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Making Use of Words: The Tangled Web of Language,

History and the Teaching of English

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Summary

This thesis traces the history of the teaching of English within the state system of education in the nineteenth century through the twentieth century and the writing of a national curriculum. More specifically, it traces definitions of language upon which its teaching has been based and the theories that have informed that teaching. This history is located within the wider social context of its formation. It contends that the teaching of English within a national State system of education was made possible by the standardisation of English as the language of the newly formed nation state. Teaching English, therefore, is primarily concerned with teaching language and through the texts it uses with teaching particular versions of society.

It is divided into two parts. The first part considers formations of English and definitions of language from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the nineteen eighties. It describes the language theory that informed the teaching of language and their change from a prescriptive to descriptive basis. The second part of the thesis considers in more detail the writing of a national curriculum for English and the theories of language upon which the original curriculum and subsequent revisions drew. It ends by proposing a formation of English informed by contemporary language theory and the subject of stylistics centred upon the writing and study of 'text' as defined by the printed word.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis has developed from an attempt to understand why teaching about language has been such a problematic and contentious area within English studies, and why it has been separated from the teaching of both literacy and literature. In the late nineteen eighties and early nineteen nineties, issues concerning definitions of language became central when a national curriculum was introduced into schools that required a formalisation of the curriculum for each subject. The writing of a curriculum for English proved to be particularly contentious, especially regarding the issue of how the English language should be taught in schools.

Immediately prior to the writing of a national curriculum for English, a government inquiry into the teaching of language was established and chaired by Sir John Kingman. The membership of the committee undertaking the inquiry was carefully chosen to reflect orthodox and traditional views regarding the teaching of English and its language. Nevertheless, the model for language proposed in the Kingman Report (1988) rejected the teaching of traditional, Latinate grammar, suggesting instead one with a more sociolinguistic and textual orientation. Influenced by committee members such as the linguist Henry Widdowson, the committee was convinced that changes in contemporary language theory made a 'return' to traditional grammar difficult to sustain. Kingman's failure to endorse a model for language that centred upon the formal teaching of standard English and its grammar lies at the centre of the ensuing debate surrounding the national curriculum for English.

However, how the model related to the English curriculum as a whole was an issue that Kingman failed to address and about which Widdowson expressed a note of reservation included at the end of the Report. This task fell to the working party for English formed in 1988 chaired by Professor Brian Cox, and to the Language in the National Curriculum Project (LINC) directed by Ronald Carter that ran from 1989 to 1993. Integrating the Kingman model into an English curriculum proved extremely difficult and controversial for various reasons.

Very briefly, the emphasis upon language for learning and a corresponding respect for pupils' own use of language had characterised English teaching from the 1950s onwards. Such an approach had embraced and endorsed linguistic and cultural diversity. Sociological studies had highlighted the correlation between language, educational achievement and social background and psychological studies had similarly highlighted the key role language played in the individual and social development of children. The consequence of such research for English

as a pedagogic subject had been an emphasis upon developing pupils' language through its use and a policy of 'language across the curriculum' rather than through the formal study of language, particularly its grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

A previous report into English, the Bullock Report (1975), had endorsed a policy of 'language across the curriculum' within which explicit teaching about language played a minor part. Its consequences for practice in the classroom meant that the formal teaching of grammar had practically disappeared. In the early 1990's, following the re-election of a Conservative government to its fourth consecutive term in office, such an approach was perceived by the new Right to threaten a homogenous English national identity and held responsible for a decline in standards of literacy.

A model for language such as the one proposed by Kingman and subsequently Cox, therefore, that demanded explicit teaching about language, also required a correspondingly major shift in the theories and practices of English as a pedagogic subject itself. Although LINC attempted such a shift by integrating language study into the English curriculum as a whole, its descriptive, sociolinguistic emphasis led to the in-service materials produced by the project being banned from publication in 1991.

Also in 1991, the National Curriculum Council (NCC) commissioned three projects to evaluate the introduction of the national curriculum in English, maths and science into schools. The one for English was based at the University of Warwick, with investigation into teaching 'knowledge about language' forming a major part. The project found that translating the requirements of a curriculum document into practice was problematic and involved more than simply abandoning or adapting former theories and practices in favour of those required by the document. Recent research has suggested that teachers' classroom policies and practices are multi-determined and that their relationship with public policy and theory is not straightforward. Progress in pedagogical theory, such as the increasing influence upon teaching methods (language and non-language based) of neo-Vygotskian ideas (e.g. see Van de Veer and Valsiner, 1991) may challenge, support or become superimposed on teachers' own implicit, tacit or personal theories. It is these latter which are often thought to be crucial in determining the policies teachers actually adopt (Carr, 1995; Goodson, 1990; Langford, 1991; Schon, 1983). Conflicts between explicit and implicit theory may well result in confused practices, particularly if conflict is also present within explicit and implicit theory in policy documents themselves. However, some researchers doubt the influence of public theory at all and Fenstermacher (1986) goes so far as to propose that teachers are never, in fact, influenced by public theory and policy until and unless their existing practices are directly challenged by it. Others (Griffiths and Tann, 1992) believe that the relationship between personal and public

theories is developmental, and that teachers may have to be helped to grow from one type of understanding to the other.

Implementing curriculum change is never straightforward or immediate. Publishing national curriculum documents and legislating their teaching and assessment do not of themselves transform practice in the classroom. The Warwick English Project supported Griffin and Tann's research, in that teachers found the document insufficient by itself to help them translate its requirements into practice, particularly areas about which they felt uncertain. The LINC in-service programme and accompanying materials had been particularly helpful in some regions of the country, but its national impact had been uneven and it was difficult to assess its long-term influence. The non-publication of the LINC materials in 1991 shortly before the start of the Warwick English Project demonstrated conflicts between linguistic and pedagogic theory which created much confusion amongst teachers that virtually paralysed their practice or, in many cases, led them to adopt practices associated with formal grammar teaching.

Throughout the two years of the Warwick English Project, it became increasingly obvious that the national curriculum for English, of all the curriculum subjects, was of intense political interest. The research issues to be investigated by the project had been identified by NCC, and the writing of interim research reports was tied to the release of funding. Writing the reports, therefore, was influenced by political concerns that had a distorting effect on the way they were written. One of these distortions was to disguise how little explicit teaching about language actually went on in schools by highlighting any that was recorded. The work of the Project was re-directed following the 1992 general election returning the Conservative government to another term in office. NCC used the interim reports of the project together with those of HMI and other advisors such as those drawn from the right wing think tank, the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS), to justify its document called 'The Case for Revising the English Order' (1992). It was clear from this re-direction that the government, particularly that section of it associated with the new right, saw a 'return' to teaching traditional, Latinate grammar with an emphasis on standard English and a defined canon of English literature as a way of not only 'raising standards' but also of re-establishing a homogenous national and cultural identity. Neither the national curriculum for English written in 1989 nor the LINC project had gone far enough towards establishing such homogeneity, both culturally and linguistically, particularly in their failure to define a canon of English literature and to sufficiently emphasise the teaching of standard English and its grammar.

At the heart of the subsequent controversy surrounding the various revisions and re-writes of the curriculum between 1993 and 1994 the area now called 'standard English and language

study'. Linguists such as Michael Stubbs, highly influential in the writing of the knowledge about language strand of the Cox Report, have pointed out the difficulty of defining standard English for the purposes of language teaching as well as the prescriptiveness associated with it. Reaching a definition of standard English that would satisfy both the government and teachers dominated the discussion surrounding the various re-writes of the curriculum during 1993 and 1994 and continues still (see: Trudgill (1996)).

Underlying the confusion and contradiction surrounding the teaching of standard English and its grammar lies the shift within language theory from prescriptive to descriptive approaches to its study and the recognition of language as one semiotic system amongst others. Richard Hudson (1992) described such a change as similar to that from alchemy to chemistry. Very briefly, contemporary language theory since Saussure has located the production of language within a socio-cultural context rather than an abstract formal one. Language thus not only reflects reality, ideas and values but forms an integral part of their construction. Language also changes, and these two aspects taken together not only make a definitive definition of standard English impossible, but locates standard English itself within a particular socio-cultural context rather than an abstract or formal one devoid of social considerations. Such a context is also influenced by change which escapes legislation. These ideas are explored and discussed in more detail within the thesis, which argues that such changes in contemporary language theory have radical implications for English pedagogy.

The argument develops by placing the current debate within a wider, sociocultural and historical context of the history of English as a pedagogic subject within state education and the language theory that has informed it. The thesis ends by proposing a framework for language study in the light of contemporary theory which takes into account a social, human and cultural context rather than an abstract, formal one. This framework draws upon several sources: the language theory of Britton (1970), Halliday (1973, 1994), Halliday and Hasan (1985) as developed by Carter and the LINC project (1991); theories of discourse as proposed by Foucault (1972); Bakhtin (1981); and Bernstein (1992); semiotic theory associated with Eco (1979), Kristeva (1989); theories of literacy such as those of Garton and Pratt (1989) and Olson (1994); and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough (1989, 1995)), together with relevant, recent research such as that undertaken as part of the Warwick NCC English Project. The framework proposed by the thesis also takes account of developments in cognitive and social psychology influenced by Piaget (1955), Vygotsky (1962) and Bruner (1986).

The concepts of 'text' and 'discourse' are central to the thesis. The terms 'text' and 'discourse' are used here in their widest sense, as defined by Fornas (1995). He describes them as:

...intersubjectively anchored signifying practices (that) combine meaningful signs into complexly structured and ordered symbolic units. These are referred to as *texts*, whether they consist of spoken or written words, images, sculptural or architectural forms, musical sounds, body movements or any combination of these or other symbolic entities.

