

Understanding challenging behaviour as a social
construction: exploring the role of pupil-teacher
discourse in the secondary classroom

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Contents

1	Abstract.....	1
2	Acknowledgements	3
3	Introduction	4
3.1	Background and interests of the author.....	4
3.2	Positioning of the research.....	5
4	Literature Review	7
4.1	Overview of the topic area.....	7
4.2	Defining challenging behaviour	9
4.2.1	Labelling or 'pathologising' of behaviour.....	10
4.2.2	Exploring definitions of behaviour.....	13
4.2.3	Difficulties with definition	15
4.3	Pupil-Teacher Interaction	15
4.4	Pedagogic talk and the Initiation-Feedback-Response sequence.....	16
4.5	Pupil-Teacher Interactions relating to classroom behaviour	19
4.6	The social construction of challenging behaviour	22
4.7	Understanding the school as a system.....	24
4.8	Institutional talk	26
4.9	Power.....	27
4.10	Challenging behaviour as a threat.....	28
4.11	Dialogue in the classroom	30
5	Systematic Review.....	31
5.1	Introduction to the Systematic Review of the Literature	31
5.2	Review Question	31
5.3	Search Strategy and Search Tools.....	32
5.4	Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria	32
5.5	Synthesis	35
5.5.1	Search and Results.....	35
5.5.2	Data Extraction	36
5.5.3	Quality Assessment	39
5.5.4	Discussion and Critique	40
5.5.5	Reliability and Validity	41
5.6	Summary of the Review	42
5.7	The contribution of unpublished research.....	43
6	Research Focus and Questions	47
7	Methodology	49

7.1	Ontology	49
7.2	Epistemology	50
7.3	Social Constructionism.....	51
7.3.1	Development of social constructionist thinking	52
7.3.2	Language as social action.....	53
7.3.3	Knowledge	54
7.4	Discourse Analysis.....	54
7.5	Conversation Analysis.....	57
7.6	Critical Discourse Analysis	60
7.6.1	Power and inequality within Critical Discourse Analysis	62
7.6.2	Critical Discourse Analysis and the School	63
8	Research Methods and Design	65
8.1	Observations.....	65
8.2	Audio-recording.....	66
8.3	Transcription	67
8.4	Ethical Considerations	68
8.5	Procedure	69
8.5.1	Stakeholder Involvement and Recruitment of Participants.....	69
8.5.2	Participants and Context	71
8.5.3	Data Collection.....	73
8.6	Reliability and Validity	75
8.7	Researcher reflexivity.....	77
9	Findings and Analysis	79
9.1	Procedure	79
9.2	Transcription	80
9.3	Ethical Considerations	81
9.4	Analysis Procedure and Protocols.....	81
9.5	Exploring the data and the construction of the analysis	83
9.6	Linguistic Devices and their functions.....	84
9.6.1	Lexical Choice.....	84
9.6.2	Grammar and use of pronouns	89
9.6.3	Non-lexical or paralinguistic features.....	91
9.6.4	Overlapping talk.....	91
9.6.5	Pauses and Silences.....	93
9.6.6	Humour.....	94
9.6.7	Ignoring – planned (intentional) and unintentional	96
9.6.8	Singing, sounds and whistling	98

9.7	Organisation of the talk	99
9.7.1	Initiations and Transitions	100
9.7.2	Adjacency Pairs	101
9.7.3	Questions.....	102
9.7.4	Rhetorical questions.....	103
9.7.5	Turn taking.....	104
9.7.6	IRF Sequence.....	106
9.8	Power and Roles.....	108
9.9	Types of talk and the development of broader discourses.....	112
9.9.1	Formal talk.....	112
9.9.2	Repetition and Reframing	113
9.9.3	Opinions.....	113
9.9.4	Empathy, Support, Reassurance and Confidence.....	114
9.9.5	School Culture and the Regulative Discourse	116
9.9.6	Pupil Culture and Teacher Culture	118
10	Discussion and Reflections.....	122
10.1	Summary of Main Findings.....	122
10.2	The Unique Contribution of the Research	128
10.3	Criticality around dominant discourses	129
10.4	Reflections upon the research design and methodology	130
10.4.1	Discourse Analysis.....	130
10.4.2	Participants	131
10.4.3	Recruitment	131
10.4.4	Data and Transcription.....	132
10.4.5	Observations.....	133
10.5	Reliability and Validity	133
10.6	Reflections on using discursive approaches to explore classroom behaviour.....	135
10.7	Opportunities for Further Research	137
10.8	Implications.....	139
10.8.1	Implications for Teachers and Educators	139
10.8.2	Implications for Policy Makers.....	140
10.8.3	Implications for EPs	140
11	Conclusion.....	142
12	References.....	144
13	Appendices.....	156
13.1	Appendix A: Flow Diagram - Identification of Included Studies.....	156

13.2	Appendix B – A table to show a bibliography of excluded studies and reasons for exclusion.....	157
13.3	Appendix C - A table to show definitions/explanations of Weight of Evidence Levels in relation to review question.....	159
13.4	Appendix D – Research Interest/Opportunity Letter to Schools.....	160
13.5	Appendix E – Information letter for school.....	162
13.6	Appendix F – Consent Form for School.....	163
13.7	Appendix G – Research Interest/Opportunity Letter for Teachers	164
13.8	Appendix H – Research Interest/Opportunity Letter for Parents	166
13.9	Appendix I – Research Interest/Opportunity Letter for Pupils	168
13.10	Appendix J – Information Letter for Teachers	170
13.11	Appendix K – Consent Form for Teachers.....	171
13.12	Appendix L – Information Sheet for Parents	172
13.13	Appendix M – Information Sheet for Pupils.....	173
13.14	Appendix N – Consent Form for Parents	174
13.15	Appendix O – Consent Form for Pupils.....	175
13.16	Appendix P – Observation Information and Pupil-Teacher Pairings	176
13.17	Appendix Q – Observation Grid.....	178
13.18	Appendix R – Discussion Questions and Prompt Tool.....	179
13.19	Appendix S – Debrief Information Sheet.....	181
13.20	Appendix T – Transcription Notation Symbols and Method.....	182
13.21	Appendix U – Analysis Protocol and Steps.....	183

Table of Figures

Figure 5-1 - Stages of a Systematic Review (Gough, 2007)	31
Figure 5-2 - Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Identified Studies	32
Figure 5-3 - A Table of Characteristics for Included Studies	37
Figure 5-4 - Gough's Weight of Evidence Model	39
Figure 5-5 - Weight of Evidence Judgements for Included Studies.....	40

1 Abstract

Challenging behaviour continues to be portrayed by the media, politicians and educationalist as a cause for concerns in UK secondary schools (DfE 2015, NASUWT, 2014). In recent years, there has been a shift in thinking amongst some researchers (Graff, 2009, Pomerantz, 2005) about how to view challenging behaviour in the classroom, recognising its idiographic nature. By drawing upon other disciplines, alongside psychology, social constructionist thinking has emerged as a helpful position from which to view challenging behaviour. From this position, challenging behaviour is socially constructed through language and action in the classroom.

This study explored challenging *verbal* behaviour in the secondary classroom from a social constructionist perspective. A series of observations of three Key Stage 3 pupils and their teachers were completed. These observations were supported by audio-recording and qualitative observation records. To analyse the data, two approaches to Discourse Analysis, namely Conversation Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis, were used to explore pupil-teacher interaction. This analysis focused on the ways micro and macro features of classroom talk created potential for the construction of challenging verbal behaviour.

The institutionally defined asymmetry in pupil-teacher roles impacted upon the range and use of linguistic devices used by teachers and pupils. Teachers used a broader range of sophisticated strategies to maintain their authority control of the discourse. Pupils would then seek to address this asymmetry through talk, sometimes impulsively, leading to the construction of situations related to behaviour. As such, challenging verbal behaviour emerged when there was conflict between the pupil and teacher roles in the interactional space in the classroom.

This study has several implications for the practice of Educational Psychologists and teachers. It highlighted the importance of considering the micro-level features of pupil-teacher talk in the classroom, recognising their idiographic nature. Dominant discourses, power and institutional talk can

make certain things 'thinkable' and 'sayable' therefore highlighting the importance of reflexivity and criticality around the language that is used when talking about challenging behaviour. Finally, the potential value of Discourse Analysis and social constructionist thinking in understanding challenging behaviour was also identified as a possible way forward, both for the evidence base and for practice.

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3 Introduction

3.1 Background and interests of the author

I first became interested in the area of challenging behaviour during my previous role as an Infant School Teacher. I can remember feeling that, as a newly qualified teacher, I felt completely unprepared for entering my own classroom. During my first year of teaching I attended several behaviour management courses in a bid to develop my practice in the classroom. I began to reflect on why some strategies worked only for some pupils and why some whole class behaviour management strategies failed to engage the whole class. As I gained more teaching experience I began to reflect on the role that language played in communicating effectively with pupils whose behaviour I myself found challenging. I found that by adapting the language I used within my interactions I could develop positive working relationships with the handful of more challenging pupils. This made a difference not only to the pupil's wellbeing but also to my own wellbeing.

My reflections were guided at the time by an influential article by Pomerantz (2005), and by Burr's text on Social Constructionism (Burr, 2003) which led me to become more aware of how language could be viewed as a means of social action. Indeed, this built on my previous interest in the work of Berger and Luckmann (1966) on the 'social construction of reality', that I had studied as part of my undergraduate degree in Psychology and Sociology.

Upon training as a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) and undertaking behaviour casework, I found many useful approaches to understanding behaviour. I have undertaken brief functional assessments, written multi-element plans and completed cognitive behavioural work with young people. However, alongside these I remain fascinated by the role that language plays in how we shape our own worlds, and as such how we are experts in our own social worlds. I believe that it is language which holds

the key to understanding how challenging behaviour is constructed in schools – and how it can be best supported and addressed.

3.2 Positioning of the research

This research adopts a social constructionist and relativist view of the world, recognising the idiographic nature of pupil-teacher relationships and of challenging behaviour in schools. It is informed by the psychological evidence base but also incorporates thinking from sociology, education and linguistics. I feel that this position will enable a greater exploration of the phenomenon under exploration, particularly as challenging behaviour is difficult to conceptualise or operationalise and can be deeply personal in nature, both for the teacher and the student.

My desire to explore the ‘problem’ of challenging behaviour from a social constructionist perspective has developed from my own experiences, including those from my own schooling. My aim was to facilitate further understanding of how and why challenging behaviour develops in the classroom, how pupil-teacher relationships are built, fostered or in some situations break down. Having watched this play out in the classroom, during my own schooling, during my teaching career and within casework, I continue to remain fascinated by something which at times feels intangible.

In undertaking this work, I hoped to explore some of the ways challenging behaviour can be constructed via language and social action in the classroom. This was not with the view of identifying ‘truths’ but to begin to develop understanding by exploring the phenomenon with pupils and teachers in a secondary school context. From this I hoped to be able to explore some of the dominant and seemingly persistent discourses which have been maintained over time, regarding pupil behaviour in schools, including the positioning of the young person as a ‘problem’.

I continue to take issue with the word ‘problem’, and continually consider where exactly the ‘problem’ lies, how it is constructed and by whom. I began the current research from the position that the ‘problem’ lies not with the young person, but within wider social practices and discourses which have

become established within our broader schooling system, and with the view that the perceived problem of challenging behaviour is also socially constructed.

4 Literature Review

4.1 Overview of the topic area

Behaviour in schools continues to be portrayed by the media, politicians and educationalists as a growing concern. A recent survey by the NASUWT (2014) indicated that 85% of teachers believe there are widespread behaviour problems in schools. This survey was completed by 16,000 primary teachers, secondary teachers and school leaders in the UK teaching in community schools (local authority controlled) and academies. 80% of the teachers reported disruption caused by pupil behaviour as an ongoing challenge or concern meaning a significant amount of teaching time is lost. Other research has also found that secondary school teachers cite disruptive behaviour as a major concern (Infantino & Little, 2005) and a source of stress which impacts on teachers' daily classroom practice (Nash, Schlosser & Scarr, 2015) which is "forcing good people out of the profession" (DfE, 2012).

Concerns about challenging behaviour in schools, though, are not new (Elton Report 1989, Ofsted 2005), and it continues to be a broadly researched topic. Within the research literature there is a growing rejection of the 'within-child' perspective of challenging behaviour whereupon it is explained in a reductionist, medicalised way by application of a label (Macleod 2010). It is now much more widely accepted within Educational Psychology that behaviour needs to be viewed as an interaction of factors (Miller & Gulliford, 2015), although this ecosystemic view may not yet appear to be fully integrated into teachers' thinking (Nash, Schlosser & Scarr, 2015, Swinson, Woof & Melling, 2003). When Educational Psychologists (EPs) undertake casework relating to behaviour they will consider different ways to view or understand behaviour from within the evidence-base. These theories will then support EPs when planning, constructing hypotheses, determining assessment methods and interventions, creating a clear theory-practice link (Frederickson & Cline, 2015).

Despite concerns expressed regarding challenging behaviour, the most common forms of misbehaviour often include low-level but persistent disruptive behaviours such as talking or calling out (DfE, 2012). These behaviours can be irritating to staff and can also disrupt learning (Ofsted, 2005). Managing classroom behaviour is an important but complex skill for teachers. It is also an area where EPs can make a significant contribution (Hart, 2010). Recent government policy, such as Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (2015), tends to focus predominantly on discipline and control, whereas applied psychology focuses on using the psychological evidence base (Hart 2010) to guide EPs in assessing and understanding behaviour.

The evidence base focusing on behaviour in schools has continued to evolve and the importance of the pupil-teacher relationship and interactions have become highly researched areas within the field. This is perhaps because interaction is a key part of a teacher's professional role (Einarsson & Granstrom, 2002) and a positive relationship can be crucial to academic achievement (Doumen, Verschueren & Buyse, 2009). The verbal behaviour of teachers and its impact on pupils and their behaviour has become an emerging theme within research into the pupil-teacher relationship (Apter, Arnold & Swinson, 2010). Much of this will be discussed in more detail in subsequent sections of this literature review.

Although there is a large amount of research that looks at pupil-teacher interaction, much of this simply *categorises* what is said, for example, labelling it as positive, negative or neutral. Very little research focuses on analysing *more precisely* what is said, or how these interactions may play a role in constructing and reinforcing challenging behaviour (Pomerantz, 2005). Pomerantz (2005) argues there is a need to explore how words are employed, how meanings are socially constructed and their role within challenging behaviour. This is the position from which the current research begins. Key areas of the literature will now be examined in more detail.

4.2 Defining challenging behaviour

Effectively managing behaviour in the classroom continues to be a universal challenge for all teachers (Hallam & Rogers, 2008). Castle and Parsons (1997) believe that pupils who display behaviour that is challenging are becoming a permanent feature within UK education culture. This has continued to be the case and there is the belief that the current context is getting worse instead of better with reported increases in severity and frequency (DfE, 2015, Visser, 2005).

Watson (2005) expresses that there appears to be somewhat of a 'moral panic' about indiscipline in schools. The discursive practices that surround the topic of challenging behaviour have led to a constant stream of media reports, ensuring that behaviour remains on the political and educational agenda. This moral panic and media discussion continues to be the case more than 10 years on and this, alongside teacher surveys (NASUWT, 2014) have driven the ongoing and repeated introduction of government documentation, initiatives, and policy such as *The Importance of Teaching* (2010), *Ensuring good behaviour in schools* (2012) and *Behaviour and Discipline in Schools* (2016) attempting to address the continued concerns.

Burke (2011) adds that concerns continue despite the UK Coalition Government of 2010 "vowing to restore teacher authority" in school to address the perceived problem. What is noted is that the main emphasis of recent government policy remains on *discipline* and *control*, rather than on defining the behaviours to which the documents refer. In fact, within *Ensuring Good Behaviour in schools* (2012) the government itself recognised the problematic nature of defining poor behaviour, stating that this was not straightforward. It could be that the persistent failure to support and improve behaviour in schools is due a lack of understanding about the varied ways to view behaviour amongst policy writers. It is here that EPs have continued to add to the developing research evidence base, and can make a valuable ongoing contribution.

4.2.1 Labelling or 'pathologising' of behaviour

As already stated, concerns continue to be expressed about behaviour in schools, and teachers cite it as one of their main concerns (NASUWT, 2014). This is despite there being no clear definition of what is meant by *challenging behaviour*, with terminology being inconsistent and lacking clarity. When searching through the literature it feels as if one is being bombarded with a variety of competing terms: 'challenging behaviour', 'disruptive behaviour', 'emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD)', 'problem behaviour', 'behaviour that challenges'.

Often, one means of defining challenging behaviour is via the attempt to apply a label to the young person's presentation. However, in doing so this roots the problem as being broadly within-child, adopting a medical or biological view (Norwich, 1999). Since the Warnock Report (1978) and following the Education Act of 1981, the term 'EBD' emerged to replace the term 'maladjusted'. It was felt that the term maladjusted stigmatised the child, and that the use of EBD as a label enabled a move away from the medical model towards an ecosystemic view of behaviour. Jones (2003) has explored the construction of 'EBD' in more recent times and highlighted the importance of the language we use to describe behaviour problems, arguing it shapes beliefs and perceptions about what support is needed and who is responsible. If language and description are not carefully thought through this can serve to reinforce a deficit medical model discourse and stigma that the original intention of the term EBD sought to remove.

Swinson, Woof and Melling (2003) also take issue with the EBD label and feel it can serve to reinforce negative perceptions and exclusions. They explored the reintegration of 12 male key stage 3 pupils with EBD into a mainstream secondary school. Prior to the reintegration, teachers had expressed negative views about the pupils, expressing that they felt they did not have the skills to support pupils with such needs. The 12 pupils were observed in 27 lessons with 11 different teachers across a 5-day period within their integration. Some support was also provided to the school, pupils and teachers by a specialist EBD teacher and two support assistants.

Observations were completed using the Pupil Behaviour Schedule (Jolly & McNamara, 1992) and looked at on-task and off-task behaviour and the nature of this, alongside recording teacher verbal behaviour. Swinson, Woof and Melling (2003) found that most of the pupils behaved extremely well in well-run classes, and often better than other pupils. During most of the observations the pupils' behaviour was in-line with other pupils in the school, leading the EBD label applied to the pupils to be brought into question by the researchers. Teacher verbal behaviour such as encouragement and praise had a positive impact upon on-task behaviour. Pupil behaviour deteriorated in lessons that were less well-organised or where less positive feedback was given regarding behaviour. In this study, the labelling of the EBD pupils and the associated negative views could have served to facilitate exclusion rather than inclusion.

The impact of applying a label or category has been noted historically by the work of Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968). For the purposes of their study pupils were randomly assigned a label about their abilities. This label then contributed to the formation of teacher expectations about the abilities of their pupils, and subsequently influenced their interactions with their pupils. In turn, this impacted upon the overall educational outcomes of the pupils in the study. Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) reported that "the disadvantaged child is further disadvantaged by his teachers setting standards that are inappropriately low" (p23).

More recently, Sarangi (1998) and Rubie-Davies (2007) found that teachers form expectations of ability and act differentially, creating an expectancy theory. Where expectations of pupils were high teachers used far more teaching statements and explanations, whereas when teachers had a set of pupils deemed to be of low ability, far more procedural statements were used and more focus was given to addressing behaviour. An important reflection in the present day would be whether the effects of a label, whatever that may be, impact upon the educational outcomes of pupils. For example, Roffey (2011) writes that

“Once a child’s reputation has begun to circulate in the staffroom, dining hall and amongst other parents, it may be very difficult for their behaviour not to be interpreted as a ‘sign’ of such imputed character traits. Children who have acquired a strong reputation may therefore find it harder to be recognised as good” (p64).

Billington (2000) argues this exact point and feels that the language used when children are spoken about or ‘pathologised’ can act as a form of power and regulation. Labels or psychopathology then serve to reinforce exclusion and often place the young person at the margins of education and society. Visser (2005) also recognises the potential dangers of labels and terminology, stating that the terminology used by teachers and other professionals is wide and diverse. Some of this terminology is colloquial but most terms have a professional tone. However, labels in themselves are socially constructed and their meanings conflicted amongst professionals. In the early 21st century, the word ‘social’ was added to create the term ‘Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD)’ and more recently this evolved to ‘Social, Emotional and Mental Health’ (SEMH) needs as outlined and defined in the new Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (DfE, 2014). Within the new SEND Code of Practice, SEMH needs are identified as one of the four key areas of need as opposed to ‘behaviour’ directly. However, these labels continue to hold negative connotations, in a similar way to the previous EBD label which sought to move away from this view. It would be fair to say that it seems to be a case of one term simply replacing another, without a significant shift of thinking or provision in schools. Roffey (2011) highlights that

“Conversations in staffrooms and in the media can focus on ‘discipline’ where young people are positioned as ‘bad’, ‘out of control’, ‘refusing to learn’, and ‘needing a firm hand’” (p66).

This discursive position begins to identify that labelling forms part of how a pupil is positioned and constructed via the language of others around them, particularly those in a perceived position of power (Orsati & Causton-Theoharis, 2013). Nunkoosing and Haydon-Laurelut (2011) explored the

discourse used in referral forms for behaviour concerns. The use of the word referral implies calling upon expertise, but discourses of the medical model and oppression were common, serving to maintain the problem as within-child. The individual is positioned as a problem to be solved and this position is sometimes used when a child is brought to the attention of an EP (Slee, 2015).

4.2.2 Exploring definitions of behaviour

The inconsistency of terminology and imprecise definition makes it very difficult for data to be gathered around incidence, frequency or severity of challenging behaviour (Crozier, 2007). This is one of the major criticisms of some of the existing research into classroom behaviour. Each study often applies its own definitions or categories making it difficult to gain an accurate picture of the current context. Therefore, it is difficult to prove or dispute claims that behaviour in schools is rapidly deteriorating as there are no accurate statistics about the prevalence of challenging behaviour in schools.

To help with this, some writers have made attempts to begin to define what is meant by challenging behaviour. Emerson and Einfield (2011) define it as:

“culturally abnormal behaviour(s) of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the person or others is likely to be placed in serious jeopardy, or behaviour which is likely to seriously limit use of, or result in the person being denied access to ordinary community facilities” (p7)

Nash, Schlosser and Scarr (2015) define disruptive behaviour as “any behaviour that is sufficiently off-task in the classroom as to distract the teacher and/or class peers from on-task objectives.” (p2). The British Psychological Society (2007) also direct us to think about intensity, frequency and duration within the outlined definition below

“Behaviour can be described as challenging when it is of such an intensity, frequency or duration as to threaten the quality of life and/or the physical safety of the individual or others and is likely to lead to responses that are restrictive, aversive or result in exclusion”

However, these definitions remain open to interpretation and continue to position behaviour broadly as within-child. Other writers have attempted to specify which behaviours are challenging, including persistent forms of low-level disruption such as chatting, wandering around and interfering with others (Little, 2005, Ofsted, 2005). Lyons and O’Connor (2006) add that

“At first glance, it appears there are two broad approaches to such definition. Challenging behaviour can be defined objectively by listing or describing behaviours that are considered disruptive and undesirable. Such an approach typically locates the cause of the behaviour in the individual or their upbringing. On the other hand, challenging behaviour can be seen as contextual or relative. The behaviour is challenging only with reference to a particular context.”
(p219)

As can be seen with the definitions, the terminology is often used interchangeably due to how researchers may construct their definitions. Some writers prefer the term “challenging” (Emerson & Einfield, 2011) whilst others use the term “disruptive” (Nash, Schlosser & Scarr, 2015). When looking at the two definitions similar ideas are being explored but are then labelled with different constructs, namely “disruptive” or “challenging”. Equally, it can also be argued that “disruptive” behaviour can be a challenge in the classroom, and that “challenging” behaviour can be disruptive in the classroom. This does create difficulties with any definition of behaviour and leads to language and terminology being used interchangeably.

4.2.3 Difficulties with definition

Macleod (2010) believes that mechanical and physical definitions of challenging behaviour are not possible and present as reductionist in nature: they are too simplistic. The lack of a clear definition is perhaps due to the complexity of the phenomenon. One alternative view, could be to view challenging behaviour as a social construction which is context dependent. Social and cultural expectations and norms are important in defining whether behaviour *is* challenging (Emerson & Einfield, 2011). They will vary over time and place, within a historical and cultural context. Emerson and Einfield (2011) acknowledge that there will be commonalities between people and settings about which behaviours may tend to be perceived as challenging but identify challenging behaviour as a social construction. This means its nature can be idiographic; what behaviours one teacher may find challenging another teacher may not (Maguire, Ball & Braun, 2010). This will also be determined by school and systemic contexts (Orsati & Causton-Theoharis, 2013).

It is clear that the notion of challenging behaviour is fluid and dynamic, making definition problematic. It is not a static concept and needs to be understood *in the context in which it occurs*. If it is the case that challenging behaviour is constructed through language and action, a good place to begin examining this is through the interactions between the teacher and the pupil.

4.3 Pupil-Teacher Interaction

There has been a vast amount of research exploring pupil-teacher interactions. Language and interaction is central to all aspects of schooling (MacGrath, 1998). Apter, Arnold and Swinson (2010) state that teachers' verbal behaviour and pupils' response to this is an ongoing area of interest. This has included research on the impact of class size, on task behaviour and interaction (Blatchford, Bassett & Brown, 2005), gender differences in interaction (Einarsson & Granstrom, 2002) and the importance of

establishing a secure and trusting relationship (Doumen, Verschueren & Buyse, 2009). The use of positive statements and feedback has also been found to be effective (Burnett, 2002) and praise helps to build positive relationships (Chalk & Bizo, 2004). Teachers spend a large amount of time across a school week with their pupils and the ability to effectively communicate with pupils has been found to be significant in learner instruction (Rubie-Davies, Blatchford, Webster, Koutsoubou & Bassett, 2010). Overwhelmingly, the research indicates the importance of maintaining positive pupil-teacher relationships in the classroom and the benefits this can have for learning and behaviour (Hajdukova, Hornby & Cushman, 2014). Sarangi (1998) states that:

“Social relationships between teachers and students are created by and affect the day to day classroom encounters – they affect opportunities for learning negotiated in the classroom and the students’ perceptions of successful outcome” (p90).

Whilst these evidence-based conclusions about the importance of pupil-teacher relationship may not be surprising to educational professionals, the complex underpinnings of pupil-teacher relationships and how to get them right remains an area for continued research. There is very little research that explores the development and maintenance of positive relationships. Teachers often are not equipped with the skills to explore the complexities of social dynamics and relationships in their own classroom (McCready & Soloway, 2010), and if they have these skills they instead face demands from the curriculum which divert them away from using these in an effective way. One way to begin to explore pupil-teacher interactions is by exploring features of classroom talk.

4.4 Pedagogic talk and the Initiation-Feedback-Response sequence

Nearly all activities in the classroom require the use of language (Cazden, 2001) and teachers and pupils must make use of a range of linguistic resources and techniques to ensure effective teaching and learning (Walsh, 2013).

Ingram and Elliott (2016) identify that classroom talk is distinct from ordinary talk, due to the structure of turn taking – which is largely directed by the teacher. Whilst there is reciprocal interaction at times, overall control of the discourse is generally maintained by the teacher who orchestrates the interactive environment via use of questions, statements and directives (Burns & Myhill, 2004). This is often referred to as the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) sequence (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) and is firmly embedded within pedagogic talk. The sequence is shown below.

Initiation – *Teacher* asks a question, makes a comment or directs someone to respond

Response – *Pupil* responds by providing an answer or response

Feedback – *Teacher* makes comment or judgement about the response

One consequence of the IRF sequence is that teachers end up occupying more of the interactional space by controlling how much space learners have. This predictable structure then creates a ratio of 2:1 in terms of turns, though clearly a response could be simply a few words, before the teacher takes to the interactional floor once more.

The IRF sequence has been a source of intensive classroom research over 40 years since Sinclair and Coulthard's publication (1975). Much of this research has been quantitative in nature, and has focused on mapping out and categorising the turn taking aspects (English, Hargreaves & Hislam, 2002). These studies found broad support for the IRF sequence and this continues to be regarded as the most typical structure of classroom interaction (Mameli & Molinari, 2013).

Molinari, Mameli and Gnisci (2013) reported that periods of monologic talk, where only the teacher spoke, were used most frequently to maintain the pace of teaching and cover the lesson content. However, pupil engagement was found to be greater when questions were asked or ideas were being shared during the response stage of the IRF sequence. During monologic talk, the teacher used talk which was described as 'authoritative', whereby

only the teacher's view was allowed in the discourse. Interruptions were addressed, before the teacher continued with the monologic talk.

Other, more qualitative research exploring the IRF sequence has also been undertaken (Graff, 2009, Stewart, 2008). This has focused more on the words being spoken during the turns, rather than just the pattern of turns. Walsh (2013) writes that within pedagogic talk teachers employ a range of discursive techniques - such as pitch, tone, speaking more slowly and making use of pausing and emphasis - to convey their message, as well as gesture and facial expression. Walsh (2013) adds that these strategies are "conscious and deliberate", both in terms of facilitating understanding and learning, and to model language effectively to their pupils.

Within the IRF sequence, asking questions is key. Questions are used as a means of getting pupils to respond and classroom discourse is often dominated by question and answer sequences led by the teacher. This makes classrooms a unique social context, as the answers to the questions are already known and predetermined by the teacher (Walsh, 2013). Asking more open-ended questions enables the pupils to provide longer responses and promote discussion but it gives them autonomy and the potential for teachers to lose control of the discourse.

Another feature of classroom discourse is the correction of errors by the teacher. Teachers assess the correctness of a response during the feedback stage of the IRF sequence. If this is done incorrectly, or too frequently, error correction can then serve to damage pupil-teacher relationships which are developing. Edwards and Mercer (1987) expressed that classroom discourse processes can remain somewhat mysterious to pupils as they do not follow typical patterns they will have been socialised into. Pupils are told repeatedly how to behave, how to do things, how to learn things and from the pupils' perspective it may seem these requests are made for no reason other than because the teacher said so (Elliott, 2007). From this position, it is easier to see how frustrations may potentially develop from both the teacher and pupil perspective, leading to the development of challenging behaviour in the classroom.

Research undertaken by Graff (2009) and Stewart (2008) identified that the IRF sequence used widely by teachers could potentially lead to conflict within pupil-teacher interactions and contribute to incidents of behaviour within the classroom. Stewart (2008) found that where pupils tried to disrupt the IRF sequence the teacher would then adopt reactive discursive strategies to address this challenge and ensure their authority was maintained. As the classroom context is so language dependent, pupils with communication needs or difficulties may experience frustration or feel excluded from proceedings, and display these as externalising behaviours (Law & Stringer, 2014).

So far, this section has broadly considered pupil-teacher interactions and also the specific nature of some aspects of classroom talk. The next section will look at literature which explores pupil-teacher interactions in relation to behaviour to build upon those shared here in relation to the IRF sequence.

