), however, the notion needed to be explored first with students before looking at ways to challenge it, suggesting she had conflicts with the sequencing of the course.

Another flaw she felt was evident in the *English Extension (Literature)* document was that she felt it read as a linear historical study of reading approaches and that world-context-centred approach, the final approach discussed which privileged critical literacy discourses, “superseded everything”. She argued the representation in the document was;

> like we had close reading and then we had reader response and now we've got this wonderful critical approach, let's throw the rest out and it presents it like it's an end point that has superseded everything, and I don't think it is a process of superseding I think we're just adding new understandings and they, in most instances, are complementary.

As identified in the curriculum analysis chapter, the *English Extension (Literature)* document reflected a poststructuralist feminist variant of critical literacy throughout the document and the world-context-centred approach did appear to be privileged. Lucy’s argument that theories from the past were “complementary” and “adding new understandings” was key to her hybridization of critical literacy. It also aligned with authors such as Lankshear (1994, 1997), Luke & Freebody (1999b), Luke & Walton (1994), Luke & Woods (2009) and Misson and Morgan (2006) who each argued that multiple discourses have contributed to the hybridization of critical literacies as they appear in the modern context. As Luke argued “critical literacy has become a theoretically diverse educational project: it draws from reader response theory; linguistic and grammatical analysis of critical linguistics and feminist, poststructuralist, postcolonial, and critical race theory; and cultural and media studies” (p. 9). Lucy’s argument reflected these views and suggested her hybridized version/s of critical literacy combines historical approaches such as reader response with critical approaches.
evident in the *English Extension (Literature)* document such as deconstruction, postcolonialism and feminist poststructuralism.

**Looking Across The Queensland Teachers**

When comparing the three Queensland teachers’ hybridizations of critical literacy there were numerous commonalities in the metalanguage they used and across their espoused and enacted curriculums. The commonalities in metalanguage appeared to reflect the senior English courses, in particular the glossary definitions in *Senior English* identified in the curriculum analysis chapter. This suggested the *Senior English* document and its glossary were influential on the teachers’ understanding of what were key concepts in critical literacy discourses. In addition, all teachers identified similar concepts that they had difficulty negotiating for students, such as “discourse” and “ideology”. Helen argued she had developed approaches to scaffold these concepts to students, Cassie also suggested she used similar approaches, but still felt students continued to have difficulties. Lucy expressed concern with her observation of teachers’ formulaic inclusions of these concepts suggesting she felt her approaches worked better to encapsulate their complexities.

In relation to their enactments, Helen’s appeared to represent an almost ‘text-book’ example of how to implement critical literacy in the classroom, however at times it reflected criticisms of using critical literacy “labels” in a prescriptive manner. As discussed earlier, limiting examination of reading to the labels “dominant”, “resistant” and “alternative” was criticised as being too prescriptive by Misson and Morgan (2006), and was also identified as a concern by Lucy. While this was the case, Helen’s hybridization of critical literacy reflected voices across a range of influences from postmodernism, poststructuralist feminist, CDA/CLA and critical pedagogy approaches, suggesting her espoused and enacted critical literacy curriculum addressed Freebody’s suggestion for future work on critical literacy practices in that it “locates critical literacy in a collection of skills, understandings, and dispositions urgently needed by students to face the contemporary and future vocational, civic, and domestic experiences lying in wait for them” (2008, p. 115). Cassie’s hybridization of critical literacy mostly reflected the critical language awareness variants of critical literacy, in particular the text analyst variants identified by Luke and Woods (2009), in that she believed having control and being aware of the power of language choices was needed to be critically literate. She also,
however, demonstrated a struggle with critical literacy assessment limiting the enjoyment of texts and English, suggesting that she was attempting to negotiate tensions between discourses of critical literacy and traditional discourses that viewed English as a subject emphasising pleasure and aesthetic appreciation of texts. Lucy also demonstrated this tension in her hybridization of critical literacy and her discourse often reflected Misson’s views on the importance of considering aesthetics and emotion in tandem with critical literacy approaches. In addition she demonstrated influences from historical approaches such as reader response reflecting her belief that you “don’t throw the baby out with the bathwater”. She was the only teacher of the six for whom these notions dominated her discourse on critical literacy.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Bakhtin’s work on meaning and knowledge construction provided a framework to analyse the construction of critical literacy through the sampled teachers’ ideological becoming as evident through their dialogic relationships with curriculum and other voices. The teachers’ hybridizations of critical literacy illustrated Bakhtin’s argument that “each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life; all words and forms are populated by intentions. Contextual overtones (generic, tendentious, individualistic) are inevitable in the word” (1981, p. 293). Various voices identified by the teachers existing within their ideological environments were influential on their hybridizations of critical literacy, some of which were assimilated, some creating tension. These voices included family, colleagues, curriculum requirements, media, professional development and academic/teacher resource publications and demonstrated the “socially charged life” and “overtones” contributing to the teachers espoused and enacted versions of critical literacy.

The approaches constructed by the Victorian teachers represented the influence of a variety of differing voices. John’s hybridization of critical literacy mostly reflected his affiliation with voices from critical pedagogy, whereas the influence of deconstruction, poststructuralist voices and Freebody andLuke’s four resources model was evident in Lauren’s hybridizations. Fay’s constructions of critical literacy aligned with the kinds of CDA/CLA variant inclusions in
VELS English as was evident in the curriculum analysis chapter. The Queensland teachers’ hybridizations demonstrated more synergies than the Victorian approaches and because of the privileging of critical literacy discourses in curriculum and professional development at a state level they illustrated Bakhtin’s comment that

> However varied the social forces doing the work of stratification – a profession, a genre, a particular tendency, an individual personality – the work itself everywhere comes down to the (relatively) protracted and socially meaningful (collective) saturation of language with specific (and consequently limiting) intentions and accents. The longer this stratifying saturation goes on, the broader the social circle encompassed by it and consequently the more substantial the social force bringing about such stratification of language, then the more sharply focused and stable will be those traces, the linguistic changes in the language markers (linguistic symbols), that are left behind in language as a result of this social force’s activity (1981, p. 293)

In the case of Queensland, critical literacy discourses saturated the educational field and had done so for many years. The effect of this was illustrated through the ways all Queensland teachers used the same metalanguage when discussing their views on the approach, and within their enactments. There were also similarities between their espoused and enacted curriculums. Helen's approach reflected influences from feminist poststructuralism and critical discourse analysis variants, various voices within these discourses (such as Fairclough and Gilbert) and voices that shifted between these and other discourses (such as Luke and Freebody, Martino and Misson). Cassie’s approach mostly aligned with critical discourse analysis variants, but also her philosophical views on critical literacy reflected critical pedagogy approaches, as well as addressing concerns evident in feminist poststructuralist approaches. Lucy’s hybridization of critical literacy was strongly focused on bringing together the aesthetic and the critical, yet also reflected critical pedagogy, through her interest in ‘empowerment’, and included an emphasis on the deconstruction of texts.

In addition, the Queensland teachers’ espoused curriculums were more closely reflected in their enacted curriculum when compared to the Victorian teachers. The Queensland teachers all included common concepts that were included in the Senior English glossary in their
teaching and their constructions of critical literacy as discussed in their interviews were evident to varying degrees. Out of the three Victorian teachers, John's enactment of critical literacy most closely aligned to his ideologies reflected in his interview utterances, demonstrating evidence of a consistent critical pedagogy variant. Fay's practice reflected her belief that critical literacy was not valued in curriculum as there was little evidence in her classroom practice of the key language or knowledge used in her interview. Lauren's interview suggested she was influence by deconstruction and critical discourse analysis/critical language awareness variants of critical literacy, however, while her practice included linguistic analysis, there was minimal evidence of how her espoused curriculum was translated into her enacted curriculum with regard to critical literacy. The implications of these findings, and those from the curriculum analysis chapter are brought together in the next and final chapter of this thesis, discussion and conclusions.
This thesis explored critical literacy in Australia and the ways it appeared in curriculum and teacher discourse in particular institutional contexts. Bakhtin’s (1981) concept ‘ideological becoming’ and several of Gee’s discourse analysis tools provided frameworks to analyse and interpret the data in light of the ways critical literacy had been constructed in these ideological environments (Bakhtin, 1978). As discussed in the literature review and methodology chapter, some states in Australia have had a stronger history and curriculum inclusion of critical literacy than others. In this thesis, two states were the focus; Queensland due to its strong history in critical literacy implementation and Victoria due to its more conservative history and curriculum. High school English curriculum documents from these two states were selected for analysis, as well as a sample of teachers who identified themselves as having knowledge of critical literacy practices. These teachers were interviewed and their teaching practice observed. The findings from the analysis of the curriculum documents and the teacher data produced three themes of significance to the ways critical literacy is constructed and valued by teachers and factors contributing to particular constructions and positioning. These themes are as follows;

1. Inclusions and omissions of critical literacy discourse in curriculum documents can permit engagement with these discourses or inspire dialogic testing.