Fornas (1995:149).

Such an extended, semiotic concept of text embraces both verbal and visual together with written representations as text. In discussing the relationship and distinction between text and discourse, Fornas writes that:

Texts are produced when subjects in sociocultural contexts combine and use symbols in intersubjective communication acts of *signifying practice*....Symbolic phenomena are created and interpreted in practices that follow an atemporal axis, in movements that do not run directly from intention to insight, but wander about and apart in sometimes contradictory directions, where various voices mingle into composite narrative structures which have a direction, a beginning and an end. A *discourse* is such a concrete - fluidly linear and dialogically interwoven - course of signifying acts; a conversation of voices where symbolic units are lined up into utterances which express propositions and mix in an anti-, hetero- or polyphonic manner.

Fornas (1995 : 151).

Although currently much debated fluid terms, (Widdowson, (1995); Fairclough, (1996)), 'text' is here used as the term given to the act of communication, whereas 'discourse' is the term given to the practices of which it is both a part and from within which it takes its shape. The term 'literacy' is thus used to embrace both speech and writing (Garton and Pratt (1989); Olson, (1994)) and the term 'grammar' is correspondingly extended to apply to the structures of texts together with those of sentences and words. (Halliday and Hasan (1985)). Such a framework has also informed *An Introduction to Stylistics* (Clark, (1996)), where the analysis of written language, including the explanation of grammatical terms, is located within a textual, sociocultural context.

Having traced the history of language within English pedagogy in the first part of the thesis, the second draws upon recent research to propose how English as a pedagogic subject could be refocused to include a study of how symbols combine into communication acts as 'text' as part of developing and increasing pupils' abilities to communicate. This would involve not only understanding how these combinations are achieved and the discourses which inform and regulate them but also the relationship between them and the values communicated by them. Language study within English that has attempted this in the past has been much criticised for its separation from the study or production of actual texts, or for avoiding or ignoring the part

played by language in communicating value as well as ideas. The notion that language necessarily embraces the communication of value as much as anything was central to the LINC project and is also central to this thesis. Language study necessarily involves a consideration of how language communicates value and the representation of reality through its grammar and vocabulary. Furthermore, such study locates values themselves within a sociocultural context. In other words, the issue is not so much whether standard English should be taught in schools and which written texts should be studied, but rather, how language, including literature, could be taught in ways which communicate the values by which we live not as self-evident 'truth' but ones that can also be challenged, appraised and questioned. It is in this way that language study becomes, as Halliday observed, and Carter reiterated (1990) a potentially subversive activity.

According to Fairclough (1989), language study is subversive because it inevitably raises questions of language and power. It challenges the authority of who determines communicative norms and which interpretations prevail. Language study, therefore, involves developing pupils' ability to reproduce and understand texts within communicative norms. It also involves a corresponding realisation that the norms and the attitudes held towards them and the values they express are socially, culturally and historically determined rather than objective, fixed and unalterable. As William Cobbett observed as long ago as 1818:

In the immense field of this kind of knowledge, innumerable are the paths, and Grammar is the gate of entrance to them all...The actions of men (and women) proceed from their thoughts. In order to obtain the co-operation, the concurrence, or the consent, of others, we must communicate our thoughts to them. The means of communication are words; and grammar teaches us how to make use of words.

Cobbett (1818 : 31).

As teachers, we can teach our pupils existing relations between language and power, in ways that re-inforce, challenge or ignore them. Above all, our role as teachers is to show pupils how, as Cobbett observed, 'to obtain the concurrence, or the consent, of others, we must communicate our thoughts to them'. Part of this process necessarily involves learning about the communicative norms within and through which language functions for both speech and writing. Pupils cannot easily challenge or conform to existing relations between language and power if they are unaware of the communicative norms through which they are realised. If grammar in its widest sense enables children and adolescents to make use of words in the communication acts demanded of them as adults, it also gives them the means with which to challenge them and to create new forms. It is the role of the teacher to make their choice, whatever it may be, an informed one.

Under the present conditions, no legislation can officially suppress the way language is used although other, more subtle ways of suppressing change are evident, particularly through the media and the funding of campaigns such as the recent 'Campaign for Better English', headed by the news broadcaster Trevor MacDonald. What this thesis illustrates is that the current attempt to control discourse and through it to control thought and action by making the teaching of standard English in schools obligatory is nothing new. On the contrary, it has characterised the teaching of English within the state system since its inception. In many respects, teaching standard English and its literature have been the very reason for its existence as a curriculum subject.

In order to locate the current debate, then, the first part of this thesis outlines a history of the language theory that informed English as a pedagogic subject within state education from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the present day, before progressing to consider the current debate in more detail. The second chapter of the thesis outlines a history of models for English as outlined by Dixon (1967), and a consideration of theories of cultural reproduction, particularly that of Bernstein (1990). Chapter 3 considers the formation of English as a subject within elementary education and the teaching of language during the nineteenth century on the formation of the subject throughout that century. Chapter 4 focuses upon the period between the publication of the Newbolt Report in 1921 and the Bullock Report in 1975, concentrating on the formation of English in secondary education, and the language theory that informed its teaching. Chapter 5 concludes the first part of the thesis with a discussion of the Bullock Report and the theories and practices associated with 'A language for life' during the early nineteen eighties. Chapter 6 concludes the first part of this thesis by discussing the 'crisis' in English that followed it.

The second part of the thesis considers in more detail the period between 1988 and 1994 and the writing of a national curriculum for English. Chapter 7 discusses the Kingham Report and its proposed model of language that preceded the national curriculum and the LINC project. Chapter 8 continues with a consideration of the first national curriculum for English and the Warwick NCC English Project intended to evaluate its implementation. Chapter 9 discusses the debate surrounding the re-interpretation of KAL as SE and language study in the various revisions of the national curriculum for English that took place between 1993 - 94. Chapter 10 proposes a new definition for English that takes account of its history and the application of current language theory upon its pedagogy. The framework, which locates language study within a textual context, sees literacy as part of a cultural and social process as well as a cognitive one. The framework proposes a third dimension to English besides those of creating and studying texts: that of studying the way textual forms are created and the ways in which they construct values and ways of being. This third aspect brings together the study of

language, literature and media by recognising that language is constantly creating new forms and structures and that attitudes towards its use are capable of change.

Part 1:

The Multiple Formation of English as a School Subject

Chapter 2

English, Language and History

2.0 Introduction

The debate surrounding both the content and the teaching of 'knowledge about language' following the publication of the Kingman Report (1988) and the first version of the English National Curriculum (1989) is extremely complex. One of its tangible manifestations has been the number of revisions made to the original 1989 curriculum between 1993 and 1994. With each revision, the issue of language has been at the forefront of the debate. The chapters in the first part of this thesis investigate its origins by locating the debate within the wider, socio-historical context of the formation of English as a school subject itself from the early part of the nineteenth century until the present day. Such an undertaking is concerned not with the unravelling of concepts such as 'English', 'language' or 'knowledge' to find a core, but rather, as Wittgenstein (1951) suggests, it is more of an attempt to locate and unravel the various 'strands' or 'fibres' which interweave together to form a concept as complex as that of 'English', 'language' or 'knowledge'.

Before undertaking a synchronic study of teaching of language, (that is, language as it is conceived and taught today), it is important first of all to take a diachronic perspective, (that is, language as it has been conceived and taught in the past). Differing from a purely structuralist approach in which it is possible to study language without taking account of its history, this thesis holds that in order to unravel the concept of 'language' as it has been taught in formal state education, it is necessary to investigate its past history to understand the complex nature and origin of the current debate, particularly with regard to teaching grammar (see 5.5). In undertaking such a history, the chapters that form the first part of this thesis are not only concerned with identifying lines of continuity and progression within the various strands identified in 1.3 below, but also with recognising the complex and at times contradictory ways in which they come into existence and are woven together.

Dixon's seminal work *Growth Through English* (1967) identified three dominant models of English teaching often referred to when the history of the subject is under consideration. The Cox Report (1988) and recent method books on the teaching of English (e.g. Stables, (1992);

Curtis, (1993)) all refer to it. *Growth Through English* documents the proceedings of an international seminar of English teachers from America and Britain who met in 1966 to address the question: What is English? Their discussion led to the identification of the three models related to its chronological development. It acts, therefore, as a useful, if much practised, entry point into the formation of English as a curriculum subject.

2.1 Formations of English

The models Dixon summarised in *Growth through English* (1967) are presented simplistically and sketchily, making the progress from one to another appear smooth, linear and progressive, taking little account of wider spheres of influence that led to their formation. Nevertheless, they serve as useful starting points for considering the development of ideas about English as a school subject and the study of language within it which, together with subsequent views of English, are listed in the Cox Report (1988). The three models identified by Dixon are: the skills model, the cultural heritage model and the personal growth model.

2.1.i The Skills Model

According to Dixon, English as a school subject began to take its shape in the nineteenth century, particularly in the elementary schools where it was predominantly concerned with 'initial literacy' in the form of being able to read straightforward, simple narrative and write, or rather copy, such narrative with vocabulary correctly spelt. The demands of the industrial workplace in the nineteenth century attached great importance to competence in these literacy 'skills'. The 'skills' involved are the ability to decipher relevant documents and instructions and to write legible, accurately spelt, punctuated and grammatically correct texts demanded by the industrial and, more recently, technical and technological workplace. However, as Dixon points out, the learning processes associated with learning correct spellings, vocabulary and punctuation and understanding the use of complex sentences are not themselves 'skills'. Dixon argues that confusing these two distinct processes, learning to use written language and its application, arose from a confused idea of their operation.