4.5 Pupil-Teacher Interactions relating to classroom behaviour

Within the research into pupil-teacher interaction there are several studies that examine how pupil-teacher interaction shapes behaviour. Payne-Woolridge (2010) examined the language that teachers use when speaking to pupils about their social behaviour, particularly in relation to rewards and sanctions. Payne-Woolridge (2010) found that there were more utterances when pupils were not focusing on a task. These utterances tended to focus on the negative behaviours rather than refocusing the pupils onto the set task.

Other research has identified that teachers can be more likely to identify and respond to negative behaviours. Fry (1983), for example, found that problem pupils received more negative attention, and pupil-teacher interactions focused on their behaviour, not on learning. Teachers may also act differently with disruptive students, often providing less support, making it more difficult to establish positive relationships (Infantino & Little, 2005). These patterns may exist because challenging behaviours cause disruption

to both the pupil and others, therefore the teacher feels they need to address the behaviour so that it does not impede the learning of others. These patterns were particularly the case for boys with externalising behaviours in lessons (Kokkinos, Panayioutou & Davazoglou, 2004). Boys often receive more interaction from teachers – not only because they engage more in general, but also because they engage in behaviours which could be interpreted as challenging (Einarsson & Granstrom, 2002).

Influential research at the time by Wheldall and Merrett (1987) explored the severity and frequency of disruptive behaviours in the primary school and found that the most frequently occurring behaviours were talking out of turn (TOOT) and hindering other children (HOC). This was replicated by Wheldall, Houghton and Merrett (1989) with UK secondary pupils and by Little (2005) in an Australian secondary age context. In her research, Little (2005) also explored the impact of proactive and reactive strategies in addressing TOOT and HOC. Little (2005) found that teachers were more likely to react negatively to students' inappropriate behaviour rather than proactively praising appropriate behaviour. Reactive strategies can then make behaviour in the classroom worse - although McCready and Soloway (2010) conclude that teachers often get caught up in reactive strategies out of habit and sometimes due to pressure to maintain order. The pupil-teacher interactions at the first sign of conflict can then set the tone for the rest of the interaction causing a situation to spiral quickly (Dix, 2010).

Further research has considered praise strategies, verbal feedback and 'on-task behaviour' (Swinson & Knight, 2007, Swinson & Harrop, 2005). These studies found that pupils would respond positively during well-structured and well-run lessons. Positive feedback and specific praise led to an increase in on-task behaviour in lessons. This corresponds with the view of Hallam and Rogers (2008) who state that effective classroom management can *reduce* challenging behaviour, whilst lack of praise and learner autonomy can *lead to* challenging behaviour.

Historically, research into interactions in the classroom has used self-reports, observations and coding, observer checklists or questionnaires

(Lam, Law & Shum, 2009). Use of observation schedules and tools is common within research such as that undertaken by Swinson and Knight (2007) and Swinson and Harrop (2005). Other scales in use include the Classroom Assessment Scoring System used by Luckner and Pianta (2011), which categorises interactions into three domains, or Flanders Interaction Analysis System used by McDermott (1985). Research by Jordan-Irvine (1985) also used self-developed categories such as *praise academic*, *positive academic*, *negative academic*, *negative behaviour*, *negative procedure*, *neutral academic*, and *neutral behaviour* and *neutral procedure*. These categories are quite broad and not necessarily exhaustive nor exclusive (Robson, 2011). Such tools code behaviours into categories and quantifies them without being able to explore the reciprocal nature or quality of such interactions or behaviours. The categories do not analyse the words spoken and rely on the researcher interpreting and coding the talk. Within McDermott's (1985) study, there was also a noticeable impact of the researcher's presence in the classroom, which led to changes in behaviour of both teachers and pupils. It is important when exploring behaviour in the classroom that observer effects are considered so that demand behaviours from pupils or teachers are less likely to occur.

A potential difficulty with the research discussed within this section is that much of it is correlational, and based on quantifiable coded data. This was acknowledged by Swinson and Knight (2007) within their own research and was also highlighted as a potential difficulty by Beaman and Wheldall (2000) who had previously reviewed the field of research. This means that there is little analysis at the word level to look at how language and shared meanings are constructed in the transactions between teacher and pupil (Mercer, 2010).

Another potential barrier to research in this area is that pupil-teacher relationships can often be a sensitive topic (Marsh, 2012), particularly where these are breaking down. In situations where conflict arises, the relationship breakdown can feel quite personal from both sides with negative relationships being cited as a common source of grievance (Hajdukova,

Hornby & Cushman, 2014). Ultimately, language can play a key role in the construction of *difficult* relationships (Graff, 2009).

Behaviour management strategies generally require some discussion between the pupil and teacher, but there is little research which explores exactly *how* behaviour becomes constructed in the classroom. To explore key turning points in pupil-teacher interaction Vavrus and Cole (2002) explored what they termed “disciplinary moments” and how these become constructed between the teacher and the pupil, but there is still much further exploration needed to enhance understanding. Yu and Zhu (2011) argue that pupil and teacher interaction should “be considered as a continual transaction” (p302). The nature of this continual transaction will be explored in more detail in the next section.

4.6 The social construction of challenging behaviour

Pomerantz (2005) believes that behaviour in school is best understood from a social constructionist perspective whereby challenging behaviour is constructed via pupil-teacher interactions in the classroom. These interactions can construct and reinforce the presentation of the challenging behaviour.

Jones, Monsen and Franey (2013) state that for too long viewing behaviour as a social construction through pupil-teacher language and action has been an *underlying* concept, rather than one at the *forefront* of our understanding and research. From a social constructionist viewpoint, we are all perceived to be experts in our own social world, and we construct and construe this based on our own individual experiences, shaped through language and action. There is not one *fixed* reality but reality is constantly being shaped by social actors.

To view challenging behaviour from this position, micro-features of pupil-teacher discourse would need to be analysed to explore *what* is said and *how* it is said. One way to achieve this could be by using video techniques,

such as video-interactive guidance (Kaye, Forsyth & Simpson, 2000). Another way, which has seen some growth in use in the field of classroom behaviour, is the use of discourse analysis (DA). This enables exploration of features of pupil-teacher discourse - such as linguistic devices, turn taking, sequencing and power - and the action potential of these (O'Brien & Miller, 2005). From this position, challenging behaviour can be viewed as idiographic and constructed by social actors, hence why it has proven so difficult to define or conceptualise. Challenging behaviour will mean something very different to each person.

Despite this growth in awareness and thinking around challenging behaviour, Pomerantz (2005) acknowledges that there is an absence of research that has investigated interactions within challenging behaviour. This continues to be the case over ten years later.

A key question here is why hasn't behaviour been explored from a social constructionist or relativist perspective, particularly if language plays a central role in everything we do? Pomerantz (2005) believes that this is because for years the influence of language and role of school-based interactions on pupil behaviour has long been overlooked or simply taken for granted in favour of within-child explanations. However, it has long been accepted that behaviour needs to be understood within the sociocultural holistic context of the child (Frederickson & Cline, 2015).

Exploring the functions of classroom talk to help understand the construction of challenging behaviour has been an area which has received little research attention (Graff, 2009, Sarangi, 1998). The research that has explored classroom discourse tends to focus on *patterns of talk* and not language or interpersonal dimensions. This needs to be explored in greater detail if we are to understand the phenomenon that is challenging behaviour in the classroom. Indeed, Graff (2009) suggests that this should be a natural progression for the evidence base because

“Naturally, we build most of our relationships with students through talk, and we can expect that some of the evidence for how such difficult relationships are built will relate to talk.” (p440)

Macleod (2010) recognises that disruptive behaviour is a social event and it holds meaning for the pupil, teacher, and other social actors in the classroom. It will be made sense of in different ways, therefore, when behaviour incidences are reviewed with pupils, there are often several versions or stories of the event. Verkuyten (2002) explored the ways in which secondary school students explained their behaviour. These explanations were found to conflict with the opinion of the teacher, which was often unfounded or influenced by bias but perceived as a 'truth'. From this position, it is easier to understand why students sometimes challenge teacher judgements of their behaviour as being disruptive. This challenge can then seek to undermine teacher authority leading to a reciprocal exchange with both positions wanting to be recognised. Priyadharshini (2011) and Moustakim (2010) have both found that when exploring behaviour management from a pupil perspective that those who have been labelled as 'naughty' or 'disruptive' want to be recognised in a different way and express counter-narratives to those of the teacher. However, counter-narratives often go unheard due to "students being constructed as difficult or disruptive, in 'hard' classes or as little 'buggers' who are out to 'get one over' on the teacher" (Burke, 2011, p187). These constructions often come from a dominant position yielded by teacher power. To help us to understand the emergence of such constructions it is helpful to explore the function of schools and the contribution of teacher power.

4.7 Understanding the school as a system

The school is best understood as an institution or system which is guided by rules and organisational practices. From the work of Foucault (1977) in *Discipline and Punishment*, it is apparent that within schools there are requirements for pupils to act in certain ways. This is part of established school systems, ingrained historically and promoted by organisation of space, systems, surveillance and examinations. Rules are also enforced and teachers are addressed as Miss or Sir. A teacher holds a position of

authority within school and within wider society (Cazden, 2001). Roffey (2011) believes that exploring the dynamics of pupil-teacher relationships is important and that we need to consider whether the teacher is considered *in charge*, or *in control*.

Greer (1999) expresses that the school as an institution serves to ensure orderly and reliable production and reproduction of society, including dominant discourses of that time and place. The school functions to shape citizens, to provide education and moral development, and it is important that the school is internally organised to be able to serve its functions. Thornberg (2009) recognises that education is not a neutral enterprise. School rules act as a means of social regulation to ensure that pupils behave and conform to the moral order. Regulating the behaviour of pupils is an essential part of schooling and teaches pupils to be good citizens. Bernstein (2000) identifies that schools employ a regulative discourse that is the moral discourse or social order, which dictates to the children where they can go, how they must conduct themselves and what they can and cannot do, for example via school rules. If pupils do not follow this regulative discourse they are then sanctioned in line with the school behaviour policy which gives power to teachers. Alongside this runs the instructional discourse, which relates to subject teaching but also to expectations within lessons (Bernstein, 2000).

Broader school systems such as ethos, organisation of rewards or sanctions, and pastoral systems all impact upon the behaviour of the individuals inside it. This includes role definitions; what it means to be a pupil or a teacher within the system. Schools are best understood as a psychosocial system. Miller (1996, 2003) explored the concept of 'teacher culture' and 'pupil culture' in understanding the organisational culture of the school. The culture of each school is often dependent upon the attitudes of staff and their professional ideologies (Grundy & Blandford, 1999).

The teacher and pupil cultures are often hidden in action as a soft system, but continue to guide practice and relationships, with the espoused hard system being visible for others to see or being presented as the 'way we do

things around here' (Argyris & Schön, 1978). Miller (2003) identifies that school behaviour policies can be well practised and defensive routines which are used to guide and justify actions. These are often framed around notions of 'positive behaviour management' or 'behaviour for learning'. They also form part of the institutional talk and power of the school as an institution. To understand behaviour, one should look at the system as a whole.

4.8 Institutional talk

By viewing the school as an institution and the power relations within it we can understand classroom interaction as a form of institutional talk (Drew & Heritage, 1992). Institutional talk differs from ordinary conversation in that it is often goal directed and participants have differential rights to act or have access to resources.

Thornborrow (2001) identifies four key features of institutional talk:

- Talk which has pre-assigned and conventional participant roles, for example, teacher-pupil or doctor-patient.
- Talk in which there is asymmetry in turn taking - in terms of length or type.
- Some speakers being allowed to engage in talk which other speakers are not
- Identities and discursive resources being strengthened or weakened in relation to role

So, in a classroom context, if Thornborrow's features are applied:

- Roles are pre-assigned as teacher and pupil and positions them within the exchange
- The teacher has more turns in the interaction and often determines the length of a pupil's turns. This was highlighted by earlier discussion of the IRF sequence (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) and the IRF sequence serves as a feature of the institutional talk of the school.

- Teachers have a broader range of discursive options in comparison to pupils. For example, teachers can correct a pupil's behaviour and deliver sanctions. This option is not available for pupils.
- The teacher role positions them in a more powerful role, in comparison to the pupil.

Institutional talk is also goal orientated and institutionally relevant, meaning it serves to allow the institution to continue to function. One example of this would be the school behaviour policy and how this is implemented in classrooms but also used within classroom interactions. Drew and Heritage (1992), however, recognise that not all school talk is institutional and it is not easy to distinguish between ordinary and institutional talk.

Classroom interaction is based on “an unequal distribution of communicative rights” (Thornborrow, 2001, p108) and where the teacher “takes turns at will, allocates turns to others, determines topics, interrupts and relocates turns judged to be irrelevant ... and provides a running commentary” (Edwards & Westgate, 1994, p46). This occurs because of the nature of institutional talk within educational settings. It is the generally accepted norm for interaction and is maintained due to the power afforded to the teacher over the pupils. In the next section, attention will be turned to understanding power in pupil-teacher interaction.

4.9 Power

From literature outlined by both the government and one of the major teaching unions, the NASUWT, both the teacher and the school can be seen to be placed in positions of power. The NASUWT (2014) specify that teachers have “powers to both encourage good and punish power behaviour”. In relation to low-level classroom disruption that NASUWT (2014) state:

“Constant challenges to authority, persistent refusal to obey school rules and frequent, regular verbal abuse of staff are the hallmarks of this behaviour. Its effects, if unchallenged, are corrosive and when sustained over a long period can have a devastating impact.”

This positions the teacher as an authority figure and identifies that teachers' authority is being challenged by such behaviour. The government outlined in *The Importance of Teaching* (2010) and later in *Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools* (2015) that the aim was to “restore the authority of teachers and head teachers”, arguing in the *Steer Report* (2005) that “good behaviour has to be learnt”.

School behaviour policies are typically top-down and are essentially about power, control and discipline – even where they are termed Behaviour for Learning policies (Maguire, Ball & Braun, 2010). They are often hierarchical and include heavily structured systems of rewards and sanctions as a means of controlling pupil behaviour (Nash, Schlosser & Scarr, 2015). Within the power provided by school behaviour policies schools are opportunities to identify misbehaviour and apply the relevant sanctions swiftly. However, Oral (2013) found that strict classroom regimes imposed by the teacher can lead to student resistance and the authority of teachers being questioned.

To fully understand the construction of challenging behaviour, it is important that one also understands the role of power within school relationships and consider how best to address it.

4.10 Challenging behaviour as a threat

One reason, perhaps, why challenging behaviour causes great concern for teachers is that such behaviour tends “to be perceived as a direct and personal threat to the teacher's authority” (Gray, Miller and Noakes 1994 p1). Challenging behaviour can threaten teacher power and ownership within the classroom, for example, a pupil may choose to wander around the classroom, become argumentative and defy the teacher's request to sit down. In response, the teacher may then use their power more directly by

stating “I *am* the *teacher* and you will do as I ask!”. In this example, the pupil is using language and action to assert their own power over the teacher. Teachers can then become defensive, or employ reactive strategies, which then serve to escalate conflict with the pupil. As Thornborrow (2001) suggests: “secondary school pupils can also be well aware that what they do shapes the actions of the teacher” (p113).

This example highlights the reciprocal nature, and the co-construction of classroom situations. Candela (1999) expresses that in some situations the collective efforts of students can take power from the teacher, for example, by collective utterings meaning that the teacher cannot proceed with the lesson. Here, Candela (1999) feels that pupils can, and do develop strategies to assert their power in other ways, for example by using whispering or silence as a discursive tool.

Another way in which pupils try to shift the power balance in the classroom is via the use of humour. Hobday-Kusch and McVittie (2002) and Meeus and Mahieu (2009) both explored the functions that humour serves for pupils in the classroom discourse. The role of class-clown was found to allow the boys to negotiate power enabling them to contribute and limit the discourse, either by engaging, or by disrupting their learning and that of others (Hobday-Kusch & McVittie, 2002). Meeus and Mahieu (2009) found that humour was used as a means of boundary seeking, to see how far they could take it, but also in boundary crossing. However, within this research, it is important to acknowledge that what one person finds funny or may be interpreted in good humour, may be very difficult for the next person. In exploring humour, this enables us to again understand the very idiographic nature of challenging behaviour in the classroom. In both examples, though, pupils used humour as a means of regaining power and therefore more control over the classroom discourse.

Power is something which anyone, in theory, can exercise through discourse. The power of the school as an institution, however, limits the ability of pupils in exercising their own power. The school structures and systems seek to maintain order and pupils are expected to conform. Burke

(2011) expresses that “There is a presumption that students – having accepted the induction into school requirements – will then be compliant and accepting” (p190). This could be viewed as overlooking pupils as social actors and playing down the pupils’ agency. In the last twenty years, there has been a move towards student-centred teaching, however, traditional power and institutional features such as the IRF sequence, uniform and detentions, continue to ensure that pupils are in a position of being controlled or managed.

4.11 Dialogue in the classroom

Orsati and Causton-Theoharis (2013) identify that a logical step would be to analyse the dialogue in the classroom to make visible the discourses of power and control that may impact on the practices used for managing pupils who display challenging behaviour in the classroom. This position, combined with that expressed earlier regarding the lack of studies exploring the link between words spoken and the construction of challenging behaviour (Graff, 2009, Sarangi, 1998) provides the direction for the current research.

When considering the research literature available around the topic of challenging behaviour there are many ways to view the phenomenon. There is now a growing recognition that challenging behaviour should be understood as socially constructed. The next chapter will systematically explore the available research evidence within this position.

5 Systematic Review

5.1 Introduction to the Systematic Review of the Literature

A systematic review aims to explore the research literature available around a focus topic or question. It is designed to locate, appraise and synthesise the best available evidence (Boland, Cherry & Dickson, 2014) so as to provide evidence-based answers. Systematic reviews are so named because they follow systematic, well-defined and transparent steps to collectively provide evidence for the question posed. This systematic review aims to explore the research literature available with regards to pupil-teacher interaction in relation to behaviour in the secondary classroom. The processes of the systematic review of the literature are detailed in the next sections and broadly follow the stages described by Gough (2007) below.

Figure 5-1 - Stages of a Systematic Review (Gough, 2007)

1. Formulate review question and develop protocol
2. Define studies to be considered (inclusion criteria)
3. Search for studies (search strategy)
4. Screen studies (apply the inclusion criteria)
5. Describe studies
6. Appraise study quality and relevance
7. Synthesise findings
8. Communicate

5.2 Review Question

What does research say about the role that pupil-teacher interaction plays in understanding challenging behaviour in the secondary school classroom?

5.3 Search Strategy and Search Tools

Five databases were used in scoping searches and the focused systematic search. These were PsycInfo, Web of Science, ERIC, British Education Index and JSTOR. Five databases were searched to facilitate the inclusion of several disciplines which included Psychology, Sociology, Education and Linguistics. Initial scoping searches for “pupil teacher relationship” and “pupil teacher interaction” were completed followed by more specific and systematic searches. Further details of the search process and search terms can be viewed in the flow chart provided in Appendix A. The more specific searches allowed synonyms to be explored, for example, communication, interaction and dialogue.

Potentially relevant papers were identified from the searches and their abstracts and titles were screened using the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Studies which did not meet the criteria or did not relate to the question were discarded.

Relevant full text papers were obtained and the inclusion criteria were applied. Studies that did not meet the criteria were then excluded and their details and reasons for their exclusion were recorded (Appendix B).

5.4 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The inclusion and exclusion criteria applied are shown in Figure 5.2

Figure 5-2 - Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Identified Studies

	Studies were included if...	Studies were excluded if....
Literature Type	Published journals	Theses Unpublished material. Web pages Books
Language	English	Not English

Publication Date	2000-2016	Pre 2000
Population	Mainstream English speaking secondary age pupils where behaviour concerns expressed Teachers or school staff	Special School populations Pupils identified as having a formal diagnosis e.g ADHD Non-English speaking populations Other professionals e.g Speech and Language Therapist
Age	Secondary age pupils (11-16 years old)	Primary age pupils (3-11 years) Post-16 learners Higher Education Adult learners
Intervention/Area of Exploration	Links to classroom discourse, interaction, or pupil-teacher relationship in the classroom. Must be focused on behaviour Interaction/discourse between or about behaviour from teachers or pupils	Does not link to behaviour related discourse Subject specific focus e.g science discourse
Target behaviour	Behaviour labelled as “challenging” “that challenges” “disruptive” “difficult” or similar terminology/definition used within the study	Prosocial behaviour Peer relationships Peer group dynamics

Setting	English speaking secondary schools English as language of instruction	Not based in secondary schools Non-English speaking secondary schools English not language of instruction
Type of research	Qualitative research and data	Quantitative methods used to gather data Correlational
Other	General classroom discourse Naturalistic talk	There was a subject specific discourse being explored as the <u>focus</u> of the study, for example, Maths

These criteria were developed considering the existing research literature, as discussed in the earlier sections of this literature review. Much of the previous research had quantified and categorised pupil-teacher interactions and established correlations. Very little research had looked at the interactions using a qualitative method to explore what was said and how it was said. For this reason, within the search, the broad term *qualitative methods and data* was used to identify research that explored interactions at the word level focusing on what is being said rather than categorising it.

A date range was introduced to ensure the current educational context was explored, creating a range of 16 years of literature. This was determined to try to capture social, political and economic context. This timeframe covers a period which includes the embedding of the National Literacy Strategy (DFEE, 1998) and National Numeracy Strategy (DFEE, 1999) and the later introduction of the Primary National Strategy (DFES, 2006). These strategies sought to address the balance of pupil-teacher talk (Hardman, Smith & Wall, 2005) and significantly altered the way lessons were structured and delivered in the UK (Black, 2004). Although a new National Curriculum (2014) was introduced in the UK recently, this period was found

to be too short to yield results. The social and cultural changes, including the increase in use of technology and increasing internet use, have also occurred since 2000 meaning that educational contexts pre-and-post 2000 may not be directly comparable.

Although the date range was set using a UK context, other studies from countries where English was the language of instruction were also included. This decision was made to ensure readability and comprehension of research papers but also due to qualitative data or discursive patterns of spoken English and classroom discourse directly being the focus of the systematic review. It was felt that some direct comparisons and similarities could be drawn within the research between the discourse of teachers and students in classrooms where English was the language of instruction. It is, however, important to acknowledge some differences in social and cultural contexts, and pedagogical practices, for example, between the US, UK and Australian schooling systems. The inclusion of such studies enabled the researcher to gain an overview of what research had been completed around pupil-teacher discourse and its role in behaviour to date. Consideration was given to the different cultural and social contexts.

5.5 Synthesis

5.5.1 Search and Results

Initial electronic scoping searches identified 8000+ citations. The search was focused and refined further and provided 178 papers to be screened against the inclusion criteria once duplicates had been removed. Titles and abstracts were screened. This led to 154 articles being excluded. Reasons for exclusion included: *out of date range specified, not in English, not related directly to area of focus or interactions not related to behaviour.*

This resulted in 24 relevant full text papers being identified, obtained and considered against the inclusion criteria. From reading and screening the full text papers, a further 22 papers were excluded. Reasons for exclusion

included: *not being the right age group, being an evaluation of the impact of an intervention upon the discourse, quantitative data or where English was not the language of instruction*. One paper was added via hand searching. Three papers were considered to meet all the inclusion criteria, and these appear in the results section. Full details of this search can be found in the in Appendix A.

5.5.2 Data Extraction

The key characteristics of the included studies can be found overleaf to provide an overview of the papers obtained.

Figure 5-3 - A Table of Characteristics for Included Studies

Study	Participant Characteristics	Setting	Research Questions	Study Design/Measures Used	Target behaviour	Key Findings and Conclusions drawn by the author/s
Graff (2009)	One seventh grade male pupil and one teacher	Middle School Classroom in the USA	What role does the public nature of classroom talk play in casting the relationship between a particular teacher and a particular student as "difficult"?	Nine-week participant observation isolating classroom incidents between the teacher and the pupil. Interactions were videotaped, transcribed and analysed using conversation analysis and Goffman's discussion of participation frameworks.	A pupil-teacher relationship which the teacher defined as "difficult".	<p>The teacher, the student and other students cooperated to create a difficult relationship.</p> <p>The publicness of discourse within whole class teaching, particularly if a relationship is difficult can reinforce this.</p> <p>Teacher interactions were often about wrongness/rightness of the pupil's responses</p> <p>IRF sequence dominates teacher discourse. Resistance to this by the pupil contributes to "difficult relationship".</p> <p>Application - Importance of analysing key moments of classroom talk to understand how it reinforces difficult behaviour. Consider US/American context – school system, culture and social factors.</p>
Pomerantz (2005)	One secondary age pupil and his teachers	Secondary classroom in the UK	What are the linguistic devices that the teachers and the pupil with challenging behaviour in the	<p>Case study approach observing in the classroom</p> <p>Use of conversation analysis to analyse the</p>	Challenging behaviour as defined by participating teachers	Both pupil and teachers created challenge through their initiated discourse. This led to dominance. Teachers used the IRF sequence to guide turn taking within classroom discourse. Pupil would then use speech acts to interrupt this sequence. The

			<p>classroom interaction use and what is the function of their talk?</p> <p>Who holds the power in the classroom interaction (adult or pupil) and how do they achieve this dominance?</p>	<p>audio taped and transcribed data.</p> <p>Exploring different speech acts at the word level.</p>		<p>teacher had to respond to these and then dominated the sequence.</p> <p>Talk nearly always initiated by the teacher and the following I-R sequences could be long.</p> <p>Challenging behaviour arises out of interaction between pupil and teacher and in many cases the adult leads this conflict by using their power to place the pupil in a defensive situation.</p>
Vavrus and Cole (2002)	<p>Pupils from two freshman classes (age 14-15). Further characteristics not specified</p> <p>Two teachers</p>	Urban high school in the USA	<p>None clearly specified but focus of research was to explore discursive construction of behaviour leading to school suspension</p>	<p>Videotaped recordings of two science classrooms supported by observational notes taken by the researchers</p> <p>Interviews with teachers</p> <p>Interviews with pupils in groups of 4-6. Supported by questionnaires</p> <p>Transcripts analysed – themes, language forms and functions</p>	<p>Behaviour leading up to school suspensions</p> <p>Exploration of 'disciplinary moments'</p>	<p>Similarities between discourse in the two classrooms. Found that students did seek to disrupt the order of turn taking and class management strategies. Pupils would construct 'counter-narratives' about having not done anything wrong. Pupils would use discursive strategies to get the attention of the teacher.</p> <p>'Disciplinary moments' are shaped by socio-cultural relations in the classroom but are also co-constructed. Recognition of the moment by moment interactions where decisions are continually made about who remains in class and who will get suspended.</p> <p>Consider US/American context – school system, culture and social factors.</p>

5.5.3 Quality Assessment

Following the reading and tabulation of full text papers, a quality assurance method was used. For the review to be systematic, judgements about quality and relevance should be made to determine what the evidence contributes in answering the review question (Gough, 2007). For the purposes of this review, The Weight of Evidence (WoE) (Gough, 2007) was selected to quality assess the three studies. This considers how studies have been designed, conducted and reported, as well as their reliability, validity and rigour.

Quality assurance also provides a more in-depth critical understanding of the studies, their results and conclusions (Greenhalgh & Brown, 2014). The WoE model was selected because it is a practical tool that considers the relevance of papers to the specific question being addressed by a review as well as generic methodological features. It also enables the judgement to be broken down, step by step in an explicit way (Gough, 2007). This ensures that these judgements can then be considered when synthesising what is known from the research.

Figure 5-4 - Gough's Weight of Evidence Model

Weight of Evidence A – generic judgement about coherence and integrity of the evidence provided by the study in its own terms

Weight of Evidence B – review specific judgement about the appropriateness of the design/analysis in relation to the review question

Weight of Evidence C – review specific judgement about the relevance of the focus of the evidence to the review question.

Weight of Evidence D – An overall assessment combining the judgement made in A, B and C.

The judgements in relation to the three articles are summarised in the table below. Explanations for these judgements can be found in Appendix C.

Figure 5-5 - Weight of Evidence Judgements for Included Studies

Study	Trustworthiness of Result (WoE A)	Appropriateness of design/ method of the study to the review question (WoE B)	Appropriateness of focus of the study to the review question (WoE C)	Overall WoE D
Graff (2009)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Pomerantz (2005)	Medium	Medium	High	Medium
Vavrus and Cole (2002)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium

The three studies were judged to be at least ‘medium’ in quality. Following on from the tabulation of included studies in the data extraction section, these studies can now be considered together to examine key emerging themes and common ground. In the next section these studies and their relative strengths, weaknesses and limitations will be discussed.

5.5.4 Discussion and Critique

All three studies explore the IRF sequence within the pupil-teacher interaction. The IRF sequence is used by the teacher to progress the lesson and difficulties arise when the pupil interrupts this sequence or attempts to control it. This moves on from other IRF sequence research, which has broadly taken a quantitative approach to explore the sequence. Direct reference is made to the IRF sequence by Pomerantz (2005) and Graff (2009). Vavrus and Cole (2002) present extracts that are examples of this, but refer to this as the natural order of the classroom.

All authors present the case that challenging behaviour arises out of interaction between pupil and teacher, and in many cases the adult leads this conflict by using their power to place the pupil in a defensive situation. This is the case in all three studies which suggests that this may be the case regardless of educational context (UK versus US/non-UK studies). In addition, Graff (2009) identifies the role that the public nature of the classroom can play in interactions. Essentially, it provides a space in which to perform, but also a space within which the teacher wishes to maintain control. Pupils taking over this performing space can be viewed as a threat to the teacher's authority. This occurred within Vavrus and Cole (2002) whereby pupils would disrupt the natural classroom order taking over the interactional space but then equally present a view that they had done nothing wrong. Vavrus and Cole (2002) believe socio-cultural difficulties can enable an understanding of how conflict can arise through pupil-teacher interaction.

All three studies *directly* captured the discourse in the classroom by using observation, video/audio recording and then subsequent transcription. Pomerantz (2005) and Graff (2009) both use features of the Jefferson transcription method enabling microfeatures of the discourse to be examined. Vavrus and Cole (2002) present verbatim accounts of what was said, but do not provide information about emphasis, tone or other linguistic features, beyond using capital letters to indicate raised voices and parentheses to indicate a pause to which length is not specified. Also, Vavrus and Cole (2002) refer to interviews and questionnaires, although the data from these is not directly presented but has contributed to their discussion and conclusion.

5.5.5 Reliability and Validity

Both Graff (2009) and Pomerantz (2005) have noticeably low participant numbers, indeed both involve only one pupil. However, the research aimed to explore the role of language as action and how an individual reality is constructed within each study, so the number of participants is arguably not

relevant (Willig, 2013). Each study is idiographic so what was presented as challenging behaviour within the studies may not be perceived as challenging behaviour within another context. It is important to recognise and acknowledge that two of the included studies are from the United States where the cultural and social context is different. The classroom practices of teachers and related pedagogy may have subtle differences to those used within classrooms in the UK. This is in part why these two studies were graded as 'medium' for Weight of the Evidence C (WoE).

Vavrus and Cole (2002) used two classes of pupils but it remains unclear how they determined which ones to present in the final paper, or whether this was determined by which participants they had consent for. This remains unclear as a discussion of recruitment and key ethical considerations is missing from their account.