2. English teachers ideological becoming and 'hybridization' of critical literacy can be influenced by their dialogues with critical literacy discourses.

3. Tension can occur in the process of teachers’ ideological becoming between critical literacy discourses and traditional notions of teaching 'literature’ and valuing of the ‘aesthetic’.
The first theme refers to the affordances and restrictions that can be an effect of particular inclusions and omissions relating to critical literacy in curriculum documents as illustrated by the differences between the Queensland and Victorian curriculum and teachers’ discourse. The second theme relates to the first in that it demonstrates how these teachers’ dialogues with critical literacy influenced their ideological becoming (Bakhtin, 1981) and reflected the ways critical literacy can become 'hybridized' (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986) when enacted. The final theme explores tensions evident in the teacher analysis when negotiating traditional discourses on the teaching of 'literature' and critical literacy discourses.

6.2 MAJOR THEMES FROM THE DATA

As discussed in the literature review and curriculum data analysis chapter, curriculum documents can ‘invite’ particular identities through inclusions and omissions that position and construct discourses in particular ways, in this case those relating to critical literacy. As Gee (2005, 2011a, 2011b) argued, these ‘invited’ identities privilege some social goods over others and “we build viewpoints about how we think social goods are or should be distributed in society” (2011b, p 120). Morson (2004) argued that mandated policy and curriculum act in a similar way to what Bakhtin (1981) labelled ‘authoritative discourses’ and Freedman and Ball argued “the nature of our struggles with an authoritative discourse depends on our relationship with it” (2004, p. 7). The ways mandated curriculum builds or destroys (Gee, 2011a) social goods can impact not only on the relationship English teachers have with curriculum documents, but also their ideological becoming in relation to critical literacy. The ways that the teachers in this study related to their state based mandated curriculum and how they engaged with critical literacy discourses was influenced by language inclusions and omissions in these documents. It was found that these inclusions or omissions permitted or gave affordances to engage with particular critical literacy discourses. It was also evident that curriculum documents can restrict a teachers’ enactment of critical literacy. Depending on teachers’ pre-existing persuasive discourses and their ideological environments, this can change mandated curriculum’s authority “from unquestioned to dialogically tested” (Morson,
2004, p. 319) and lead to resistant behaviour. These findings are outlined in further detail below.

As was illustrated in the curriculum analysis chapter, the curriculum documents in Queensland and Victoria vary in their inclusion of critical literacy discourse, particularly in the mainstream senior English documents. The privileging of critical literacy ideologies in the Queensland documents through the inclusion of key concepts and terms from these discourses built critical literacy as a valued approach. Also contributing to the political building (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) of critical literacy discourse for teachers in Queensland was the state’s historical inclusion of critical literacy discourses in mandated curriculum. These discourses and skills have been more evident and explicit in Queensland curriculum (and practice) historically than in Victoria. As Helen argued “this isn’t new curriculum you know, I mean we’ve been doing this stuff with Bjelke Petersen [former Queensland extreme right premier] in the early eighties”. While Helen’s placement of critical literacy in the early 1980s is debatable, it illustrates the importance of critical literacy social goods for teaching practice in Queensland around this time. Critical literacy inclusions in the Queensland senior English years documents, particularly criteria three in the Senior English document (assessed across all tasks), and a history of critical literacy inclusion in Queensland curriculum (both years 7-10 and senior years) permitted the Queensland teachers in this study to privilege critical literacy discourses in their professional development, reading, academic engagement and collegial discussions. This was illustrated in Cassie’s comment when referring to critical literacy inclusions in the senior curriculum requirements, “[critical literacy] is integral to what we’re doing in terms of the tasks and the ways they’re delivered”.

Development of their critical literacy ‘identities’ were further enhanced through discussions with colleagues that often focused on the ‘critical literacy’ requirements of the mandated English curriculum course. All three teachers expressed the belief that collegial discussion and engagement with critical literacy, as was afforded by its privileging in the curriculum documents, strengthened their understanding of the approach and encouraged them to continue engaging with the discourses. It formed an integral part of their ongoing professional development. Helen believed teachers in Queensland had a great sense of
“collegiality”, particularly when subverting attempts to remove critical literacy from
curriculum. Cassie felt through "scholarly and academic" discussion with colleagues and
mentors, and as critical literacy became more “current” (due to the focus in curriculum), her
ideas strengthened and broadened. Lucy had strong English curriculum leaders mentoring
and directing her to seminal texts on critical literacy. Her discussions suggested these
mentoring leaders viewed engagement with, and enactment of, critical literacy as essential to
meeting the requirements of the English curriculum documents (and English in general). In
addition, Helen and Lucy engaged in discussions on moderation through their membership on
marking and assessment boards at a local and state level; Helen as panel chair for North
Queensland in Senior English and Lucy as district chair for English Extension (Literature). The
curriculum documents in Queensland ‘permitted’ these teachers to dedicate time, both their
own and school allocated, to develop and strengthen their understanding of critical literacy,
its application and assessment for the classroom. The requirements of the year 11 and 12
mandated curriculum documents from this state appeared to have the kinds of outcomes for
these teachers that Eisner (1990) and Schwartz (2006) suggested were necessary for effective
implementation. The documents motivated the teachers to learn, as was reflected in Lynda’s
comment "the longer I teach it the more I learn", which suggested to a certain extent they
amplified (Eisner, 1990) their teaching skills in the area of critical literacy.

Further to this, state based publications and professional development were also influenced
by the privileging of critical literacy in the state mandated curriculum documents. For
example, both Helen and Lucy had completed Masters level studies focusing on critical
literacy in English (Lucy’s specifically on the Senior English curriculum) and all three
Queensland teachers had run workshops and training focusing on critical literacy in English.
In addition, Helen had joined the critical literacy ‘Conversation’ (Gee, 2011a) on another level
having published in the area and organised keynotes/workshops with prominent Australian
critical literacy authors. A focus on critical literacy was also permitted through an inclusion of
critical literacy discourses in the assessment tasks in the senior years (which are often at the
forefront of teachers’ minds). Discourses in critical literacy were seminal components of
these teachers’ ideological becoming and were highly persuasive on both their espoused and
enacted English curriculums. The privileging of these discourses, particularly in the senior
years curriculum documents, established certain social goods reflected in critical literacy worth enacting and ‘invited’ teachers ideologically predisposed to critical literacy to hold positions of power at local and state levels. The curriculum afforded an interweaving of extra-curricula voices that expanded their contact with critical literacy discourses. These events and actions all formed a part of the teachers’ ideological environments and developed curriculum stories (Shkedi, 1998) that privileged critical literacy ideologies.