Harre and Gillet (1994) distinguish between two different kinds of skills which further clarify the point made by Dixon. They make a distinction between manual and discursive skills. Manual skills are 'used to manipulate material stuff' and discursive skills are 'those we use in our symbolic interactions.' Both are intentional and normative and are used for accomplishing a project, however small. Thus the decoding involved in reading, the marks made in writing and the sounds made in speech are processes that manipulate the material stuff of words, but

they also involve processes which interpret marks or sounds as symbols. The two complement one another and both are necessary if any sense is to be made of what is said, written or read. As Harre and Gillet point out, 'Our language is our main means for managing in the world of symbols, and our hands and brains are for managing in the material world.' (1994 : 100). It is characteristic of human beings to live in these two worlds, and we cannot have one without the other, but that is not to say that a clear-cut dichotomy is possible. Rather, manual and discursive skills are bridged by language through which the world of symbols and the material world meet. A 'skills' model of English is essentially reductive in that it reduces the world of symbols to the material world, ignoring the discursivity of language and focusing instead on its material properties. As Dixon commented, such a view is extremely limiting, since it regards English as existing solely as a vehicle for teaching accuracy in the use of language, rather than as a means for interpreting symbolic interaction. Whilst teaching accuracy may be a part of English teaching, the major limitation of the skills model was not with the area it mapped out 'but in the vast terrain it chooses to ignore.' Dixon (1967:2) . According to Dixon, rejection of this model, with its emphasis on mechanical accuracy, gave way to the second model based on the notion of English as the conveyor of cultural heritage.

2.1. ii. The Cultural Heritage Model

The change from a skills to a cultural heritage model was based upon the study of a body or canon of literary texts which encompassed all that was best in national thought and feeling that could be handed on to the next generation. The emphasis correspondingly altered to the symbolic, rather than the material, world. The Newbolt Report (1921) argued passionately for the importance of English as a pedagogic subject beyond elementary schooling based on such views. Literary texts, as well as being studied, were offered as models on which pupils could base their own writing rather than doing exercises in grammar and composition. The report also argued that reading a canon of literature would serve to unite and strengthen people in a common culture, a culture given by those who possessed it to those who did not. Such a view was heavily influenced by English as it was beginning to be taught in universities, where it had become a study of literature rather than of philology. The Report stressed the value of literature both as a unifying social bond and as a model of exemplary writing for pupils to emulate. It also advocated the teaching of spoken as well as written standard English in schools as another important means of unifying and bonding the nation. Both the skills and cultural heritage models, therefore, highlighted the teaching of spoken standard English as an important part of the subject. The study of literature was further advanced during the nineteen thirties and forties by the literary critic F. R. Leavis and the Cambridge School of English, influential in the formation of English within higher education as well as within the secondary curriculum through the work of one of Leavis' pupils, Denys Thompson.

Dixon challenged the cultural heritage model on the grounds that it confirmed the teacher as presenting experience to pupils as it was expressed in literature rather than drawing from pupils' own. His main criticism of the cultural heritage model was its one-sided presentation of cultural experience that took little or no account of the experience of its students or the language in which they expressed it. This criticism was increasingly articulated throughout the nineteen sixties and into the seventies, particularly on grounds of equality, especially of class, gender and race. It questioned the authority by which one section of society felt able to dictate what should be read and counted as 'literature' and how speech should be spoken on behalf of all others. The concept of a canon of literature is never a straightforward or uncontroversial one, nor one immune to change. Literature traditionally chosen for study in state schools post 1944 generally failed to take into account the experiences of the majority of its pupils and students, men as well as women, who came from increasingly diverse social and ethnic backgrounds. The very notion of a canon which did not adequately reflect the reality of experience of its readers also began to be challenged and rejected. At the same time, the futility of teaching formal grammar as a means of improving writing perpetuated by the demands of examinations came increasingly under attack. Writers like Clegg (1964) and Holbrook (1961) published writing by pupils who had not been taught formal grammar to show that its quality was in no way hampered by a lack of grammatical exercises.

In summing up the former two models, Dixon pointed out their preoccupation with written language. Spoken language was virtually ignored, unless it dealt with form such as pronunciation and 'correct' use of dialect, notably standard English, ignoring its relationship with experience. The rejection of a cultural heritage model led Dixon to argue for an alternative that would redress its shortcomings.

2.1.iii The Growth Model

This model for English relied more upon personal response as a reflection of pupils' experiences rather than an emphasis on its representation through a canon of texts and the standard language. It depended upon pupils actively taking part, creating and challenging meanings for themselves as opposed to receiving them from others. Pupils, Dixon argued, should be active participants in their learning, in their writing, reading and talking, rather than passive recipients. They should engage with and create texts which had relevance to their own lives.

Such an approach enabled the range of texts pupils studied in school as part of 'English' to be more varied. The criteria for their selection altered from a set list to virtually any text which would appeal to pupils, including contemporary fiction and the visual media of film and

television, and fiction written specifically for children and teenagers. This approach was officially sanctioned by the introduction of a new examination syllabus, the Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE) in 1966 and endorsed by the Bullock Report of 1975. Alternative syllabi were also offered for the established ordinary level of the General certificate of Education (GCE). This approach left teachers free to determine the choice of texts pupils studied and made it examinable by coursework, marked and moderated by teachers themselves. In terms of pupils' writing, pupils own use of language would improve, it was thought, by engaging with such texts and through the act of writing their own texts, just as their speech would develop by creating opportunities for discussion. As Dixon sums up:

It was for this reason that members of the seminar moved from an attempt to define "What English is" - a question that throws emphasis on nouns like skills, and proficiencies, set books, and the heritage - to a definition by process, a description of the activities we engage in through language.

Dixon (1967:7).

Dixon acknowledged the shortcomings of such a model, namely that by encouraging creativity, there was a danger that teaching conventions of language and its structure would be ignored. Such an approach could also, he warned, lead to simplification, by focusing entirely on the pupils' self expression with no thought of developing a pupil's awareness of the different ways of looking at things and exploring alternatives. However, it is important to note at the start that the phrase 'knowledge about language' used by the Kingman Report in 1988 in place of 'grammar' to describe its model of language was also used by Dixon to explain the place of learning about language within the growth model:

There is, then, a kind of knowledge or awareness about language that affects our power to think clearly and to some purpose. The teacher of English will be particularly concerned with helping pupils ...to "conceptualize their awareness of language"...1 "Conceptualizing", a verbal form, suggests activity on the part of the individual pupil, whereas "concepts" unfortunately can be thought of as things, reified objects to be handed over by a teacher. "Their awareness" points to a recognition already there in the pupil's thinking, not yet explicit or fully conscious perhaps, but something the alert teacher will notice and draw upon.

Dixon (1967:10-11).

Dixon suggested that making explicit formal structures of language was most appropriate when a teacher saw that pupils were beginning to recognise or bring to the surface their own implicit knowledge about language. Teaching formal grammar to pupils with little or no regard to pupils' cognitive development was, Dixon assumed, a futile exercise. Knowledge about language could not be taught as a transmission of a body of knowledge, although precisely how it was to be taught remained unclear. Dixon reported that the participants of the seminar did not have enough information about language learning to explore the issue in any depth. Nevertheless, there was general agreement amongst them that explicit knowledge about language was not something which could be imposed on pupils. It arose instead from their emerging needs and demands. Within the growth model, then, there was a recognition that 'knowledge about language' was important, but how to teach it remained unanswered and consequently, for the large part, ignored.

Rather than developments in linguistic theory, it was developments in psychological theories about the nature of learning which had the biggest impact on education theory throughout the nineteen sixties. Studies in psychology, particularly those undertaken by Piaget (1955) placed emphasis on the importance of language for learning and highlighted use of language rather than any explicit study of language. Briefly, these psychological theories posited learning as an active rather than as a passive process, one which applied as much to learning language as it did to anything taught through language. Learning language was also shown to be cognitively developmental, including the formation of concepts. Furthermore, there was a recognition that learning a language and any further subsequent cognitive development was individual and unique.

The influence of the growth model as summarised by Dixon dominated English pedagogy for the next decade and well into the nineteen eighties following the publication of the Bullock Report in 1975. This second report into the teaching of English was heavily influenced by the ideas proposed by one committee member, James Britton. Britton (1970) recognised language as a means by which representation of the world is organised rather than as a neutral medium through which we experience reality. Britton's theory, together with its development and applications, drew on work that had been undertaken in both linguistics and psychology, including Sapir (1961), Piaget (1951, 1959), Vygotsky (1962), Luria (1959), and Bruner (1956). Britton (1970) used the metaphor of an instrument to describe language, with its players responsible for what they do with it:

In the experience of any given moment - in any confrontation with the world - what we make of the occasion will depend a good deal upon the appropriateness and subtlety and complexity of the expectations we bring to it: these, in turn, for most of us, are very largely the fruits of past thinking, reading, writing and talking-in other words they reflect the degree to which we have been able to use language as an organizing principle in our accumulated picture of the world.

Britton (1970:276).

Britton thus acknowledged a fundamental shift in the relationship between language, experience and reality. He added that: 'we cannot afford to underestimate the value of language as a means of organizing and consolidating our accumulated experience, or its value as a means of interacting with people and objects to create experience' (1970 : 278-9). Rather than conceiving of language as a neutral, transparent medium which had dominated language theory since Aristotle, linguistic research had shown that language was itself an organizing principle of reality. However, Britton did not go so far as to recognise that language had any role to play in constituting experience. In viewing language as an instrument, he placed a responsibility upon its users for what they did with it, arguing that it was one of many semiotic sign systems that did so.