Positivistic criteria such as reliability and validity are problematic within qualitative research as the view is taken that there is not one outside truth against which the analysis can be assessed. A better judgement of quality within qualitative research is trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Trustworthiness is broken down into further elements of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. However, when considering the WoE judgements, the research designs are clear, as are the methods of analysis, indicating that the conclusions drawn can be transferred to other contexts and guide further and future research. It could be argued that the UK study by Pomerantz (2005) has greater transferability to a UK educational context. All three papers present clear and logical accounts supported by extracts from the data to evidence how the analysis was constructed.

5.6 Summary of the Review

The systematic review identified three pieces of research which met the criteria although there were others which met most of the criteria. Much of

the excluded research was set in the primary age phase and there are distinct differences between primary and secondary education and teaching methods. The fact that only three studies were identified could be interpreted as a limitation, particularly as two are from the United States rather than a UK context, but equally it could be considered an opportunity. This highlights the potential scope for future research within this area.

5.7 The contribution of unpublished research

Although unpublished theses were excluded from the systematic review process, the researcher is aware of four theses relevant to the topic area and review question that have been written in the last 15 years. These will be discussed briefly and help to add understanding to the area of research at this point in time.

The theses outlined have used discourse analysis (DA) as a means of exploring and developing understanding around the concept of challenging behaviour in the classroom. It is interesting to note that the role that pupil-teacher interaction and language has in understanding challenging behaviour has received more focus and attention within theses than it would apparently seem to have had amongst published research literature.

Moustakim (2010) explored the role that discourse plays in power and resistance in the secondary classroom, in relation to pupil disaffection. To better understand how teachers and pupils had constructed their own but conflicting realities, the narratives of two teachers and six pupils were explored through one-to-one interviews. Teachers' narratives indicated that they felt that pupil disaffection was due to emotional and behavioural pathologies such as ADHD or a moral underclass within their communities. Pupils' counter narratives indicated that they felt their disengagement was rational and due to the curriculum not being interesting or because they felt disrespected by teachers.

Moustakim (2010) acknowledges that his focus is on how pupils and teachers are *talked about* by each other, rather than their exchanges in the classroom. The latter, he suggests, is an area for further research and argues that there would be some benefit in being able to explore *both*, to add to the understanding of how pupils and teachers construct their own reality.

Pomerantz (2007) explored how language is used to construct and position boys in relation to exclusion. The research involved fortnightly one hour interviews with eight adolescent boys, this being followed by a home visit to speak with their parents or carers. DA was used to analyse the language used in the construction of the individual identities of two of the boys in detail. Alongside this, to explore how discourse constructs identity at a societal level, newspaper articles relating to school behaviour, adolescent boys and exclusions were collated over a six-month period. These were analysed to explore grand narratives or hegemonic discourses which could inform any shared reality in society at the time of the work.

Hobley (2005) also explored how identities in relation to challenging behaviour are constructed. Hobley (2005) critically examined the talk about three pupils who were described by their parents as displaying challenging behaviour in school. A mixed approach of conversation analysis, discursive psychology and critical discourse analysis was employed. Social and power relations were found to feature within the discourse and the discourse tended to focus on the pupils' difficulties, thus maintaining the construction of the challenging behaviour. Exclusionary practices can also operate within the discourse and this can be directed towards the pupils.

Finally, Stewart (2008) explored the initiation, response, feedback (IRF) sequence with five pupils with statements for EBD. It is interesting to see the IRF sequence being explored using discourse analysis as much of the research into the IRF sequence is quantitative or sequential. Stewart (2008) focused on the language used within the IRF sequence and explored whether discourse leads to deviation from the IRF sequence. Stewart (2008) found that there were some variations from the norm, in relation to previous

IRF research. The pupil's discursive practices on occasions led to a deviation from the traditional IRF sequence causing threats and challenges to the teacher's authority and use of the IRF process. The teacher then needed to adopt their own discursive strategies to manage the pupil's impulsivity in interactions and challenge and maintain the learning process in the classroom.

Across all four theses a clear argument is made for the need to use DA in applied contexts, particularly within the classroom and especially around understanding behaviours and the constructions of it by pupils and teachers. There is a need to explore live classroom discourse to understand how behaviour can escalate in relation to what is being said or done by the teacher or pupil.

Whilst in terms of Gough's WoE model outlined in Appendix C these theses would be considered 'low', it is important to acknowledge the potential value of the work undertaken here: it is clear that the use of DA, or that viewing interactions from a qualitative rather than quantitative perspective does help to illuminate interactions and does contribute to a better understanding of pupil-teacher interaction in relation to understanding challenging behaviour.

In summary, when considering the evidence identified through the systematic review alongside the theses identified above, it is clear to see that the role language plays in understanding challenging behaviour in secondary schools is highly significant but remains under-researched. Some research has been undertaken using quantifiable methods, such as coding and categorisation interactions, particularly within the primary school age range, however, much of this research remains correlational in nature and does not necessarily view both the pupil and teacher as social actors or view language as a form of social action.

From the author's perspective, there was a significant need for research that furthers understanding of interactions at the word level, and specifically for research that employs discourse analysis to explore in detail how these

interactions between the pupil and teacher socially construct and shape challenging behaviour in the classroom.

6 Research Focus and Questions

From the literature available, it is evident that there has been only limited research into the role and function of language within the pupil-teacher relationship and how this may influence or shape behaviour. Research has highlighted the importance of a positive relationship to academic achievement and suggests pupil-teacher interaction is a key part of the professional role. There is also research that has investigated the role and impact of teacher verbal feedback to pupils (Clunies-Ross, Little & Kienhuis, 2008) and the use of pro-active and reactive verbal strategies in relation to behaviour (Swinson & Harrop, 2001). Much of this research is correlational or categorises the language. It does not focus on what is said at the word-level within interactions, explore the functions of talk within the pupil-teacher relationship or investigate the role that language may hold in understanding challenging classroom behaviour.

The research which *is* available, exploring the role language and action play in shaping challenging behaviour, indicates that further research is needed in this area. This is also supported by the conclusions drawn by other researcher-practitioners within their theses.

The current research explores the role that language may play within the construction and understanding of challenging behaviour. Currently, this is an under researched area, but one which continues to appear within a casework context in work as a TEP. Investigating the role and function of talk is important to EP practice, because talk is a vital part of what EPs do in their role (Mercer, 2010).

From reviewing the literature, the following research objective, and research questions have been identified to guide the current research and provide a focus.

Research objective:

To further understanding of challenging behaviour as a social construction and to explore the potential role of pupil-teacher discourse in the causation and alleviation of challenging behaviour

Research Questions

- What **linguistic devices** are used by the teacher or pupil within pupil-teacher interactions around challenging behaviour? What **function** do these serve?
- Does the **IRF sequence** feature in the discourse – and does it play a part in the construction of challenging behaviour?
- How is **power** achieved within interactions around challenging behaviour and how does it influence the discourse?
- How are **roles** defined within the classroom through language?
- What **types of talk** are associated with challenging behaviour?
- In what way does classroom discourse **facilitate** the construction of challenging behaviour?
- In what way does classroom discourse **reinforce** the construction of challenging behaviour?

7 Methodology

This section begins with a broad view of the philosophical debates within the relevant research literature. Discussion then focuses on the approaches and methods used within this piece of research.

When considering methodology, it is important to consider how epistemology and ontology influence the design and method, and its implementation (Carter & Little, 2007). Using a qualitative approach enables rich data regarding language use and interaction within the classroom to be gathered and explored. Qualitative researchers hope to explore meanings and how people make sense of the world via naturalistic enquiry focusing on experience and meaning making around the phenomenon (Krauss, 2005), rather than establishing cause and effect (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). However, Marks (1996) recognises that researching people's experience is "fraught with epistemological and ontological dilemmas" some of which are explored in the next section in the context of this piece of research.

7.1 Ontology

Bryman (2008) states that ontological position refers to "whether the social world is regarded as something external to social actors or as something that people are in the process of fashioning" (p3). It considers the nature of reality and how we can know what we know and whether there is one single truth or reality to be discovered or multiple realities which are experienced by individuals (Allison & Pomeroy, 2000). An ontological position also enables us to understand the kind of assumptions a methodology makes about the world.

This piece of research takes a relativist or constructionist ontological perspective where "social phenomena and their means are being continually accomplished by social actors and are in a constant state of revision" (Bryman, 2008, p19). The world is understandable from the point

of view of the individuals involved in it, meaning that reality and knowledge are constructed. Berger and Luckmann (1966) understand the world as consisting of multiple realities and that social interaction shapes these realities. A constructionist ontological position also places language and subjective meanings at the centre of helping us to understand these multiple realities (Tuffin & Howard, 2001). This perspective has been adopted because the research will take place in real world settings with social actors who are, through language and interaction, constructing behaviour in the classroom.

7.2 Epistemology

Allison and Pomeroy (2000) state that epistemology is closely connected to ontology, and refers to the nature of knowledge. It considers the relationship between the researcher and what can be known. Positivism as a position seeks to identify 'truths' in an objective, measurable and scientific way in a stable social world. Positivism would also consider there to be a fixed reality that it is possible to describe and to a certain extent capture or quantify (Willig, 2001). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) also state that positivism can be reductionist and deterministic and may exclude "notions of choice, freedom, individuality and moral responsibility" (p17).

In response to positivism, those adopting anti-positivist or interpretivist stance would argue that the world is subjective and that we are influenced by our own values and experiences. Within an interpretative perspective, the pupil and teacher would be "viewed as interacting organisms" that bring prior experience and knowledge into the classroom, this influencing the interactions between the pupil and teacher (Kokkinos, Panayiotou & Davazoglou, 2004). Bryman (2008) states that from an interpretivist position the subject matter explored within the social sciences, namely people, is "fundamentally different from that of the natural sciences" and therefore a different approach is needed in to facilitate exploration and understanding. For this reason, the current research will adopt an interpretivist

epistemological position where the aim is to understand the subjective world of human experience (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007).

Much of the previous research into pupil-teacher interaction has quantified interactions into categories and measured which type of interaction was used most frequently and with what effect. This is not the aim of this piece of research; the aim is to move beyond this and place language and relationships at the centre of understanding classroom behaviour. If a positivist objective position were adopted, Freebody (2003) points out, “research activities structured through the logics of quantification leave out lots of interesting and potentially consequential things about the phenomenon” (p35) and the research becomes a search for facts rather than exploring subjective experiences. Interpretivism is opposed to the principles and practices of the natural sciences and favours open-ended methods so that knowledge can be created rather than extracted or deduced (O'Donoghue, 2006). Bryman (2008) states that epistemology also determines what is regarded as appropriate knowledge about the social world, for example, is only knowledge from the natural sciences highly valued, or is knowledge recognised as being subjective. Allison and Pomeroy (2000) argue that as we all view the world differently, it is likely that as individuals we will possess, value and interpret knowledge in different ways. Equally, what is regarded as knowledge can be historically and culturally specific is continually being constructed and reshaped by social actors.

7.3 Social Constructionism

Based on the earlier discussion regarding ontology and epistemology, this piece of research takes a social constructionist and relativist approach to exploring the phenomenon of classroom behaviour.

Burr (2015) states that social constructionism is based on ontological relativism and epistemological subjectivism. Within this position in the

research literature, the terms constructionism and constructivism are often used interchangeably and some would argue that this is incorrect. These terms are, though, perhaps best understood as interlinked or overlapping (Robson, 2011). Constructivism is concerned with how individuals construct and make sense of their world and constructionism is the collective generation of meaning (Patton, 2015). For this reason, it can be argued that one cannot exist without the other. For the purposes of consistency throughout the research, the term *constructionism* will be used to focus upon shared experiences and co-construction.

7.3.1 Development of social constructionist thinking

Social constructionism draws its influences from a range of disciplines including philosophy, sociology, linguistics and psychology, and should be considered multidisciplinary in nature. Burr (2015) adds that a grasp of sociology is fundamental to understanding social constructionist thinking and that the “unhelpful separation of sociology and psychology since the early twentieth century” (p2) means that psychologists have only recently begun to draw upon social constructionist approaches in their research. Upon reflection, this may enable some understanding as to why there is little psychological research exploring challenging behaviour in the classroom from a social constructionist perspective.

Social constructionism is based on relativist and subjective notions, whereby multiple realities and meanings are continually being shaped by social actors. Burr (2015) identifies four key social constructionist assumptions:

- A critical stance towards taken for granted knowledge
- Historical and cultural specificity
- Social processes sustain knowledge
- Knowledge and social action go together.

Within sociology, writers have developed social constructionist ideas. One example of this is Berger and Luckmann's (1966) work, 'The Social Construction of Reality'. This was influential in developing thinking at the time, and has continued to permeate through the social constructionist movement. Berger and Luckmann (1966) stated that they perceive reality as being socially constructed by active, rather than passive, social actors within it, and that reality is contextual and relational – what is perceived to be real to one person, may not be to the next. How realities come into being, and how dominant realities emerge within time and space will be discussed in more depth as this research progresses, particularly in terms of power, discourses and institutional talk.

7.3.2 Language as social action

Within social constructionism, language is viewed as a form of action (Macleod, 2002). One of the ways people construct reality is through talking together to shape what becomes accepted or recognised as knowledge (Robson, 2011). Gale and Densmore (2000) state that language has a strong sense of functionality but within social constructionism, the key is to look beyond the cognitive view of language as a skill and begin to see how words and meanings are used to the advantage of the speaker (Fairclough, 2015). Words can be manipulated to create different meanings and effects. O'Brien and Miller (2005) also recognise that:

“People use language to do things, for example, blaming, asking and defending and in so doing create versions of the social world. Therefore all language can be seen as having an action orientation” (p64).

Events or phenomena can be described in different ways, which creates new ways to perceive or understand, and social constructionism recognises that “neither way of describing it is necessarily wrong” (Willig, 2001 p7). From this perspective we can, again, begin to see how this could help us to

understand some of the difficulties with behaviour and conflict resolution in the classroom.

7.3.3 Knowledge

Knowledge is sustained by social processes and is recognised as constantly changing over time. It is through social interaction that our own versions of 'knowledge' become fabricated or brought to life (Burr, 2015). Another key aspect of social constructionism, is the assertion that everyone possesses knowledge as it is something which is created and enacted together (Burr, 2015).

Social constructionism also challenges the assertion that categories are pre-defined and external to social actors. Social phenomena and their meanings "are continually being accomplished by social actors" (Bryman, 2008, p19). Whilst social constructionism accepts there is no one 'truth' it is possible to establish shared meaning and consensus amongst a group (Patton, 2015). This is where Gergen (2009) does throw some criticism on what he refers to as extreme positions within social constructionism. In recognising that multiple constructions are possible, with one version not having more value over another, there must be existence of an agreed shared reality – "that is, we must have at least a rudimentary agreement on what exists" (Gergen, 2009, p9) with some universality to it. The assumption must be that there is some agreement about the language we live by or common ways of speaking. However, it is important to recognise that these shared realities are context dependent and are still not wholly universal.

7.4 Discourse Analysis

Based on the social constructionist positioning of this research, Discourse Analysis (DA) was identified as being an approach that would enable analysis of the features of classroom talk and interaction. DA as an approach has social constructionist principles embedded within it.

DA has not yet been widely used within research into understanding challenging behaviour but it is a method which is growing within qualitative research and educational psychology. In thinking about classroom discourse, content and meaning are interactionally and situationally constructed (Floriani, 1994). As Pomerantz (2005) acknowledges, DA has potential to offer an alternative perspective, particularly if “classroom challenging behaviour can be viewed as a socially constructed and actively created discursive phenomena” (p18). This can then offer new understandings and potential directions as it opens the possibility of re-orientating away from a search for *causes* of behaviour towards understanding the *construction* of it (Parker, 2013).

Although DA is a useful method in exploring talk in action, it is important to recognise it goes beyond simply a ‘method’, and provides a way of thinking about language which is tied up with theoretical issues (Macleod, 2002). Jager and Maier (2009) state that discourses do not just reflect reality, they also shape and enable it. As a result, it can expose implicit values and hidden assumptions. DA aims to explore constructions through language and not make truth claims. To do so, would be more in-keeping with a positivist or realist position.

Ontologically, DA is constructionist, attempting to challenge realism by not making assumptions about the social world. Epistemologically, DA places emphasis on the subjective meanings being negotiated through the language of social actors (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), which produces subjective realities. Here, it is possible to see the marrying up of the overall methodology of the research and the method being employed as a means of analysis.

DA is best understood as an umbrella term; it can mean different things to different people. Many approaches to DA currently exist and this has led to some ambiguity in understanding amongst researchers and a difficulty in

clearly defining what it is (Pomerantz, 2008). The positioning and understanding of what discourse is perceived to be influences orientation and the analysis process methodologically. Tannen, Hamilton and Schiffrin (2015) identify three main ways of thinking about discourse:

1. Anything beyond the sentence
2. Language in use
3. A broader range of social practices

In terms of 'anything beyond the sentence', this could include two people in conversation and focuses on linguistics and the formal properties of language. Exploring the second way of thinking about discourse as 'Language in use' involves understanding applied linguistics and how people may go about "doing" language and what functions or devices are used. This could also include non-linguistic features such as pauses, tones of voice and emphasis. It could be explored via everyday talk but also begins to draw on situations in institutions.

The third way of thinking about discourse incorporates social practices such as gestures and facial expressions into the discourse. It also aims to create a general understanding of what people do and the broader social practices and systems of thought which underpin it. This often relates to the historical, political and cultural context at the time of which things were said. This makes certain things 'thinkable' and 'sayable' whilst considering issues of power and inequality. For example, in this current research, the broader discourses about pupil behaviour may be driven by political, social and educational agendas, which influence the classroom discourse.

Consideration should then be given to what discourses do, and how they operate. Gee (2014) breaks these ideas down into two main categories; those which are descriptive and largely focus on linguistics, and those that are more critical and which are applied and political in nature. Gergen (2009) summarises these into two categories along similar lines but with the

first being the content of talk and the second being the process or function of talk. Within more critical approaches to discourse, social practices are the focus and look at how discourses are produced and what they produce. Broadly, descriptive processes adopt a micro-analysis approach whilst critical approaches adopt a macro-analysis approach looking at broader features.

Although there are distinctions made between the approaches used within DA, these are not discrete and are best understood as a range of contrasting ways to think about and analyse discourse. Recognising these as distinct and discrete approaches is unhelpful and could be thought of as being more reductionist when actually DA is more fluid, exploratory and inductive in its approach. For this reason, many discourse analysts will combine techniques in their construction and understanding of the discourse.

The next two sections will discuss the methods of DA adopted within the current research, namely Conversation Analysis (CA) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

7.5 Conversation Analysis

Conversation Analysis (CA) is a theoretically and methodologically distinctive approach to understanding social life and interaction (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). It is an interdisciplinary approach which began in linguistics and sociology. Broadly, CA is the study of naturalistic talk-in-interaction and analyses talk using a sequential and technical process. Although, CA explores naturalistic talk, it has also been used to explore the talk within institutions, including schools (Drew and Heritage, 1992).

In the analysis of talk and its organisation and features, an understanding of how social action is brought about can be developed (Antaki, 2011). This is achieved by a fine-grained micro level analysis (Bryman, 2008) where the researcher looks for underlying patterns in the structure and organisation of

the minute-by-minute talk via transcripts of the conversational data. It is this transcription and subsequent micro-analysis which makes CA time consuming and labour intensive (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2013). The underlying philosophy of CA is that social contexts are not static but constantly shaped through language use, for example, how turn taking occurs, openings and sequence of the talk (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). CA then aims to look at structural organisation of the action and explore the rules and practices that structure talk (Walsh, 2013).

Some of the features of talk explored within CA have been outlined by Thornborrow (2001) and Walsh (2013) and these features are shown below. These will be illustrated further in the analysis section of this thesis.

- Turn taking – who is speaking, when and for how long.
- Lexical choice – words spoken
- Adjacency pairs – Utterances which go together where the first part largely predicts the second part.
- Repair mechanisms – how talk may be corrected, retracted or amended
- Organisational preferences – how the talk is organised
- Overlapping of talk – how talk may overlap and how this is managed
- Continuers – such as ‘hmm’ to show the listener is still engaged in the interaction
- Initiations – inviting people into the talk
- Transitions – movement between speakers which are commonly made with very little overlap.
- Non-lexical features – breaths, grunts, sighs which add meaning

Having a list of features could be argued to indicate some predictability or ‘truths’ about discourse. This suggests that there are established routines, unwritten rules and some subliminal agreed understanding about what should occur the interaction. Whilst broadly this statement is helpful, use of the word ‘explain’ may be questionable as this could be interpreted to imply

causality or universal rules. The phrasing 'explain or illuminate in context' may be a more accurate reflection.

Walsh (2013) would argue that whilst there are general social conventions about talk which are established, CA does not have preconceived categories at the outset, as the structural organisation is determined by the participants. There is no attempt to fit the data into categories as in quantitative studies of classroom interaction. The researcher does not set out to look for these but if they occur during the talk, the researcher rightly would analyse and discuss them. Bryman (2008) also recognises that there is no set way to begin CA and it often "begins with the analyst noticing something significant in or striking about the way that a speaker says something" (p495). From reviewing the range of definitions and explanations about what CA is, it is evident that there is little consensus between conversation analysts with all defining it slightly differently. The main area of some agreement would be the importance of context and that meaning is grounded in this and also that CA explores who said what, when, how, why and in what context (Walsh, 2013).

CA explores talk at the micro level and will be helpful in illuminating some of the research questions being asked by the current research. However, some of the research questions are broader and address notions of power and inequality. As Wilkinson and Kitzinger (2013) recognise, CA is not well suited to exploring these agendas as the minute-by-minute interactional analysis can obscure broader social and political realities. For this reason, within this research, CA is being combined with an approach to DA which can provide a broader macro analysis to complement the micro analysis, that of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

Thornborrow (2001) recognises that there are benefits to combining methods of DA and argue that they can complement each other. It is interesting to note that the few published pieces of research (Graff, 2009, Miller & O' Brien, 2008) and unpublished theses (Moustakim, 2010, Stewart,

2008, Pomerantz, 2005, Hopley, 2005) within this topic area often combined methods of DA within their work to enable the analysis of both micro and macro aspects of the discourse. Thornborrow (2001) states: “blending of perspectives makes it possible to analyse how power relations are both embedded in institutional discourse and constructed within social interaction” (p23). This is particularly important for exploring the current research questions.

In some ways, it could be argued that CA and CDA are polarised positions underneath the umbrella of DA and to an extent this could be true. CA, on the one hand, focuses on the directly observable and fine analysis of talk-in-interaction taking a bottom up analysis (Gee, 2014) Although context is considered, this is broadly about the interactional environment and not broader political, cultural and social contexts. On the other, CDA looks at overarching aspects of the discourse, but also how discourses come into being via power and inequality between social groups, from a top down perspective (Gee, 2014).

7.6 Critical Discourse Analysis

The approaches of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) are associated with the work of Fairclough (2015), van Dijk (2003) and Wodak and Meyer (2009) and developed out of critical linguistics. Woofitt (2005) states that “Critical Discourse Analysis adopts an overt political stance in terms of both the kinds of topics it studies and the role it sees for the rest of the research” (p139) giving it an explicit socio-political stance. Fairclough (2015) writes that:

“Critical Discourse Analysis is not, as one might assume, just a critique of the discourse, it is a critique of the existing social reality (including its discourse) which begins with a critique of the discourse” (p7).

CDA hopes to address issues of power and inequality and bring about social change. CDA starts with broad social issues which face people in their social lives (Fairclough, 2001). Part of the criticality is looking for explanations and beginning to question why the discourse shaped in a particular way. CDA is commonly used when examining institutional talk (Cameron, 2001).

CDA explores how discourse produces and reproduces social dominance and power, and therefore inequalities, and how groups may attempt to resist this dominance via the use of discursive tools (Wooffitt, 2005). CDA aims to analyse both the obvious and hidden structural relationships of discrimination, power, control and oppression via language in action. CDA also explores how social inequality may be legitimised through dominant discourses. An area of exploration within CDA is how dominant ideologies and assumptions are presented as neutral or the status quo, remaining unchallenged forming part of everyday life (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Jager and Maier (2009) position CDA as aiming to question and criticise discourses. It also explores positioning and how particular statements are acceptable and rational and why certain things are 'sayable' and 'thinkable'. Those who follow the approach of CDA are "particularly concerned with (and concerned about) the use (and abuse) of language for the exercise of socio-political power" (Widdowson, 2007, p70) and consider cultural constructs of how the world is perceived to be and political constructs of how the world should be. Here, researcher reflexivity is important (Wodak & Meyer, 2009) as the intentions and socio-political values of the analyst guide the theory and method of CDA being used (Rogers, 2004).

Although it can be helpful, CDA researchers do not in the first instance concern themselves with linguistic units, as with CA. They are more interested in studying social phenomena which are complex and broad, and the relationship between language and society. This enables a *description*, *interpretation* and contextual *explanation* of the discourse (Fairclough,

2015) and possibly why and how such discourses work. First, description explores the linguistics features of the text, interpretation builds on this by looking at how texts are produced and used and explanation examines the social practices which enables this to be so. Description is also thought of being at the local level, interpretation being at the level of the institution and explanation being at the societal level (Rogers, 2004).

7.6.1 Power and inequality within Critical Discourse Analysis

Wodak and Meyer (2009) identify that power and the existence of inequality are central concepts within CDA. Fairclough (2015) recognises that discourse can be a site of power struggles, particularly hidden power. Discourse can be structured to facilitate or limit, and enable or constrain (Willig, 2001). This is because from the position of CDA some participants already have power due to their institutional role, for example, with a teacher holding more power than a pupil or parent. Other demographics such as socio-economic status can also provide individuals with a degree of power within society (Fairclough, 2013). Power can also be acquired by privileged access to social resources, for example, conversational and linguistic skills, title or holding a stake in society. Here, social resources and competencies are important in terms of access to the discourse and can often be unequal (Van Dijk, 2003).

As language is such a crucial feature in power relations, it then follows that what becomes accepted as knowledge is shaped by the discourses of those in power and positioned prominently (Rogers, 2004). For example, the dominant discourses from the government or teaching unions around classroom behaviour continue to assert within-child explanations. The broad view of the pupil as “naughty” or “disengaged” continues with “authority” and “discipline” being perceived as the solutions. From this view, CDA would hope to explore how this had come to be this way by exploring the organisation of language in a culture that had allowed this dominant ‘truth’ to make sense. Widdowson (2007) offers some further insight,

recognising that language is used and abused by those in power as a means of control and persuasion. Understanding how this is achieved is one potential way to question the status quo and develop strong counter discourses.

In terms of power, CDA aims to “include a critique of relations between discourse and power, focusing upon discourse as part of exercising power over others” (Fairclough, 2015, p49). Here, discourses are not just expressions of social practice but serve particular ends by regulating and institutionalising ways of talking, thinking and acting, therefore guiding what is ‘thinkable’ and ‘sayable’. However, within the conceptualisation of power and dominant discourses, it is also important to recognise that language can also be used to challenge power and to alter the balance of power over time, both in the short and long term. Language can indeed be a powerful tool, and can enable dominant counter discourses to be constructed which challenge the dominant discourses and those in power. When this occurs, social change can occur and the power balances can shift. As Willig (2001) acknowledges no version of the world remains dominant forever as social actors are continually shaping and re-shaping it through social action, giving new meanings, and determining the next dominant ideologies.

7.6.2 Critical Discourse Analysis and the School

The classroom and school are both settings that are ‘institutional’, in the sense that they have clearly defined roles and routines. Much of the social action is guided by institutional practices and institutional talk. The teacher is in a position of perceived control or authority within the classroom and largely controls and shapes the discourse. Similarly, around school there are regulative and instructional discourses (Bernstein, 2000) which tell social actors how to behave and conduct themselves. Here, discourses can be bound up within institutional practices and CDA can enable us to explore issues of power and inequality within an institutional setting such as a school. It can also allow us to explore how dominant discourses, such as

those of pathologizing and labelling may permeate into the language in action in the minute by minute classroom interactions, influencing the discursive actions of individuals. Kumaravadivelu (1999) writes that:

“The emphasis on social context has helped classroom discourse analysts look at the classroom as a social event and the classroom as a ‘mini society’ with its own rules and regulations, routines and rituals” (p458)

CDA can be used alongside CA to explore how such a ‘mini society’ has come to be shaped. Is it shaped collaboratively with all participants having an equal stake, or does power and institutional talk enter into the mix, bringing with it issues of inequality or privilege? As Watson (2005) recognises some pupils enter school with the social resources and skills to access the discourse, and these may be more in-keeping with the general discourse patterns of the school discourse. Less privileged pupils may find it harder to fit into the general discourse patterns meaning they exercise power as a form of resistance to the institutional talk and discourse. This can then mean that this resistance is portrayed as frustration, disengagement, or challenging behaviour. Watson (2005) recognises that when pupils attempt to use their own power and agency in this way, it can lead them to come into conflict with the teacher.

Here, based on the other aim of CDA which is to bring about social change for the better, powerful and purposeful explorations of discourse and how pupils are constructed could help to move things forward. This is particularly significant for EPs when working in the context of behaviour casework and with pupils at risk of exclusions. Use of a critical perspective could create important and alternative constructions of pupils perceived as challenging, particularly where those in positions in power have constructed them in particular ways for a particular purpose.

8 Research Methods and Design

8.1 Observations

When reviewing literature from research in the field of challenging behaviour, observations are often a research method of choice (Apter, Arnold & Swinson, 2010). They have been used successfully within research to gather data on a variety verbal behaviours of teachers and pupils via coding but have not yet been widely used as a means of recording conversation. Despite this Robson (2011) believes that observation is the most appropriate technique for capturing real life in the real world. Observations are a key tool because

“the actions and behaviour of people are a central aspect in virtually all real-world research, a natural and obvious technique is to watch what they do, to record this in some way and then describe analyse and interpret what we have observed” (Robson, 2011, p315)

Patton (2015) highlights the value of direct observation stating that this includes rich description, behaviour in action and contextual sensitivity. A major advantage with observation is that the researcher does not need to spend time asking people about their views or behaviour but can “watch what they do and listen to what they say” (Robson, 2011 p316). Observations can illuminate complex social phenomena in naturalistic settings, such as behaviour in the classroom.

Despite the success of the use of observations in published research it is important to recognise potential limitations. Observation can be time consuming (Robson, 2002) and there is a chance that participants will behave differently if they know they are being observed. Observation is also open to interpretation by the researcher. Observation can be helpful as a supplementary method to validate or corroborate, particularly as there will be information which audio recording alone would not be able to capture.

After the observations, it is important that meaning and purposes are checked with participants if needed via discussion or reflection. This also enables exploration of whether behaviour did change due to being observed, for example, did the teacher feel the pupil's behaviour had changed with the researcher present, and vice versa. This is a key component of qualitative methods and enables validity or credibility to be checked.

8.2 Audio-recording

To capture the minute by minute of naturally occurring talk, one effective method which has been used is audio-recording (Smith, 2015). This has also been successfully combined with naturalistic observations to capture the verbal and non-verbal aspects of naturally occurring talk and behaviour.