The Queensland Senior English course, the curriculum document identified as being the most influential on the teachers in this study, also required the teachers to use concepts characteristic of critical literacy within the classroom and with assessment, which opened the possibility for debate around critical literacy discourses. The inclusions of key terms and knowledge from critical literacy discourses in the glossary and throughout the document left a “trace” (Bakhtin, 1981) in the teachers’ discourses, with a similar critical literacy metalanguage apparent across the three teachers. These utterances were evident in the kinds of espoused and enacted curriculum discourses of the Queensland teachers. Cassie’s observed class centred on the critical literacy concept “invitations” (Martino & Mellor, 1995; Mellor, O’Neill & Patterson, 1991; Misson & Morgan, 2006; Moon, 1998; Morgan, 1994, 1996, 1997) which was frequently used throughout the duration of the lesson. Other links to critical literacy in her utterances were “manipulate audience” and “subtle messages” tying to the ideological focus in many critical literacy discourses (Carrington & Luke, 1997; Luke, 1992, 2000; Luke & Walton, 2009). She also identified in her interview that she used the terms “discourse” and “ideology”, but felt the students had difficulty fully comprehending these terms. While this was the case, the curriculum inclusion of these terms allowed teachers to engage in debate and discussion about how to use these key concepts, and permitted them to use them in their enactment of the mandated documents. This was illustrated by the fact that both Helen and Lucy also identified these concepts as words they themselves had “assimilated” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 341) during their own ideological becoming, however they also suggested these were concepts that had to be negotiated carefully in the enactment of critical literacy. In addition, while the QELS English document included limited use of critical literacy key concepts compared to the Senior English document, all three teachers appeared to privilege the senior curriculum and hence incorporated these in their teaching across all year
levels. The privileging of sign systems and knowledge from critical literacy discourses in the mainstream English course, in particular the Senior English course, provided affordances for teachers to explore and enact these discourses in their classrooms.

While the invited critical literacy identities evident through inclusions in the Queensland English curriculum ‘permitted’ the teachers in this state to engage with critical literacy discourses, there were still instances of restrictions and tensions which the teachers acted against (mostly in the form of subversion). All of the Queensland teachers in this study placed limited value on the new Years 7-10 curriculum (QELS English). Helen argued they were “not well written documents” and valued the previous “marvellous syllabus” (in effect since 1994) more highly due to its “critical literacy work”. She viewed the QELS English as ‘destroying’ social goods (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) integral to her persuasive discourses on English practice. Cassie completely ignored the QELS and used the documents her Head of Department (Melinda) designed, in which she suggested critical literacy was a key component. She viewed her curriculum leader as an ‘authority’ on English curriculum design and afforded her higher status than the state based curriculum designers. Lucy felt the removal of “critical understandings” and “theorising” was a “great loss” reflecting both Helen and Melinda’s ideological positions. What these teachers viewed as limited inclusion of critical literacy discourse in the QELS English document led to subversive devaluing of the course. The curriculum analysis chapter identified some inclusions of critical literacy discourses reflecting poststructuralist, CDA/CLA and critical pedagogy influences on critical literacy, however when compared to the senior courses the privileging was not as prominent. Since critical literacy discourses were more evident in the senior English courses, particularly in the rationale and assessment tasks, and related directly to school priorities, these teachers resolved their tension with the QELS English document by either ignoring it or modifying it to meet the priorities of the senior year’s documents.

While these teachers valued the senior courses more than the QELS English, subversion of curriculum change and tension with some curriculum requirements of the senior courses were also evident. These changes were resisted because of the ways they aimed to devalue sign systems and knowledge (Gee, 2011) of importance in critical literacy discourses and
created a situation “where the distribution of social goods is at stake” (Gee, 2011b, p. 118). This view was illustrated by Helen’s description of the changes as “pretty frightening stuff” and Lucy’s as a “mistake” indicating not only their rejection of the proposed removal of links to critical literacy discourses, but also the way they themselves valued the enactment of critical literacy discourses in English. Helen subverted these proposed changes by engaging in collegial resistance with other English teachers, and publicly stating her views when conversing with “bureaucrats”. Lucy’s comments suggested that critical literacy skills were deeply embedded within teachers’ inner persuasive discourses and were integral to their ideological becoming so she didn’t believe they would modify their tasks, suggesting she too had no intention of doing this. Their comments confirmed Luke’s argument that “Teachers will transform mandated curriculum and texts to suit their views on practice” (2012b). The removal of particular critical literacy social goods was in contradiction to these teachers’ ideologies and a tradition in Queensland curriculum to value critical literacy sign systems. Their relationship with both the QELS English discourse and the changes to the English Senior course were such that when they were dialogically tested (Morson, 2004) the teachers were not convinced to make changes to their existing practice. As discussed in the teacher analysis chapter, the subversion of the English Senior changes by those in the English education field in Queensland was such that the course was redesigned and criteria three was reinstated.

In addition, both Lucy and Cassie identified an area of restriction in the curriculum, creating tension for these teachers’ as they negotiated their hybridized form of critical literacy. This related to limited advice in the Senior English document on how to assess affective and aesthetic skills in tandem with critical literacy skills. This suggested the curriculum constrained (Eisner, 1990) these teachers’ skills in this particular area of critical literacy enactment. While it was an integral component in the mandated curriculum, they both felt that by omitting the assessment of the links between affective aims and critical literacy knowledge in the exit criteria the relationship had been devalued. Yet, since both elements were present in the curriculum, it allowed Lucy to dialogically engage with this area by focusing her Masters studies on the assessment omissions in the curriculum centring on the aesthetic and critical literacy. Making the choice to conduct focused research in this area provided an avenue for powerful professional development and engagement with this area of
conflict. It encouraged her to move towards becoming the kind of “critically engaged” practitioner Luke (2010) and Doecke and Parr (2011) suggested are needed in schools.

In Victoria, critical literacy sign systems (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) were not as explicitly promoted in curriculum, at least in the mainstream VELS English and VCE English/ESL courses, or in extra-curricula contexts as they were in Queensland. The historical context surrounding curriculum design did not encourage dialogue with critical literacy discourses to the extent that was evident in Queensland. As was the case in Queensland, the teachers valued the mainstream senior course more highly than the Years 7-10 VELS English meaning the expected skills/texts in this course dominated the teaching in these earlier years. It was also the course that dominated the teacher conversations, rather than VCE English Language or VCE English Literature, which could be attributed to the fact that 85% of Victorian students studied the mainstream course (VCAA, 2009). Unlike Queensland, these two courses were not ‘extensions’ to the mainstream course. When comparing VCE English/ESL to its equivalent course in Queensland, Senior English, the underpinning critical literacy criteria and saturation of critical literacy metalanguage evident in the Queensland course was not prominent in the Victorian course. The effect of these differences was evident in the ways the teachers in each state spoke about their ideological environments and extra-curricula opportunities to engage with critical literacy discourses. In Queensland, because of curriculum assessment requirements, professional development, moderation activities, local publications and conferences focused on the critical literacy discourses evident in the Senior English course. Considering this was not such a priority in the state of Victoria, while the inclusion of critical literacy discourses in these forums were mentioned, they were not as evident.

The Victorian senior mainstream mandated curriculum courses acted as authoritative discourses (Bakhtin, 1981) in that they could afford or limit dialogue on particular educational discourses. The influence of the differing curriculum priorities and testing regimes across the two states was illustrated by the ways the Victorian teachers did not identify that it was a state priority to engage with critical literacy discourses. While John had delivered professional development workshops within which he felt critical literacy was central (relating to VCE English, issues analysis), none of the three Victorian teachers
identified having attended any professional development (at least that they felt was worthwhile) focusing on critical literacy, let alone engaging in productive dialogue of the kind identified by the Queensland teachers with colleagues specifically focused on critical literacy discourses. Lauren had engaged in readings that included notions of critical literacy (Freebody & Luke, 1990) since her postgraduate studies, but John had not “had time” to read in the area (even though he wanted to) and Fay argued since critical literacy was not a “prime concern” in Victorian curriculum, she “never had to think about it seriously for work”. Fay also argued that upon asking colleagues about critical literacy just prior to the interview they all reflected the same sentiments about it’s worth, or rather lack of. While all Victorian teachers felt critical literacy was evident to some extent (and had conflicting views about where it was included) in the mainstream curriculum documents in Victoria, they did not have the same access to professional development, readings, academic engagement or colleague discussion that the Queensland teachers did in relation to exploring and developing their critical literacy identities in English teaching and assessment. Even though the “authoritative word is spoken or heard in a milieu of difference” (Morson, 2004, p. 318) and curriculum documents are “dialogically tested” (ibid) by teachers they also “taste of the context and contexts in which it [the word] has lived its socially charged life” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 293). These documents reflected differing historical traditions relating to the privileging of critical literacy discourses. The omissions and ambiguities in the Victorian curriculum documents meant critical literacy was not as privileged as Queensland and hence the teachers in this state had not been afforded (or required) to engage with the variety of critical literacy voices (from academia to colleagues) as those teachers in Queensland.