As a member of the Bullock committee, Britton's ideas were very influential and despite vigorous opposition, they pervade its Report. Endorsement of individual creativity perpetuated the growth model and laid the ground for its refocusing throughout the nineteen eighties into both the cross-curricular and cultural analysis models or views of English . Public, official support for such a version of English was endorsed in the mid nineteen eighties when the public GCE and CSE examinations were amalgamated into the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). It is no wonder, then, that the bemusement of the English teaching profession was profound when, in 1988, the Kingman Report presented its model of language and the Black Report proposed a framework for a national curriculum and associated assessment based on levels and end of key stage testing at ages 7, 11 and 14 as well as at 16. As a school subject, English had, by the nineteen eighties, become characterised by a plurality of models and views, rather than by a unifying, common model or view. The Kingman Report presented a model of language but failed to explain how it related to the English curriculum as a whole. Consequently, the writing of a national curriculum for English based on the model proved very difficult and controversial.

The attraction of Dixon's models lies in their simplicity. However, the account he gives of how and why the models became transformed and the conditions that led to their transformation is very minimal, and by no means as simplistic as he implies. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 investigate the formations of each one in turn, with particular reference to the teaching

of language. To this purpose, the following section takes account of recent theories of cultural reproduction and discourse, particularly that of the sociologist Basil Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse.

2.2 The Social Construction of Discourse

In his book *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972), Foucault points out that most investigations into the historical development of an idea have attempted to trace continuity and progression within the history in terms of a linear succession through historical 'periods' of the kind outlined by Dixon above, a notion Foucault challenged. Rather than historical continuity of thought and a continuous chronology of reason traced back to an origin, Foucault argues for what he calls discontinuities or 'interruptions' that influence and shape an idea and which 'cannot be reduced to the general model of a consciousness that acquires, progresses and remembers.' (1972:8). For Foucault, there is no single line and progression, in the sense that what happens next is better than what has gone before. Baudrillard goes one stage further, arguing that at some point in the 1980s, 'history took a turn in the opposite direction... the downward slope of events began and things began to run in reverse' (1994 : 10). The notion that history was becoming introspective has also been put forward by commentators of recent educational history such as Jones (1990, 1992) and Lawton (1994).

Foucault does not deny that tradition and continuity act as forces of influence upon an idea, but rather that they are not enough *in themselves* to act as significant forces in creating change. The expression and site of ideas he calls *discourse*, which for him is an active and dialogic, rather than a passive and monologic, process. Any discourse at any given moment in time is structured as much by the assumptions about what constitutes it as a discourse as well as the boundaries of language itself. Within education, for example, institutional practices control the access of individuals to various kinds of pedagogic discourse. He points out that: 'Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or modifying the appropriateness of discourses with the knowledge and power they bring with them' (Foucault 1972 : 46).

The historical process of cultural institutions, of which the education system is a part, has also been investigated by Raymond Williams. In *Marxism and Literature* (1977), he divides the elements which are responsible for what Inglis (1995) calls the value-loadings of discourse into three: residual, dominant, and emergent. These elements co-exist in varying degrees at any cultural moment. By the residual Williams does not imply archaic elements of past culture which survive. They are experiences, meanings and values which have been formed in the past but cannot be expressed in terms of the dominant culture. Even when in opposition to

it, they are still present and even active within it. Emergent culture involves the making of new forms and discourses, in the process of which there occurs pre-emergence, where expression is active but not yet fully articulated. Furthermore, the very existence of subordinate and repressed cultures point to the fact that culture is not a unitary phenomenon. Non-dominant discursive elements interact with dominant ones at various times, co-existing with, being absorbed or destroyed by them as well as challenging, modifying or even displacing them thus, rather than the dominant model of English altering totally from one based on skills to cultural heritage, the skills model remained residual within one based on cultural heritage. At the same time, it provided the conditions for the emergence of the growth model.

Any analysis of cultural formations, therefore, is an attempt to account how cultural value is ascribed. Value is not viewed here as an innate, natural phenomenon. Like the language through which it is expressed, it is determined or governed by a historico-cultural process. What counts as value stands in relation to other preferences and is marked by opposition, difference and exclusion as well as consensus and similarity. One important element in the ascribing of value is the part played by language. Because of its association with value, feeling and experience as expressed through language, particularly as literature and the standard register, English as a school subject quickly came to be more than the transference of a particular body of factual knowledge. It also came to be concerned with contemporary beliefs about the nature of human individuals and societies: that is, with cultural knowledge and how to live. As Goodson and Medway observe:

... if English teachers decide, as from time to time they do, to re-order the priorities of their subject and accord legitimacy to new forms of writing or to the spoken vernacular or non-standard dialect, more is involved than the in-house arrangements of a specialist subject community. Attempts to control and define the subject move beyond the subject community because changing English is changing schooling.

Goodson and Medway (1986:vii).

This thesis argues that the reverse is also true: attempts to control and define the nature of the subject from outside endeavour to change schooling and society by changing English. Thus any attempt to outline the formation of an idea such as that of English as a school subject and its relationship with language has to take account of both the struggles 'outside' as well as 'within' the subject. One such theorist who has attempted such an account is the sociologist Basil Bernstein.

Bernstein (1990) acknowledged the important contribution that theorists such as Foucault and Bourdieu have made to theories of cultural reproduction, but also criticises them for taking for granted the discourse which is subject to their analysis. He argues that pedagogic discourse is viewed by these theories as a medium for other social voices or discourses such as class, gender and race, but that they fail to distinguish between the message and the carrier of the message and to make enough of a distinction between that which is relayed, and the relay itself. In his words,

The discourses of education are analysed for their power to reproduce dominant/dominated relations external to the discourse but which penetrate the social relations, media of transmission, and evaluation of pedagogic discourse. It is often considered that the voice of the working class is the absent voice of pedagogic discourse, but we shall argue here that what is absent from pedagogic discourse is its own voice.

Bernstein (1990:165).

The analogy for language that Bernstein gives is that of a carrier wave, distinguishing between the carrier and what is carried. In a hi-fi system, the activated tuner carries the signal that is heard, so that the system carrying the signal simultaneously regulates it. Bernstein likens such a distinction between what is relayed and the relay itself to that between language and speech. When it comes to considering pedagogic discourse, Bernstein argues that we know what is relayed - the discourse - but are not so clear when it comes to the relay itself, that is, the structure that allows it to be conveyed. In other words, pedagogic discourse emphasises speech - what is said - at the expense of a regulatory pattern of language - the structures that allow the speech. He adds: 'It is as if when we study pedagogic communication we study only the surface features, only its message, not the structure that makes the message possible' (Bernstein 1990:168). Moreover, Bernstein points out that pedagogic discourses are distinct from many others in that they are totally dependent upon others drawn from outside themselves in forming their own. What he is concerned with are the conditions and the structures which make pedagogic discourse possible and affect its change.

Within the models outlined by Dixon, for example, what is said is highlighted, but the structures that gave them voice are largely ignored. What this thesis will attempt in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 is an account of both the discourse and the structures that have affected the formation of the various models of English teaching, particularly those associated with the teaching of language. As Ball has argued:

changes in the definition of school knowledge are to be viewed in two dimensions, in one dimension changes over time are envisaged, in the other changes are related to various social influences. The 'subject' is viewed not as an abstract intellectual conception but as a changing body of knowledge produced by a social collectivity.

Ball (1983:62).

Bernstein criticises previous theories of cultural production on a second count, in that the concepts they use are incapable of generating specific descriptions of the agencies central to their concern. Citing the work of Willis (1977), Bernstein argues that the concepts Willis uses puts agency before structure, concentrating on how groups resist and oppose pedagogic communication rather than being positioned by it. Furthermore, the concepts themselves are incapable of describing the distinctive, discursive practices and features which constitute the school that theories such as those associated with Bourdieu and Passeron (1970) fail to do. They fail to 'generate an empirical description of any specific agency of cultural reproduction' (Bernstein 1990:171). Subsequent investigation should also distinguish whether a theory or approach focuses upon the subject's relation to this text in terms of class, gender or race, or whether it focuses upon its internal constituents in the process of its transmission and acquisition in the classroom. In an attempt to provide such a description, Bernstein identifies three principles, those of distribution, relocation or recontextualisation and evaluation. To generate these principles, Bernstein distinguishes between the discourse of a pedagogic subject such as English and the text privileged within it. He makes a fundamental distinction between the positioning of the pedagogic subject in relation to the privileging text and its positioning within it as well as without, particularly in relation to the school and classroom as well as the education system itself:

Briefly, theories of cultural reproduction, resistance, or transformation offer relatively strong analyses of 'relation to', that is, the consequences of class, gender and race in the unequal and invidious positioning of pedagogic subjects with respect to the 'privileging text', but are weak on analyses of 'relations within.'

Bernstein (1990:178).

Bernstein argues that if a theory is weak on 'relations within', then it is not possible to realise rules for the description of the agencies or processes with which it is concerned. In other words, for a theory of cultural reproduction to be complete, it has to explain *how* a text came to be constituted as it is and accorded a privileged status (which may change), as well as *what* is transmitted. Bernstein argues for what he calls the 'pedagogic device' to achieve this. He proposes a theory of pedagogic discourse within which an intrinsic grammar, the 'pedagogic device', controls the principles of its distribution, recontextualization and evaluation. He defines pedagogic discourse as: 'a principle for appropriating other discourses and bringing

them into special relation with each other for the purposes of their selective transmission and acquisition' (Bernstein 1990:181). It does not have a discourse of its own, but rather delocates or draws from others and relocates them within itself. For example, a pedagogic discourse such as English removes or delocates a discourse from the universities and relocates it within the school context, reordering and refocusing it according to the principle of distribution controlled by the pedagogic device.