Audio-recording is the preferred method of conversation analysts for capturing data, as it can be used with or without the researcher present (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2013). Cameron (2001) highlights the debate about being present or not during audio-recording and this is broadly for similar reasons to the presence of a researcher during observations. The presence of the researcher during audio-recording may lead participants to change what they say, how they say it or even how much they talk in comparison to if the researcher were not there. However, if the researcher is not present, then context can be lost as the audio-recorder will only capture spoken data and not information about what else may have been happening (Robson, 2011).

Although audio-recordings are the preferred method for researchers completing DA, Walsh (2013) points out that making a recording can be highly complex and fraught with difficulty. Cameron (2001) indicates the importance of working with gatekeepers as the ethical requirements for audio recording within institutions such as schools can be formal. There is the need to gain the informed consent of the head teacher, the class teacher, pupils and their parents before the data collection can begin.

Decisions must also be made about the positioning of the audio-recording equipment and the settings required in different contexts. Sound quality can be a problem as there may be background noise, interference, or in the classroom, potentially many voices speaking at once. This can make key moments within interactions related to behaviour in the classroom particularly difficult to playback and then transcribe. One other possibility could be the use of multiple microphones or lapel microphones, however, this may then become obtrusive and change the nature of the interactions being observed.

8.3 Transcription

Transcription is a time consuming but necessary process (Willig, 2013). Before analysis can be completed the researcher must produce a transcript. At the transcription phase key decisions need to be made and this is where the analysis first begins (Holt, 2011). Wilkinson and Kitzinger (2013) recognise that analysis begins at the transcription phase where decisions are made about layout, line numbers and spacing and context such as font type and transcription detail (Jenks, 2011) as well as what to include.

Walsh (2013) highlights that methodological decisions made during transcription can influence clarity and understanding of the data. It is important that the precise relationship between the interaction and the words and symbols used to represent it is carefully considered. These methodological decisions may include whether to record pauses, intonation, emphasis, pitch and volume rises and what the implications may be of doing so, or not doing so. Silverman (2013) states it is also important to recognise that transcripts are also a construction and decisions are made about what is transcribed and how. To encourage neutrality, it is important that key decisions are recorded within the research diary about what is to be included or omitted.

Transcription offers a high level of detail, something which is needed for the micro-approach of CA. It allows the capture of speech errors, pauses, laughter, interruptions and other audible features but whilst also capturing features which are not at the word level, such as how things are said (Willig, 2013). This then opens up the opportunity for a more critical macro-approach such as CDA to be used. Once data is transcribed, it is recommended that the researcher immerses themselves in the data by listening to the audio-recordings again but also by reading and re-reading transcripts (Bozic, Leadbetter & Stringer, 1998). Following this, coding and highlighting should take place and this may go through several cycles or constructions. The demands of transcription are significant and labour intensive and this is why “decisions about sample size are often strongly influenced by pragmatic considerations” (Willig, 2013, p92) and a vast amount is not needed for meaningful analysis.

8.4 Ethical Considerations

Prior to the research taking place, a successful submission was made to the University of Nottingham Ethics Committee. This submission was made using the Ethical Risks Checklist and in concordance with the ethical guidelines outlined within the University of Nottingham Code of Research Conduct and Ethics (2013) and the British Psychological Society Code of Human Research Ethics (2010). Ethical considerations are discussed throughout the next section. These include consent, right to withdraw, data protection, stakeholder recruitment and engagement, anonymity, confidentiality, TEP/Researcher dual role and debriefing. The very nature of the topic and the inductive approach to the research meant that there was potential for ethical considerations to arise throughout the research process, including at the analysis phase due to working with spoken words and actions (Brinkman and Kvale, 2013). Ethical considerations pertaining to the analysis phase will be discussed later.

8.5 Procedure

8.5.1 Stakeholder Involvement and Recruitment of Participants

The current research took place in the Local Authority where the author is on placement as a TEP. The researcher identified three schools to be approached about taking part in the research. The secondary school which was selected and then asked to participate in the research is a smaller than average sized secondary school in a small town within the local authority. The town is socially and economically diverse, but there are areas of significant social deprivation. There are approximately 800 pupils on roll at the school with an equal split of boys and girls. Approximately 2% of pupils have a statement or Education, Health and Care Plan. The overall proportion of pupils with identified Special Educational Needs (SEN), learning or physical disabilities is slightly below average. Approximately 25% of pupils are eligible or have been eligible for pupil premium funding. Very few pupils (3%) are learning English as an Additional Language.

Before the school completed the consent form the distinction between the TEP role and researcher role was clarified and made explicit. A copy of the research interest letter, information letter and consent form can be found in Appendix D, Appendix E and Appendix F. The role distinction continued to be reinforced throughout the research, at the start of each research visit. Before any research could begin it was important that consent was gained from the school as gatekeepers (Robson, 2011). It was decided that based on the epistemological and ontological positioning of this research, one school would be used, to create a holistic picture and explore institutional talk and the nature of pupil-teacher interactions *within* a school system rather than *across* schools.

Once the school had completed the consent form, dialogue was opened with senior members of staff about approaching teachers and pupils to take part in the research. This enabled discussion to be held about participants'

suitability to the nature and topic of the research, which was to look at language use in the construction of classroom behaviour and explore interesting classroom interactions. Pupil participants whose interactions with teachers – with specific regard to ‘behaviour’ – which might be illuminative and interesting were identified.

Once pupil participants were identified and recruited to the research about possibly taking part, the researcher provided a research interest letter to their teachers (Appendix G), parents of the pupils identified as being possible participants for the research (Appendix H) and the pupils themselves (Appendix I). This would enable them to make an informed decision about taking part in the study and time was provided for them to ask further questions. The use of a parent version of the letter also allowed parents to make an informed decision about whether they wished for their child to take part. The research interest information letters were provided to the participants before consent was sought to provide time to think about whether to become involved.

Gaining consent was then organised with individual participants. If the teachers wished to take part they were provided with an information sheet (Appendix J) and filled in a consent form (Appendix K). For pupil participants, an information sheet was provided for parents (Appendix L) and for pupils (Appendix M). Two consent forms (Appendix N and Appendix O) were completed to ensure that both the parent and pupil had given their consent. It was felt that parental consent was as important as pupil consent and that the decision must be mutual. Walsh (2013) highlights this is good ethical practice, particularly if research is based in a school context. If this form was returned without both signatures, then the pupil participant did not take part in the research.

All information sheets and consent forms were designed following ethical guidelines outlined in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) and Creswell (2014). Both highlight the importance of information sheets and consent

forms including the researcher's contact details, purpose of the study, the level of voluntary involvement that would be required, explanation about confidentiality and anonymity, and an explanation about the right to withdraw from the research.

8.5.2 Participants and Context

Pupil participants being recruited to the study were selected because there had been some concerns expressed by school about individual pupil behaviour in the classroom. These concerns will also have been expressed to the pupil or parent in the context of home-school communication and pupils may have been placed on a progress report by their head of year. This meant that there was already open dialogue between home and school, therefore receiving a research letter regarding behaviour would not damage relationships between the school and the pupil. For the purposes of the research, participants were identified where it was felt there would be interaction and contributions in class, so to illuminate the topic of exploration. For this reason, pupil participants whose interactions with teachers – with specific regard to 'behaviour' – which might be illuminative and interesting were identified.

To guide the discussions with the SENCo, factors such as recent school exclusions, time in the seclusion room, being on report or picking up negative comments on the school system were used to identify potential participants. Also, situations where pupil-teacher relationships may be difficult were also considered as these may also enable illuminative exploration. Within this, it was decided that pupils who were at risk of permanent exclusion from school would not be asked to take part. This was because it was hoped that each participant would complete three to five observations and to try to ensure retention of participants.

From further discussion with stakeholders it was felt that low-level but persistent verbal behaviour would be the main criterion. It was felt this can

present a significant challenge for teachers within the school, and as such, this was a current concern held by the school. This also corresponds with the research literature discussed within the earlier literature review. Many teachers in the research literature expressed greatest concerns about low-level disruptive behaviours, particularly talking out of turn or situations where the IRF sequence is disrupted (Ofsted, 2005 DoE, 2012). It is, of course, important to acknowledge the personal and subjective nature of challenging behaviour and this definition may be different from teacher to teacher. The focus on *verbal behaviour* would also facilitate audio recording of the data. Non-verbal behaviour was then be noted via direct observation.

Six pupil participants were identified as possible participants. These pupils were all male and attended the school on a full-time basis in Key Stage 3. Four pupil participants returned consent forms signed by themselves and their parents. One pupil participant later withdrew from the study and their data has not been used, in accordance with ethical guidelines. For the three pupil participants who were part of the research, their teachers were then approached to ask if they wished to take part in the research. This would create natural pupil-teacher pairings. Six teacher participants provided their consent to take part in the research and timetables were provided to the researcher by the SENCo, to plan paired observations and communicate these in advance with the pupil and teacher participants. Before the observations began, pupil and teacher participants were reminded that their taking part was voluntary. They were also reminded of their right to withdraw from the research, and that their data would be anonymised and stored securely.

All three pupil participants who took part in the research were boys from Key Stage 3, with two pupils from Year 9 and one pupil from Year 8 respectively. None of the pupils had any formal medical diagnoses, for example, ADHD or ASD, or identified learning difficulties. Broadly their scores on entry to school indicated that they had made good progress at primary level and were making some progress across Key Stage 3. Some concerns, however,

had been expressed regarding the behaviour of all three pupils in lessons and around school and it was felt that this could be hindering progress. The school had worked collaboratively with pupils' parents and developed programmes of pastoral support in school to help to improve the situation for the pupils and staff. Historically, all three pupils had spent time on the school report system with regards to disruptive and challenging behaviour in lessons, including talking out of turn, shouting across classrooms and being off-task. At times, these situations had escalated and led to pupils receiving detentions, negative points for behaviour or being spoken to by senior members of staff. All three pupils were identified by the school as meeting the criteria for the research based on their contextual definition of behaviour that is "challenging" or "disruptive" in lessons (displaying low-level but persistent verbal behaviour).

Teacher participants within the research had a range of experience, with three teachers teaching more than one subject within school. All teachers had pastoral responsibilities and had their own tutor groups alongside their subject/taught classes. One teacher had taught at the school for an extended period and had over 15 years teaching experience. Two teachers had five to ten years teaching experience and had been at the school for approximately half of that time. Two teachers were recently qualified with approximately two years teaching experience and one teacher was newly qualified.

In agreement with participants, the first observation of one of these pupil-teacher pairings acted as a pilot. This enabled the researcher to pilot the observation technique, observation grid and audio-recording equipment to ensure these were viable methods before the research proceeded.

8.5.3 Data Collection

Observations were made of the pupil-teacher pairings across a six-week period. Further information about the nature of the observations including

topics taught, timings and the pupil-teacher pairings can be found in Appendix P. Observations were recorded using the observation grid developed by the researcher which can be found in Appendix Q. This enabled information about context, who was speaking and when and non-verbal features of communication such as expressions or gestures to be captured. Notes were made regarding what was said, when and how.

The observation records mainly aimed to capture details which the audio-recording would not. Audio-recorded data was only transcribed for those participants who had given consent to take part in the research. No data was used within the research for other pupils or adults in the classroom. Observational and audio-data were then combined to aid transcription.

As the research was taking place in a real-world context, observations followed the progression of the school day and typical lesson format and lasted for approximately 60 minutes. This was to ensure that the learning of pupils was not disrupted or altered and that the normal context could be observed. The researcher positioned themselves at the back of the classroom to not disturb the learning of other pupils. The researcher did not engage with the lesson content nor initiate conversation with those around her to avoid becoming a participant and altering the natural setting, unless approached by the pupils or teacher. Contextual details such as time of day, lesson, number of pupils, pupil and teacher positioning was also noted on the observation grid. Pupil-teacher pairings received a maximum of five observational visits in total from the researcher.

After the observations in the classroom, open-ended discussions were completed with the teacher and pupil participants on an individual basis. This was done to gather their perspectives on the classroom experience, behaviour in school and to also explore features of the discourse or extracts where appropriate. Some key topics, questions or discussion points (Appendix R) were developed based on themes emerging from the observational data to guide the discussion if needed. It was intended for the

discussions to be participant-led, unstructured and narrative in nature. Participants were reminded that the discussions were voluntary. These discussions were also audio-recorded and then transcribed and helped to explore aspects or further themes that emerged from them. Verbal debrief information was also provided within these discussions and participants were given a further opportunity to ask questions about the research and provided with the researcher's contact details (Appendix S).

Due to the nature of the topic being explored, another key consideration was the safety of the researcher (Robson, 2011). During the observations, no events arose which led to the researcher to feel unsafe but the researcher was positioned in the classrooms with an identified route to the exit available. Due to the sensitivity of the topic being discussed, it was appropriate to provide the participants with a confidential space for the discussion. Although, audio-recording was used to capture this data, it also acted as a means of safeguarding the researcher and participants.

8.6 Reliability and Validity

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) recognise that "validity is key to effective research" (p133) alongside reliability and generalisability of research findings. These enable the quality of a piece of research to be determined. However, positivistic criteria such as reliability and validity can be problematic within qualitative research as it takes the view that there is not one truth against which the analysis can be assessed (Holt, 2011).

The nature of qualitative research means that findings tend to be contextually unique. The research data collected and its subsequent analysis is a construction of the naturally occurring talk shaped by the social context and the social actors. It features the voices of social actors who are constructing their own meanings and understandings within a social context. Each conversation is idiographic in nature and unique to the social actors within the situation.

In qualitative research, there is less focus on measurability and more focus upon meaning and action. Qualitative research is not intended to be a hunt for truth, or a definitive explanation for why a pupil presents with challenging behaviour in the classroom. But qualitative research does aim to enhance understanding of the phenomenon, for these social actors in this context. Pomerantz (2005) adds that this is why sample size within the analysis is not important as the research does not claim to establish a fixed reality to generalise from. It is more about gathering rich data and for this reason a purposeful sampling method was used (Silverman, 2013).

A more useful criteria or judgement of quality within qualitative research is trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Trustworthiness is broken down into further elements of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. These run in parallel to more positivistic criteria such as objectivity. Credibility means ensuring research follows good practice and reviewing the findings with the social actors in social world the piece of research has focused upon. This is to ensure that findings have been interpreted in a fair, truthful and accurate way. This was the purpose of the follow up discussions held with participants and enabled the addition of respondent validation. This also ensures an element of neutrality to the analysis and helps to counter-act researcher bias within the analysis. Transferability means showing that the findings have broader applicability in other contexts, whilst still acknowledging the idiographic. Dependability means showing that findings are consistent and could be repeated and confirmability focuses on ensuring a degree of neutrality. This is not the same as objectivity but means that the findings have been shaped by the participants, not researcher bias or motivation. Confirmability considers whether the findings can be traced back to raw data and this can often be supported by the keeping of a research diary which records decisions made and any justification.

8.7 Researcher reflexivity

In considering trustworthiness within qualitative research a key aspect is that of research reflexivity (Bishop, 2007). This enables the researcher to work with subjectivity but also have clear tools for managing the threat of researcher bias. Willig (2001) defines reflexivity as;

“an awareness of the researcher’s contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an acknowledgement of the impossibility of remaining ‘outside of’ one’s subject matter while conducting research” (p10)

Due to the subjective nature of qualitative research, there will be threats of researcher bias and subjective opinion. It is important for the researcher to think critically about interpretations and possible bias. Fairclough (1995) states that critical language awareness also forms part of this. The words that are used within the written account of the research are also constructive, and language does not ‘mirror’ reality for anyone except the person who is writing the account. The researcher brings only one perspective and those who participate provide additional but equally valid perspectives guided by their own assumptions and beliefs. Van Lier (1984) states that in using DA in classrooms:

“the nature of the research will largely be determined by the researcher’s views about the nature of language in use. It is important, for the relevance and clarity of any study, to be as explicit as possible about how these views, which the research carries with him/her as basic assumptions” (p119).

Some of the researcher’s assumptions, values and beliefs were outlined in the earlier introductory section of this thesis and are also addressed at the analysis phase. To reduce the threat of researcher bias, follow-up discussions were held with the individual participants to explore, validate or

contradict the researcher's interpretations and analysis of the data. Observations were accompanied by audio-recording and this data was continually cross referenced to ensure interpretations were an accurate reflection of what was observed. Again, these were reviewed with the participants and any misinterpretations addressed. This was not done with the view of identifying confirmable truths but to explore subjectivity and different constructions. These were recorded within a research diary, along with key decisions made and details of the research activity.

Within reflexivity, it is also important to consider how the researcher is positioned within the research. For this piece of research, the researcher was acting in the researcher role, and not that of a TEP. This is highlighted within the research letters, consent forms and was made clear to participants before each visit to the school so that participants understood the data would only be used for research purposes. Also, in terms of closeness to the research, it is important that the researcher recognises their own personal values, subjectivities and influences, as it is not possible to separate these entirely and be objective within any analysis (Patton, 2015). Self-scrutiny and careful consideration of researcher's past experiences and points of view can all impact upon the analysis and act as "baggage" (Tracy, 2012). Qualitative researchers acknowledge this throughout the research process and within the analysis process. This is also documented in the research diary.

Similarly, within qualitative research and as part of a reflexive researcher, it is important to demonstrate methodological awareness, showing evidence of procedures which facilitated the analysis and helped the researcher to reach their conclusions. This aspect will be presented in more detail in the data and analysis section of this research.

9 Findings and Analysis

Willig (2013) recommends that when using DA approaches, it is often helpful to merge the analysis and discussion section to ensure that clarity is provided about how the findings have emerged. Analysis develops into a narrative account of key themes and is punctuated with extracts from the transcript (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). For this reason, within this chapter, extracts and analysis will be presented and then discussed in turn. This will illuminate features of the discourse and enable exploration of the data in light of the research questions outlined in Chapter 6. Extracts are numbered sequentially within the analysis section and which transcript these were taken from is in brackets.

9.1 Procedure

Each pupil-teacher pair received a series of observational visits as indicated in Appendix P and over time this did appear to limit observer effects. In the first observation with each pairing, the pupil participants did seem more reserved and quiet initially. This only became evident following subsequent observations. Completion of a series of observations also enabled the researcher to become immersed in the discourse and the classroom environment.

It is important to recognise the data gathered only reflects the discourse within those observations, and as such, is a partial construction of the pupil-teacher relationship. It was difficult to try to capture everything, particularly based on where participants were in the live classroom environment. At times, some aspects of the discourse such as pauses, facial expressions and speech were obscure, for example, if all pupils are moving or talking at once. This impacted on the audio-recording itself and the researcher's ability to view the unfolding action. This is, however, part of the nature of real world research.

Follow up discussions were held as part of the analysis phase. These acted as a means of context checking, but also exploring wider macro-level discourses which were in use within the classroom and school as a system.. Once the data was collected via audio-recording, this was transcribed to create transcripts of the pupil-teacher talk.

9.2 Transcription

Audio-recorded data was transcribed verbatim and then modified to show linguistic and paralinguistic features. Decisions were made about which features to capture on the transcript. Transcription was based on the Jefferson (2004) method and can be found in Appendix T. This includes features of talk such as emphasis, speed of talk, volume, pitch and pauses.

The decisions about which features to capture in a noisy classroom were pragmatic ones, rather than theoretically led. Some inaudible content was captured on the recordings meaning the significance of the interaction was lost. In the few instances where it was unclear who was talking, this data was not transcribed to avoid transcribing data where consent may not have been given. At the transcription phase, pseudonyms were given to the participants, and identifiable features such as place names were removed.

Another key decision was deciding whether to transcribe all data for participants, or just data relating to behaviour. It was decided that all data for the teacher and focus pupils would be needed and transcribed to consider how situations were constructed across a lesson. This led to a large amount of data being transcribed where behaviour-related interactions were not directly evident. This helped the researcher to understand the context of the situation and look at how conflict may develop between the teacher and pupil. To also help inform context, as time went on comments and brief descriptions were added to the transcript on an anonymised basis to indicate where other pupils or adults in the room spoke. This was needed

to make sense of the talk, as it appeared as if the teacher was talking for extended periods and asking questions where no response was received.

9.3 Ethical Considerations

Decisions also had to be made regarding transcription difficulties around data where consent had not been obtained. Ethically, direct data could not be transcribed where consent had not been given, but it is used in a contextual basis on the transcript, simply by saying “pupil spoke”, and where a focus pupil referred to another *named* pupil, a pseudonym was given to the *named* pupil. These decisions were made to ensure the transcripts reflected the nature of the situation whilst protecting all involved. Direct full extracts cannot be presented in some cases due to participant anonymity needing to be maintained but were considered as part of the analysis process

Full transcripts are available subject to permission being granted from the participants. Extracts are used to highlight and illustrates aspects of the analysis. Some extracts were shared with participants at the follow-up discussions where it was felt appropriate to do so. Also on the original recordings, a lot of useful but anonymous data was captured which could illuminate the research phenomenon. As such, there were events observed which cannot be reported or transcribed and were “lost” from the data for ethical reasons.

9.4 Analysis Procedure and Protocols

The analysis began and continued to occur based on the researcher’s interaction with the text (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). As outlined in the Methodology chapter, there are many ways to approach DA, and DA itself has been argued to be an intangible process (Willig, 2013). It has less to do with following prescribed steps and is more about conducting an analysis in “the spirit of post-structural inquiry” (Holt, 2011).

The researcher developed a unique analysis protocol to guide analysis and can be found in Appendix U. This utilises aspects of the approaches of CA and CDA rather than following one approach explicitly. This decision was made to allow for micro and macro features of the discourse to be analysed. It also ensured that the analysis protocol would enable the research questions to be explored effectively. Key decisions made regarding analysis were recorded directly as annotations on the transcripts, analysis protocol or within the research diary (Rogers, 2004). These illustrate the analysis process undertaken. This ensured that there are clear links between the raw data and the final analysis presented. It also illustrates researcher reflexivity within the analysis process (Fairclough, 2015).

The analysis protocol outlines the cyclical process followed by the researcher. Although aspects on the analysis protocol are numbered, this was not done to imply steps in the process. Within DA, the data leads and shapes the analysis. The process of analysis is not a systematic or linear process but is more cohesive, guided by the text or talk.

It is important to recognise that alternative readings could be possible from the transcripts. There are a multitude of potential aspects of the discourse which could have been explored. Any analysis should not be presented as the definitive view or truth but recognised as just one way to view the analysis (Holt, 2011). As the research is positioned as relativist and inductive from the outset, it follows that the analysis does not seek to predict or identify universal truths but seeks to explore and illuminate the construction of challenging behaviour.

Several phases of detailed analysis were completed and the raw transcripts act as analytic tools (Jenks, 2011). Transcripts were numbered and initially analysed in number order. However, as the analysis progressed, it became more about analysing by features of talk, interesting aspects and bringing parts of transcripts together. The analysis protocol was referred to frequently to bring a level of neutrality to the analysis. Due to the large amount of rich data gathered it is not possible to present a detailed analytical account of each pupil-teacher relationship in turn within this chapter but

these could be presented as case studies in future work by the researcher. Key aspects of the idiographic relationships and interactions are presented in this section to illustrate the analysis, alongside broader features and discourses. The data were combined for the purposes of looking at pupil-teacher discourse across the school and to illuminate the social construction of behaviour via pupil-teacher interaction.

9.5 Exploring the data and the construction of the analysis

To present a cohesive overview of the analysis of the data, this section is framed firstly by exploring different micro-level conversational features and how these were used within the talk between the teacher and pupil, or in some instances between the teacher and the whole class, in relation to behaviour and classroom management. Secondly, consideration is given to how these conversational features develop into broader overarching discourses, facilitate power and the construction of challenging behaviour. In some sections, these two aspects will be discussed in combination.

The researcher has continued to reflect and focus upon the research questions shown below:

- What **linguistic devices** are used by the teacher or pupil within pupil-teacher interactions around challenging behaviour? What **function** do these serve?
- Does the **IRF sequence** feature in the discourse – and does it play a part in the construction of challenging behaviour?
- How is **power** achieved within interactions around challenging behaviour and how does it influence the discourse?
- How are **roles** defined within the classroom through language?
- What **types of talk** are associated with challenging behaviour?
- In what way does classroom discourse **facilitate** the construction of challenging behaviour?

- In what way does classroom discourse **reinforce** the construction of challenging behaviour?

As the analysis and discussion progressed it was felt that it would be more helpful to explore these final two questions as one 'topic'. It became difficult to view the facilitation and reinforcement of challenging behaviour separately as the two issues appeared to be interlinked within the data. In a similar way, as the analysis progressed, it was found to be more helpful to consider how facilitation or reinforcement of challenging behaviour is made possible by aspects explored via the other research questions.

In framing the analysis, key topics – indicated by those words highlighted in the research questions above - will be used to provide a structure for the discussion.

9.6 Linguistic Devices and their functions

9.6.1 Lexical Choice

Extracts from the transcripts indicated a variety of word choices made by teachers and pupils. Teacher 1 made use of countdowns from five to indicate to pupils that she required their attention for the next part of the learning. The use of countdowns served two main functions, it maintained order within the discourse and lesson proceedings, and enabled the teacher to maintain overall control of the talk.

In a lesson with Teacher 1 and Andrew, countdowns were used by the teacher in lines 83, 135, 153, 280, 336 and 367. In the earlier instances, the class and Andrew responded and turned to listen to the teacher. However, as the lesson progressed, this countdown began to serve another function whereby pupils used it as an opportunity to interrupt as the teacher was counting. In line 516 shown in Extract 1, the teacher becomes frustrated by this interruption, redelivering her countdown over the noise of the pupils, including Andrew, who is talking to the pupil next to him.

Extract 1 (Transcript 1)		
516	Teacher1	Right(.) 5(.)4(.)3(.)2(.)1(.)Show me(.)Show me your
517		boards(.) I want to see everyone's boards(.)Fred
518		when your board is like that I can't see it(.)Right(.)
519		see
520		{{background noise – discussion etc}}
521	Teacher1	Right(.)5(.)4(.)3(.)2(.)1(.)Show me(.)Right Andrew I
522		don't <need you> to be talking(.)I just want to see
523		your boards(.)

The use of repetitive phrases such as “are we listening?” “right” and “so” are evident across this lesson and these phrases lose impact over time, leading to the escalation in Extract 2. The teacher then must make use of emphasis and volume to get her point across, maintain control and to stop the situation from continuing.

Extract 2 (Transcript 1)		
616	Teacher1	I'm <u>not</u> impressed(.)Over there the <u>work rate</u> is not
617		<u>particularly</u> good(.)So we <u>need</u> to make sure we are
618		sitting on our chairs properly and we are getting
619		these done(.)Right(.)just <u>STOP</u> what you are doing
620		and look this way(.)All listening(.)I've got a feeling
621		that <u>some of us</u> are <u>not</u> paying attention(.)Shhhh(.)I
622		am still waiting(.)

Whilst Andrew is not named in this extract, this talk was directed towards him and a group of pupils. The teacher reframes her dissatisfaction about the behaviour of pupils by repeating a similar message in several different ways. The omission of a pupil name, in this case, Andrew, to indicate the direction of the initial first judgement, means that the same message is delivered again.

In some extracts, the use of assertive phrasing is used frequently. By this, assertive word choices are made using the words ‘need’, ‘expect’ and ‘want’ (Dix, 2011). These serve to indicate what pupils are expected to do, but also serve to enable the teacher to use her authority to maintain classroom expectations and pupil behaviour.

Extract 3 (Transcript 1)		
13	Teacher1	One thing I just want to say(.)and I <u>know</u> (.)that that it was not particularly you(.)cos the other groups were lining up awful(.)It was <u>shocking</u> (.)I <u>expect</u> you to be setting an example to the other groups about how to do it(.) It's not good enough(.)I <physically>(.) (pauses to address behaviour of another pupil)(.)I am physically quite small(.) {{another pupil enters and teacher addresses him}} so I find it very difficult to shout at an entire year group telling them to line up properly(.)That is very difficult for me(.)so I <u>need</u> your support to show people how to do it properly so the other classes are like right we are messing about we <u>need</u> to get it sorted(.)Because I <u>know</u> you lot know how to do it properly(.)So you <u>need</u> to be showing the other groups how to do it(.)Do we understand↑(.)
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		
26		
27		
28	Andrew	Yes ((with rest of class))

The words 'need' and 'expect' are reinforced via emphasis by the teacher. In some instances, these are accompanied by an explanation which aims to appeal to the pupils in line 19 about being small, so finding it more difficult to shout to get quiet outside. Pupils listen in silence. Andrew, alongside all pupils, comment that they understand, however, the question in line 27 in this instance acts as an adjacency pair where the only socially acceptable answer is yes.

Use of non-standard English by some teachers acts as a form of word choice. Across all the transcripts standard English is the norm but use of non-standard English serves as a means of relationship building and adding humour to pieces of teacher talk. In Extract 4, Teacher 2 makes use of the word 'spoonhead' to guide pupils in making decisions about who to choose as a partner. It provides pupils with an insight into the teacher as a person, outside the institutional role. Bruce and other pupils laugh and smile in response.

Extract 4 (Transcript 4)		
61	Teacher2	Before(.) we do anything(.) I do need you to <get into pairs>(.). \$Work with somebody you know a (.) you are going to get some work achieved and b (.) you know you are not going to be a <u>spoonhead</u> with(.)\$ Ok(.) go and spit your chewing gum out(.) Anyone else like to take <this opportunity> to spit their chewing gum out to avoid
62		
63		
64		
65		
66		

67		yourself having a <u>detention</u> at break(.) Done(.) Cool(.) I
68		am going to give you 30 seconds to find a partner (.)

This use of humour then makes it easier for him to deliver a disciplinary statement about chewing gum. Several pupils feel safe in disposing of their chewing gum, including Bruce. “Cool” is then given as feedback by the teacher.

The use of ‘spoonhead’ also could be viewed as a kinder alternative to other words. For example, had this word been replaced with ‘stupid’ this could have prompted a very different reaction from the pupils. Across the lessons, there does appear to be an institutional rule that terminology which could be labelled as swearing or cursing is not acceptable within the school. When pupils used these words, this prompted the teacher to address the verbal behaviour of a pupil.

Extract 5 (Transcript 6)		
467	Bruce	Oh crap
468	Teacher4	Pardon(.)Pardon(.)What would be an easier or nicer
469		way of saying that(.)Oh dear would be better(.)We’ve
470		<u>got</u> a guest in the room does she want to be hearing
471		rude words like that(.)
472	Bruce	No
473	Teacher4	It’s not appropriate in polite company(.)I know(.) but
474		you could have been politer than that(.)
475	Bruce	Why is that a bad word though(.)
476	Teacher4	Why are you still talking at me(.)And then you’ve got
477		1(.)2(.)3(.)4 and it goes up like this(.)Shhh(.)Right(.)
478		Be quiet(.)

In Extract 5, the use of the word ‘crap’ is addressed in the context of the researcher presence and her being from outside the institution, the reaction of other pupils led the researcher to feel this was standard institutional practice. In this instance, however, the word seemed to have been said because the pupil had made a mistake in his work, voiced this out-loud, leading to a disciplinary conversation.