The less explicit and often ambiguous inclusion of critical literacy discourse in the Victorian English curriculum documents did not invite the teachers in Victoria to use, or learn/explore, the kinds of language and utterances characteristic of critical literacy discourse. This resulted in the inclusions of critical literacy utterances and metalanguage in the Victorian espoused and enacted curriculums demonstrating some considerable differences to the inclusions demonstrated in Queensland. John’s class included some critical literacy utterances, but very few examples that were clear representations of the discourse. Some examples that demonstrated links to critical pedagogy influences (Lankshear, 1994; Luke, 1991b; Misson &
Morgan, 2006) were “language is everywhere and it's there for a purpose”, the use of “awareness” in tandem with “connections to the world” and using the term “constructed” when discussing the ways advertisements were made. The only example evident in Lauren's observed class was when she asked the students to have their “radar alerts” on when looking for subjectivity (through language connotations) in newspaper articles that claim to be objective. This reflected the notion discussed by critical literacy academics such as Freebody and Freiberg (2011) and Freebody and Luke (1990) that students need to be aware of gaps and silences in texts. Even though two of the three Victorian teachers advocated critical literacy, there was limited evidence to suggest that critical literacy utterances were integral to their enactment of the mandated English curriculum documents, especially when compared to the explicit nature of the inclusions in the Queensland teachers' enactments. The result of this was that the Victorian teachers' understanding of how critical literacy should be represented in their classrooms did not include the kinds of explicit focus on metalanguage that characterised Queensland teachers' approaches.

The result of the emphasis on critical literacy discourses in Queensland meant the teachers could be overt about their inclusion of knowledge and sign systems characteristic of critical literacy discourse in their own discourse, development and practice. The Victorian teachers, on the other hand, incorporated it more subtly and two demonstrated struggles with the authoritative nature of mandated curriculum discourse. John and Fay's relationship with the curriculum documents were most illustrative of these struggles. Both teachers felt critical literacy discourses were not visible in the VELS English curriculum, and were selectively evident in the VCE English/ESL document. In John's case, when reflecting on his school's curriculum decisions as compared to the VELS document he stated his and his school's implementation of VELS English was not done “properly at all”. Instead John (and the English curriculum developers at his school) subverted the VELS English curriculum by including critical literacy knowledge in their English Year 9 and 10 curriculum to the point that he argued the school's English curriculum was designed to be “almost a preparation for critical literacy”. Since VELS English, in John's view, did not promote a focus on critical literacy, he struggled with this document to the point that a subversive relationship formed. In addition, John stated that he did not use mandated curriculum documents, neither 7-10 nor senior
years, to plan and instead was guided by his thirty five years of experience. He did not view the mandated curriculum documents as reflecting his ideological priorities which included using the sign systems of critical literacy that were embedded in his internally persuasive discourse (mostly reflecting critical pedagogy influences).

Fay’s struggles were more in relation to conflicts between her valuing of implementing curriculum requirements and her conflicting espoused views on critical literacy. Her utterances on critical literacy suggested she valued the curriculum requirements more highly than the implementation of critical literacy skills, arguing on several occasions throughout her interview that they were not prioritised in the curriculum documents. She argued instead that the focus for Victoria was theme based literature study and ensuring students had basic literacy, with critical literacy skills only being relevant for advanced students. She also suggested the former discourses were not only more important in enacted curriculum, but also privileged by the mandated curriculum documents. Her interpretation of what she saw as minimal inclusion of critical literacy discourses in the senior year’s documents was that they were intended as a tool to lead to theme based responses. While she argued this, some conflicting examples of her espoused views on critical literacy and her recollection of enactments of critical literacy illustrated the dialogic struggles she was having with these views on the curriculum requirements. By arguing critical literacy only “informally” and “subconsciously” appeared in her practice, yet providing examples of enactments that could be located in critical literacy discourses, she reflected the influence of the mandated curriculum document’s constructions of critical literacy.

In addition, the ambiguous nature of some of the statements in the Victorian mandated English curriculum documents led to more variety in the interpretation of these documents, including contradictory views about assessment expectations. An example of this was the difference in opinions about the location of inclusions of critical literacy utterances in VCE English/ESL, with John viewing it as “integral” to Area of Study 3 (Issues Analysis), Fay seeing it as slightly evident in Area of Study 1 (Reading and Responding) and Area of Study 2 (Creating and Presenting), and Lauren viewing it as being across the three Areas of Study with the overall “intention” of producing more critically literate students. Lauren did, however,
also argue that the language inclusions in the mandated documents in relation to critical literacy discourses were ambiguous. Her view on these ambiguities reflected Barnes’ (1975) assertion that these could be viewed as positive ‘gaps’ in that she suggested they allowed for “individual interests and actions and influences”. Hence she felt these reflected curriculum affordances rather than restrictions. These contradictory views and ambiguities meant the variability in interpretations of key aspects of the curriculum teaching and assessment requirements, particularly in relation to critical literacy knowledge and skills, decreased consistency in approaches and metalanguage across the individual teachers. As discussed in the literature review, this was an issue identified by Matters and Masters (2007) in that they argued that “the wording of any of the English curriculum documents can be interpreted as including critical literacy” (p. 85) and that a teacher could either “find support in the curriculum documentation for making this [critical literacy] a focus in the classroom” (Matters & Masters, 2007, p. 85), or exclude it if they viewed critical literacy as irrelevant. The three Victorian teachers demonstrated the struggles teachers can have with ambiguities in curriculum documents that open the possibility for multiple interpretations, especially if they interpret the document as misaligning with their ideological position on English.

While it may be argued that the more explicit nature of the Queensland curriculum resulted in overly prescriptive constructions of critical literacy which could in turn restrict dialogic interaction, this was not the finding of this study. The teachers in Queensland privileged the senior documents because they felt they provided affordances to engage with critical literacy discourse on multiple levels, including engagement with particular limitations of enacting critical literacy. The overt focus on critical literacy discourses within the mandated curriculum documents and the ideological environment surrounding these teachers allowed them (and their schools) to validate spending professional development money, organising conferences/workshops, and designing classroom curriculum that had critical literacy as it core component. The Queensland teachers’ interview utterances and classroom enactments suggested these curriculum affordances encouraged not only dialogic relationship with the mandated documents, but also with a large variety of critical literacy voices beyond them. The findings demonstrated these affordances were not available for the Victorian teachers, and hence, the implementation and engagement with critical literacy had greater variance.
across the three teachers in this state. In addition the Victorian teachers’ relationships with the curriculum documents were not as positive as the Queensland teachers’, and they did not indicate a collegial possibility for resistance or change. Their relationship with the Victorian curriculum documents could be categorised as subversive (John), conformist (Fay) or ambivalent (Lauren) rather than dialogic. As Schwartz (2006) argued if curriculum writers move towards “engaging and educating” teachers and challenging their thinking, rather than designing curriculum with just student outcomes in mind, this can lead to innovative teaching. Curriculum that encourages a dialogic relationship, as it appeared to be the case for the Queensland teachers in this study, engages teachers and encourages further exploration of important educational discourses such as critical literacy discourses.

As identified in the teacher analysis chapter, the dialogic relationship each teacher had with various voices in their ideological environments (Bakhtin, 1978) contributed to their “process of selectively assimilating the words of others” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 341). In other words this describes their ideological becoming. Depending on the ways they related to these voices, they may have also dismissed particular ideologies that entered their environments, further shaping their discourses. The outcome of their combination of various texts relating to critical literacy was that they constructed hybridizations (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986) of critical literacy to fit their contexts and needs. These dialogic relationships and outcomes are the focal point of this theme.