What most theories of cultural reproduction lack, Bernstein argues, is an analysis of the internal logic of pedagogic relay and its relation to what is relayed. Such an internal logic is provided by what he calls a 'pedagogic device' that provides the intrinsic grammar of pedagogic discourse. The device controls the principles of distribution, recontextualization and evaluation. It does so in a hierarchical way, in that the principle of distribution regulates the principle of recontextualisation which in turn regulates that of evaluation. The principle of distribution regulates 'the fundamental relationship between power, social groups, forms of consciousness and practice, and their reproductions and productions' (Bernstein (1990 : 180)). The principle of recontextualization in turn regulates the constitution of specific pedagogic discourse. The principle of evaluation is constituted in pedagogic practice. Bernstein states that: 'The pedagogic device generates a symbolic ruler of consciousness. This in turn begs the question of : 'whose ruler, what consciousness?' (Bernstein: 1990: 180).

Between power and knowledge, and between knowledge and forms of consciousness lies the pedagogic device which is itself controlled mainly by the upper reaches of the education system. In order to explain this device, Bernstein distinguishes between two basic classes of knowledge: the esoteric and the mundane, where the line between these two classes is relative to any given period, as are the principles generating either one. For example, in small, non-literate societies, the division between the 'thinkable' and the 'unthinkable' was effected and regulated by the religious system, whereas in large, literate societies such as our own the division is controlled to a large extent, but not totally, by 'the upper reaches of the educational system', particularly that part of it concerned with the production of discourse. Bernstein maintains that in both types of societies, the 'simple' and the 'complex', the distribution of forms of consciousness and systems of meaning is structurally similar, but that they are specialised differently through different agencies and pedagogic discourses. There is always a space or a gap which is the site of the 'unthinkable' which has the potential to become the 'thinkable', and any distribution of power is an attempt to regulate the realisation of that potential 'in the interests of the social ordering it creates, maintains and legitimates', just as any re-distribution of power seeks to regulate its realisation in a different way.

Bernstein proposes that the pedagogic device makes the transformation of power into differently specialised subjects possible through the distribution and regulation of 'knowledges' and the discourses such knowledge presupposes. Change occurs as a consequence of the inner potential of the device and the regulation of knowledge coming into conflict with the social base from which its power is derived. Rather than act as an agent of change, the education system, therefore, becomes a site of cultural reproduction that aims to reproduce the society within which it is located.

The example Bernstein gives of the formation of a pedagogic subject is that of physics in the secondary school, which is the result of the recontextualizing principle that has selected and delocated what counts as physics from its primary location in the universities and relocated, refocussed in the secondary school. According to him, physics undergoes a complex transformation from an original to a virtual/imaginary discourse:

The rules of relation, selection, sequencing, and pacing (the rate of expected acquisition of the sequencing rules) cannot themselves be derived from some logic internal to physics nor from the practices of those who produce physics. The rules of the reproduction of physics are social, not logical facts. The recontextualising rules regulate not only selection, sequence, pace, and relations with other subjects, but also the theory of instruction from which the transmission rules are derived.

Bernstein (1990:185).

The recontextualising principle is governed by three corresponding rules, each of which perform different functions. Firstly, the text changes its position in relation to other texts, practices and position. For example, within the subject 'English', the privilege of the religious text was altered to a concern with literacy in English that altered the position of the text. Secondly, the text itself is modified by selection, simplification, condensation, and elaboration. For English, such modifications resulted in a shift away from religious texts through which literacy had been taught to literacy itself. This modified the texts used in schools to include secular as well as religious ones. Thirdly, the text is repositioned and refocused. Within English, the text changed from Biblical and religious texts to ones written in the vernacular of English.

Bernstein confines himself to the production and reproduction of pedagogic discourse in contemporary developed societies. What this thesis will do is to apply it to the production and reproduction of English as a pedagogic subject. It concentrates on the principle of recontextualisation as it has shifted the position of the privileged text in English several times.

In so doing, each chapter takes into account how the privileged text has changed position in relation to each other as well as to other texts, practices and positions and the role of the state and its relationship with pedagogic and language theory within education. The chapters in the first part of the thesis aim to provide a context for the recent debate surrounding language that forms the substance of the second part, showing how it is anchored within an older, historical tradition within which various discursive strands have appeared, woven and interlocked but with the possibility of breaking apart and constituting a contradiction. The metaphor is not so much one of a magnet, drawing ideas into a centre from which strands radiate and fade in a regular pattern, but of a series of tangled webs where various strands meet in relation to one another and alter in density across one another.

Before considering the history of language within English, the final section of this chapter outlines the various discursive 'strands' that have contributed to the recontextualisations of the subject that the following chapters unravel.

2.3 A Taxonomy of Types

In considering the formation of English as a pedagogic subject and the teaching of language in particular, certain identifiable, discursive strands have all contributed to its recontextualisations drawn from a variety of discourses that have linked and woven through to form the texture of 'English'. The pedagogic device is the site of struggle between the various voices or discourses, bending its rules in an effort to accommodate all of them as the boundaries of the subject have expanded. These discourses are:

Grammarians, a discursive strand which highlights the rules which govern 'correct' use of language, with its roots in eighteenth century prescriptivism. The emphasis here is on the 'correct' use of these rules, both in written and spoken English, in the belief that knowing the rules will result in their application to use. Taken to its extreme, accuracy of expression becomes more important than content and overrides content as a criterion of judgement.

Vocationist, which focuses on the teaching of literacy skills and competencies necessary to succeed in the adult world of work. Little else is asked of English except as a provider of functional literacy which will prepare a workforce to the degree and level demanded by employment and nothing more.

Humanist, which stress the transmission of values self-evident in literature in order that the future generation can live in a more just and humane manner. This strand holds that reading 'good' and 'worthwhile' literature will have a civilising effect on people and make them strive for a better world as well as provide a model for writing.

Romantic Individualist, which favours an independent, personal appreciation of literature through which an individual embraces a common culture and tradition. The emphasis is on personal and individual discovery through writing modelled on literary forms as well as reading literature by means of which individuals will come to see for themselves the values which reside in a common culture.

Democrat, which aims at an awareness of class, gender and race. There is here an attempt to raise the status of those groups by paying attention to their use of language and their literature as a way of promoting equal opportunity.

Radical Culturalist, which supports the deconstruction of traditional literary culture by challenging the very notion of culture itself. Culture is here defined not as a set of prescribed texts but as any text which has popular appeal.

Educational Linguist, which sees language study as an end in itself. This strand believes that such knowledge leads to increased awareness and competence of use that will also affect future generations. It bases its view of language as essentially objective in that it is neutrally descriptive whilst at the same time recognises the social and cultural nature of language, and therefore can never be genuinely 'neutral'.

Critical Analyst, which stresses the constructed nature of reality and the power relations which govern it. This strand is concerned with the analysis of both spoken and written texts and the discourse from within which they are drawn to uncover the power relations upon which they are based.

Clearly, several of these discourses overlap. Their identification is not intended to be exhaustive or definitive. Rather, they illustrate conflict 'within' the subject in their interpretation of the privileged text as well as 'without' in terms of what the purpose and function of English as a pedagogic subject actually is. Each has been brought into existence by

being drawn from discourses 'without' the subject as a result of tensions and changes in the wider social base, regulated by the three principles of distribution, recontextualisation and evaluation. They are controlled by the pedagogic device, namely the government departments responsible for the funding and administration of education. At various times, the privileged text in English has changed from transmitting a national heritage in the belief that either activity will result in 'better' people to encouraging individual creativity. The position of language has altered from teaching skills and 'correct' grammar to language use in the belief that such use will result in actual 'correctness'. The degree of dominance of each position has depended upon whether its function as a pedagogic subject has been as a vehicle for acknowledging diversity or a means of maintaining hegemony and the status quo.

What Bernstein's theory demonstrates is that changes to the subject occur as a result of changes in the wider social base rather than the subject itself on its own being a possible agent of change. Within the subject itself, the varying emphasis placed upon teaching language and its associated theory of instruction occur as a consequence of the inner potential of the pedagogic device which regulates these strands. In the process, they can come into conflict not only with each other but also with the social base from which their power is derived, rather than from any arbitrary source or solely from re-orderings within the subject itself. How a subject is recontextualised, therefore, is the result of a complex interplay and dialogue between macro social formations such as the state, employment, social class and the education system and the micro ones such as school and the family and the internal ordering of the subject. These in turn are regulated by the pedagogic device, itself controlled by the upper reaches of the education system which regulates and distributes knowledge so as to reproduce desired cultural norms. The following three chapters undertake a pedagogic discourse analysis of English within state education from the nineteenth century to the present day. They consider the formation of the strands that informed each recontextualised model of English, as summarised by Dixon, the discourses from which they were drawn, their relationship with one another, their selective transmission and acquisition and their appropriation by one another.

Chapter 3

Language and Education in the Nineteenth Century

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the formation of English within state elementary education during the nineteenth century and the theories of language and learning that informed it. More specifically, it considers the recontextualisation of literacy from a means which made Biblical study possible to an end in itself. There are of course other starting points such as the formation of English in the universities, public schools, various adult education organisations or considerations of gender. Michael (1987) points out that English as a pedagogic subject had been taught in one form or another since at least medieval times. Writers such as Palmer (1967) and Johnson (1980) have argued that the movement for popular education and the spread of literacy was distinguished by its concern with adults rather than with children, particularly education provided for outside working hours and on Sundays by philanthropic, radical or self-help groups.