A similar event occurs in Extract 6, whereby a misunderstanding has occurred due to the pauses Christopher has made when speaking.

Extract 6 (Transcript 10)		
454	Christopher	What's this meant to be a pattern of(3)Jesus Christ↑
455	Teacher5	Pardon
456	Christopher	What(.)That's not rude
457	Teacher5	I said pardon
458	Christopher	Oh I thought you meant like when you burp
459	Teacher5	I don't understand what you are talking about
460	Christopher	Cos the pattern looks like Jesus's cross(.)
461	Teacher5	Oh it looks like Jesus's cross(.)I understand now(.)

The teacher reacts to Christopher's use of the phrase "Jesus Christ" with a shocked expression. However, time is provided for Christopher to explain his word choice, address misunderstandings and avoid the construction of a situation that might escalate. Later in the same lesson, Christopher's word choice is again questioned by the teacher in Extract 7.

Extract 7 (Transcript 10)		
442	Christopher	This pencil is crap(.)
443	Teacher5	Can we have another word please(.)instead of
444		crap(.)it's not really appropriate(.)We might say the
445		pencil is not very good
446	Christopher	Rubbish
447	Teacher5	Alright it's rubbish then(.)It's a bag of rubbish(.)
448		\$Christopher you rebel\$

By addressing Christopher's word choice an opportunity is provided for learning, rather than a disciplinary conversation. To move the situation on, the teacher also makes use of her smile voice to change the tone.

In a lesson later in the day, Christopher then uses another religious phrase 'God' when frustrated at not being listened to.

Extract 8 (Transcript 11)		
20	Christopher	Argh(.)I'm putting my bag down for God's sake(.)Ah
21		it's all gone(.)I picked it up look(.)
22	Teacher6	Shhh(.)Christopher(.)Christopher(.)now sheet right
23		way up in front of you and writing on it please

Although the use of the word here is acknowledged by use of 'shhhh' he is not provided with the same opportunity to correct his word choice. As a result, he uses it twice later in the lesson (line 37 and 144). Both then lead

to conflict situations, one where Christopher is unable to get the teacher's attention so the use of the word functions to get the teacher's attention.

Extract 9 (Transcript 11)		
144	Christopher	For GODS SAKE(.)Why.)(gets up out of seat and
145		throws objects)
146	Teacher6	{{other side of the room}}
147	Christopher	((laughing/talking to peers))
148	Teacher6	Christopher(.)what's this one
149	Christopher	I don't know(.).I don't know(bangs table)

It does seem that if curse or swear words are not addressed pupils will use them, sometimes using ones which are more severe as situations escalate. From the transcripts, it does appear that swear or curse words are a potential trigger for a situation to develop around behaviour.

In contrast to swearing, all teachers made use of manners when talking to pupils, particularly in saying thank you. This served to de-escalate situations but also acknowledged pupils making positive choices with their learning and behaviour.

9.6.2 Grammar and use of pronouns

Teachers make use of pronouns to indicate possession or ownership of the classroom space, for example, my board, my classroom, my bin. This serves to position the classroom and its contents as belonging to the teacher. Whilst pupils accept this, it does continue to reinforce the asymmetry between the pupil and teacher and a lack of pupil ownership. It implies that pupils are there by invitation and there are terms to this and it is not their classroom or their space. These phrases, if altered to read as our board, our classroom or our bin, would serve to re-address the balance and promote a greater sense of power balance.

Grammar and use of pronouns are also used to position pupils. For example, earlier in Extracts 2 and 3 reference was made to pupils as a group as "you lot" or "some of you". This serves to imply pupils are a group to be managed, or in some instances playing one half of pupils off against the

other half, creating power divisions between those who have and those who have not.

In terms of interactional space, word choices and grammar create ways of teachers giving the same message but with different effects and different times. For example, “I am talking” is the preferred phrase of Teacher 1 and Teacher 4. Teacher 4, however, often asks pupils “Why are you still talking?”, which provides an opportunity for the pupil to respond, despite the question being rhetorical as shown below in Extract 10

Extract 10 (Transcript 8)		
376	Teacher4	Why are we still talking(.)
377	Bruce	What(.)I didn't say anything though

The contrast between asserting speaking rights in comparison to ‘be quiet’ or ‘shut up’ have different impacts on the flow of the discourse. Be quiet and shut up can lead to situations escalating as indicated in Extract 11 below. Christopher sings throughout this extract, further leading to the aggravation of the teacher as he tries to get a pupil to be quiet.

Extract 11		
183	Teacher6	Boys <u>shut up</u> (.)Philip you are going to need to
184		move(.)move your stuff and go and sit on that table
185		at the back(.)
186		(pupil response)
187	Teacher6	Go now
188		(pupil protests)
189	Teacher6	GO NOW(.)still not going(.)because the choice is
190		going to work in another room or going to work on
191		that table there(.)If you don't do it now
192		(pupil response)
193	Teacher6	Philip be quiet
194		(pupil response)
195	Teacher6	Philip be quiet
196		(pupil response)
197	Teacher6	QUIET
198	Christopher	(singing loudly – overlapping this extract)

9.6.3 Non-lexical or paralinguistic features

Andrew would use some non-verbal strategies to express his opinions about the work, alongside words. In Extract 12 below, Andrew grunts, which gets the teacher's attention and subsequent interaction.

Extract 12 (Transcript 1)		
139	Andrew	((grunts))this is boring(.)((puffs out air))
140	Teacher1	I <u>know</u> (.)but if you asked my Year 11's to round to
141		one decimal place I can guarantee you that ninety
142		percent of them <u>won't</u> be able to do it(.){{pupils
143		talking}} 5(.)4(.)3(.)2(.)1(.)Show me(.)Right Andrew
144		what is written on your board
145	Andrew	(unclear)
146	Teacher1	Right(.)it's not particularly clear but thank you(.)Last
147		one(.)1.576(.)
148	Andrew	((groans))
149	Teacher1	((approaches and whispers))No I know(.)Come on
150		then you can do this(.)

The teacher maintains a calm approach and provides support and reassurance to stop the situation from escalating.

Across the transcripts teachers used “shhh” or “shush” as a strategy of controlling the volume and talk of pupils. In very few situations this did lead to the class quietening. In most instances, it escalated the verbal behaviour of the group as pupils would also say “shhhh” in support of the teacher but this caused the volume to rise. There is not an extract which shows this explicitly as it tended to render speech unintelligible on the transcripts.

Smile voices, where the teacher is speaking whilst smiling therefore altering the tone, were used predominantly by Teacher 4 and Teacher 5, accompanied by a slightly slower speaking pace and emphasis.

9.6.4 Overlapping talk

Overlaps within the talk were short but appeared to emerge from pupil impulsivity, meaning the teacher did not finish what they were saying. For example, in Extract 13 Bruce anticipates what the teacher is going to say to him or asks a question in response to what the teacher is doing.

Extract 13 (Transcript 4)		
192	Teacher2	Just as we recorded everything from bar four we have
193		to drag it across from there(.).If you've not got it from
194		[the start please]
195	Bruce	[Oh I see]
196	Teacher2	[One]
197	Bruce	Sir how come [you have to do that(.)]
198	Teacher2	[Ok(.).it's]recording

In Extract 14 Christopher displays impulsivity due to eagerness to participate in such a way that he talks over others:

Extract 14 (Transcript 10)		
280	Christopher	So x is at the bottom cos you know that 2 is the
281		start(.).is the main number(.).so you put all the
282		numbers that are the same or somethin' I don't
283		know(.)
284	Teacher5	[All the coordinates are the same]
285	Christopher	[SEE THEY ARE THE SAME]
286	Teacher5	Which ones are the same(.)
287	Christopher	All the bottom(.).corridor ones(.).2 2 2 2
288	Teacher5	Lewis↑
289		[(pupil response)]
290	Christopher	[2 2 2]
291	Teacher5	That's right because all the coordinates have [two]
292	Christopher	[TOLD YOU I KNEW THAT]

Christopher tries to continue this strategy, however, later in line 306, the teacher makes use of humour to address Christopher's verbal behaviour saying "\$Ok foghorn, we can all hear you\$" to which Christopher laughs and gives others a turn. Christopher's talking out of turn had the potential to be a situation which could escalate and require a sanction, but the teacher's swift use of humour de-escalated the situation but without making Christopher feel his contribution and eagerness was not valued.

There were some extended periods of overlapping talk due to many people speaking at once. In some instances, this did create a collective and indirect challenge to teacher control and teachers would lose control of the discourse temporarily. The situation with Teacher 6 in Extract 15 below was initially instigated by Christopher but as others joined in the discussion at line 282 and 289, Christopher can move out of his seat and chase another

pupil whilst the teacher is addressing the situation created by Christopher's initial comment in line 276.

Extract 15 (Transcript 11)		
276	Christopher	Argh did you fart(.)
277		{{Discussion amongst pupils about what has happened}}
278		
279	Christopher	Have you trumped(.)((wretches))Oh that's
280		disgusting(.)Oh she's trumped(.)Natalie has
281		trumped(.)
282		{{Loud 'accusatory' discussion amongst pupils}}
283	Teacher6	Shhhhsshhh
284	Christopher	Errr it stinks(.)she's gone as red as a cherry(.
285		tomato(.)
286	Teacher6	Erm Christopher no(.)Be quiet
287	Christopher	((whistling))
288	Teacher6	<u>Shhhhhh</u>
289		{{classroom discussion is becoming very loud}}
290	Teacher6	Sit properly please Christopher(.
291	Christopher	((pupil stands up))COME ON THEN((chases
292		another pupil around the classroom)) hahaha(.
293		Come on then(.
294	Teacher6	Christopher(.)Christopher(.)Christopher(.)in your
295		place getting on with your work(.

Here instead of then addressing the collective classroom volume, the teacher begins by addressing Christopher's behaviour using his name repeatedly to get his attention.

9.6.5 Pauses and Silences

Very few pauses beyond micropauses were noted on the transcripts meaning there were very few periods of silence in lessons. Where silences or pauses were used, for example, for pupils to copy from the board, teachers tended to use these to reinforce key points and fill the silence. In Extract 16 the teacher deliberately used pauses to emphasise they were waiting for quiet, however, prior to waiting for quiet, the teacher had attempted a humorous verse linked to the poem they were reading as a class. This meant pupils were laughing in response, rather than focusing on the lesson content.

Extract 16 (Transcript 7)		
128	Bruce	Roses(.)Roses are red(.)violets are blue...
129	Teacher3	\$Roses are red(.)violets are blue(.)Ben is daft and
130		James is too(.)\$That was clever wasn't it(.)Right so
131		you need to write(.)you need to(.)I'll wait(3)
132		{{pupils talking and laughing}}
133	Teacher3	I'll keep waiting(5)You need to write(2)Bruce come
134		and see me in (room) at break please(.)
135	Bruce	Why
136	Teacher3	Break in(room)(.)Right(.)

In this example, when pupils continued to talk, it appeared that Bruce had been singled out from the talking pupils perhaps as he had originally spoken out of turn. The teacher ignored Bruce's question, reaffirmed his message and moved swiftly on with the lesson content, stopping the situation from escalating further.

Silence did feature in one transcript where Andrew was taking a test. In this situation, it seems that Andrew and other pupils were able to conform to the institutional convention of test taking in a quiet room. Here, any speech was reduced to a whisper and gestures were used. Whilst this rendered most of the data unusable, it indicates that expectations and power can be used when needed to maintain an extended period of silence and control the behaviour of pupils.

9.6.6 Humour

Some instances of humour have already been discussed in the previous extracts, but humour by two pupils and by teachers was a key feature of the talk. One main function of humour was to reframe situations which could have been disciplinary in nature, for example, the loss of equipment.

Extract 17 (Transcript 9)		
1	Teacher5	Are you all right Christopher what do you need(.)
2	Christopher	A pen
3	Teacher5	Where's yours(.)
4	Christopher	It ran out
5	Teacher5	\$Did you not catch it as it ran out.)(laughs))\$
6	Christopher	((laughs))

7 8	Teacher5	\$It was too fast for you weren't it\$(.)Anyway c'mon let's go(.)
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In a similar exchange, which cannot be directly reported in the analysis, between another pupil and another teacher this kind of situation was handled very differently, in-line with the school behaviour policy. The pupil was given a detention which led to conflict and escalation, whereas with Christopher and his teacher, humour was used to diffuse the situation, and the teacher did not use her power to sanction.

Christopher, in particular, tries to build relationships through humour. He uses similar discursive strategies with two of his teachers but receives two different reactions which construct the situations in different ways.

Here, humour is used and it reinforces the positive pupil-teacher relationship.

Extract 18 (Transcript 10)		
456	Teacher5	Have you done them(.)
457	Christopher	\$I have\$
458 459	Teacher5	\$Are you using that invisible ink(.)Yes he is Sir(.)I know you are\$
460	Christopher	\$Oh <u>no</u> I've writ it all without it\$
461	Teacher5	You are joking me(.)Get your pencil then

However, pupil humour can trigger a negative teacher response and be viewed as a threat to teacher authority. Christopher's attempts to use humour in the same way are less successful with another teacher and even when using similar strategies such as singing and joking. In this situation, humour does not build the relationship in the same way as it is not reciprocated.

Extract 19 (Transcript 12)		
92	Teacher6	No no singing
93	Christopher	\$Yes sir\$>{{smiles and continues to sing}}
94	Teacher6	No shhhhhh
95 96		{{Background noise. Pupils working teacher talking to pupils individually}}
97 98	Teacher6	<u>Christopher</u> (.)you look like you are working ever so hard
99	Christopher	\$Yes of course I am(.).are <u>you</u> spying on me\$

100	Teacher6	No(.)I just noticed you
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9.6.7 Ignoring – planned (intentional) and unintentional

At times, ignoring talk was a feature of the classroom discourse and this took two possible forms, what could be interpreted as *planned (intentional)* or *unintentional ignoring*. Planned ignoring is where the speaker chose not to respond to something which was said, so as such, planned to ignore it. Sometimes, due to the background noise or if the teacher was focused on something else at that point, pupil comments were not heard by the teacher and unintentionally ignored. This could lead to frustration and situations might escalate, for example, the pupil would say their comment louder, meaning the teacher had to stop to address the pupil.

Teachers also used *planned or intentional* ignoring to continue the pace of the lesson as shown in Extract 20. Bruce makes attempts at humour which the teacher initially responds to in line 308 but quickly regains control to move the teaching on. He ignores Bruce's further comment in line 309 and addresses the class. However, due to not receiving a response Bruce then tries another humorous comment in line 314. This is humorous because Bruce is identifying an aspect of poetry from the lesson in the teacher's talk.

Extract 20 (Transcript 7)		
301 302	Bruce	Sir on assonance(.)is it in the middle of a sentence like that yellow one(.)
303 304 305 306	Teacher3	It's not in the middle of a sentence(.)it's in the middle of a word(.)Bear in mind(.)and this is the bit that (name of adult) taught me(.)why is it in the middle of the word(.)
307	Bruce	Because your ass is in the middle of your body(.)
308	Teacher3	Yes(.)Shhhhh then
309	Bruce	\$((to self))ass(.)ass(.)ass((laughs))\$
310	Teacher3	Which bit haven't I said that I said I'd keep saying
311	Bruce	Oh about the effect on the reader
312 313	Teacher3	<u>Crucially</u> this <u>has</u> to be linked to the effect on the reader(.)
314	Bruce	\$That is repetition\$

315	Teacher3	Right there's your last couple of bits for effect(.)We have done stuff for meaning(.)You need to hope you've got a good friend on your table(.)Shall we worry about effect first(.)You haven't got those two bits(.)
316		
317		
318		
319		
320	Bruce	What two bits(.)
321	Teacher3	I'll make you a deal(.)If you haven't got those two bits written next to effect(.)which you've just told me you have(.)In those words(.)I'll raise you a detention(.)
322		
323		
324	Bruce	No no(.)I'll do it(.)

Once the teacher has finished speaking, he addresses Bruce's lack of work due to him speaking out of turn and makes the threat of a sanction. This power then forces Bruce to conform and continue with his work.

Sometimes, planned ignoring helps to avoid conflict between the teacher and pupil. Teacher 4 would walk away and move on to supporting another pupil rather than getting into conflict. This served to break the construction of a situation.

Extract 21 (Transcript 8)		
52	Teacher4	Working(.)
53	Bruce	I am
54	Teacher4	No you're not(.)You are talking(.)You haven't drawn your axes(.)you haven't got your objective(.)No(.)Be quiet and work(.)
55		
56		
57	Bruce	But I'm trying to work
58	Teacher4	No(.)Be quiet(.)be quiet
59	Bruce	I am
60	Teacher4	<u>No</u> you are <u>not</u> (.)You are <u>still talking</u> (.)Last chance(.)Right(.)do you want to go and do that in a different room cos' that's what's going to happen(.)
61		
62		
63	Bruce	((puffs out air and teacher moves away))

Planned ignoring can also be used by pupils towards the teacher, particularly when instructions have been given. This provides pupils with temporary power as the teacher must stop and address this to maintain control and enable the lesson to proceed.

Extract 22 (Transcript 2)		
123	Teacher2	Ok(.) Shhh(.)eyes on the board(.) <u>Please</u> (.)eyes on the board please(.)I'm still waiting(.)((Bruce continues to
124		
125		

126		play track))I've got ten percent of the room(.)I've got twenty percent of the room.) <u>Still</u> waiting Bruce.)
127	Bruce	((looks up towards teacher))
128	Teacher2	Thank you(.)Shhhh(.) <u>stop</u> ((directed at Bruce))(.)I'm
129		going to go through it now(.)Right(.)eyes on the board
130		then please(.)Ipad flipped onto your laps(.)Flip over
131		the screens please thank you(.)Nearly there(.)Nearly
132		there(.)I'm still waiting(.)I'm still waiting Bruce(.)Thank
133		you(.)Can we focus(.)Thank you(.)Right(.)

In this extract, the teacher reframes expectations and Bruce does not put the Ipad down until line 133, despite the initial teacher request in line 123. A similar situation occurs later in the same lesson.

Extract 23 (Transcript 2)		
239	Teacher2	When you've <u>quite</u> finished Bruce.)
240	Bruce	\$Oh my god that sounded cool\$((turns Ipad over))

Here the teacher appears to have grown tired with being ignored by Bruce so uses emphasis to make his point. Whilst Bruce makes a comment, he then quickly turn his Ipad over and look in the direction of the teacher.

9.6.8 Singing, sounds and whistling

All three pupils made use of actions or sounds which impacted on the progression of the lesson. Bruce tended to whistle and this was not addressed by teachers, either because they did not hear it or had chosen to ignore it. Andrew made use of low-level noises such as pen clicking and tapping, again these received no response from the teacher.

However, Christopher sang and made sounds in lessons, and these were responded to in two ways. With Teacher 5, these 'contributions' were acknowledged by the teacher via use of humour.

Extract 24 (Transcript 13)		
174	Christopher	((rapping lyrics))
175	Teacher5	Christopher are you rapping or what(.)What are you
176		doing(.)
177	Christopher	Yeah I'm wrapping the paper for Christmas
178	Teacher5	((laughs))
179	Christopher	Boom boom tish(in response to own joke)

This seemed to reduce potential for conflict and Christopher stopped singing and focused on his work. In another lesson with Teacher 6 Christopher sang for periods throughout the lesson and this was not commented upon and as a result, this got louder across the lesson.

Whilst this analysis does not aim to look at intent, these behaviours do seem to be due to pupils trying to find their way into the talk. It could be that the focus pupils have less awareness about how to enter and maintain their position in the discourse or that noise making is simply a less demanding strategy to engage in. It does, however, highlight that there is perhaps a discrepancy between the language skills and competencies of the teachers and pupils within this research.

As strategies, noises and singing do not have the same language demand as speech but have the potential to act as a means of challenge to the teacher authority. Often noises were made as the teacher was talking directly to a group creating disruption and therefore had the potential to construct a situation that became about behaviour.

9.7 Organisation of the talk

To explore the IRF sequence and structure of talk throughout this section the words **initiation**, **response** and **feedback** have been added to the extracts in bold, to highlight such aspects. They have been added explicitly here to provide a focus.

As discussed in the earlier literature review, the school should be viewed as an institution. Within this, features of institutional talk influence the organisation of talk in the classroom, for example, the asymmetry of talk where teachers generally possess more interactional space. Whilst the aim of this research is not to quantify, broadly across the transcripts, teachers did say many more words than pupils did. Pupil responses were often no more than one line when transcribed, so a few words at most. This asymmetry is present to differing degrees in the extracts already presented

within this analysis. It is this interactional and conversational asymmetry which helps to maintain the teacher control and ownership of the discourse. Another key evidence-based structure which features within institutional talk of the school is the IRF sequence. This has an interactional ratio of two to one in favour of the teacher. These features of the discourse will now be discussed in more detail and illustrated by extracts of the text where appropriate.

9.7.1 Initiations and Transitions

Within classroom interactions, the teacher invites pupils into the talk by either naming them or using hands up. This indicates how movement will be made between speakers. These methods were used by all teachers in similar ways to maintain classroom interactions. Whilst teachers try to be fair in the initiation process by naming different pupils, inevitably some pupils enable themselves to have more time in the discourse by employing strategies to achieve this. In Extract 14, shown earlier, Christopher made use of overlapping talk or shouting out over others, meaning the teacher needed to respond. Because of pupils shouting out, or talking out of turn, others are excluded from the discourse. Some pupils accept this, but others try to assert themselves. Similarly, teacher invitations into the discourse to pupils by name mean some pupils must wait for an extended period to contribute. In the case of Andrew with Teacher 1, this built up over time as frustration, whereby by the time the teacher asked a fifth question but did not select Andrew, he shouted out his response loudly and out of turn.

To initiate and guide transitions in the talk, Teacher 3 made use of a random name generator for answering questions. Whilst this meant pupils appeared to pay more attention it caused some frustrations for Bruce in Extract 25.

Extract 25 (Transcript 7)		
92	Bruce	Can't you just pick someone(.) (Initiation)
93	Teacher3	No(.)because then its classed as picking on someone
94		because it's not random(.)it's not random is
95		it(.) (Response)

This frustration is perhaps because it's use serves to go against general classroom conventions. Pupils have been socialised to expect the teacher to determine who can contribute and which contributions are valid. Pupils do try to find their own ways into the discourse by shouting out and talking out of turn, because the natural everyday conversational rules would permit this. This is where conflict can arise in the classroom due to the different turn taking and initiation structures for who can talk, what can or can't be said and when.

These natural conversational rules do also sometimes lead to Bruce finding himself in trouble. He will talk aloud on occasions to support his thinking and this appears to be misinterpreted as an initiation. In Extract 26 below Bruce begins by commenting to himself aloud. The teacher addresses Bruce's talking and this ends up with attention being drawn towards Bruce.

Extract 26 (Transcript 8)		
292	Bruce	Why did I write that(.)Oh I've done it wrong(.)All I have
293		to do is copy and I've done it wrong.)(Initiation)
294	Teacher4	↑Why are we talking(.)You've had nearly three
295		minutes and how many have you done(.)How many
296		have you done(.)How many have you done(.)
297		None.)(Response and Initiation)
298	Bruce	Erm I'm just on one.)(Response)
299	Teacher4	{{moves away to other side of room}}
300	Bruce	Who's KICKING MY CHAIR.)(Initiation)
301	Teacher4	Shhhh over there.)(Response)

9.7.2 Adjacency Pairs

Adjacency Pairs are a feature of talk where one part largely predicts or increases the likelihood of the other (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). Initiations are a form of adjacency pair, whereby the teacher naming a pupil aims to cue a response to the question asked. Adjacency pairs in a school context often take the form of a question and answer sequence. These were used broadly across all lessons by teachers and in some cases pupils too. Questioning sequences could facilitate the construction of verbally challenging behaviour in several ways, some of which have already been discussed but others are talked about in the next section.

9.7.3 Questions

Most of the questions in lessons already had known answers and pupils accepted the superior knowledge and judgements of the teacher. The turn taking and question structure in lessons, although typical for a school environment, is different to the form of everyday conversation where questions tend to be more open and genuine. Generally, in everyday conversation a speaker would not ask a question if an answer is known. Question asking in school forms part of the broader instructional discourse and acts as a key structure within lessons. Pupils have come to expect this sequence, and challenging behaviour can be constructed when pupils do not conform to this structure. For example, Andrew is caught out by teacher questions in the same lesson in Extract 27. and Extract 28.

Extract 27 (Transcript 1)		
165 166	Teacher1	What other number do I need to look at so I know what to do with that 5(.)Sophie(Initiation)
167		{{Sophie answers}}(Response)
168 169 170	Teacher1	<u>Well done</u> (.)I'm going to look at the number next to it(.) Andrew what am I looking for in that 7(.)What does that 7 stand for.)(Feedback to Sophie and Initiation)
171 172	Andrew	Errrr the decimal point(.)I don't know(.)I wasn't listening.)(Response)
173	Teacher1	I know↓(.)Ok(.)ask somebody (Feedback and Initiation)
174	Andrew	Ben (Initiation/Response)
175		{{Ben answers}} (Response)
176 177 178 179 180	Teacher1	Ok(.)it is the number next to the decimal place which we are interested in(.)It tells us whether we round this 5 up or leave it(.)So because this is a 7 what are we going to do(.)Because it's more than 5 what are we going to do.)(Feedback and Initiation)
181	Andrew	Round the five up (Response)
182	Teacher1	So my answer will be what Andrew.)(Initiation)
183	Andrew	1.6 (Response)

Here, rather than continuing to persist in getting Andrew to answer and potentially causing conflict, the teacher provides Andrew with an opportunity to ask a friend. This provides him with enough time to re-orientate to the

questioning sequence and answer the second part of the question on line 183.

Later in the lesson, Teacher 1 is not so forgiving and uses her authority in line 490 indicating “<Well> I want you to answer my question” to which Andrew must admit that he was not listening. The teacher had purposely directed a question to Andrew as he had been talking to a pupil next to him. However, as Andrew’s name was not in the question as an initiation, he did not realise it was his turn to respond.

Extract 28 (Transcript 1)		
483	Teacher1	Yes(.)two(.)so what am I rounding to(.)So I am
484		rounding to <u>two</u> decimal places so I need to have two
485		decimal places in my answer so I am going to be
486		keeping these first two here yep(.)so now that I am
487		rounding to two decimal places what am I going to
488		look for now then(.) (Initiation)
489	Andrew	Huh(.) (Response)
490	Teacher1	<Well>I want you to answer my question (Response)
491	Andrew	I didn’t hear what you said(.) (Response)
492	Teacher1	Why not(.) (Initiation)
493	Andrew	Because I was talking (Response)
494	Teacher1	I want to keep these two numbers here so what
495		number do I need to look for to tell me whether to
496		round it or not(.) (Initiation)
497	Andrew	1 (Response)

In the previous two extracts, the teacher makes use of elicitation questions and guided the responses where needed to enable the pupil to reach the right answer.

9.7.4 Rhetorical questions

In the classroom discourse, some teachers would make use of rhetorical questions, whereby they did not seem to be expecting an answer despite asking a question, but instead wanted to make a point, as shown with Bruce and his teacher in Extract 29.

Extract 29 (Transcript 7)		
122	Teacher3	Right so the way it looks on the page needs putting next to your structure bit(.)Have we all got that written in(.) (Initiation)
123		
124		
125	Bruce	\$No\$((banging pen on the table)) (Response)

In a similar way, the question “Are we listening?” is used frequently by Teacher 1 and this provides the pupils with some interactional space to either provide a yes response or engage in further behaviour which may irritate the teacher. Some pupils would respond with “no” to challenge the teacher. In this particular lesson, Andrew was then able to turn and interact with his friend, leading to the teacher repeating the question again. It is assumed by the teacher that asking pupils if they are listening makes it clear she is waiting for silence. It may be that pupils know this and choose to push the boundaries.

With rhetorical questions, the teachers may expect an answer or response by behaviour, not by verbal response. It is here then that verbal behaviour that challenges can emerge and act as a source of disruption by pupils responding verbally when teachers did not expect this. These help pupils find a way into the discourse but can be perceived as talking out of turn which is then a threat to the teacher maintaining control of the discourse.

9.7.5 Turn taking

Largely, teachers control who talks and when. This is a feature of institutional talk and strategies are used by the teacher to maintain ownership of the talk. One of these strategies is controlling the turn taking via initiations, as discussed earlier, but also in determining *how long* turns should be. Pupils seem to understand that they should provide short responses. Broad historical discourses about school and pupil-teacher roles have been maintained over time that continue to make this asymmetry possible. Pupils, as we have seen in earlier examples, can become frustrated at not getting into the talk.

Whilst turn taking in schools is structured asymmetrically, turn taking in natural conversation is more symmetrical. This causes some difficulties for Bruce in Extract 30. Bruce initiates conversation with the teacher because he is stuck, but this situation quickly escalates as Bruce has occupied too much interactional space and continues to try to maintain the turn taking.

Extract 30 (Transcript 8)		
35	Bruce	Sir what about if you don't know it(.) (Initiation)
36	Teacher4	Look in your book(.)That's the whole point isn't it(.)
37		This is revision(.)This is you learning it(.)So you are
38		drawing axes minus 6 to 6.)(Response)
39	Bruce	Oh ok do you just draw the answer.)((Initiation)
40	Teacher4	Draw x equals 3 x equals minus 5.)(y is minus 3 y is
41		4.)((Response)
42	Bruce	Where does it say minus 66 (Initiation)
43	Teacher4	Draw a set of axes from minus 6 to 6.)(Response)
44	Bruce	So twelve squares.)((Initiation)
45	Teacher4	Get on (Response)
46	Bruce	What number shall we do.)((Initiation)
47	Teacher4	It says draw x equals 3.)((Response)
48	Bruce	So what shall I do then.)((Initiation)
49	Teacher4	Well you haven't drawn x equals 3.)(You don't need
50		any coordinates for the line x equals 3.)(Look at your
51		notes.)(Draw the line x equals 3.)(You should know
52		what it looks like.)(Working.)((Response)
53	Bruce	I am (Response)
54	Teacher4	No you're not.)(You are talking.)(You haven't drawn
55		your axes.)(you haven't got your objective.)(Be quiet
56		and work.)((Response)
57	Bruce	But I'm trying to work (Response)
58	Teacher4	No.)(Be quiet.)(be quiet (Response)
59	Bruce	I am (Response)
60	Teacher4	<u>No you are not</u> .)(You are <u>still talking</u> .)(Last chance.)(
61		Right.)(do you want to go and do that in a different
62		room cos' that's what's going to happen.)((Response)
63	Bruce	((puffs out air and teacher moves away))

Similar examples occurred for Bruce on several occasions with the teacher having the final turn. In another situation with an anonymous pupil, the structure of talk was similar but as the pupil wanted to have the last word, he was asked if he wanted to leave the room by the teacher. In asking this, this asserted that the teacher was going to have the last turn and the pupil

then needed to make a choice. I do not have consent to use the full extract to illustrate this in more detail. This did, however, seem to be a discursive pattern of pupils who found themselves in challenging situations in this classroom.