Lucy, Cassie and Lauren all used terms to describe ‘critical literacy’ as something underpinning all aspects of English teaching, suggesting the critical literacy voices they had been in contact with had provided positive persuasive influences on their ideological development as English teachers. Cassie argued it “permeates everything, it’s what we’re doing with the language”; Lucy believed that for her it was a “natural” part of any good textual engagement or reading practice” that could not be seen as “separate”; rather it was “underpinning”, “always there”, “infuses everything” and “it is what empowers us”. Lauren viewed critical literacy as the “umbrella” under which theoretical approaches to textual
analysis such as deconstruction, feminism, Marxism and psychoanalysis sat. She viewed her role as a teacher as one of “consciousness raising” where she aimed to ensure students were not “victims of language”, rather “user[s] of language”. John and Helen, the two most senior teachers, did not use such precise language to describe the ways critical literacy influenced their becoming as English teachers, however their descriptions also indicated that critical literacy was considered across all elements of their teaching, with John even describing how it came into his teaching of other humanities courses. John felt he was introduced to critical literacy through his father’s approach to education and saw it as being something “instinctual” and a “lifetime thing” for him. He argued it not only influenced his identity as an English teacher, but how he approached life in general. Helen’s explicit use of terminology in her espoused and enacted curriculum, her identification with critical literacy theorists, her publications in the area, and her resistance to the removal of explicit links to critical literacy in mandated curriculum suggested critical literacy discourses underpinned her overall view of English. Critical literacy discourses from their ideological environments had become embedded in their internally persuasive discourses (Bakhtin, 1981). For these teachers “critical literacy is not something that occupies a timetable slot or that can be turned on and off to demand. It is a discursive commitment, a form of life, a way of being in the world” (Lankshear, 1998, p. 9). Their relationships with ‘voices’ from critical literacy discourses contributed to their individual constructions of what ‘being’ an English teacher meant and also appeared to impact on their ideological position on life in general. These teachers all reflected a belief that critical literacy was the main lens through which they interpreted all things relating to English teaching.

One teacher, Fay, presented conflicting views on the influence of critical literacy voices on her ideological becoming. She demonstrated the most struggle with critical literacy discourses as her interview included utterances that dismissed in full, partly dismissed and partly accepted critical literacy voices at various points. In contrast to the other five teachers, she did not argue that critical literacy underpinned her views on English, and in fact identified conflict with critical literacy voices that she felt represented unrealistic valuing of student interpretations above that of the teacher. She did, however, show signs of struggle as she negotiated her interpretation that critical literacy was not a “priority” or of “prime concern” in
curriculum requirements in Victoria, conflicting with Lauren's view, and her belief that elements of critical literacy discourses did "influence choices", were "subconscious" and "in the back of my mind" when planning her teaching. Unlike the other teachers who interpreted curriculum through their critical literacy lenses, Fay appeared to view the curriculum documents as the 'lens' and her interpretation was that these documents required a focus on:

- basic 'literacy' skills of the kind described in Green's (1988) 'operational' and Freebody and Luke's (1990) 'code-breaker' categories;
- "immersing kids on literary experiences" such as reading canonical texts, and "how to recite poetry"; and
- thematic studies reflecting functional literacy, Leavisite and genre studies discourses.

She also argued critical literacy was developmental and something that may have a place in discussions on "philosophical ideas at a much higher level" in an "advanced class". Hence, while she partly accepted some aspects of critical literacy discourses, she did not consciously plan to incorporate the discourses into her teaching. This reflects the kinds of struggles within her inner persuasive discourse with the multiple existing voices on literacy which sometimes have conflicting ideologies. In Fay's case critical literacy was more of an 'ad hoc' inclusion and would only be consciously enacted if she interpreted it as being prioritised in Victorian curriculum documents. The influence of various literacy discourses and the curriculum on Fay's ideological becoming illustrated her differing approach to the other teachers in this study who applied a critical literacy 'lens' onto curriculum, rather than viewing the curriculum documents as the regulator of one's practice. This meant her hybridization of critical literacy reflected more the curriculum representations than her contact with critical literacy voices.

The teachers who viewed critical literacy as central to their understanding of English identified the approach as being important for lives (both their own and their students') beyond the classroom and in this way reflected the influence of Freire and Macedo's (1987) view that reading the word needs to also relate to reading the world. They also demonstrated dialogic relationships with various theorists' voices, influential models and other texts within critical literacy discourses. While there were some commonalities across these five teachers,
the limited access to targeted professional development in critical literacy and the limited availability of ‘other’ voices (Bakhtin, 1981) on critical literacy appeared to result in greater differences between the Victorian hybridizations of critical literacy than the Queensland hybridizations. As Freedman and Ball (2004) argued, the availability of others’ words, in this case from critical literacy discourses, are essential for teachers’ development and learning of these discourses. The more ‘words’ available, the more choices an individual has to form a dialogic relationship with these particular discourses. In addition, as Bakhtin argued, the “saturation of language with specific (and consequently limiting) intentions and accents” (1981, p. 293) adds to the stratification of discourses. If these available ‘words’ or language are consistent, the ‘learning’ may reflect more commonality, as was the case in Queensland particularly evident through the apparent critical literacy metalanguage used by all three teachers. Apart from the fact that the three Queensland teachers were all very familiar with the Senior English curriculum document, there were commonalities between the kinds of texts/authors (hence voices/words available in their ideological environment) identified by all of the Queensland teachers as having been useful and influential. In particular common texts and voices identified were the Chalkface series of critical literacy teacher resource texts (authored by a combination of Patterson, Mellor, O’Neil, and Martino), Freire, Luke, Misson (and Morgan's) work, and the voice of Green through the influence of his 3D model on the pre-existing lower year’s English syllabus document. These texts/voices were also represented in the recommended reading list for teachers in the Queensland Senior English curriculum and English Extension (Literature) document.

In light of the commonalities across the influential voices the Queensland teachers identified and the extra-curricula engagement with critical literacy discourses afforded by the overt curriculum inclusions, the variance between their hybridizations of critical literacy were not as pronounced as the Victorian examples. All Queensland teachers reflected (with slight individual hybridizations) elements of all ‘variants’ or strands of critical literacy identified by authors such as Freebody (2008), Lankshear (1994, 1997), Luke and Walton (1994), Luke and Woods (2009), Misson and Morgan (2006) and Morgan (1997). These variants mainly revolved around influences from poststructuralism/postmodernism, critical pedagogy, critical discourse analysis (CDA) and critical language awareness (CLA), cultural media studies and
paradigms focusing on empowerment such as feminism and postcolonialism. Helen’s interview demonstrated the influence of voices from critical pedagogy streams through her positive association with Freire, critical discourse analysis through Fairclough, and poststructuralist feminist/gender studies through the work of Morgan, Misson, Gilbert and Martino. Her enacted curriculum also demonstrated the influence on her ideological becoming from all of these variants, but was slightly more aligned with the kinds of poststructuralist feminist influences identified by Luke (2000), Luke & Woods (2009) and Morgan (1997). Cassie’s interview also reflected voices from the same variants as was evident in her discussion on the ways critical literacy needed to “empower” students, teaching critical linguistic competence was necessary, and that it was important to ensure students understood the multiplicity of ways to read texts. Her observed practice aligned with variants influenced by critical discourse analysis, particularly of the kind labelled “text analyst” by Luke and Woods which viewed “texts as mechanisms of power and knowledge, as semiotic technologies for constructing the world and for positioning readers in relationship to the world” (2009, p. 15). Lucy’s interview mostly reflected voices from critical discourse analysis and feminist poststructuralism rather than critical pedagogy, however this influence was still evident. In addition Lucy (and Cassie to a small extent) raised issues relating to the merging of critical literacy discourses and aesthetic considerations in texts, which added a further dimension to their hybridizations of critical literacy. For Lucy this was a dominant inclusion in her criticisms of curriculum and her identified struggles with critical literacy discourses.