However, it is during the nineteenth century that English came to be formed within a state funded and administered system of education centred upon elementary schools and it is to the curriculum of these schools that the skills model of English Dixon identified applies the most. It is from this system that popular secondary education emerged during the early twentieth century discussed in the next chapter.

Dixon's analysis of changing models of 'English', together with his more recent discussion of the shaping of critical and literary studies (Dixon 1991), illustrate a tradition undertaken by such studies that focuses upon the emergence of 'English' within settings and institutions which fell outside those of the mainstream, the university extension movement of the middle to late nineteenth century. Studies of the history of English such as Palmer's *The Rise of English* (1965) and more recently Eagleton's chapter of the same name concerning its history in his *Literary Theory* (1983), Baldick's *The Social Mission of English Criticism* (1986) as well as Doyle's *English and Englishness* (1989) have all contributed to this tradition, which has placed the teaching of literature at the heart of 'English' and its prime movers as those that fall outside mainstream education. Hunter (1989) takes issue with such an approach, on the grounds that such studies fail to take into account the fact that state education is itself a part of the state, within which 'the language of aesthetic appreciation' is redeployed to suit

the requirements of the state school system and not the other way around. He points out that literature gained its place in the curriculum because it fulfilled certain requirements of education as a system as much as anything else.

An account such as Hunter's, however, emphasises the relations 'without' the subject which does not sufficiently explain why it was English rather than any other subject that became concerned with such practices, just as those of Baldick, Dixon and Doyle which emphasise relations 'within' the subject, fail to take sufficient account of the role of the state in its recontextualisation. The importance of English derived not only from social, economic and administrative demands for a literate population which gave rise to a state system of education, but also from the need to form a national and imperial identity within the transformed nation state. English as a pedagogic subject came to be formed because it served the interests of the state as well as the individual. From then on, language in education became a site of struggle between the rights of individuals and the demands of an increasingly organised nation state. Changes in the subject are not only affected by its practitioners influenced by changes in the theories of language and learning from which it draws its discourse but also by changes in the wider social base.

This chapter argues that as a pedagogic subject, English was made possible as the final stages of language standardisation reached their completion by forming a national language and by the privileging of one particular form over all others - that of standard English and its literature. This allowed for moral supervision to be transferred from religion to language as well as fulfilling social demand for the provision of the formal teaching of literacy. The following section provides a context for this discussion by considering the formation of elementary schooling in general. Sections 3.2 and 3.3 outline various theories of language in so far as they affected the formation of the skills model of English. Having sketched the influence 'without' the subject, section 3.4 discusses theories of learning and the practices associated with its teaching in the classroom.

3.1 The Formation of Elementary Schooling

In so far as the formation of a state system of education had any overt or deliberate policy or principle of distribution, then that of non-intervention appears to be the prime one, motivated by concerns to maintain social stability. Its administration and organisation relied more upon religious and charitable philanthropy rather than on state regulation until at least the middle of the nineteenth century. Many histories of state education written during the nineteen sixties and seventies have highlighted the political and social tensions within it (e.g. Eaglesham, (1967); Hopkins, (1979); Lawson and Silver, (1973); Silver, (1974); Simon, (1974); Wardle, (1970)), particularly the conflicting attitudes that existed regarding the question of education for the

working class. These writers state protection of class interest, citing the reluctance with which the upper and governing classes appeared to support a state system of education as evidence for this. However, it is clear that the distributing principle of education in the nineteenth century was on the whole precisely concerned with maintaining and upholding class interest in favour of social stability. Only later during the twentieth century, did it become concerned with social equality.

In the early part of the nineteenth century, working-class education was not organised by the state but was provided for by religious bodies who were funded through a combination of voluntary subscription and school fees which could, if they qualified, be subsidised by Parliament. Such provision varied enormously within and between urban and rural regions of the country. The main body responsible for such schools was that of the Church of England, supported by funds given to it by the state. Simon (1974) makes the point that although the government provided funds, they did so with great reluctance, since the Tory tendency was to oppose direct government intervention in education. Attendance at school was made possible through a series of Factory Acts passed between 1802 and 1874 that allowed working-class children to attend them on a voluntary and part-time basis. These Acts were not without opposition both from the parents who risked losing the income earned by their children and from the employers who risked losing a source of cheap labour.

Laqueur (1976) discusses how, alongside the charitable bodies, a privately funded education was also available to the working-class. It was sometimes little more than one teacher teaching in a room in his or her house, but it provided elementary instruction at least as well as that within the Charity schools or in the home. Government reports of the time such as the survey of 1818 that assessed the provision of education across the country provide evidence of the wide diversity of provision as it existed at the time. Laqueur points out that such private schooling was more attuned to the rhythm of working class life than that of more regulated schooling. Classes tended to work around and accommodate parents and their pupils. They were pragmatic in their attitude towards attendance, the number of hours attended in any one session as well as standards of cleanliness and dress. By contrast, elementary or Charity schools emphasised these aspects as part of moral training. A sizeable majority of parents had great difficulty in meeting these requirements that had little to do with instruction itself. Working-class parents were thus able to choose whether or not to purchase education from within this improvised network in a marketplace unregulated by the state. As Laqueur points out:

...schools provided by religious bodies - particularly those provided by the overwhelmingly dominant Anglican National School Society - were suspect as foreign, as strange to the community. The discipline they sought to impose was either noxious in itself, made compliance expensive, or was thought to be irrelevant to elementary education. Teachers were self-consciously above and outside the community they purportedly served and were often viewed, like charity workers, as agents of oppressive authority.

Laqueur (1976:199).

Johnson (1980) similarly argues that the quality of what was on offer to the working classes within mainstream education for adults as well as children, did not live up their expectations or aspirations: 'Far indeed from promising liberation, provided education threatened subjection. It seemed at best a laughable and irrelevant indulgence (useless knowledge in fact); or, at worst, a species of tyranny, an outward extension of the power of factory master, or priest, or corrupt state apparatus' (Johnson 1980:78).

Simon (1974) discusses how industrialists were opposed to an extension of education which would restrict their right to employ the children of their employees as and when they required, just as the Reformers were campaigning for it. It is equally clear that the working-class themselves resented the charity upon which funded education depended as well as being dissatisfied with the missionary zeal of its curriculum based on a doctrine of original sin that essentially branded them all as sinners.

At the same time, growing public demand for elementary education from all classes could not be ignored, particularly as education became an increased marker of social class and prosperity. Various campaigns for social reform were held during the first half of the century as the organisation of English society itself underwent a period of unprecedented change. Universal education had become a matter linked to political campaigns for Reform associated with movements such as the People's Charter and Owenite calls for a socialist order. The state could no longer ignore calls for increased access to education which might otherwise have been met in politically less reputable private schools. Nevertheless, these schools continued to function alongside subsidised ones within working class communities until at least the 1870 Education Act, in contrast to those provided by the state as part of and not an imposition on the culture of those they served. Laqueur (1976) comments that:

Increased State intervention in education, public financing of schools, the introduction and extension of compulsory attendance for a prescribed number of years, were all progressive measures in their time, but curtailed or precluded parents' ability to determine the content and structure of their child's education. Schooling became a question of public policy, not private choice.

(Laqueur (1976:202)

Mass education, therefore, was openly justified on grounds of stability, with little pretence to providing equality of opportunity or intellectual enlightenment. In the early part of the century, then, a growing demand for increased educational provision to be financed by the state led by Reform campaigners was matched by increased dissatisfaction on the part of its consumers.

By mid-century, the position had changed as the political conflict that threatened the social stability of earlier decades turned more to consensus (Simon 1974). Easy access to greater wealth and growing power appeased men who had once rebelled against an aristocracy which had seemed a stumbling block to middle-class initiative. Political alignments along with social ones were themselves changing from a strict division between Whig and Tory as Radical and Irish M.Ps were admitted to government. Such widespread changes within English society provided the background and conditions for the recontextualisation of English as a pedagogic subject within the curriculum of elementary schools that privileged literacy as a 'skill'. It appeased working-class demands for 'useful knowledge' that was also consistent with utilitarianism. At the same time, it contributed to social stability by its emphasis upon the superiority of standard English as a spoken as well as written form of language, effecting a transference of moral value to language as well as remaining within religion.

3.2 English and the Pre-History of Education

In the early part of the nineteenth century, the curriculum of schools such as those of the Anglican National Schools Society was dominated by the teaching of the Catechism, felt by various reformers such as Tom Paine, Robert Owen, James Mill and Jeremy Bentham to perpetuate rather than cure social injustice. Although Reform declined and receded into the background as the century progressed, its call for a national secular system of education based upon a secular and scientific curriculum rather than the religious and dogmatic one that existed did not. Educational reformers believed that the inculcation of religious dogma was the main cause of social oppression and backwardness, campaigning vigorously for a more secular system of education. This eventually led to the responsibility being transferred from the church to the state, particularly as the scale of provision required was one which the church could not provide on its own.

In the early part of the century, there was a sincere belief held by those responsible for the charitable institutions which funded and administered schools (as opposed to those of the free market) that children needed to be saved from their home background. Such a salvation could be best achieved by separating them from it by teaching them the Bible and catechism. In his study on literacy and popular education, Vincent (1989), argues that the education

which children received in these schools had as its overriding ambition the dismantling of 'the process of cultural transmission which took place in the homes of the labouring poor, and replacing it with a self-sufficient body of values, information and cognitive skills'(Vincent 1989:92). This dismantling served in turn to reinforce and deepen the class divisions which were being transformed throughout this period of which reformers were particularly critical.