In Christopher's class, Teacher 5 actively encouraged pupils to control turn taking by asking them to name the next person to respond. The teacher facilitated this to maintain overall control but this meant that for periods, pupils spent more time talking than the teacher did, which contradicts the commonly held view of interactional asymmetry.

9.7.6 IRF Sequence

Alongside adjacency pairs and turn taking, the IRF sequence featured within the data. Whilst this comes as no surprise, as there is a strong evidence base for this sequence, teachers here used it in slightly different ways in their practice. From the data, the IRF sequence appears to actually work both ways and is not just a tool of the teacher. The teacher largely initiates talk via the means of a question, pupils respond and the teacher then provides feedback. However, in some instances, when a pupil initiates or poses a question, the teacher responds and the pupil provides feedback. This creates a space where the teacher's authority and control of the discourse is potentially under threat. In Extract 31 the teacher quickly takes back ownership of the IRF sequence.

Extract 31 (Transcript 1)			
37	Andrew	Can I borrow a pen please(.)	(Initiation)
38	Teacher1	Where is your equipment(.)	(Response)
39	Andrew	I don't know(.)	(Feedback)
40	Teacher1	Why not(.)	(Initiation)
41	Andrew	Forgot(.)	(Response)
42	Teacher1	But you're at school(.)	(Feedback)

The teacher has used another question in response to a question to maintain ownership of the discourse and has turned a conversation about equipment into one about discipline and expectations. In the earlier extract between Bruce and his teacher, the IRF sequence is also started by Bruce

and reclaimed by his teacher. Challenging verbal behaviour can arise when pupils take control of the teacher's ownership of the IRF sequence and it breaks the classroom conventions. Challenges or threats to the IRF sequence include interjections, anticipation of questions (as seen earlier during overlapping talk), miscuing (see Andrew's extracts) and pupils posing their own questions. These strategies challenge teachers' agendas, asymmetry and lesson progression in a subtler way.

The IRF sequence enables the teacher to maintain control of the discourse whilst at the same time in some situations it serves to facilitate the construction of verbally challenging behaviour. This is because some pupils appear to feel frustrated at not being invited into the discourse or being chosen by the teacher. The IRF sequence can also lead to some impulsivity in pupil responses.

When challenge to the organisation of classroom talk occurs, whether through turn taking or questioning, this is when challenging behaviour can potentially be constructed based on the next moves of the teacher and pupil. Some teachers build this challenge into the discourse - as seen in Extract 32 - and *reframe*, whereas others pause to address this challenge.

Extract 32 (Transcript 10)		
225	Teacher5	So at the moment all the x coordinates are equal to
226		five so that line has the equation x equals
227		five(.)Because all the x coordinates(.)we do along
228		the x axis and up the y axis so this line has an
229		equation x equals five because all the x coordinates
230		are equal to five(.)Tell me the coordinates and tell
231		me the equation
232	Christopher	I think everyone gets the idea now {{sarcastic tone}}
233	Teacher5	Oh do you(.)Well I'm testing it now Christopher(.)
234	Christopher	Me too
235	Teacher5	Yes I want the equation on your whiteboard please
236		and I want the equation for that one as well(.)
237	Christopher	What's an equation again I forgot(.)What's an
238		equation(.)
239	Teacher5	Well what's an equation got in it(.)
240	Christopher	Numbers

Rather than viewing Christopher's interjection as a threat, it is seamlessly built into the discourse and reframed as a challenge to Christopher. This enables the teacher to maintain control and address Christopher's use of sarcasm about the teacher's long explanation to the class.

Throughout the analysis process, the researcher did note that although the IRF sequence *is* embedded within the transcripts, the third turn feedback element of the IRF was under-utilised and, as can be seen from the examples, sometimes absent. Whilst, the focus of this piece of research was not to look directly at feedback, it is an interesting observation that it is often absent in discussions between the pupil and teacher in relation to behaviour.

9.8 Power and Roles

Many of the extracts shared so far have demonstrated how power can be present within interactions around challenging behaviour in terms of linguistic devices and organisation of talk. The asymmetry and power provided institutionally within school and via the IRF sequence provide the teachers with control over classroom proceedings. In turn, this constructs the role of both pupil and teacher. Historical and dominant discourses of the present day, from the media and government, further strengthen the role construction of pupil and teacher and the power asymmetry between roles.

Power and role definition is also provided within school via policies and procedures laid down institutionally, for example, behaviour policies. These have been shaped historically and act as the regulative discourse of the school and govern what is 'thinkable' and 'sayable' for pupils and teachers within the school. For example, within the data, pupils addressed their teachers formally as "Sir" or "Miss". Teachers mainly used pupil names, particularly for initiations and questions, but also made use of less formal words "you" or "you lot" when referring to pupils.

In terms of power and roles, there seems to be an implicit understanding about what "being in school" means in terms of behaviour and conduct for pupils. For example, in the earlier extract between Andrew and his teacher,

it was deemed not acceptable to say that he did not have a pen as he was “in school”. Other behaviours, actions and talk from the pupil were also deemed ‘not acceptable’, or ‘not thinkable and sayable’, due to the institutional rules of the school. Teachers framed them in the context of ‘school’ and certain things not being allowed. Some examples are presented in the next series of extracts

Extract 33 (Transcript 7)		
9	Teacher3	Can you sit up(.)
10	Bruce	((huffs))
11	Teacher3	We’re not at ‘ome(.)Put your chair under and sit up(.)
12	Bruce	((sits up))

Extract 34 (Transcript 11)		
206	Christopher	((has feet up on the desk))
207	Teacher6	Planner out feet on the floor(.)You should not be
208		tying your shoe laces now(.)FEET ON THE FLOOR
209		NOW(.)Be getting on with your work(.)Right we
210		don’t shout out(.)
211	Christopher	WHAT! It wasn’t me
212	Teacher6	Christopher{{teacher moves on}}next question(.)
213		Christopher you can do this one(.)
214	Christopher	Ey(.)Oh erm E
215	Teacher6	((continues with questions))
216	Christopher	((is stood up and laughing))
217	Teacher6	Christopher(.)what is this
218	Christopher	WHAT(.)Ow me arse (stretched to reach an object
219		on table behind)
220	Teacher6	[Really not language you should be using in the
221		classroom]
222	Christopher	[Ee ar Sir catch that]

Extract 35 (Transcript 7)		
336	Teacher3	Right(.)conversations have started which means you
337		must have finished
338	Bruce	Nah man(.)
339	Teacher3	Try to remember we are in a classroom(.)
340	Bruce	Sorry sir

Both Bruce and Christopher are reminded about behaviour not being acceptable in the classroom and this implies implicit understanding of what is or is not allowed. The teacher role enables the teacher to make

judgements about pupil behaviour. This same power of judgement is not given to pupils. Equally, the teacher role enables teachers to make requests of pupils and give sanctions, for example, asking a pupil to move seats.

Extract 36 (Transcript 7)		
274	Teacher3	Yeah(.)Some of these can either be low end or high
275		end(.)Depending on(.)Boys(.)Bruce come and
276		move over here now(.)Hurry up(.)
277	Bruce	Shall I move my stuff(.)
278	Teacher3	Yes(.)All of these can be low end or high end(.)1(.)
279		Depending on how you write about them and 2(.)
280		Depending on how they are used in the poem(.)
281	Bruce	((bangs things down onto desk))
282	Teacher3	So if it uses one simile and used it for effect then(.)
283		but if there is only one it probably hasn't got that
284		much to write about(.)
285	Bruce	((kicks chair and slams book down))

In terms of requests of pupils, it also enables teachers to enforce the institutional expectations to pupils. Here the teacher is reinforcing the regulative discourse about outer garments being removed in lessons.

Extract 37 (Transcript 2)		
14	Teacher2	Ok shhhhh(.)And again(.)<And again>your scarf is still
15		on(.)your coat is still on(.)James your scarf and your
16		coat are still on.)(calls names from register))(.)Boys(to
17		Bruce and friend) ((Pupils stop talking))(.)((calls names
18		from register))

The teacher role construction also allows teachers to impose their expectations upon pupils, but to also change their mind about what they have said to pupils. Initially, the teacher asks pupils to throw their rubbish away, but then says not to, realising that this is causing her to lose the attention of her pupils. Whilst it seems that power and the role construction enable teachers to change their mind, the role construction of pupils does not give them this same right.

Extract 38 (Transcript 1)		
386	Teacher1	<u>I am still waiting</u> ↑(.)When I want you looking this way
387		I expect that to happen straight away(.)You need to
388		<u>learn</u> that if we are going to do this and have treats
389		you need to know(.)right <u>Miss</u> wants us to listen now

390		and sort it out(.)because if this carries on it isn't going
391		to happen(.)Now if you have to chuck your rubbish in
392		the bin(.) that's important(.)the one I want you to
393		chuck it in is this one(.)Please don't put it in my
394		recycling bin cos that's recycling(.)So we looked at
395		one decimal place(.)don't chuck your rubbish away
396		just yet(.)I need eye contact from everybody(.)

The pupil role is also constructed in a way that makes phrases such as “you will work” or “you will do as I say” ‘sayable’ by the teacher. The pupil role is also positioned in a way that typically requires an invite into the discourse.

Thornborrow (2001) states that participants will bring their own set of conventionally structured knowledge about talk and what their role is in it. This is influenced by institutional structures and broader discourses about roles. However, throughout the transcripts, at key points, it emerged that for the pupils, although they had knowledge about talk in a general sense, they were finding it difficult to apply this knowledge to the institutional nature of school talk. Much of the conflict arose around role definitions and speaking rights, which are unique to the context of school and classrooms. The pupil is broadly in a subordinate position where the expectation is that they will comply.

There was, however, an illuminative extract from Christopher which provided some challenge to this, particularly as the teacher through humour seemed to be implying Christopher should break the rules laid out in the regulative discourse.

Extract 39 (Transcript 10)		
301	Christopher	Can I go to the toilet(.)
302	Teacher5	What time is it(.)
303	Christopher	Thirty five past eleven
304	Teacher5	\$Thirty six past(.)You are already into that time(.)
305		Run(.)Like the wind(.)\$
306	Christopher	\$But the school rule is you can't run in the corridor\$
307	Teacher5	\$That's a good answer(.)You can't run in the
308		corridor(.)Go(.)\$

It is, then, Christopher who takes on the role of judgement of what the teacher has said. This extract does also highlight how embedded regulative

discourses can be, and demonstrates that they can place pupils in a position where they will end up in trouble either way. Christopher may have got in trouble for running *or* for being too long visiting the toilet.

9.9 Types of talk and the development of broader discourses

Part of the analysis explored the types of talk and broader discourses that emerged across the data. This was conducted via broader analysis of whole transcripts beyond the word and sentence level as outlined in the analysis protocol. It was not a search for themes but for features, repeated messages and how things become 'thinkable' and 'sayable' within this setting.

9.9.1 Formal talk

Institutional talk guides the talk within the school, leading to interactions having a formal tone to them. Role definitions mean that teachers and pupils behave in certain ways and this formalises the pupil-teacher relationship. Although, the regulative discourse implies a degree of formality to all school talk in some instances teachers did use less formal language and shared anecdotes from their lives outside of school. This temporarily pushed the defined role boundaries and enabled the teacher to be viewed in the "person" role rather than as a "teacher" role. These moments, although brief, did serve to blur the role and relationship boundaries and enabled the asking of questions by the pupil. However, when these moments had passed, teachers then found they needed to regain their authority often by reasserting the regulative discourse. This could and did cause confusion for some pupils.

The formality of talk means conversations are quite structured and their organisation is generally predictable. This predictability can, in some situations, enable pupils to behave impulsively in interactions. However, the focus pupils did not always seem aware of this predictability, often making discursive moves which then led to conflict between them and the teacher.

9.9.2 Repetition and Reframing

Repetition and reframing featured within teacher interactions with pupils regarding behaviour. Reframing serves to provide space for a situation to de-escalate, and give the pupil chance to modify their behaviour. Repetition is used in a similar way, but with repetition seems to come power and authority. Power gives the teacher the ability to repeat instructions until pupils conform to expectations. These might be reframed or said in a slightly different way, but the message remains the same. Pupils then interpret this as the teacher “going on at us”.

9.9.3 Opinions

Within the talk around behaviour, opinions emerged within the talk. These occurred in lessons, where pupils had managed to gain interactional space, for example, Andrew saying “It’s boring” in response to lesson content. Pupils within the talk can voice opinions but these are often reframed or ignored intentionally by the teacher. Christopher’s teacher tries to use challenge (line 408) and humour (line 410) to re-engage him, but to control the situation is firm in saying “right let’s do this” and sits with him.

Extract 40 (Transcript 10)		
408	Teacher5	Go and get on with your questions(.)He’s on 4B
409	Christopher	I don’t care!
410	Teacher5	\$What’s up with you you’ve got a grump on\$
411	Christopher	I don’t care!
412	Teacher5	Right let’s do this(.)

In contrast, teachers seem to have more interactional space to express their opinions and the power that comes with their role seems to enable this. In the final lesson of term, although pupils are trying to express their opinions about the lesson, the teacher’s opinion takes prominence here.

Extract 41 (Transcript 3)		
41	Teacher1	I don’t <u>care</u> what they did in English(.)
42		{{Pupil comment}}
43	Teacher1	I don’t <u>care</u> what you do in other subjects(.)I <u>care</u>
44		about what you do in here(.)Other classes are doing
45		proper lessons(.)So I would appreciate some of you

46		being a little grateful and not just bashing everything
47		that I want you to do(.)It upsets me a little bit that you
48		are not appreciating what I want to do for you
49		because we can do a normal lesson if you want to(.)

Other examples in the transcripts also highlight where pupil's expressing an opinion has been taken as a challenge to the teacher, leading to the facilitation of conflict, before situations are resolved in the teacher's favour.

9.9.4 Empathy, Support, Reassurance and Confidence

All pupils in lessons sought help from the teacher. Some of this linked to the language used by the teacher, leading pupils to not understand how to be successful. This again, highlights the crucial role that communication and understanding of language have in the classroom. As such, the instructional discourse and organisation of talk can lead to pupils lacking confidence and seeking reassurance. Bruce and Christopher both sought regular reassurance in lessons.

Extract 42 (Transcript 8)		
234	Teacher4	Number 6 is 70cl to 1 litre(.)That's a(.)b £2 to 80p
235		c(.)9 hours to one and a half hours(.)and d is 9kg to
236		150g(.)That's question 6(.)
237	Bruce	Oh I don't even know what 1 litre is((tries to indicate
238		to teacher he needs help))
239	Teacher4	{{ignores and is on other side of the room –
240		discussion unclear – Bruce stops working and talks
241		to peer}}
242	Bruce	How many centilitres are in a litre.)(shouts across
243		room))
244	Teacher4	Cent
245	Bruce	1000
246	Teacher4	Cent doesn't mean a thousand(.)
247	Bruce	One hundred pennies(.)Yeah(.)Oh I don't know(.)
248		{{general discussion between teacher and pupils
249		about American money}}
250	Bruce	I'm confused how do you convert centilitres to litres
251	Teacher4	You don't you convert litres into centilitres(.)it's
252		easier(.)How many centilitres in a litre
253	Bruce	700
254	Teacher4	Cent
255	Bruce	Yeah so 100(.)

256	Teacher4	So write that as centilitres(.)70:100 well done(.)Apart from you're still talking and I've told you over and over again to stop talking(.)
257		
258		

Extract 43 (Transcript 10)		
44	Christopher	So is it 4b add a
45	Teacher5	4b add a then subtract b(.)Michael less talking(.) Ben get on please thankyou(.)
46	Christopher	So shall I put that
47	Teacher5	Well have you got four bananas(.)And an apple(.)
48		Subtract a banana(.)For what(.)Get a whiteboard
49		and draw it
50	Christopher	What(.)Why(.)Ohhhhh(.)Four(.)it's just four(.)
51	Teacher5	Well you are going to have to draw it for me and see
52		(timer beeps)get a whiteboard and a whiteboard
53		pen and draw it for me(.)Right Melanie what was
54		your question sorry about that(.)
55		{{pupil response}}
56	Teacher5	Ok Christopher draw me four b's
57	Christopher	Hey
58	Teacher5	Draw me four b's
59	Christopher	Four four b's
60	Teacher5	No four b's
61	Christopher	Oh
62	Teacher5	No(.)b(.)b(.)b and b(.)3(.)2(.)1 and listening(.)That's
63		it and now subtract one off Christopher(.)
64	Christopher	Oh

Whilst reassurance was provided, this placed a significant demand on teachers and disrupted the natural flow of the lesson. In discussion with teachers, the pupils were initially positioned as being “weak” or “needy”, supporting within-child explanations, rather than it being about support or demands of the instructional discourse.

From Andrew's follow up interview, he repeatedly talked about needing help and lacking confidence with his work. Although the level of support needed by all three pupils placed demands on the teacher, the pupil discourse indicated they appreciated the help from their teachers. The support enables the building of positive pupil-teacher relationships. Equally, Andrew's teacher displayed a degree of empathy and understanding during discussion by trying to view the situation from his perspective.

Extract 44 (Transcript 18)		
421	Teacher1	Yeah(.)He does want to do well and make me
422		happy(.)And I think that(.)at the end of a lesson
423		where he has been a bit silly(.)cos a lot of the time
424		he will just mess about with pencils(.)and I'll have to
425		say Andrew what have you been doing this lesson
426		(.)I am not happy(.)and he'll go↓>I know Miss I'm
427		sorry< and he'll say he's sorry(.)and I like kids that
428		can say yeah I was a bit of a plonker but I'm sorry
429		(.)I know I shouldn't have done it(.)

Although all teachers reflected on the pupil-teacher relationships explored in this research, this extract demonstrates the very individual nature of these relationships, understanding what works over time and knowing the pupil well. This empathy is also shown by the same teacher regarding an anonymous pupil's home circumstances and how she understands these impact on him daily.

9.9.5 School Culture and the Regulative Discourse

Some examples of the regulative discourse have been shared in earlier sections and illustrated by extracts. A broader discourse which emerged is that of the behaviour policy and practices in school. The pupils all seemed clear about these and could explain them to the researcher. This enabled her to ask curious questions to further understand the culture of the school and its regulative discourse.

Extract 45 (Transcript 16)		
30	Researcher	Where does the seclusion room fit in(.)
31	Christopher	That's for if you do something <u>really bad</u>
32	Researcher	And what would get someone into the seclusion
33		room(.)What might they do(.)
34	Christopher	You can get behaviour called if you are naughty in
35		lessons(.)
36	Researcher	Ah so what's a behaviour call(.)what happens(.)
37	Christopher	Where one of the people who work in the seclusion
38		room comes over and gets you(.)
39	Researcher	And do they walk you over(.)
40	Christopher	Yeah(.)yeah
41	Researcher	[Ok]

42	Christopher	[And sometimes] you get a warning
43	Researcher	Where the teacher says to you(.)
44	Christopher	Yeah

Extract 46 (Transcript 14)		
45 46	Researcher	So with the progress report(.)What's that that you've got
47 48 49	Andrew	Progress report is like(.)where you are on it for a week(.)so this morning because I wasn't doing enough work in lesson
50 51	Researcher	Ah ok and so is it for that(1)So what do your teachers do with it then(.)Why is it important(.)
52 53 54	Andrew	Like every lesson they have to sign it and give it numbers(.)Like four is the best and they sign it and I have to give it to my mum to sign it
55	Researcher	Ah ok(.)So it's a home school thing
56	Andrew	Yeah

Extract 47 (Transcript 15)		
55 56 57 58 59	Bruce	Oh erm(.)There's one is if you are late(.)There's one if you've been bad behaviour(.)and then there's the one for really bad behaviour and four is really good behaviour and if you are good in lessons you get fours(.)if you are bad in lessons you get ones

The commonality of language across the three pupil extracts is illuminative and indicates a 'them versus us' situation. The pupil refers to themselves as 'you', which is often the title given to pupils in lessons. It also positions behaviour as being general or anonymous rather than using the word 'I' to talk directly about their experience, they spoke in more general terms. Teachers or staff were referred to as 'they' or 'a person' rather than by name.

The behaviour system in the school seems to be clear for pupils and it can cause confusion when teachers deviate from this. This was illustrated by the earlier example, where Christopher asked to go to the toilet (extract 40), and in the extract below where the teacher has not followed the 'rules' laid out in the regulative discourse for progress reports.

Extract 48 (Transcript 3)		
112	Teacher1	(hands progress report back to Andrew) Let's see

113 114	Andrew	\$There's fives on there(.)Since when was that a thing(.)\$
115 116 117 118	Teacher1	That's why I said to you(.)You've worked well and you've been nice and quiet(.)I don't know that's the first time I've seen fives on them(.)I only thought it went up to four(.)
119	Andrew	I need to be good for Teacher 6 now(.)
120	Teacher1	Right it's almost time now
121 122 123	Andrew	\$Mum's going to be well happy with me\$(.)That's it fives all day now(.)Don't distract me in German now(.)any of you(.)

In exploring the regulative discourse with teachers, it seems there is less clarity around policy and procedures with comments being phrased with “I think (it is like this)” rather than being definitive, and this was explained as “every teacher does it slightly differently”. Some teachers follow the behaviour policy more rigidly, but others are creative as indicated in the next extract.

Extract 49 (Transcript 18)		
351 352 353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360 361	Teacher1	And some teachers(.)do do that(.)And they are like this is the rules and they are breaking them(.)And I can understand where they are coming from(.)cos you don't want other kids saying well they've done exactly the same as I've done but they've gotten away with it(.)the other students are not stupid(.)they know(.)that they are different in that sense and have issues(.)cos they see them in every single lesson they go to(.)but kids know they don't get away with it(.)there will be a sanction but it will be in a <u>different</u> way

This indicates that there could be potential for future research to explore behaviour policies and procedures from a social constructionist perspective in more detail.

9.9.6 Pupil Culture and Teacher Culture

9.9.6.1 Teacher Culture – Constructions of Pupils

In the earlier literature review, different ways of thinking about challenging behaviour were explored, including the labelling of pupils. Power and

dominant discourses from recent government policy serves to makes these positions ‘thinkable’ and ‘sayable’. This position enables an understanding of some ways teachers constructed pupils through language within this research. Some language adopted a deficit position, where pupils were viewed as “needy”, “weak”, “running riot” or “needing to be dealt with”.

Dominant discourse across the school, then, create constructions of pupils and establishment of reputations, for example, “I was expecting a nightmare child”, “I was expecting him to be a maniac” or “We already knew when he came up in September that he would be a challenging one”. These constructions are then retold in as part of teacher culture. However, amongst teachers, there were examples which counter this dominant discourse of problem boys, for example, “He will work like an angel” or “I don’t have any issues with them”. “They aren’t a problem for me” emerged as a dominant discourse within teacher discussions. This is interesting given the examples highlighted through extracts from lessons. It also led the researcher to reflect on what she may not have seen from the focus pupils in other lessons which could further illuminate the research questions.

9.9.6.2 Pupil Culture – Constructions of Teachers

Another type of talk which emerged from the data was that of pupils constructing and positioning teachers in particular ways via language. Whilst the dominant view of the teacher role as having authority is accepted, pupils tend to use ‘they’ or ‘them’ when talking about teachers outside of the classroom. Teacher names are more likely to be used where teachers are ‘in favour’ and where pupils feel they have good supportive relationships. Where relationships are felt to be positive, phrases such as “cool” or “she helps me” are used. As Christopher’s extract shows below he holds different views of teachers.

Extract 50 (Transcript 16)		
111	Christopher	Oh yeah he’s cool(.)I get on with a lot of teachers
112		but some I don’t(.)
113	Researcher	What is it that means you don’t get on with them(.)
114	Christopher	Just(1)too strict(.)and <u>mean</u>
115	Researcher	What is it they do that’s mean(.)

116	Christopher	Just shout at you for no reasons(.)
117 118 119	Researcher	So is it that they spot something you may or may not have done and come at you about it(.){based on observed incidents in lessons}}
120	Christopher	Yeah(.).It's unfair(.)

One reflection on this extract is that although Christopher and Teacher 6 sometimes appear to come into conflict in the classroom, Christopher thinks he is a “cool” teacher. This contrasts with the overarching discourse from Teacher 6 during discussion about how he feels on occasions he fails Christopher and finds his behaviour challenging and would like to support him better. Further research could explore how pupils view their teachers and how this impacts upon their behaviour towards them.

Another pupil discourse that emerged is that pupils have an awareness of which teachers could be view as targets, and that often pupil misbehaviour is due to what teachers do. Christopher's extract here is insightful, although he positions this as being about other people and not himself.

Extract 51 (Transcript 16)		
137	Christopher	Some people do it cos' of the teacher(.)
138 139	Researcher	So is it because they don't like the teacher(.).or because of [what]=
140	Christopher	[What the] teacher does first(.)
141	Researcher	What might they do first(.)
142 143	Christopher	Like shout out em' for no reason(.).So they'll start messing about to get their own back(.)

After reflecting further on this extract, it might be argued that this also becomes about the power of the teacher and pupils trying to assert themselves.

The discourse indicates that teachers are also aware of how pupils construct the roles and positions of teachers as part of pupil culture. As such, it serves to reinforce the ‘them versus us’ notion, providing a space for potential conflict in the classroom. The extracts below illustrate this kind of talk and an awareness of pupil culture from the teacher perspective.

Extract 52 (Transcript 17)		
314	Teacher4	So that they know(.)And these students like to think they are clever and they do know which subjects they can and can't get away with it in(.)It shouldn't be like that but Bruce and Edward know(.)
315		
316		
317		

Extract 53 (Transcript 20)		
117	Teacher6	Exactly(.)Yes and they sort of follow each other round the day and the trouble that kicked off in Science carries on in English and because they spend all day with each other(.)they know each other better than we do(.)Erm(.)so one of the things is setting has worked brilliantly for the top end but not at all well for the bottom end(.)
118		
119		
120		
121		
122		
123		
124	Researcher	And sometimes pupils get that awareness that they are the bottom set(.)
125		
126	Teacher6	Yes(.)And that follows them around everywhere they go then(.)and yeah the likelihood of them changing or modifying their behaviour
127		
128		

Teacher 6 also reflects on how the instructional discourse of 'setting' pupils by ability can serve to reinforce pupil constructions of teachers and the presence of challenging behaviour. The same pupils are often grouped together and taught by the same teacher.

Also, within pupil culture, talk about 'problem boys' also exists between pupil to pupil. Andrew talked about a construction of a pupil called Matthew which he held but had been co-constructed across the school by both teachers and pupils.

Extract 54 (Transcript 14)		
167	Andrew	Yeah (.)Once in science this kid Matthew(.)I don't know whether you know him or not(.)He just carried on tapping the table yeah(.)Some people just lost it and started throwing things at him(.)I just got this box and threw it on the floor to tell him to shut the f*** up and he didn't like it(.)He's just weird(.)
168		
169		
170		
171		
172		

It seemed that this construction has been facilitated by this being the dominant view, shared not only by pupils, but within school.

10 Discussion and Reflections

10.1 Summary of Main Findings

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the research explored the following research questions:

- What **linguistic devices** are used by the teacher or pupil within pupil-teacher interactions around challenging behaviour? What **function** do these serve?
- Does the **IRF sequence** feature in the discourse – and does it play a part in the construction of challenging behaviour?
- How is **power** achieved within interactions around challenging behaviour and how does it influence the discourse?
- How are **roles** defined within the classroom through language?
- What **types of talk** are associated with challenging behaviour?
- In what way does classroom discourse **facilitate** the construction of challenging behaviour?
- In what way does classroom discourse **reinforce** the construction of challenging behaviour?

The data gathered enabled the idiographic nature of challenging classroom behaviour in the secondary classroom to be illuminated. Via the use of CA and CDA it has been possible to begin to understand the key role that the linguistic devices teachers and pupils use have in the construction of challenging classroom behaviour. The contribution that dominant discourses have on pupil and teacher role construction has also been highlighted. Dominant discourses also seem to influence what is 'sayable' and 'thinkable' in the secondary classroom and serve to maintain teacher power.

In summary, the main findings of the research were:

- The pupil-teacher role asymmetry creates a power balance in favour of the teacher.

- The pupil-teacher role asymmetry enables the teacher to have access to a greater range of discursive strategies and more interactional space.
- *Planned ignoring* and *silence* are two linguistic devices which seem to be particularly significant in the construction of challenging behaviour.
- Pupils make linguistic choices that lead to the potential for conflict to arise.
- The dominant discourse around boys and behaviour continues to persist and makes some statements 'thinkable' and 'sayable'.
- The differences in what is 'thinkable' and 'sayable' in each classroom varies.
- Institutional talk plays a key role in the construction of challenging behaviour in the classroom and serves to reinforce such constructions.

It is important to recognise that these are not 'universal truths' but findings that developed from this research. From a social constructionist perspective, there are many ways in which the research questions could be approached and alternative readings could be possible. However, in this context, using the analysis protocol and supporting this with extracts, this is the construction arrived at by the researcher. These key points will now be considered in more detail.

The pupil-teacher role asymmetry creates a power balance in favour of the teacher.

The pupil-teacher role asymmetry creates a power balance in favour of the teacher. This asymmetry is supported by historical discourse about what it means to be a pupil or teacher in a school. The power that is constructed within the teacher role means they are often the decision maker in the classroom, and they are there to maintain the regulative and instructional discourses of the school. This can then cause conflict between the teacher and pupil. As such, challenging behaviour seems to arise when there is a

threat to the teacher's power. This could be by pupils talking out of turn, occupying too much interactional space or trying to disrupt the IRF sequence.

Positive pupil-teacher interactions occurred when this power balance was addressed by the teacher, providing more balance, for example, by giving pupils control over the discourse within a lesson.

The pupil-teacher role asymmetry enables the teacher to have access to a greater range of discursive strategies and more interactional space.

The role asymmetry means teachers can use their power and have access to a greater range of strategies within their talk. Their position means there are some things that they can say or do in their teacher role that pupils cannot do. For example, teachers via the IRF sequence, typically have a turn ratio of 2:1 in their favour. If pupils gain a ratio of turns at 2:1 then the teacher acts quickly using more sophisticated strategies to regain their interactional position.

Embedded and somewhat hidden in this role asymmetry are the differences in communication skills and competencies between the teacher and pupil. An important reflection in this regard is that teachers are educated to university degree level or beyond. This means they have a broader vocabulary, providing them with greater lexical choice. Teachers can potentially exclude some pupils from the discourse by the words they use. Pupils in comparison are still developing their competencies and may use less sophisticated strategies in the discourse, for example, noise making. Law and Stringer (2014) explored the difference in interactional skills and found that communication difficulties can sometimes be found alongside behavioural difficulties. This difference in communication competencies also becomes important when consideration is given to how language rich the curriculum is at secondary level.

The IRF sequence which is cited within the literature as being the bedrock of instructional discourse and enables the teacher to maintain overall

interactional control, inviting pupils into the discourse. It can, however, create a battleground where pupils try to gain interactional space by taking ownership of the IRF sequence but come into conflict with the teacher's agenda.