The hybridizations of critical literacy by the Victorian teachers demonstrated more variance than those by the Queensland teachers. John identified the influence of voices from critical pedagogy such as Freire, Giroux and Apple, and hence his enacted curriculum reflected to a certain extent a critical pedagogy style variant of critical literacy in that he asked the students to read the word and the world (Freire & Macedo, 1987). His aim of ‘empowering’ his students to be able to find hidden agendas in the world around them, or in his words “dig deeper and find out what’s going on, because there’s bound to be a bloody reason”, reflected mostly the voices of critical pedagogy variants which included “a critique of propaganda and ideology” (Luke, 2004, p. 23). Lauren’s approach was less to do with the ‘bigger picture’ and more to do with close deconstruction (and reconstruction). This linked to her identified
affinity with deconstruction and semiotics (and authors in this area), and to CDA/CLA variants such as the text analyst described by Luke and Woods (2009). She also identified a focus on encouraging theoretical readings of texts (such as feminist and Marxist), reflecting voices from poststructuralist feminist variants (Luke & Woods, 2009, Morgan 1997) of critical literacy. The influence of the notion of ‘resistant’ readings, a key concept for feminist poststructuralist variants, was not, however, evident in Lauren’s discourse in the way that it was reflected in the Queensland teachers’ discourse. The difference in mandated curriculum utterances provided some explanation for these variations. In relation to models, Lauren mentioned the voices of Freebody and Luke as reinforcing her views on critical literacy, hence influencing her ideological becoming in this area. Fay did not identify any theorists or theories in this field and demonstrated little evidence of having engaged in a positive manner with voices from critical literacy discourses (in her interview or observed practice). Her hybridization of critical literacy reflected the critical literacy knowledge dispersed through the Victorian mainstream curriculum documents, which mostly linked to poststructuralist and CDA/CLA influences.

The table below summarises the shared understandings and variances between the two states relating to the teachers’ hybridizations of critical literacy.

**Table 3 – Summary of shared understandings and variances between Queensland and Victorian teachers**

<table>
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<th>TEACHERS</th>
<th>SHARED UNDERSTANDINGS</th>
<th>VARIANCES</th>
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| Queensland (Helen, Cassie and Lucy) | • All believed theoretical rigour was important in mandated curriculum documents and that critical literacy was clearly evident in the senior year documents, but very watered down in QELS (which they resisted).  
• Many of the utterances/words from critical literacy discourses used were the same (eg. language such as dominant readings, resistant readings, invitations, | • Understanding and treatment of the links between critical literacy discourses and discourses on pleasure and aesthetics varied. |
discourse, ideology, gaps and silences) creating a common critical literacy metalanguage.

- All believed critical literacy inclusions in mandated and enacted curriculum was worth fighting for.
- All demonstrated some dialogic interaction with considerations of aesthetics in critical literacy.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Victorian Teachers (John, Fay and Lauren)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• All agreed critical literacy utterances were evident in <em>VCE English/ESL</em>.</td>
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| • They did not identify the same sections of the *VCE English/ESL* course as having evidence of critical literacy discourse hence reflecting differing interpretations of what the enactment of critical literacy meant. |
| • There was no clear shared ‘variant’ from critical literacy discourses evident across more than one teacher. |
| • There was no evidence of |
shared influential texts/voices from critical literacy discourses reflected in interviews or classroom practice.

- There was not an established critical literacy metalanguage.

From the teachers analysed in this thesis, five demonstrated the ways their dialogic relationship with critical literacy influenced their ideological becoming as English teachers (and their ‘complete’ social identities). One (Fay) illustrated how her resistant struggles with critical literacy ‘voices’ and her perception of curriculum requirements had influenced her ideological becoming and resulted in her viewing ‘critical literacy’ as something she claimed she did not prioritise even though some of her utterances reflected critical literacy approaches. All of the teachers who advocated critical literacy viewed their espoused hybridizations as essential components of their teaching which would contribute to the betterment of students’ lives and society, reflecting the moral social justice element cutting across all variants of critical literacy. While they all shared this view of critical literacy as “an embodied, lived professional experience” (Howie, 2006, p. 228), their hybridizations reflected a combination of the ‘taste’ of the speaker (Bakhtin, 1981) and the ways critical literacy discourses were stratified (Bakhtin, 1981) depending on their individual state’s literacy priorities and historical contexts. This combination resulted in the Queensland teachers demonstrating more commonalities across their hybridizations of critical literacy compared to the Victorian teachers - as illustrated in the table above.

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TENSION CAN OCCUR IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHERS’ IDEOLOGICAL BECOMING BETWEEN CRITICAL LITERACY DISCOURSES AND TRADITIONAL NOTIONS OF TEACHING ‘LITERATURE’ AND VALUING OF THE ‘AESTHETIC’
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Several teachers chose to discuss tensions that existed for them between representations of critical literacy discourses and traditional notions of teaching ‘literature’, specifically focusing on the aesthetic, imagination, pleasure and formal assessment requirements. Considering the postmodern/poststructuralist influence on critical literacy discourses, there have been
criticisms, particularly by the media, arguing that critical literacy is overly ideological and political removing the pleasure of reading texts, and constructs all texts as being of the same worth (Slattery, 2005b, 2005c; Donnelly, 2005a, 2006a, 2006c). Misson (1995, 1998b, 2004, 2005, 2012) and Misson and Morgan (2006) identified conflicts in this area and suggested some solutions. While some of the teachers in this study identified familiarity with these critical literacy voices, they still demonstrated ongoing struggles when trying to position critical literacy concepts and traditional discourses on pleasure and aesthetics into a framework that would work in practice and assessment (especially when the connections weren’t required in mandated curriculum). This finding suggested constructions of critical literacy and its enactment in this particular area of critical literacy discourses created unreconciled dialogic struggle for these teachers and influenced their ideological becoming, as is discussed in the following paragraphs.

Both Lucy and Cassie demonstrated tension in their negotiations of critical literacy ideologies and ways to merge these with the pleasures of reading literature, illustrating “the difficulty critical literacy has with literature – and with enjoyment in it” (Misson & Morgan, 2005, p. 17). Lucy identified the critical literacy voices influencing her views in this area as being mostly Misson’s body of work, which she drew on in her postgraduate Master of Education thesis. Her thesis focused on the contradictions in this area in the Queensland Senior English course brought about through the inclusion of affective aims in the rationale but not in the assessable exit criteria. This topic illustrated that the kinds of conflicts Misson (1998a, 1998b, 2003, 2004, 2009) and Misson and Morgan (2005, 2006) identified between these groups of ideologies and the representation of this view in curriculum. In her interview she argued that “critical literacy infuses everything” and should not be represented as being “opposed to an aesthetic understanding of a text or to read a text and empathise”. She also argued that assessment needed to account for the fact that the aesthetic is what “really positions you”, reflecting Misson’s assertion that “it is important that students should analyse the ways in which the text is producing pleasure, because giving pleasure is a fundamental way a text has of positioning the reader” (1998b, p 109).
Cassie also viewed critical literacy as something that “permeates everything” and, like Lucy, was frustrated by the way critical assessment appeared to be favoured at the expense of pleasure as illustrated in her utterance:

I also sometimes feel a bit resentful of...assessment too, it seems to be...the tension seems to be coming back, but because it's something one can critically assess more easily than one can assess the aesthetic appreciation of something I sometimes feel that it takes away from some of the pleasure, the pleasure of the subject, the intellectual discussion as well.

Both Lucy and Cassie’s comments suggested they were ideologically committed to critical literacy and reflected Misson’s views that “one cannot simply critique a text rationally without coming to terms with the way it is working emotionally” (Misson, 2012, p 34) and that understanding textual representation “requires an act of imagination” (Misson, 2009, p 7). They struggled with the ways the curriculum document represented critical literacy knowledge as separate from affective aims as it compounded the already “agitated and tension-filled environment” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 276) in which these discourses existed for them. Lucy did, however, empathise with curriculum writers saying “how do you assess it, how do you talk about it”, further illustrating the conflicts she was having with these discourses.