By mid-century, Reform was sufficiently advanced for the Newcastle Commission of 1861 'to enquire into the present state of popular education in England, and to consider and report what measures, if any, are required for the extension of sound and cheap elementary education to all classes of people' (Hopkins 1979). As a result of this Commission, the state increased its share of responsibility for education. It reported that teachers spent more time on less essential subjects than teaching the 'three R's' and so money was not being spent 'to best advantage'. Justification for concentrating on the 'three R's' was also given on the grounds that it was what parents wanted. One of the Report's commissioners observed that in stating a preference for one system of education over another, '...all told me that the poor in selecting a school, looked entirely to whether the school supplied good reading, writing and arithmetic.' Hopkins observed that:

Whether the commissioners were justified in their criticism of teachers is an open question. What is certain is that they were convinced teachers preferred subject-teaching to 3R work which the teachers found difficult and boring. In their view, a way had to be found of compelling the teachers to concentrate on this work rather than on frills.

Hopkins (1979:120).

The way that was found which would involve least expense and also be efficient was a Revised Code of regulations, drawn up in 1862. This Code made payment of an annual grant from the government dependent upon the number of children who passed an examination of a curriculum defined by Standards. Hopkins quotes Robert Lowe, author of the Code, from a statement he made to the House of Commons that sums up its principle of distribution: '...if it is not cheap, it shall be efficient; if it is not efficient, it shall be cheap' (Hopkins (1979 : 72)).

The rapid growth in population required more schools to be built than that with which the established charities such as the National Society could cope. Rather than transferring control of all schools to the State, however, the 1870 Education Act, itself following the Reform Act of 1867, allowed the Church to keep control of all its schools. National Schools were built where church ones did not exist, funded partly by local rates and partly by an annual grant from government.

At the same time, the central focus of the curriculum in elementary schools which had centred on teaching the Bible and related religious literature was replaced instead by that of the 'three R's'. This fundamental shift in the purpose of education altered its focus from learning to read in order to gain access to the Bible and religious literature to the acquisition of literacy itself, reinforced by the method of funding which depended upon children passing examinations as laid down by the Revised Code. Teaching literacy, therefore, became not only a vocational, mechanistic practice as an end in itself, but the site of moral transference as the privileged text was delocated from religious texts and relocated to those used to teach literacy. The texts used in such teaching were consequently modified and expanded to include secular as well as religious ones.

Increased emphasis and demand for teaching literacy was also made possible by standardisation of the English language itself, due largely to the expansion of printing (Febvre and Martin 1958). The theories and beliefs about language upon which this standardisation was based employed the term 'standard' to describe not only a common variety of language but also a measure against which all other varieties could be judged. To this was added a third definition: a measure of the degree of education received.

The following two sections consider theories of language in so far as they affected the formation of English as a school subject in the elementary school curriculum. They are summarised very briefly, but are crucial for an understanding of the ways in which they informed educational policy of the time and whose influence has also been apparent a century later when a national curriculum for English came to be written.

3.3 Theories of Language and the Process of Language Standardisation

The transformation of the regional East Midlands dialect into a national language was initially associated with a particular class, the London mercantile class. This process was virtually complete by the middle of the nineteenth century when state schooling began to emerge as a formal institution. The details of this transformation have been thoroughly discussed elsewhere, most notably in Burke and Porter (1987), Crowley (1989 and 1996) and Leith (1983) amongst others. Crowley (1996), following Bakhtin, (1981) shows how this new, central form of language was, during the nineteenth century, a form of monoglossia based on the notion of language as a socially unifying agent whilst at the same time providing a marker of English liberalism. This language of 'democracy and tolerance' was the 'standard language', a national, uniform and commonly accepted written, literary language.

Febvre and Martin (1958) argue that printing was probably the single most important factor in the process of the formation of European languages, including English. This may be so with regard to a standard written form, but certainly does not apply to speech, since the number of people who could read and write remained in the minority for some time after its invention. Unlike other new European national languages planned in more formal ways, the standardisation of English resulted more from decisions such as Caxton's to print in the East Midlands dialect than from any deliberate policy of standardisation. The East Midlands as a region, containing within it the London Inns of Court and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, was more likely to provide him with an audience sufficiently literate to make its publication worthwhile. In his introduction to a translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, he writes that this decision was influenced by a consideration of his likely readership, and the East Midlands region was most likely to provide one. Even so, attitudes towards newly-formed standard languages remained ambivalent. Politically, it was necessary to defend them, but socially and educationally they were felt to be inferior to classical Greek and Latin. Nevertheless, the movement away from Latin to non-Romance languages continued throughout the Reformation.

In England, people who could read and write remained in the minority for some time after the invention of printing. At the same time, the classical languages prolonged their survival at they continued to dominate the curriculum of public schools in England. However, once the vernacular language of European states came to be fixed in writing, the reasons for using Latin as a national, written language were no longer very persuasive. Despite the Renaissance in classical studies, Latin as an international language began to lose ground from the sixteenth century onwards as the small, literate middle-class increased to include sections of the population, most notably women and merchants, who had hardly any knowledge of Latin, illustrated by the various educational histories of Casaubon and Dorothea, Rosemary and Fred Vincey in Eliot's *Middlemarch* and various other nineteenth century novelists. At the same time, the curriculum in public and endowed schools continued to centre upon a study of Classical languages and their literature, dominating it until the early twentieth century.

Whilst the English language became a defining characteristic of the English nation, the educational status of the language and its literature remained decidedly inferior to that of the Classics. An education based on the Classics dominated the curriculum of both public and private schools, whilst that of charity and state schools which provided for mass education was based on the standard language. Speech also came to be a marker of social class in ways in which it had not in previous centuries, particularly the form of standard English and its pronunciation as it came to be spoken in London society at the time (Phillips, 1984).

The process of standardisation that led to the formation of a unitary form of English begun in earlier centuries had accelerated during the eighteenth, marked by the publication in 1755 of Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language. This fixed spelling and word definitions and in 1762 by Bishop Lowth's grammar prescribed rules of usage to which Walker's pronunciation dictionary was added in 1774. The term 'standard', therefore, began to be applied to the pronunciation of speech as well as its vocabulary and grammar, with little distinction being made between the two forms of speech and writing. Leith (1983) and Olson (1994) have both argued that the standardisation of the language in print subsequently influenced its standardisation in speech. The sounds and symbols associated with speech in spelling, and the construction of words described by morphology and syntax in writing, made it possible for the rules governing writing to be applied to speech and its pronunciation. However, some spelling came to correspond less with pronunciation and became more complicated by the influence exercised upon it by the classical languages. Nevertheless, rules of speech were thought to work in the same ways as those of writing and were applied in the same ways to both, with pronunciation in speech equivalent to spelling in writing and the same grammar applied to both.

Not all of those concerned with language study were in agreement, however. The eighteenth century grammarian Priestley (1762) saw the futility of singling out one variety of language over any other. He argued that it was absurd, 'in modern and living languages, to formulate invariable rules of speech and writing. Rather, general prevailing custom, whatever it happens to be, should be the only standard for any one time. As Crowley (1996) further points out, Priestley's argument that a standard be determined by common usage rather than regulation was contradicted by many, particularly as the Latin grammarian Quintilian, whose work was often cited by sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth century textbooks on language, had defined usage as 'the agreed practice of educated men' rather than prevailing custom. He was also required reading in the universities.

At one and the same time standard English became a concealer of regional origins and also a marker of 'a specific social class since it is the language of the 'well-bred' and 'well-informed'. Consequently the form specified is not simply a definition of the 'common' language but a 'standard' to be reached.' Any usage not adhering to it in either writing or speech was thus 'lazy' and full of 'errors', corresponding in turn to aspects of people's behaviour. Language was thought to mirror the thoughts of the mind'. Since standard English was the 'proper', 'correct' and 'superior' form of language, it appeared logical that those who spoke and wrote it were, therefore, 'proper', 'correct' and 'superior' citizens.

Theories based on ideas such as these found expression in the work of influential nineteenth century linguists such as Archbishop Trench, discussed by Crowley (1989):

The motto of Trench's earliest linguistic work, *On the Study of Words* (1851), asserted that 'Language is an instrument of Knowledge'. If this is taken together with the motto of the radical newspaper *The Poor man's Guardian*, 'Knowledge is Power', we begin to find new and important links and concerns with and between language, knowledge and power.

Crowley (1989:52)

Burke and Porter (1987) point out that linguists such as Trench were children of their time. Influenced by evolution theory, nineteenth century scholars thought of language as an organism which grew or evolved through various, progressive stages that expressed the values or spirit of the nation and the people who spoke it. It is not difficult to see how theories such as these influenced the teaching of English as a substitute for religion as a provider of both moral supervision and national identity within the state education system of a newly emerging nation state. For example, the aim of historical investigations of language such as Trench's *English Past and Present* published in 1855 was to teach students moral respect and thereby to lead them into a greater love of England through a more intimate knowledge of English. As Crowley points out: 'The English language became not only the vehicle of the nation's history at this time, but a guarantor of the nation's identity' (1996 : 97-8). Consequently, its teaching provided a means that ensured the reproduction of that identity.