Planned ignoring and silence are two linguistic devices which seem to be particularly significant in the construction of challenging behaviour.

Planned ignoring and silence emerged as two pivotal aspects but in different ways. Silence was very rare in the lessons, even when pupils were copying from the board. When silence did occur, this was quickly filled with teacher talk; either to reframe, to refocus or to provide further information. This served to prevent pupils from gaining ownership of the discourse. The lack of silences served to reinforce teacher dominance in the interactional space, and reduced potential for pupil interactions. Pupils were reminded of their need to "be quiet" frequently but the teacher role means that there is no requirement for the teacher to also have periods where they talked less.

Planned ignoring served to de-escalate some situations but escalated others. This seemed to depend on the teacher-pupil pairing. In some situations where teachers strategically ignored the verbal behaviour of some pupils this moved the lesson on. In others, because they had been ignored, pupils would engage in further exchanges, escalating conflict. Planned ignoring seemed to be influenced by pupil-teacher roles. Teachers were allowed to use planned ignoring as a strategy, however, when pupils tried this same technique this was constructed as 'rudeness' towards the teacher.

Pupils make linguistic choices which lead to the potential for conflict to arise.

Pupils had less options in terms of lexical choices and linguistic choices. Linguistic and non-linguistic behaviours such as noise making, singing and whistling could mean they were identified quickly by the teacher leading to situations that became about behaviour. Also, some pupil talk was less formal and seemed to gain a reaction, for example, curse and swear words.

Whilst informally and in naturally occurring talk this would be more acceptable, institutionally, it conflicts with the regulative and instructional discourse.

The dominant discourse around boys and behaviour continues to persist and makes some statements ‘thinkable’ and ‘sayable’.

The notion of ‘problem’ boys continues to persist and this is made possible due to dominant discourses from the media, government and historically. This was explored by Pomerantz (2007) in her analysis of media articles about boys’ identities and ten years later these messages continue to persist. The dominant discourses make possible constructions of boys as “weak”, “needy”, “challenging” or “running riot”. Equally, the boys themselves also shared their constructions of other “challenging” boys within school but did not view themselves as being “challenging” or as having “bad behaviour”. Within-child explanations of challenging behaviour also continue to exist and dominate talk, with the cause of the problem being located with the pupil.

These dominant discourses can create a them versus us situation, whereby the classroom and interactional space can be viewed as a space to be fought over. Teachers construct pupils through language and stories, but equally it emerged from this research that pupils also construct teachers through language. This can be considered part of pupil culture, whereby pupils construct some teachers as being weak, and they know collectively which teachers they can “get away with it”. Teachers, to a certain extent echo this position when they say things such as “he doesn’t do that for me”.

Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (DfE, 2016), also serves to reinforce the teacher role as being linked to power and authority outlining plans to give authority back to teachers so that they can discipline pupils who do not conform to the behaviour expectations in school. As indicated in the literature review, challenging behaviour is not new, but similar discourses have been reinforced over time since the Elton Report (1989) and Warnock

Report (1978) which spoke about EBD. The discourse has been refashioned over time.

What is 'thinkable' and 'sayable' in each classroom varies.

The differences in what is 'thinkable' and 'sayable' in each classroom means that there is variability in which strategies pupils can use with individual teachers. A strategy which builds a relationship with one teacher can lead to conflict with another, leading to the construction of a situation related to behaviour. Whilst this could be expected, due to individuality and autonomy in professional practice, it seems to cause confusion and potential for conflict as pupils move from one lesson to the next. Across a school day, secondary pupils see an average of five teachers, meaning potentially five different interactional spaces with slightly different parameters for them to navigate. Along with the slightly less sophisticated strategies used by pupils, this provides a site for potential conflict, even if the regulative and instructional discourse within a school is governed by the school behaviour policy.

Institutional talk plays a key role in the construction of challenging behaviour in the classroom. It also serves to reinforce such constructions.

The institutional nature of talk in the secondary school reinforces the role asymmetry and requires pupils and teachers to behave in different ways. Institutional talk gives the teacher a powerful position and implies that their knowledge is superior. This gives teachers the ability to ask questions where answers are already known, invite pupils into the discourse and make judgements about pupil contributions via the IRF sequence. It can be argued that these three aspects are not present in naturally occurring talk that pupils use outside of the classroom.

The institutional nature of talk can make it difficult for pupils to navigate the classroom discourse, particularly if they employ strategies used from naturally occurring talk. For example, by providing a response every time after the teacher has spoken. Whilst this would usually be the convention

for talk to maintain a conversation, in the classroom this is not appropriate for the pupil. It can quickly turn into an argument with the teacher, which then leads to the construction of a situation about behaviour. Some aspects of institutional talk are subtle, with unwritten rules that pupils learn by trial and error, sometimes finding themselves in trouble with the teacher.

10.2 The Unique Contribution of the Research

In summary, the research does indicate that there are patterns and conversational practices at work in the secondary classroom, at a micro and macro level. It also highlights the importance of the pupil-teacher relationship in both the construction of, but also the avoidance of the construction of challenging behaviour. It can be argued that positive pupil-teacher relationships have previously been accepted as a universal truth and good common sense. However, this current research suggests that our understanding of the importance of pupil-teacher relationships is too simplistic. Much of the published research so far into pupil-teacher relationships has looked at praise, feedback or the use of teaching and behaviour related statements. Other research has looked at the IRF in patterns of pupil-teacher interaction. It has tried to quantify or operationalise what makes a positive pupil-teacher relationship. This piece of research argues that there is a need to dig much deeper into the pupil-teacher relationship and explore the idiographic nature of such relationships.

This research aimed to explore, from a social constructionist perspective, what conversational practices were at play to better understand how pupil-teacher relationships are built, but also how this then shapes behaviour in the classroom through language and action. It is not simply enough to say that positive pupil-teacher relationships and interaction should be fostered: there is much scope for further research. DA and social constructionism clearly has much to offer in exploring secondary classroom behaviour. It can also help in understanding school discourses at a macro systemic level and provide ways for EPs to understand how things become 'thinkable' and 'sayable' within different schools. It also provides an alternative way to view

challenging behaviour and can provide counter discourses to the within-child view, which continues to dominate the media and government documentation.

10.3 Criticality around dominant discourses

As mentioned briefly in the last section, another message from this research is around dominant discourses. CDA can be a helpful tool in understanding how vulnerable groups can be positioned and constructed through talk, leading to them potentially becoming marginalised within a school system.

There continues to be a dominant message regarding behaviour in schools and that the situation is worsening. Within-child explanations of behaviour dominate, and this is despite ongoing interest in the topic over several decades. The labels around behaviour have been reconstructed several times, including the addition of social and environmental factors. EPs take a broad view when exploring behaviour concerns, drawing upon the evidence base, but they continue to face within-child explanations.

To address dominant discourses and provide counter discourses it is of great importance that awareness and understanding is developed around how these dominant discourses are constructed and maintained by those in power in society. It is increasingly important that EPs are reflexive in their own practice to ensure that they provide criticality and do not serve to unintentionally reinforce these discourses, bearing in mind the power that is sometimes ascribed to the EP role (Bozic, Leadbetter & Stringer, 1998). Also, talk is a key aspect of the EP role and challenging and deconstructing terminology is of great importance. Again, doing this requires an understanding of how phrases such as “needy” or “challenging” came to be constructed in the first place, along with pupils constructed ‘reputations’ preceding their arrival in teachers’ classrooms in some cases. EPs should, for example, be alert to the role that hearsay and policies can have in providing the opportunity for teachers to construct pupils and pupils to construct teachers through language.

Another way to view this problem would be not with the boys but with the wider education system. The system has not seen significant change in recent years in terms of the pupil-teacher roles and broader discourses. Many of the dominant discourses around school are historical, and in this research, there were some hints of community-based discourse emerging. The research did not have the scope to explore these in detail and nor was this the focus of the research.

10.4 Reflections upon the research design and methodology

10.4.1 Discourse Analysis

So far DA has not been widely utilised in exploring challenging behaviour, despite the pivotal role that language and action clearly play in its construction. It may be that due to the dominant rhetoric that already exists about behaviour in the secondary classroom, the research has so far focused on a search for truths, rather than exploring the idiographic nature of classroom behaviour. Equally the under-utilisation of DA in published research about behaviour may be due to its fairly recent emergence within mainstream psychological research. DA has been used more often within sociological and educational research. Qualitative studies have so far focused on questioning style or the nature of subject specific discourse, with discourse about behaviour either being missed or omitted dependent upon the research questions. This feels like somewhat of a missed opportunity given that learning can impact upon behaviour and behaviour can impact upon learning progress.

Another challenge in using DA is that there is no agreed method or protocol to follow, leading to researchers constructing their own. DA is an umbrella term under which many approaches can be used. There is also a multitude of terminology to navigate through and this can at times make DA appear intangible with no one way to do it.

10.4.2 Participants

One reflection would be that the researcher noted that the behaviour and discursive acts of the focus pupils were not always significantly different to most pupils in the class. This then raised the question about why these pupils were identified as meeting the criteria of 'verbally challenging behaviour' as outlined in the methodology section, whilst other pupils were not. A further reflection on this is that identification was perhaps guided by the profile of the focus pupils in the school at the time of recruitment, including how they were being positioned and constructed.

Another point to note is that although the research aimed to explore constructions from the data, the participants that eventually took part in the research were all boys. Originally, the research did not have 'boys' as a criterion, but no girls were identified as participants. This then opens up the potential that discursive strategies could have been different had the pupil participants been female. This provides an opportunity for further research.

10.4.3 Recruitment

Since conducting the research, the researcher has reflected upon the recruitment procedures for participants. These will have impacted on who was identified and approached, and why some participants opted to take part and others who were approached did not. The sensitive nature of the topic is one of the factors. Challenging behaviour can feel very personal for both the teacher and pupil and it could be perceived as a sign of weakness or of a teacher not coping. This was not the focus of the research but it emerged as a potential threat to recruitment to the research.

The matching method used, whereby pupils were recruited first, meant that the teachers were approached second, and some did not wish to take part. Teachers who did put themselves forward may also have felt more confident in their own classroom practice. A more effective way of identifying and recruiting participants may have been to approach a selection of pupils and

teachers and then use a matching system to identify where natural pairings occur from the pool of participants.

Recruitment was a very time consuming process but ethical considerations were paramount, particularly in ensuring that parental consent was provided for pupils and information was provided to everyone involved in the research. This created a time pressure element for the research. The researcher had hoped to collect data over five observations across a term, but in practice data were gathered over a half term, with follow up discussions held after Christmas. Also, having a pool of participants to potentially select for the main research could have been beneficial as this may have allowed for sampling to see which participants best fit the identification criteria. A further reflection on this though could be that from a social constructionist perspective, the school identified the pupils that were, in their view, challenging in terms of verbal behaviour in class, even though the researcher from her perspective may have potentially identified different pupils.

10.4.4 Data and Transcription

Another decision point arose around what to do with audio-recorded data, which could have been potentially illuminative but where consent had not been obtained. This was discarded for ethical reasons and not transcribed but meant that some aspects and meanings were lost from the transcripts. Some anonymised contextual data was included to help understanding. There was, however, one example, which would have been highly illuminative of the construction of challenging behaviour, but this was lost at transcription. This led to reflection upon ways of gaining consent.

Ethically, the procedures used in this research were the best way to proceed in terms of participant recruitment and handling of data but some thoughts were had around the potential benefits or compromises of opt in or opt out research. Also, with the recruitment procedures, the researcher has reflected that for various reasons already discussed the most problematic discourse and constructions of behaviour may not have been observed or

included in the research. However, for the purposes of the research this is not significant as the construction focused on what could be included and reported.

10.4.5 Observations

Completion of audio-recording of observations alongside handwritten notes helped to support the construction of transcripts which accurately reflected the situation in the classroom. The researcher recognises that there is always the potential for observer effects and pupils or teachers to change their behaviour. This was noted in the first observations with each pupil, but as the pupils became used to the researcher presence this lessened. This was cross-checked with pupils and teachers during follow up discussions. This suggests that the data collected and transcribed was an accurate reflection of observations.

10.5 Reliability and Validity

As presented in the methodology section, with qualitative research alternative constructs are often used to evaluate a piece of research. These are highlighted by Lincoln and Guba (1985) as credibility, confirmability, dependability and transferability. The research will now be evaluated using these constructs in turn.

Credibility could be considered the closest parallel construct to internal validity. Credibility seeks to ensure that the topic and focus of the research is adequately described, explored and is an accurate reflection of the context. One way of enhancing credibility is via member checks. These were completed with participants to ensure the researcher had understood the context of each pupil-teacher pairing but also to check that this had been captured in the data. The pupils were identified using the school's own internal constructs of challenging behaviour therefore ensuring the research was a representation of reality from the school's perspective.

The rich data collected in the study over an intensive period, and the researcher being directly involved in this also helped to enhance the

credibility of the research. Data was combined or triangulated to strengthen the construction.

Transferability could be considered the closest parallel construct to external validity. This explores whether this case can be transferred rather than generalised to other settings. Transferability considered what elements could potentially illuminate challenging behaviour in another school. For example, do some aspects of the discourse appear in other classrooms and if so do they have the same or different impacts within the construction. The research was exploratory: it was not a hunt for generalisable truths. However, do the aspects identified here enable a greater understanding of challenging behaviour. At this stage, the researcher feels it does open up further aspects for exploration.

Confirmability seeks to determine whether enough information is available to be able to understand the findings. In other words, can the results be traced back to the raw data and is it clear how the researcher got from the raw data to the analysis. In terms of analysis processes this is the reason for the development of an analysis protocol to bring some transparency about how the analysis was constructed. Extracts were also presented to illuminate the findings and interpretive decisions had to be continually made. These were recorded within the research diary. It is, however, important to acknowledge that alternative readings are possible as people bring to the data their own values and interests. The researcher has outlined her own interests in the introduction, to provide some understanding about prior experience and biography and how this could have impacted upon the construction. Through researcher reflexivity a degree of neutrality can be given to the research, particularly at analysis.

Dependability considers whether the methodological procedures were acceptable and enabled exploration of the question or topic area. The use of DA - but also observations and discussions - enabled the collection of rich data. There is always the potential that if another method had been used a different interpretation could have emerged. This could have also been the case if video-recording had been possible as this would have

captured the full context of the classroom including positioning, gesture and facial expressions.

10.6 Reflections on using discursive approaches to explore classroom behaviour

The emergence and ongoing development of discursive approaches outlined in this research, such as DA and CDA, developed out of work completed by key authors in the 1970s (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975, Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974). This current research has shown that these approaches can continue to be useful in exploring classroom discourse. This has also been highlighted by research completed by Pomerantz (2005).

Recent research has highlighted the key role that DA could have within real world situations, especially in schools within the work of EPs (Moustakim, 2010, Stewart, 2008, O'Brien & Miller, 2005). However, it is important to recognise that much of the foundations of the development of DA is over 50 years old and although this is seminal work it was developed in a different context, both socially, culturally and historically. Whilst it has been used to inform the research into pupil-teacher interactions in the classroom generally (Walsh, 2013, Hardman, Smith & Wall, 2005) and in relation to behaviour (Pomerantz, 2005, Graff, 2009) it is important to recognise that these pieces of research were undertaken in different social and historical contexts, and also educational contexts. Alongside this, the very early work (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974) initially developed out of conversations between two people as opposed to the multi-speaker dialogue often found in classrooms. The IRF sequence could also be argued to have been developed at a time where classroom practice was more traditional in style with one teacher talking to the class and using individual questions. Whilst this style still resonated within the current research, some of the talk had shown a shift away from this, for example, when Teacher 5 enabled pupils to take control of the discourse and the IRF sequence.

Much of the existing research using discursive approaches to explore classroom talk was completed prior to the introduction of the Primary National Strategy (DfES, 2006) and more recent National Curriculum in 2014 (DfE, 2014). This does therefore raise some questions or critique regarding whether the seminal work from DA can still enable the understanding classroom interactions some 50 years later. Teaching styles and pedagogical approaches are arguably more interactive and involve greater use of ICT which may impact upon classroom interactions, and therefore classroom behaviour. As this current research found teachers can spend time attempting to maintain the IRF sequence within classroom discourse, and the IRF can in some situations become a space for conflict between the teacher and the pupil leading to a situation which becomes focused upon pupil-behaviour.

Similarly, whilst DA and the data gathering methods used with this, often observation or audio recording, capture talk in action there are some features, particularly paralinguistic or non-verbal features which cannot always be fully captured in a classroom environment. This includes posture, body language, facial expressions and gesture. Some of this can be captured using observation, but in a busy 'live' classroom environment, noise and movement of people makes this more challenging. Also, in exploring challenging behaviour and how pupil-teacher interactions contribute to this, DA provides a snapshot view of such relationships and interactions. It cannot account for people's histories, biographies, or even what may have occurred in the lesson before which continually shapes the relationships in the classroom. From the findings of this research, this may help to illuminate why it was felt that in some situations the behaviour of the three pupils was not always different to other pupils, but had been constructed as being "challenging" or "disruptive" within lessons. Institutional talk, pupil culture and teacher culture (Miller, 2003) also contribute to such constructions.

Finally, in using DA to explore classroom behaviour it is important to remember that not all challenging classroom behaviour presents verbally.

Whilst this research focused upon “verbally challenging behaviour” and “interesting interactions”, there were some behaviours which would be difficult to capture using audio-recording and observation, for example, physical behaviours or refusals. On a subtler level, facial expressions and reactions may also be more difficult to record. Some of this can be captured in the contextual details around the transcribed talk but the pace of the action in a classroom can move quickly meaning that there may be too much to attempt to capture at once.

10.7 Opportunities for Further Research

Some of the possible ways forward for further research have already been mentioned. A possible avenue for further research could be to explore how challenging behaviour is constructed with *female* pupils and how this might compare or contrast to the construction of male pupils. The dominant discourse of ‘problem boys’ persists, and both published and unpublished research has continued to focus upon boys. It could be helpful to consider the construction of female pupils. It may be the case that girls can navigate institutional talk more successfully, meaning they are constructed differently by their teachers. They may also use different discursive strategies and word choices but without research this is difficult to comment upon.

Another possible area for further exploration could be including the discourse of parents and carers to explore both the home and community influences upon the discourse. This research touched up on this area briefly as localised historical discourses emerged as background themes during discussions. That is, home discourses and patterns were sometimes seen in the talk of pupils in the classroom, for example, use of double negatives by pupils or localised terminology. This was not built upon in this study as some of this was very geographically specific, meaning there was a risk of identification of participants if it had been included and talked about.

It could also be useful to look at the different constructions that pupils, teacher and families hold around challenging behaviour. Discursive Psychology could be a useful tool here, in looking at how narrative accounts

or stories are constructed via use of vivid description and extreme case formulations, along with considering stake and interest.

Further exploration of the communication skills of secondary pupils, particularly where behaviour may be a concern could also be helpful. This might involve exploration around whether the communication competencies of pupils enable them to be successful in a system where language and communication places a high demand. This does not mean to say that this would need to adopt a within-child view, but the research might seek to explore and address the current communication skill asymmetry identified within this research. There seems to be an assumption that by age eleven pupils have similar communication skills to adults, but actually this asymmetry seems to be a potential source for the construction of classroom behaviour. Research of this nature could then help to raise the awareness of teachers and support them in adapting their discursive strategies and classroom practices to address this asymmetry.

Within the evidence base so far there is some research about how teachers construct and talk about pupils, but there is less that looks at how pupils construct their teachers and position them through language. Also, pupil perceptions of the teacher role could also illuminate why pupil-teacher relationships can break down. This could begin to explore the them versus us notions which emerged within this research.

As part of the current research, the researcher reflected that there could have been the potential for action research. This could form a next phase of the research whereby the data is reviewed and awareness raised around some linguistic devices or broader discourses. There is potential to intervene with the discourse to bring about changes in, and reflections on, teacher-pupil communication and build stronger relationships. This could potentially be accompanied by video-interactive guidance (VIG) which has been used in a previous study (Kaye, Forsyth & Simpson, 2000).

10.8 Implications

10.8.1 Implications for Teachers and Educators

As the research has highlighted, greater reflective practice is needed around the pupil-teacher role asymmetry. This asymmetry is supported by institutional talk but also dominant discourses that have existed over time in education. For example, teachers are positioned in a role of power and authority and maintain the order in the classroom. To move forwards, this role asymmetry needs to be attended to in an active way by educators, to enable pupils to make greater contributions in lessons. Much challenging behaviour arose through conflict around interactional space and turn taking, and in situations where the interactional rules were different for the pupils. Through reflective practice educators could be supported to reflect more upon the interactional resources they use within lessons, including vocabulary. Pomerantz (2005) identified that if teachers were more able to recognise the action potential of their talk this could change the way that pupils and teachers interact with each other. This would then help to foster positive relationships in the classroom.

Alongside this, the interactional asymmetry in terms of communication skills and competencies, as identified by Law and Stringer (2014) needs further consideration to facilitate pupil access and engagement with the curriculum. Pupils in this research used less sophisticated strategies meaning there was a mismatch between the pupil and teacher. Through reflective practice, it would be possible to identify communication breakdowns and how these contribute to classroom behaviour. Also, greater awareness of institutional practices such as school behaviour policies would be welcome, particularly in how these policies can impact upon the construction of challenging behaviour. The discourse within school behaviour policies is important as it constructs the regulative discourse of a school. The development of collaborative co-construction between the teacher and pupil could be one way to overcome this, where difficulties are *talked through* instead of always following a disciplinary role which reinforces teacher power.

Social constructionist approaches also potentially provide teachers with alternative ways to view classroom behaviour and begin to explore situations beyond within-child explanations. Greater exploration is needed into pupil-teacher relationships, however, one way to raise their importance and profile could be via teacher training programmes and NQT packages. Often, these focus on curriculum content, rather than the softer interpersonal skills needed to teach effectively and build positive relationships.

10.8.2 Implications for Policy Makers

This research highlighted the persistence of within-child explanations of classroom behaviour which are often oversimplified. The lexical choices within policies serve to maintain the status quo and position the teacher as powerful and authoritative and pupils as needing to be disciplined. An important implication of the research for policy makers would be the need to continually look beyond within-child explanations and place positive pupil-teacher relationships at the centre of future policy. This would provide a helpful counter discourse to the current message being portrayed by Behaviour in Schools (2015).

In relation to school exclusions, the approach from this research provides scope for the writing of policies around early intervention where relationships can be explored in detail over time. Only in understanding the idiographic can we begin to fully understand why relationships breakdown between teachers and pupils, as the situation is constructed via language and action.

10.8.3 Implications for EPs

Language is a key part of the EP role and is something which is used daily in exploring problems with schools. EPs also possess a range of interpersonal skills which enable them to explore and understand a situation and unpick terminology and constructs. This is important because language can be very subjective and shapes our understanding of the world. DA has

a valuable contribution to make within EP practice, particularly in understanding the construction of behaviour, as this research has highlighted. Whilst it would not be possible to complete a full analysis within casework, it would be helpful to draw upon aspects of DA as tools during observations, for example, exploring word choices, turn taking, feedback or humour in the classroom. Equally, in building positive relationships, EPs could help to facilitate reflective practice in schools alongside teachers to strengthen classroom relationships. This serve to reconstruct relationships and position the pupil and teacher roles differently.

EPs can also work systemically with schools. In thinking about the regulative discourse of a school EPs may be able to help schools reflect on the construction of behaviour policies, and how particular practices may serve to reinforce behaviour in the classroom. This is particularly important in a secondary school context. Secondary aged pupils often meet several teachers across a week and must navigate different interactional environments where there are subtle differences in what is 'thinkable' and 'sayable'. These differences are important when there is variability in pupil behaviour across different lessons. It could therefore be beneficial to observe the pupil with a teacher where the relationship is positive, whilst also exploring situations where relationships are breaking down. This enables contrasts to be drawn and how conversational patterns differ. This was highlighted in Christopher's case within the analysis.

Having an awareness of the developing research evidence base around pedagogic talk, role constructions and the asymmetry that comes with this is also helpful in guiding EPs when navigating casework.

11 Conclusion

From this research, it can clearly be seen that language has a pivotal role in shaping and constructing challenging behaviour in the classroom. On a daily basis, teachers and pupils make use of a range of linguistic devices which shape conversation and action in the classroom. These linguistic devices shape the pupil-teacher relationship and serve to co-construct challenging behaviour in the classroom. Whilst some of these linguistic devices are guided by practices outlined within institutional talk and the pupil-teacher role asymmetry, there is still scope for active choices to be made by both the pupil and the teacher. This research has begun to explore how linguistic devices can facilitate the construction of challenging behaviour, but also ways in which such a construction was avoided, often by the choices teachers made.

The teacher-pupil role asymmetry is both dominant and historical, and this asymmetry can serve to create the climate where challenging behaviour can become constructed. This is due to the teacher being in a position of power, both institutionally and interactionally. In response, pupils will seek to engage in strategies which enable them to find their way into the classroom discourse often bringing them into conflict with the teacher's agenda, and the regulative and instructional discourse of the school.

This research has highlighted the value and importance of adopting a social constructionist and relativist position to exploring the complexity of challenging behaviour. Alongside this, the use of DA has enabled this complexity to be explored interactionally at a micro and macro level. More importantly, this research has continued to add to the view that challenging behaviour is often over simplified and needs much more unpacking to explore how conflict arises in the classroom. Moving forwards, there is a need to continue to think of challenging behaviour as being both idiographic and personal and a shift away from the search for universal truths. There also needs to be rethinking around dominant discourses which persist

around power, authority and discipline, and a move towards recognising the action potential of pupil-teacher discourse in the classroom.

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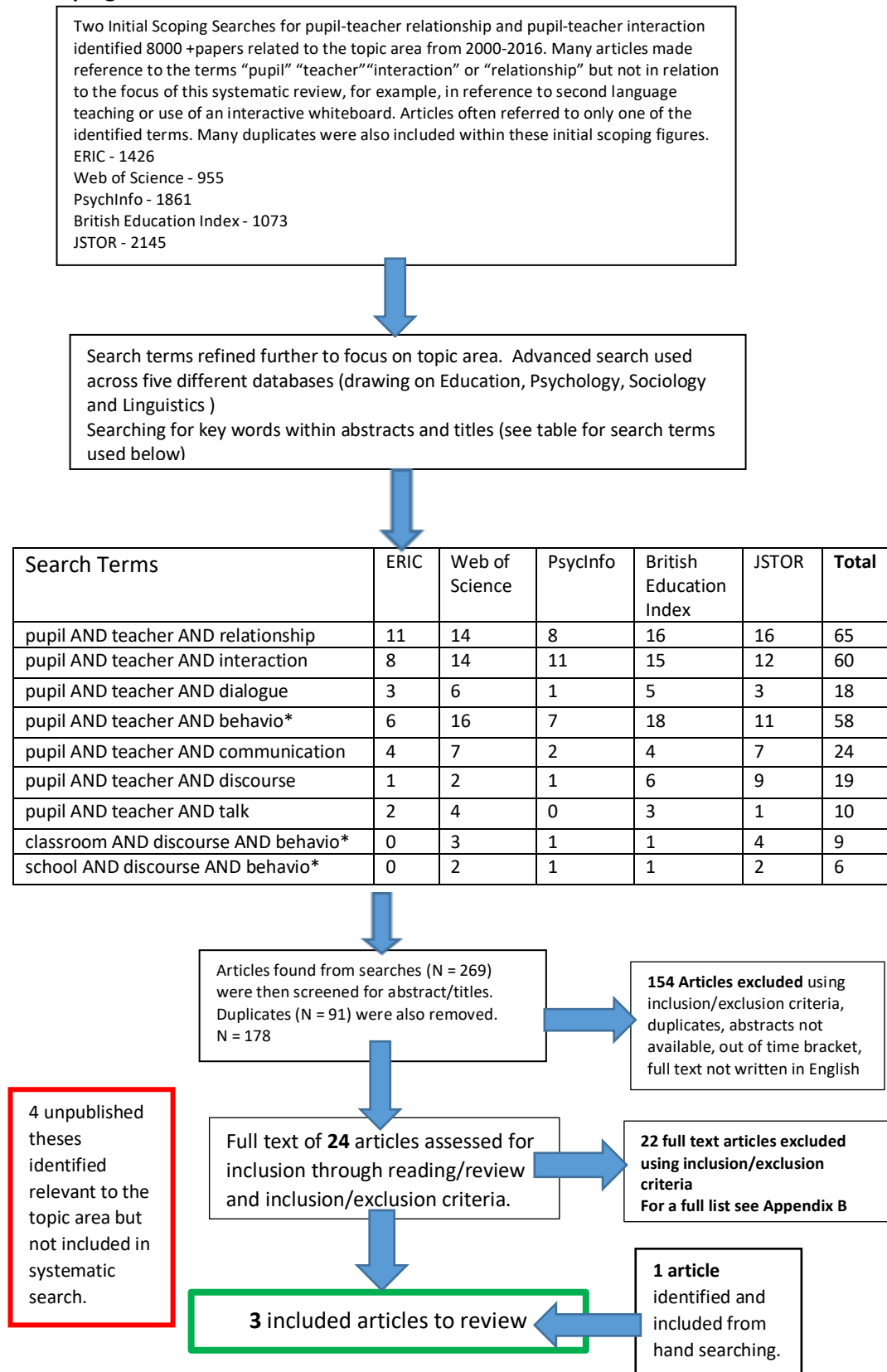
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13 Appendices

13.1 Appendix A: Flow Diagram - Identification of Included Studies

Systematic Review Focus: Understanding the role that pupil-teacher interaction plays in shaping classroom behaviour



13.2 Appendix B – A table to show a bibliography of excluded studies and reasons for exclusion

Author	Reason for Exclusion
Black (2004)	Not secondary age pupils Evaluation of impact of National Literacy Strategy
Blatchford (2003)	Not secondary age pupils Quantitative data – categorising
Einarsson and Granstrom (2002)	Quantitative data – coding/categorising English not the language of instruction
Fisher and Larkin (2008)	Not secondary age pupils
Hardman, Smith and Wall (2005)	Not secondary age pupils SEN focus Evaluation of impact of National Literacy strategy upon classroom discourse
Hobday-Kusch and McVittie (2002)	Not secondary age group Humour used by children as the research focus
Humberstone and Stan (2011)	Not secondary age pupils Not in school
Lefstein (2008)	Not behaviour Evaluation of National Literacy Strategy impact
Molinari and Mameli (2013)	Does not link to behaviour but pupil participation. Italian Not secondary age pupils
Myhill (2002)	Underachievement Quantitative Not related to behaviour
Nystrand, Wu, Gamoran, Zeiser and Long (2005)	Does not link to behaviour but to understanding and learning in the classroom in a broad sense
O'Brien and Miller (2005)	Not secondary age group
Orsati and Causton-Theoharis (2013)	Not secondary age group
Priyadharshini (2011)	Not secondary age group
Read (2008)	Not secondary age pupils
Rubie-Davies, Blatchford, Webster,	Not secondary age group

Koutsoubou and Bassett (2010)	
Smith, Hardman, Wall and Mroz (2004)	Evaluation of National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies Quantitative – coding and categorization leading to frequencies
Swinson and Knight (2007)	Quantitative using frequency and categorization Correlational Not secondary age pupils
Verkuyten (2002)	English not the language of instruction Not English speaking country where research completed
Wardman (2013)	Not secondary age pupils EAL Withdrawal group Quantitative
Wright (2009)	Not research but a summary of the history of talk around pupils with challenging behaviour

13.3 Appendix C - A table to show definitions/explanations of Weight of Evidence Levels in relation to review question

Trustworthiness of Result WoE(A)	Appropriateness of design/method of the study to review question WoE (B)	Appropriateness of focus of the study to review question WoE (C)
<p>High – Participants more than N=1, Published research, Participant recruitment and selection methods clear, participant characteristics clearly stated, How data was gathered is clear including by whom, data analysis clear, clear reference to ethical issues</p> <p>Medium – Participants N=1, Published research, some details provided on participant selection and recruitment, participant characteristics available, how data was gathered is clear, reference to ethical issues</p> <p>Low – Unpublished research, theses, dissertations, any of the features from high/medium (stated above) are unclear or not specified.</p>	<p>High – Use of a qualitative method and presents excerpts of discourse to illustrate analysis and discussion points. Use of discourse analysis as a method of analysis. Participants more than N=1. Analysis and data gathered about the interactions between pupil and teacher in relation to behaviour</p> <p>Medium – Use of a qualitative method to gather data and analyse interactions. Excerpts of data presented but does not use discourse analysis. Participants N=1. Analysis of pupil and teacher discourse in relation to behaviour</p> <p>Low – Use of quantitative methods or narrative account without presentation of excerpts.</p>	<p>High – Must relate to behaviour (challenging, disruptive or similar term), secondary age range and include interaction between pupil and teacher. Analysis of discourse in relation to this interaction</p> <p>Medium - Must relate to behaviour(challenging, disruptive or similar term) , secondary age range, include discourse from pupils or teachers about challenging behaviour, may include one of these but not the other</p> <p>Low – Does not relate to behaviour but only interaction.</p>

13.4 Appendix D – Research Interest/Opportunity Letter to Schools



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

Researcher Name: Hayley Stower
Contact email: lpshes@nottingham.ac.uk
Supervisors Name: Nathan Lambert
Contact email: Nathan.Lambert@nottingham.ac.uk

(Researcher's name and contact
details followed by the date)

(School name and address)

Dear (Headteacher's Name),

RE: Research Opportunity – understanding language and behaviour in the classroom

My name is Hayley Stower and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist. I am currently in my second year of study for a Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology at the University of Nottingham. I am on placement with [REDACTED] Council working three days a week, usually Monday to Wednesday.