Helen’s position on critical literacy approaches to literature provided a contrast to her Queensland colleagues Lucy and Cassie. In her enactment she included a definition of ‘literature’ that reflected postmodern discourses in that it critiqued socially situated and ideologically implicated decisions on what constituted literature. She also included a discussion on what influences one’s view on ‘good writing’, being one’s values and ideologies, and invited students to analyse texts of their own choice in the classroom. Helen’s utterances, unlike Lucy’s and Cassie’s, suggested she preferred students did not ‘turn off’ critical literacy when reading popular culture texts such as Twilight. This was evident in her utterance “so in their own lives let’s hope when they’re reading the Twilight series they’re a little bit more critically literate”. Helen did not share Cassie and Lucy’s concerns about using critical literacy with texts students’ enjoyed. While Cassie and Lucy felt this may destroy their pleasure in reading these texts, Helen felt it essential that they critically approached their reading of these
kinds of popular culture texts. She also argued when discussing the incorporation of canonical texts such as *Animal Farm* in the classroom that if students stated they disliked the text she told them “well that’s good we don’t want you to like it we just want it to make you think”. This view reflected Misson and Morgan’s comment that “according to critical literacy, the experiential and emotional impact of the text is largely there to distract us. So we’d better not linger appreciatively” (2005, 144). Whether having critical literacy constantly ‘switched on’ takes the pleasure away for the students is a contentious area, and was a criticism evident in media discourses (Slattery, 2005b, 2005c; Donnelly, 2005a, 2006a, 2006c). Misson (2009) and Misson and Morgan’s (2005, 2006) work, however, suggested pleasure not only exists in tandem with critical literacy, but can enhance the experience. Helen’s embodiment of particular voices within critical literacy discourses demonstrated a dismissal of the kinds of tensions with traditional notions identified by Lucy and Cassie. Helen had reconciled notions of ‘literature’ and aesthetic considerations to meet her hybridization of critical literacy.

Fay also demonstrated tension with voices from critical literacy discourses and traditional discourses within her ideological becoming, however in a different way to the Queensland teachers. Her conflicts related more to struggles to privilege traditional discourses over critical literacy discourses, rather than the other teachers’ struggles because of their predisposition to critical literacy. Fay’s utterances throughout the interview reflected a rejection of critical literacy discourses in that she argued they were not relevant, however her utterances also suggested critical literacy discourses did influence her enactment of English. She also felt students in recent times were lacking in literary experiences such as “how to recite poetry” and did not have “literary backgrounds” in specific kinds of texts. Her conflict with this area of critical literacy reflected an anecdote in an article by Misson and Morgan in which Morgan recalled an informal discussion with Luke. She asked him the question

Is there room for poetry in critical literacy? No, he says. No room. Poetry’s a minority interest, a kind of cultural and aesthetic speciality. Let people do poetry, if they choose, outside of school, like any hobby ...In classrooms, he says, we’ve got far more important work to do, to help students understand how texts work ideologically, to help them become critical, resistant readers and viewers. (2005, p. 17)
Fay's tensions with critical literacy and traditional notions of aesthetic appreciation and 'literature' were evident in the following utterance:

Some schools are abandoning texts like that because they are too difficult and so it's a challenge to get them to enjoy it, to engage in it and they will think that we get to do it from different perspectives themselves, I think they're writing, they've written *Star Wars* version of *Romeo and Juliet* and all sorts of versions and so they're getting, they're understanding the characters, they're discussing Romeo, what he's like in relation to a 16 possibly 16 year old today, so we discuss it, but mainly from within the text and, and in comparison to their own world.

This utterance suggested Fay's enactment of English included an activity typical of critical literacy approaches, reconstructing canonical texts. Fay's tension, however, was that the only way to teach these texts to the current generation of students in a way that they would enjoy it was to use an approach that allowed them to reconstruct them to fit into modern, popular contexts. She argued that schools no longer included “difficult” texts, meaning students no longer wished to “engage” or “enjoy” these texts, and that students “think that we get to do it” through modern rewrites that included popular culture revisions. While she used critical literacy style activities to engage the students, her conflict with these approaches was evident through her comment that this was focused “mainly within the text”, was simply used to help understand character and lead to a 'text response' style essay, and her insistence throughout the interview that critical literacy was not assessed or relevant in the Victorian context. She demonstrated discomfort with the displacement of value placed on texts such as those that were for her important cultural and aesthetic texts. She dismissed critical literacy voices as she resented their emphasis on reconstructing texts that she viewed as having literary value for the sake of student engagement, which were approaches she felt she had to use in her own classrooms. The infiltration of these approaches influencing engagement with 'pure' forms of literature such as poetry and Shakespeare created competing discourses for Fay that she found difficult to reconcile.

When analysing John and Lauren's utterances, the negotiation of critical literacy discourses and appreciation of literature did not feature as creating tension or otherwise. This area of
contention appeared to be more influential on the teachers in Queensland than those in Victoria. This suggested those teachers in Queensland may have had more contact with voices such as Misson in their ideological environments bringing it to the forefront of their critical literacy constructions. The teachers discussed in this theme demonstrated various levels of tension when negotiating the “dialogically agitated” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 276) interrelationship between “value judgements and accents” (ibid) of critical literacy representations and traditional discourses on the appreciation of literature. Their tensions illustrated the kinds of perceived disjuncture that Misson (1998a, 2003, 2009) and Misson and Morgan (2005, 2006) identified as existing in discourses on critical literacy. This area was yet to be reconciled by several teachers in this study, and for those who advocated critical literacy the difficulties in bringing these areas together in assessment resulted in them expressing feelings of resentment and frustration. This tension confirms Misson’s (2009, 2012) continued emphasis on the need to align critical literacy discourses with discourses on pleasure, creativity (particularly related to writing) and aesthetics. The findings also illustrated that factors, such as omissions in assessment criteria, contributed to this disjuncture and further work can be done to develop teachers’ dialogic relationship with this part of critical literacy discourses.

6.3 CONCLUSION AND ‘WHERE TO NOW’

The analysis and interpretation of the data collected for this research project illustrated several findings in relation to the place and construction of critical literacy in curriculum and teacher discourses in Australia. First, curriculum can provide affordances and restrictions for teachers regarding theoretical engagement with important theories of relevance to critical literacy. The Queensland teachers in this study were accustomed to curriculum documents that provided opportunities to engage with critical literacy discourses and lived in a state with a history of privileging critical literacy discourses. In light of this, various voices of significance to critical literacy theoretical discourses were evident in their ideological environments (Bakhtin, 1978) and contributed to their ideological becoming (Bakhtin, 1981) as English teachers. They also resisted attempts to remove these affordances, particularly in the influential senior year’s documents. In Victoria, where curriculum documents, and curriculum history, did not have an emphasis on critical literacy, the teachers did not have the same access to critical literacy discourses as the teachers in Queensland did and either
subverted curriculum, appropriated the curriculum using a critical literacy 'lens', or chose to privilege other discourses they interpreted as curriculum priorities. There was very little evidence of common voices from critical literacy discourses influencing these teachers in their ideological environments.

Second, the findings from the data analysis and interpretation also illustrated a lack of consistency between the two states in relation to the ways knowledge and sign systems (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) promoted by critical literacy discourses were valued as social goods. While all but one of the teachers in the study placed high value on critical literacy discourses, the influence of these discourses on the Queensland teachers' ideological becoming and enacted curriculum was considerably more evident than the Victorian teachers. The teachers in Queensland identified similar voices and appeared to have common critical literacy metalanguage reflecting the definitions from the Senior English glossary. Their hybridizations were also similar reflecting variants, identified by Lankshear (1994, 1997), Luke and Walton (1994), Luke and Woods (2009) and Morgan (1997), influenced by paradigms such as postmodernism/poststructuralism, critical pedagogy, CLA/CDA and feminist/postcolonialism. In Victoria there was no evidence of teachers using common critical literacy concepts, and their hybridizations did not demonstrate common streams like those in Queensland. Finally, the findings suggested negotiating critical literacy with discourses on pleasure and aesthetics, a more recent concern in critical literacy discourses, created tension for several teachers in the study, and was particularly evident for two of the Queensland teachers.