As part of my Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology, I am conducting an observational research study within secondary school classrooms. This research will form part of my thesis and the research is being supervised by Dr Nathan Lambert at the University of Nottingham. The research has been approved by the Nottingham University Ethics Committee (Number 829)

The purpose of this study is to explore the role and influence that spoken language may have in understanding challenging behaviour in the classroom. It is hoped that the research will enable an exploration of the different functions and purposes language serves in the context of the secondary classroom.

I am writing to enquire whether you would be interested in taking part in the research and would give permission to observe in classrooms within your school. If you choose to give your permission I would then contact teachers and pupils via a letter to provide information about the research and ask if they would like to participate in the research. The participation of teachers and pupils would be voluntary.

My data collection will involve observing a selection of pupils and teachers across a series of lessons and making written observational notes, with the focus being on the role of language. These would then be followed up with individual discussions with the participants. These observations and discussions would be supported by audio recording which would be used for the purpose of this research only. This data will then be analysed and will then be used to form part of my thesis as an assessed part of the Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology. A copy of this thesis will be made available online electronically as part of the University of Nottingham E-Theses database. The data from the research will be stored securely and destroyed after 3 years. Participants will have the right to withdraw up until the point where the data is combined and analysed.

The details of the school and participants will remain confidential and the data will be anonymised. The informed consent of teachers and parents of children involved in the research study will need to be gained before the research proceeds. Once the classroom staff have given their consent, I

will meet with parents of the children who are taking part in the research study to introduce the study and its aims and gain their consent.

I will follow up this letter with a phone call within the next week to discuss the possibility of your involvement. In the meanwhile, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me directly via email at lpxhes@nottingham.ac.uk.

Yours Sincerely,

(signed with electronic signature)

Hayley Stower
Trainee Educational Psychologist
University of Nottingham

13.5 Appendix E – Information letter for school



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

School of Psychology Information Sheet

Title of Project: *Understanding the role pupil-teacher discourse has in constructing behaviour in the classroom*

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: 829

Researcher(s): Hayley Stower (lpxhes@nottingham.ac.uk)

Supervisor(s): Nathan Lambert (nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk)

This is an invitation to take part in a research study which is investigating the role spoken language may play in understanding behaviour in the classroom. Before you decide if you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. The purpose of this study is to explore the role and influence that spoken language may have in understanding the presentation of behaviour in the classroom. I hope that this research will provide a greater understanding of the role that language used by teachers and pupils plays in the construction and presentation of behaviour.

Please take time to read the following information carefully.

If you participate, the research will involve a researcher visiting the school to observe teachers and pupils in lessons. These observations will have been arranged and agreed at the start of the study and will involve the researcher sitting at the back of the class and completing observations and written notes as the lesson progresses. The focus of these observations will be on spoken language and behaviour. I also hope to follow these observations up at a later date with individual discussion about the classroom experience. The observations and discussions will be supported by audio recordings which will be transcribed by the researcher.

The procedure will involve several visits to the school but with the view to completing three to five lesson observations and one individual 30 minute follow-up discussion session per participant.

Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are under no obligation to take part. You are free to withdraw at any point before or during the study. All data collected will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only. It will be stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to ask now. I can also be contacted after your participation at the above address.

(signed with electronic signature)

Hayley Stower
Trainee Educational Psychologist
University of Nottingham

If you have any complaints about the study, please contact:
Stephen Jackson (Chair of Ethics Committee)
stephen.jackson@nottingham.ac.uk

13.6 Appendix F – Consent Form for School



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

**School of Psychology
Consent Form**

Title of Project: Understanding the role pupil-teacher discourse has in constructing behaviour in the classroom

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: 829

Researcher(s): Hayley Stower (lpxhes@nottingham.ac.uk)

Supervisor(s): Nathan Lambert (nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk)

The participant should answer these questions independently:

- Have you read and understood the Information Sheet/Letter? YES/NO
- Have you had the opportunity to ask questions about the study? YES/NO
- Have all your questions been answered satisfactorily? YES/NO
- Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study? YES/NO
(at any time and without giving a reason)
- I give permission for my data from this study to be shared with other researchers provided that my anonymity is completely protected. YES/NO
- Do you agree to take part in the study? YES/NO

“This study has been explained to me to my satisfaction, and I agree to take part. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time.”

“I agree that I wish for my school take part in classroom observations completed by the researcher and that notes can be taken during these observations.”

Signature of the Participant:

Date:

Name (in block capitals):

I have explained the study to the above participant and he/she has agreed to take part.

Signature of researcher:

Date:

13.7 Appendix G – Research Interest/Opportunity Letter for Teachers



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

Researcher Name: Hayley Stower

Contact email: lpshes@nottingham.ac.uk

Contact Phone Number: [REDACTED]

Supervisors Name: Nathan Lambert

Contact email: Nathan.Lambert@nottingham.ac.uk

Dear

RE: Research Opportunity – Understanding Language and Behaviour in the classroom

My name is Hayley Stower and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist. I am currently in my final year of study for a Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology at the University of Nottingham. I am on placement with [REDACTED] Council working three days a week, usually Monday to Wednesday.

This is an invitation to take part in a research study which is investigating the role spoken language may play in understanding behaviour in the classroom. Before you decide if you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. The purpose of this study is to explore the role and influence that spoken language may have in understanding the presentation of challenging behaviour in the classroom. The research will involve observing the interactions which relate to or address pupil behaviour between you and a focus pupil during lessons. The focus pupil will have been identified in consultation with school staff on the basis that this will allow for interesting interactions related to pupil behaviour, and in some circumstances challenging behaviour, to be observed.

These observations will have been arranged and agreed at the start of the study and will involve me, as the researcher, sitting at the back of the class and completing observations and written notes as the lesson progresses. The focus of these observations will be on *spoken language* and naturally occurring talk within a lesson. I also hope to follow these observations up at a later date with individual discussion about the classroom experience. The classroom interactions between you and the focus pupil, and follow up discussions will be supported by audio recordings which will be transcribed by the researcher.

There are two purposes to this research. The first is that it is hoped that the observations gathered can support an understanding of how the spoken language used influences classroom behaviour. It will help to identify the role language may play in understanding and shaping classroom behaviour. The second purpose is that the research will form part of my thesis and fulfil the requirements of the Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology. The research is being supervised by Dr Nathan Lambert at the University of Nottingham. The research has been approved by the Nottingham University Ethics Committee (Number 829).

Within the research, the data collected will be anonymised and your name and pupil's names will be changed so they are not identifiable. Other identifying features will also be removed during the transcription phase. The data will be treated confidentially and will be stored securely and destroyed after 3 years. Once you give informed consent to take part in the research, you continue to have the right to withdraw from the research at any point up until the data is analysed. As mentioned, the data will form part of my thesis, and a copy of this thesis will be available online

via the University of Nottingham E-Theses portal. It will also be used for publication in a research journal.

If you have any questions about the research and would like more information, please contact me directly via email on lpshes@nottingham.ac.uk or using the contact number above.

Yours Sincerely

(signed with electronic signature)

Hayley Stower
Trainee Educational Psychologist
University of Nottingham

13.8 Appendix H – Research Interest/Opportunity Letter for Parents



Researcher Name: Hayley Stower
Contact email: lpshes@nottingham.ac.uk
Contact Phone Number: [REDACTED]
Supervisors Name: Nathan Lambert
Contact email: Nathan.Lambert@nottingham.ac.uk

Dear

RE: Research Opportunity – Language and Behaviour in the classroom

My name is Hayley Stower and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist. I am currently in my final year of study for a Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology at the University of Nottingham. I am on placement with [REDACTED] Council working three days a week, usually Monday to Wednesday.

This is an invitation to ask if your child would like to take part in a research study which is investigating the role spoken language may play in understanding behaviour in the classroom. Before you decide if you wish for your child to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. The purpose of this study is to explore the role and influence that spoken language may have in understanding and shaping pupil behaviour in the classroom.

The research will involve observations of the interactions between your child and their teacher during lessons which relate to incidences of either positive or negative classroom behaviour. These observations will have been arranged and agreed at the start of the study and will involve me, as the researcher, sitting at the back of the class and completing observations and written notes. These will be accompanied by audio recordings which will be transcribed and only be accessed directly by the researcher. I also hope to follow these observations up with individual discussions about the classroom experience. It is hoped that your child's involvement would enable me to observe interesting interactions which will help to illuminate the role of language in the classroom environment and in understanding behaviour.

There are two purposes to this research. The first is that it is hoped that the observations gathered can support an understanding of how the spoken language used influences classroom behaviour. The second purpose is that the research will form part of my thesis and fulfil the requirements of the Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology. The research is being supervised by Dr Nathan Lambert at the University of Nottingham. The research has been approved by the Nottingham University Ethics Committee (Number 829).

Within the research, the data collected will be anonymised and your child's name will be changed so they are not identifiable. Other identifiable features will also be removed from the transcription to protect the anonymity of the participant. The data will be treated confidentially and will be stored securely and destroyed after 3 years. Once informed consent has been given for your child to take part, you continue to have the right to withdraw them from the research at any point up

until the data is analysed. As mentioned, the data will form part of my thesis, and a copy of this thesis will be available online via the University of Nottingham E-Theses portal. It will also be used for publication in a research journal.

It is also important before deciding if you wish to give permission for your child to take part that you discuss involvement with your child.

If you have any questions about the research and would like more information, please contact me directly on lpshes@nottingham.ac.uk or using the contact number above.

Yours Sincerely

(signed with electronic signature)

Hayley Stower
Trainee Educational Psychologist
University of Nottingham

13.9 Appendix I – Research Interest/Opportunity Letter for Pupils



Researcher Name: Hayley Stower
Contact email: lpshes@nottingham.ac.uk
Supervisors Name: Nathan Lambert
Contact email: Nathan.Lambert@nottingham.ac.uk

Dear

RE: Research Opportunity – Language and Behaviour in the classroom

My name is Hayley Stower and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist. I am currently in my final year of study for a Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology at the University of Nottingham. I am on placement with [REDACTED] Council working three days a week, usually Monday to Wednesday.

I am writing to you to ask if you would be like to take part in a piece of research I am completing. This research is hoping to explore what is said (words used) in the classroom by teachers and pupils and what role this may have on behaviour in the classroom. To help me to do this, and if you decide to take part, I would complete observations of the interactions between you and your teacher. This means I would observe what you say to each other during a lesson when you speak to each other. Any observations would be arranged and agreed with you and your teacher before the research starts. The observations would involve me sitting at the back of the classroom and making some notes to help me to remember as well as using audio recording to capture the words which are said. These notes and audio recordings will be written up but I will be the only person who has access to them. After the observations, I would also like to meet with you to have a discussion about your classroom experience.

There are two purposes to this research. The first purpose is that it is hoped that the information gathered will help me to understand how the words said in lessons can influence behaviour in the classroom. The second purpose is that the research will form part of my thesis as I am working towards my Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology. This research is being supervised by Dr Nathan Lambert at the University of Nottingham. The research has been approved by the Nottingham University Ethics Committee (Number 829).

The data I collect from this research will be anonymised and your name will be changed. This means that you will not be able to be identified from within the research. Any other information which may be able to identify you, for example, school name will also be removed to protect your anonymity. The data will be treated confidentially and I will store this securely and destroy it after 3 years. Once you have provided informed consent to take part, you will be able to withdraw (leave) the research at any point up until the data is analysed. As mentioned, the anonymised data will form part of my thesis, and a copy of this thesis will be available online via the University of Nottingham E-Theses portal. It will also be used for publication in a research journal.

It is also important before deciding to take part that you discuss involvement with your parent or carer.

If you have any questions about the research and would like more information, please contact me directly on lpshes@nottingham.ac.uk.

Yours Sincerely

(signed with electronic signature)

Hayley Stower
Trainee Educational Psychologist
University of Nottingham

13.10 Appendix J – Information Letter for Teachers



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

School of Psychology Information Sheet

Title of Project: *Understanding the role pupil-teacher discourse has in constructing behaviour in the classroom*

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: 829

Researcher(s): Hayley Stower (lpshes@nottingham.ac.uk)

Supervisor(s): Nathan Lambert (nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk)

This is an invitation to take part in a research study which is investigating the role spoken language may play in understanding behaviour in the classroom. Before you decide if you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. The purpose of this study is to explore the role and influence that spoken language may have in understanding the presentation of behaviour in the classroom. I hope that this research will provide a greater understanding of the role that language used by teachers and pupils plays in the construction and presentation of behaviour.

Please take time to read the following information carefully.

If you participate, the research will involve a researcher observing you and a focus pupil during lessons. These observations will have been arranged and agreed at the start of the study and will involve the researcher sitting at the back of the class and completing observations and written notes as the lesson progresses. The focus of these observations will be on spoken language and behaviour. I also hope to follow these observations up at a later date with individual discussion about the classroom experience. The observations and discussions will be supported by audio recordings which will be transcribed by the researcher.

The procedure will involve three to five lesson observations and one individual 30 minute follow-up discussion session.

Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are under no obligation to take part. You are free to withdraw at any point before or during the study. All data collected will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only. It will be stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to ask now. I can also be contacted after your participation at the above address.

(signed with electronic signature)

Hayley Stower
Trainee Educational Psychologist
University of Nottingham

If you have any complaints about the study, please contact:

Stephen Jackson (Chair of Ethics Committee)

stephen.jackson@nottingham.ac.uk

13.11 Appendix K – Consent Form for Teachers



The University of
Nottingham

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School of Psychology
Consent Form

*Title of Project: **Understanding the role pupil-teacher discourse has in constructing behaviour in the classroom***

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: 829

Researcher(s): Hayley Stower (lpxhes@nottingham.ac.uk)

Supervisor(s): Nathan Lambert (nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk)

The participant should answer these questions independently:

- Have you read and understood the Information Sheet/Letter? YES/NO
- Have you had the opportunity to ask questions about the study? YES/NO
- Have all your questions been answered satisfactorily? YES/NO
- Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study? YES/NO
(at any time and without giving a reason)
- I give permission for my data from this study to be shared with other
researchers provided that my anonymity is completely protected. YES/NO
- Do you agree to take part in the study? YES/NO

“This study has been explained to me to my satisfaction, and I agree to take part. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time.”

“I agree that I wish to take part in a classroom observation completed by the researcher and that notes and audio recordings can be taken during this observation. I agree to take part in a follow up discussion about my experiences in the classroom.”

Signature of the Participant:

Date:

Name (in block capitals)

I have explained the study to the above participant and he/she has agreed to take part.

Signature of researcher:

Date:

13.12 Appendix L – Information Sheet for Parents



The University of
Nottingham

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**School of Psychology
Information Sheet**

Title of Project: Understanding the role pupil-teacher discourse has in constructing behaviour in the classroom

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: 829

Researcher(s): Hayley Stower (lpxes@nottingham.ac.uk)

Supervisor(s): Nathan Lambert (nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk)

This is an invitation to take part in a research study which is investigating the role spoken language may play in understanding behaviour in the classroom. Before you decide if you wish for your child to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. The purpose of this study is to explore the role and influence that spoken language may have in understanding the presentation of behaviour in the classroom. I hope that this research will provide a greater understanding of the role that language used by teachers and pupils plays in the construction and presentation of behaviour.

Please take time to read the following information carefully.

If your child participates, the research will involve a researcher observing your child and their teachers in the classroom during lessons. These observations will have been arranged and agreed at the start of the study and will involve the researcher sitting at the back of the class and completing observations and written notes as the lesson progresses. The focus of these observations will be on spoken language and behaviour. I also hope to follow these observations up at a later date with individual discussion about the classroom experience. The observations and discussions will be supported by audio recordings which will be transcribed by the researcher.

The procedure will involve three to five lesson observations and one individual 30 minute follow-up discussion session with your child.

Your child's participation in this study is totally voluntary and your child is under no obligation to take part. You are free to withdraw your child at any point before or during the study. All data collected will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only. It will be stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to ask now. I can be contacted via the email above or on 01629 532735. Alternatively, I can arrange to meet with you directly to answer any questions you may have at any stage. I can also be contacted after your child's participation at the above address.

(signed with electronic signature)

Hayley Stower
Trainee Educational Psychologist
University of Nottingham

If you have any complaints about the study, please contact:
Stephen Jackson (Chair of Ethics Committee) stephen.jackson@nottingham.ac.uk

13.13 Appendix M – Information Sheet for Pupils



The University of
Nottingham

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**School of Psychology
Information Sheet**

Title of Project: Understanding the role pupil-teacher discourse has in constructing behaviour in the classroom

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: 829

Researcher(s): Hayley Stower (lpshes@nottingham.ac.uk)

Supervisor(s): Nathan Lambert (nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk)

This is an invitation to take part in a research study which looks what is said (words used) within interactions in the classroom by teachers and pupils and what role this may have on behaviour in the classroom. Before you decide if you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. The purpose of this study is to explore the role and influence of the words people say and how these may help in understanding behaviour in the classroom. I hope that this research will provide a greater understanding of the role that language used by teachers and pupils plays in the construction and presentation of behaviour.

Please take time to read the following information carefully.

If you decide to take part, the researcher would complete observations of the interactions between you and your teacher. This means the researcher would observe what you say to each other during a lesson when you speak to each other. Any observations would be arranged and agreed with you and your teacher before the research starts. The observations would involve the researcher sitting at the back of the classroom and making some notes as well as using audio recording to capture the words which are said. These notes and audio recordings will be written up but will only be accessed or used by the researcher. After the observations, the researcher would also like to meet with you to have a discussion about your classroom experience.

The procedure will involve three to five lesson observations and one individual 30 minute follow-up discussion session.

Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are under no obligation to take part. You are free to withdraw at any point before or during the study. All data collected will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only. It will be stored in compliance with the Data Protection Act.

If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to ask now. I can also be available in school if there are any questions you want to ask me directly. I can also be contacted after your participation at the above email address.

(signed with electronic signature)

Hayley Stower
Trainee Educational Psychologist
University of Nottingham

If you have any complaints about the study, please contact:
Stephen Jackson (Chair of Ethics Committee) stephen.jackson@nottingham.ac.uk

13.14 Appendix N – Consent Form for Parents



The University of
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

School of Psychology
Consent Form

*Title of Project: **Understanding the role pupil-teacher discourse has in constructing behaviour in the classroom***

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: 829

Researcher(s): Hayley Stower (lpxhes@nottingham.ac.uk)

Supervisor(s): Nathan Lambert (nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk)

The participant should answer these questions independently:

- Have you read and understood the Information Sheet/Letter? YES/NO
- Have you had the opportunity to ask questions about the study? YES/NO
- Have all your questions been answered satisfactorily? YES/NO
- Do you understand that you are free to withdraw your child from the study? (at any time and without giving a reason) YES/NO
- I give permission for my data from this study to be shared with other researchers provided that my child's anonymity is completely protected. YES/NO
- Do you agree to your child taking part in the study? YES/NO

"This study has been explained to me to my satisfaction, and I agree for my child to take part. I understand that I am free to withdraw my child at any time."

"I agree to my child taking part in a classroom observation completed by the researcher and that notes and audio recordings can be taken during this observation. I agree for my child to take part in a follow up discussion about their experiences in school"

Signature of the Parent/Carer:

Date:

Name (in block capitals):

The study has been explained to the above parents/carers and they have agreed that their child can take part.

Signature of researcher:

Date:

13.15 Appendix O – Consent Form for Pupils



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School of Psychology
Consent Form

Title of Project: Understanding the role pupil-teacher discourse has in constructing behaviour in the classroom

Ethics Approval Number or Taught Project Archive Number: 829

Researcher(s): Hayley Stower (lpxhes@nottingham.ac.uk)

Supervisor(s): Nathan Lambert (nathan.lambert@nottingham.ac.uk)

The participant should answer these questions independently:

- Have you read and understood the Information Sheet/Letter? YES/NO
- Have you had the opportunity to ask questions about the study? YES/NO
- Have all your questions been answered satisfactorily? YES/NO
- Do you understand that you are free to withdraw from the study? (at any time and without giving a reason) YES/NO
- I give permission for my data from this study to be shared with other researchers provided that my anonymity is completely protected. YES/NO
- Do you agree to take part in the study? YES/NO

“This study has been explained to me to my satisfaction, and I agree to take part. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time.”

“I agree to take part in classroom observations completed by the researcher and that notes and audio recordings can be taken during this observation. I agree to take part in a follow up discussion about my experiences in school”

Signature of the Young Person:

Date:

Name (in block capitals):

Signature of researcher:

Date:

13.16 Appendix P – Observation Information and Pupil-Teacher Pairings

Observations – Topic/Focus, duration and time of day

1	Afternoon – 1 hour – Maths - Decimals and rounding including whole class tasks, challenges and individual work.
2	Morning – 1 hour - Performing Arts/ICT – making own musical track on iPads following musical conventions and task brief. Mostly working in pairs but then whole class sharing towards the end of the lesson.
3	Morning – Maths – 1 hour Textbook work and whole class work broken up into 15 minute bursts of activity. Focused upon recent work covered about shape and coordinates.
4	Afternoon – English – 1 hour - Poetry – some group work and tasks taught directly from the board to support revision for test about the concepts of poetry.
5	Morning – English – 40 minutes Poetry – some group work and tasks taught directly from the board to support revision for test about the concepts of poetry.
6	Morning – Maths – 1 hour - Textbook work and whole class work broken up into 15 minute bursts of activity. Focused upon recent work covered from a range of topics including shape, measures, ratio and number.
7	Afternoon – Maths – 1 hour - Textbook work and whole class work broken up into 15 minute bursts of activity. Coordinates
8	Morning – Maths – 1 hour - Textbook work and whole class work broken up into 15 minute bursts of activity. Coordinates and plotting negative and positive numbers.
9	Morning – 1 hour – Individual assessment work including completion of a maths test paper in exam conditions. Some individual work and discussion completed outside of exam conditions
10	Afternoon – 50 minutes - Modern Foreign Languages – vocabulary work related to town topic
11	Morning – 1 hour - Modern Foreign Languages via ICT. Revision for upcoming test including vocabulary and speaking and listening tasks.
12	Afternoon – Maths – 1 hour - revision of topics including multiplication tables, challenges and number facts.
13	Afternoon – Maths – 1 hour - revision of topics via maths game including multiplication tables, challenges and number facts.

Observations – Matching of Teachers/Pupils

The table below shows the number of observations and pairings for each participant

	1	2	3	4	5
Pupil A	Teacher1	(absent)	(absent)	Teacher1	Teacher1
Pupil B	Teacher2	Teacher3	Teacher4	Teacher3	Teacher4
Pupil C	Teacher5	Teacher5	Teacher6	Teacher6	Teacher5

13.17 Appendix Q – Observation Grid

[illegible]

13.18 Appendix R – Discussion Questions and Prompt Tool

Follow up discussion prompt sheet – questions and topic areas

Teachers

Context checking questions/prompts

- Behaviour management structures and support in school
- How do these relate to the school behaviour management policy?
- Does/How does the behaviour management policy inform your practice?
- What is working well/not so well?

Thinking about classroom behaviour questions and prompts

- Challenging behaviour in class – what does that mean to you? More challenging or less challenging? Extreme examples from general teaching and classroom experience
- How does challenging behaviour emerge and develop? What are your thoughts/views? Attributions/explanations

School specific context questions

- Pupils on report – process and why this might occur, decision making.

Other points of discussion

Debriefing and opportunity to ask questions. Discussion of extracts of the transcripts/examples where appropriate.

Pupils

Context checking questions/prompts

Experiences in school in general – what is going well or not so well?

Exploring general behaviour in the classroom across school

Pupil perceptions of school policies – prompting questions

- What happens if a teacher isn't happy with a pupil's behaviour? What could then happen? – build on school rules, school structures, pupil perceptions of power of teachers as observed in the discourse in lessons.
- Sometimes pupils disengage and make choices which mean they end up in trouble? Why do you feel this happens? Sense of fairness (a theme from the observations)
- Decision making in school

- What is working well? Not so well?

Other points of discussion

Debriefing and opportunity to ask questions. Discussion of extracts of the transcripts/examples where appropriate.

Notes

Further checking was completed with participants around consent for use of sensitive extracts of the transcript where appropriate.

These are intended topics or prompts to discussion, in the event that the discussion does not flow and construct itself via natural turn taking in the discourse.

A brief debrief letter to be provided to participants to close the research and provide contact details for the researcher.

13.19 Appendix S – Debrief Information Sheet

Debrief Information Sheet – Language and Behaviour in the Classroom

Dear

Thank you for agreeing to be involved in this research project. The information gathered from this research project has supported the exploration of the role features of spoken language play in understanding the construction of behaviour in the classroom.

All the information gathered will now be written up as part of my thesis for my Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology. All information will remain confidential and any names or identifying features have been anonymised. If you would prefer to have your information removed before analysis and writing up take place please contact me on lpshes@nottingham.ac.uk.

I hope that you have enjoyed taking part in the research. I will be contacting your school again in the near future to provide further feedback and follow up information.

Thank you once again for your participation and support during this project.

Yours Sincerely

(signed with electronic signature)

Hayley Stower

Trainee Educational Psychologist

University of Nottingham.

13.20 Appendix T – Transcription Notation Symbols and Method

A table to show transcription symbols – adapted from Jefferson (2004) and Ten Have (2001)

Symbol	Description
(.)	Just noticeable pause
(number)	Measured pause in seconds/split seconds
<slow>	Talk noticeably slower than surrounding talk
>fast<	Talk noticeably faster than surrounding talk
[Onset of overlapping speech
]	End of overlapping speech
<u>emphasis</u>	Underlining of a word indicating emphasis – volume or tone
((comment))	Non-verbal communication observed or editorial notes
{{comment}}	Details needed to provide additional information on transcript
↑	Rise in pitch/tone
↓	Lowering of pitch/tone
(unclear)	Unclear part of the tape
CAPITALS	Loud speech
\$word\$	Smile voice
:	Elongation of word

13.21 Appendix U – Analysis Protocol and Steps

Findings and Analysis Protocol and Steps Taken

1. Creation of transcripts – tapes played repeatedly. Initial transcription of audio-recording verbatim capturing words spoken.
2. Transcripts revisited and modified to record notation of linguistic and non-verbal features of the talk and action, using Jefferson notation method
3. Transcripts anonymised and pseudonyms given to participants and any other names mentioned in the transcripts. Any identifiable features such as place names, locations were also removed from the transcripts.
4. Initial observations, reflections and thoughts recorded in research diary.
5. Conversation Analysis - Exploration and discussion of micro-features and conversational elements of the text highlighted and annotated (Jenks, 2011)
 - Turn taking
 - Lexical choice
 - Adjacency pairs
 - Repair mechanisms
 - Organisational preferences
 - Pauses
 - Overlapping of talk
 - Continuers
 - Initiations
 - Transitions
 - Non-lexical/paralinguistic features of the text
6. Description and Interpretation (CDA, Fairclough, 2013)
 - a) Exploration and discussion of the use of the linguistic features in step 5 above alongside broader features of discourse below:
 - Formal versus informal use of words/language
 - Use of metaphors/sarcasm/humour
 - Sentences as active or passive
 - Sentences and phrasing positive or negative
 - Vocabulary
 - Use of grammar – for example, how are the pronouns ‘we’ ‘you’ ‘I’ used
 - Processes that dominate the talk – interactional such as turn taking or questioning
 - Larger scale structures within the text/social practices
 - b) Strategies, linguistic devices and discursive strategies used by participants

- c) Features of institutional talk which may be evident in the talk.
How do they feature and what is their influence?
- d) Authority and power within the talk and how does this shape language, action and behaviour of participants?
- e) Positioning through grammar and language
- 7. Explanation (CDA, Fairclough, 2013)
 - a) Discussions with participants – sharing extracts but also exploring perceptions and constructions of challenging behaviour and wider features of the school system and society from participants' perspectives (CREDIBILITY)
 - b) Exploration and discussion of broader discourses and dominant discourses around challenging behaviour within the talk from lessons and discussions
 - c) Consider how these readings of the data and discourses are made possible at a micro or macro level – shaping, positioning and construction. How are these thinkable and sayable? What is said versus not said?
 - d) Consider whether there are any competing discourses
- 8. Tie together aspects of the talk and the discourses
- 9. Bringing together of key aspects to create a narrative account in the research thesis, punctuated with extracts (Potter & Wetherell, 1987)

At all stages, record in research diary using reflexive running commentary and on transcripts to ensure that interpretive decisions are evidenced from the raw data and transcripts to the analysis phase (CONFIRMABILITY and DEPENDABILITY).

Analysis not a linear process but a constructive fluid process with steps being revisited.