When considering the future of critical literacy in Australian English educational contexts it is important to draw on current views about how a critical literacy agenda can and should continue in Australia. Several Australian critical literacy academics, such as Freebody and Freiberg (2011), Luke (2011, 2012a, 2012b), Luke, Dooley and Woods (2011) and Misson (2012), have recently discussed the worth, policy treatment and hybridizations of critical literacy. Luke, Dooley and Woods (2011) argued that “culturally based reading comprehension and critical literacy instruction has received little policy endorsement despite an extensive qualitative literature over three decades that has documented local efficacy (e.g., Au 1993; McNaughton 2002; McCarty 2009; Nixon et al. 2009; Janks 2010)” (p. 153). Their
argument suggested further work was required to encourage “political building” and “privileging of social goods” (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) from critical literacy discourses into policy contexts. Along similar lines Luke argued that

educational work in the field of critical literacy provides a key opportunity for the debating, unpacking and learning about this family of questions: How does language, text, discourse and information make a difference? For whom? In what material, social and consequential ways? In whose interests? According to what patterns, rules and in what institutional and cultural sites?...These, I want to argue, are not fringe or boutique concerns of an elite literary, cultural studies or political education. Nor should these be elective options in an education system that is locked into the production of its human subjects as competitive capital for these new economies.” (2011, p. 3)

These authors suggested a critical literacy agenda continued to be of prime importance for literacy policy and curriculum design in modern Australian contexts which was reflected in the views of five out of the six teachers included in this study. These publications (and the findings) demonstrated that the knowledge and sign systems within critical literacy discourses continued to be viewed as social goods in literacy education and beyond.

In addition, Luke (2011, 2012a) also revisited his earlier discussions (Luke, 2000; Luke & Walton, 1994; Luke & Woods, 2009) in these recent publications on the hybridizations of critical literacy, outlining historical influences such as critical pedagogy (particularly Freire), Foucault, systemic functional linguistics, critical discourse analysis, critical language awareness, poststructuralist feminism and cultural/media studies. While Luke addressed issues and gaps in the various influencing discourses that have contributed to critical literacy variants, he did not add his own ‘hybrid’ as a way to suggest future directions for critical literacy enactment. Rather he placed the future of critical literacy discourses into the hands of each individual educator, arguing “how educators shape and deploy the tools, attitudes, and philosophies of critical literacy is utterly contingent: It depends upon students’ and teachers’ everyday relations of power, their lived problems and struggles, and...on educators’ professional ingenuity in navigating the enabling and disenabling local contexts of policy”
(Luke, 2012a, p. 9). Essentially, Luke suggested the enactment of critical literacy depended on the educator’s ability to work within or challenge policy environments that may or may not enable dialogic relations with the discourses. In this study it was found that the Queensland contexts proved to be more enabling than those in Victoria as they provided opportunities for teachers to dialogically interact with critical literacy discourses through curriculum language inclusions and collegial support. The historical privileging of critical literacy in Queensland permitted schools and teachers to focus professional learning on this area and negotiate a variety of ‘other’ voices in these discourses to “produce [their] own meaning out of the myriad connotations and associations of the words [others] use” (Maybin, 2001, p. 65). The establishment of critical literacy voices in the state also meant they had the power to negotiate curriculum as was demonstrated in their collegial resistance towards the removal of critical literacy social goods in authoritative policy documents. In other words there appeared to be more avenues for the Queensland teachers to work towards becoming the kind of critically engaged educators Luke (2010) and Doecke and Parr (2011) argued for, and to develop their own hybridizations of critical literacy.

In light of the findings of this research, and recent publications arguing for a continued focus on critical literacy social goods in educational contexts, how can critical literacy be envisaged for the future in Australia? Before presenting suggestions arising from this research context, the views of academics in the field need to be addressed. Freebody and Freiberg (2011) and Misson (2012) presented different approaches on possible future hybridizations of critical literacy. All publications suggested that the existing critical literacy discourses did not provide enough guidance for teachers to enact productive approaches to literacy. Misson’s suggestion for the future direction of English in Australia was to overhaul subject English to incorporate critical literacy (as a part of critical analysis) with imagination, affect, ethics and belief. He emphasised the interrelations between the five elements and that these crossed all interactions with text including reading, writing/production, speaking and listening. Freebody and Freiberg (2011) argued, in a similar vein to Luke (2010), that research pointed “to the need for some version of critical literacy education and to some of its more promising forms” (p. 432) and that they believed the “most productive view of critical literacy is that it refers to a distinct and growing body of technical knowledge about textuality” (p. 432). Their suggested “components” of an “integrated curriculum on the topic of critical literacy” (p. 444)
attempted to address gaps and limitations. They identified the components as being “(a) textual forms and technologies; texts and interpretations as analysable productions (b) textual and literate practices as social practices: texts and interpretations as context-relevant, motivated social actions; and (c) reflexivity: texts and interpretations as productive” (p. 445). Research into the dialogical possibility of these theoretical constructs for teachers is yet to be conducted. Further work is required to see if these hybridizations of critical literacy would be persuasive influences on teachers’ ideological becoming.

While the above academic publications included some exploration of the possible future of critical literacy discourses, Freebody and Freiberg’s (2011) text was the only one offering a practical direction for re-envisioning critical literacy discourses in the form of components, that could be used as a new ‘model’. An important omission in these texts was consideration of the kinds of conditions needed for teachers to continue effective critical literacy dialogues. Considering the upcoming requirement for schools to implement a national curriculum, there needs to be some acknowledgement of the conditions needed for teachers to engage in meaningful literacy (and critical literacy) “Conversations” (Gee, 2011a, 2011b) when interpreting curriculum requirements. The findings in this thesis suggested several conditions provide affordances for teachers to have meaningful dialogues with critical literacy voices. First, teachers need to be able to access multiple other voices within their ideological environments. These need to not only include their English teaching colleagues and mandated curriculum, but also those beyond the domain of secondary contexts into theoretical and public spheres. They need opportunities to engage with a variety of voices that complement and contrast with their own views, and those that enable them to develop a sense of community. As Freedman and Ball argued, “the role of the other is critical to our development; in essence, the more choice we have of words to assimilate, the more opportunity we have to learn” (2004, p. 6). This will provide more ‘opportunities’ for them to become members of heteroglossic critical literacy discourses who can contribute to their ‘renegotiation’ (Lemke, 1995). The Queensland teachers in this study identified the most contact with critical literacy voices in their ideological environments. The privileging of various critical literacy knowledge and social goods in the state’s mandated curriculum, particularly the senior years, provided opportunities to construct spaces for dialogue.
The Queensland teachers’ relationship with the curriculum in their state highlights the second condition, permissions through mandated curriculum. Curriculum documents that encourage teachers to develop and assess social goods from critical literacy discourses will permit them to engage more with the discourses. In addition, for teachers to develop productive curriculum and a sense of professional identity a third condition needed is that they are seen as producers of knowledge and given spaces to develop educational knowledge through critical reflexivity. This was also a condition emphasised by authors such as Gale (2006), Doecke, Locke and Petrosky (2004) and Doecke and Parr (2011). Leading on from the findings of this thesis, one way to encourage critical reflexivity in the area of critical literacy is to provide spaces for teachers to explore the ways they can and do contribute to the hybridization of critical literacy. It is important for teachers to go through a process of “conscientization” (Freire, 1970) in which they critically reflect on the ideologies they bring to their teaching of English, and how this defines their relationship with mandated curriculum documents. This will enable them to develop more theorised and justified approaches to their teaching of English. This includes opening spaces for teachers to do three things; examine gaps between their espoused and enacted critical literacy curriculum; critically reflect on the multiple ‘other’ voices that have entered their ideological environments and influenced their hybridizations; and examine the ways these influence their deconstruction and engagement with mandated curriculum documents. Meeting these conditions will provide for teachers more productive ideological environments in which they can critically reflect on their and others’ hybridizations of critical literacy and its place in Australia in classrooms and public domains.
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