During the nineteenth century, language came to be an object of study among others, as Max Muller (1862) the first professor of Philology at Oxford asserted, irreducible to laws governing its processes. For philologists such as Muller, the object of study was 'language' in general rather than any specific one which made it possible to study language as a science, abstracted from the contexts of its use that was eventually called linguistics. Attitudes towards language use were validated by claims to scientificity, fostering the notion that any variation from standard English as a norm was deviant, and therefore "improper" and "incorrect". Such deviance was a manifestation not only of "improper speech", but "improper behaviour." To speak the "superior", "refined" language demonstrated that one belonged to a "superior" class, and that speaking a "vulgar" language correspondingly meant that one belonged to a "vulgar" one. Smith writes that:

The study of universal grammar at that time stipulated that languages were fundamentally alike in that they represented the mind, and fundamentally different in the quality of mind and civilisation that they represented...By dividing the population into two extremes, ideas about language firmly distinguished those who were within the civilised world from those who were entirely outside it

Smith (1984:2-3)

One way of ensuring the reproduction of this national, standard form could be achieved was by teaching it in schools. Thus the 'superior' language and its literature which were associated with a 'superior' class was held up to working-class children as a model for their behaviour as well as for their speech and writing. Codes of moral and language behaviour were de-located from one class, recontextualised and relocated within the pedagogic subject of English as it was taught to the working class, privileging the standard form above all others. Wherever 'English' was taught, either as literacy or literature, or indeed any subject, this meant that it was taught not only as a set of skills but also as a set of values. Whilst speech was acquired in the home with its corresponding set of cultural values, teaching reading and writing and modifying speech became the province of formal, state schooling with its corresponding set of values which could be very different from and conflict with those of the home. From a late twentieth century perspective, ideas such as these upon which nineteenth century teaching of language was based can, and have, been criticised. However, it is important to recognise that at the time they were widely held and crucial to the shift from a curriculum based on religious education to one based on literacy felt to be appropriate for elementary education.

The modification of speech as writing written in standard English was not uncontested. Throughout the nineteenth century, texts written in dialects other than standard English proliferated, leading to the founding of The English Dialect Society in 1873. This society produced the *English Dialect Dictionary*, published between 1898 and 1905, paralleling the writing of the New Oxford English Dictionary published between 1888 and 1933. Working-class authors in the first half of the nineteenth century wrote in regional dialects as well as standard English for various purposes. They also utilised standard English as a way of establishing a class presence and to extend their own culture rather than to subscribe to its purported values. William Cobbett (1818), for example, believed that in order to function in political debate, people would themselves need to appropriate print and standard English.

In a discussion on dialect literature Joyce (1991), makes the point that social identities that were being worked out in dialect were far from simple, particularly as the cultural and linguistic roots of many later nineteenth-century employers were decidedly local. Paradoxically, as standard English became removed from its regional origins it served to increase, rather than decrease, class differentiation which was reflected in attitudes towards language use as it became stratified by class as well as by region. The issue was not so much with standard English in itself, but, as it is today, with attitudes towards its use which perceived its users as in some way morally and intellectually as well as socially 'superior' or 'above' those who did not. Such attitudes were further strengthened by its association with power, prestige and education together with its role as a marker of social class. This is not to

say that issues of class, education, power and prestige reside solely in language, but that language is an important consideration which Crowley (1996) observes has often been ignored when the history of the period has been considered.

Joyce (1991) argues that the growth of dialect literature testified to the existence of an intellectual and social climate which was sympathetic to the culture of the people, one that attempted to reconcile the divergence of 'low' and 'high' culture. It also perceived language as a central means by which the historical unfolding of cultures could be revealed, a point also explored by Aarslef (1967). As Joyce acknowledged: '... the intellectual climate in which dialect literature developed was one in which language and literature carried versions of nation and the people that offered the labouring classes the possibility of inclusion in the body of society rather than the exclusion so evident in many other respects.' (Joyce 1991 : 160). In his consideration of the development of the novel from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century, Williams (1969) commented upon the influences of differing social and educational backgrounds amongst the writers of the period. He also drew attention to the difficulties posed by considerations of language in the writing of its prose. He quotes, as have others, from Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* to illustrate his point:

Mrs. Durbeyfield habitually spoke the dialect; her daughter, who had passed the sixth Standard in the national school under a London-trained mistress, spoke two languages; the dialect at home, more or less; ordinary English abroad and to persons of quality.

Hardy (1891:48).

In his analysis of Hardy's distinction between Tess's use of 'dialect' and 'ordinary English', Williams says that: 'We have to consider, for example, the confidence of that 'ordinary English', and ask how ordinary it was, and where, ultimately, the standard was set' (1969 : 43). For writers such as Hardy, language was inseparable from the people who used it, and for linguists such as James Murray (1888 - 1928), language was similarly inseparable from the history of a people, especially the history of its political institutions. But Murray's views with their strong sense of local history and custom, wedded as they were to a radical interpretation of wider national history, were not representative of the established intellectual community of the time. The idea of a standard, 'literary' language with a definable historical tradition as distinct from any other was similarly very strong. As both Crowley (1966) and Leith (1983) pointed out, the standard language was developed at the expense of other regional dialects. It was based upon a written, literary version that distinguished between the language of literature and that spoken by its inhabitants.

Thus despite the existence of intellectual climates that were positive in their attitudes towards dialects and dialect literature, they were dominated by the emphasis on standard English that polarised the distinction in language between standard English and all other dialects on aesthetic grounds, separating language varieties, particularly of speech, into 'vulgar' and 'polite' tongues. The distinction in speech was further marked by pronunciation, where not only the form of words used but how they were said was also marked. The accent most closely associated with standard English, Received Pronunciation, (RP) was variously known as 'the Queen's English', 'the King's English', or more recently, 'Oxford' or 'BBC' English: in other words, the accent of established power and authority. As Joyce (1991) observed, 'pronunciation thus became allied to power, learning and authority. As RP became more closely associated with standard English, other accents, together with dialects, were deemed 'ignorant' and 'wrong'.

This illusion was perpetuated through the elementary school system, where the teaching of literacy rejected, rather than included, the home dialect of the child. Through his study of nineteenth century school textbooks, Joyce shows how they emphasised the distinction between 'vulgar' and 'polite' language, exalting written over spoken English, and associating 'correct' English with superior breeding and success. The example Joyce gives to illustrate this is taken from one called *Enquire Within Upon Everything* which had sold 592,000 copies by 1877:

This compendium of advice on all matters of social skills is a classic in the voluminous literature of Victorian self-improvement. It contains a large section with hundreds of rules and hints about correct speaking and writing. It is at once absurdly prim, hyper-correct and extraordinarily supercilious about popular usage. Imitation of the 'educated' is the key to success. Imperfect grammar, the misuse of words, and incorrect pronunciation are all corrected with reference to the hideous errors of dialect, the most reprehensible form of which is Cockney. The tone is taken from *Punch* and its guying of popular speech. Nine versions of Cockney are identified and denounced, including 'Low', 'Genteel', 'Cockney', 'Flunky', 'Feminine', and 'Domestic'. Similar treatment is meted out to the Irish and the Scots, and to provincial 'brogues', 'provincialism' being the most characteristic form of abuse. The most pressing of all dilemmas in agonised world is "'H" or "No H?" That is the question.' The reader is finally assured that though he or she may not be educated, he or she may yet become 'cultivated' through the proper exercise of language

Joyce (1991:159).

The 'proper exercise of language' highlighted the study of grammar. The grammar and dictionaries of English which came to be written and used in schools described the grammar and vocabulary of Standard English. Grammar was thought of as a unified, universal concept that described any language, and the degree to which a language or a variety within it fitted grammatical prescription was a marker of its superiority over all others, which were

therefore 'imperfect' and full of errors. Prescriptivism in language study, therefore, was transferred to prescriptivism in teaching language in the classroom.

3.4 'English' and Grammar

Williams (1977) identified three branches of language study originating in the medieval trivium that eventually became specific and separate disciplines within formal education. Firstly, language as a way of indicating reality could be studied as *logic*. Secondly, language as an assessable segment of reality, particularly in the fixed form of writing, could be studied as *grammar*, in the sense of its formal and external shape. Thirdly, within the distinction between language and reality, language could be conceived of as an instrument used for specific and distinguishable purposes, and was studied as *rhetoric* and *poetics*. Williams observes that the trivium, specifically grammar and rhetoric, moved into relatively formal, learned demonstrations of the properties of a given body of 'classical' written material from which 'literary study' developed in secondary and higher education, rather than into investigating the activity of language in relation to reality, thus language study stressed its formalist aspect, rather than becoming referential, or concerned with truth or value.

Written composition in English was taught throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as part of rhetoric. Learning to use language in this way was complemented by a study of grammar, with its framework and method directly derived from those used to describe and teach the grammar of ancient Latin. It was perceived as axiomatic that learning about the structures of one's own language, in this case English, would be identical to learning about the structures of an ancient one such as Latin. Michael (1987) points out that until the end of the eighteenth century, the methods used to study one's own language were similar for those of studying a foreign one. The grammar of English, therefore, was thought to operate along similar principles as those applied to Latin. The methods used to teach Latin were also applied to teaching English. Michael comments that:

Such a view obscured the distinctiveness of first-language teaching, inhibited attempts to develop a grammar and a mode of teaching appropriate to English speaking pupils, and tended to keep English subordinate to the elaborate and prestigious grammars of the classical languages...Because English grammar was thus kept in close relationship to Latin grammar it was assumed, by circularity, that English grammar was a good preparation for Latin.

Michael (1987: 18.9)

Such an assumption was largely true, since what was being taught was case-systems and balanced compound sentences rather than a grammar of English. Ideas such as those summarised by Michael influenced the writing of grammars for English. Rules intended

for Latin were transferred and applied to English in an attempt to make the language fit the rules. Where it did not, the language was altered so that it would be made to fit, such as the rules established by Lowth (1762) that sentences ought not to end with a preposition or that infinitives should not be split.

One grammar which did attempt to account for usage more descriptively was William Cobbett's immensely popular *A Grammar of the English Language*, first published in 1818, ending with a fortieth edition in 1923, which drew upon the work of established grammarians such as Lowth. However, far from treating language as a neutral object, Cobbett recognised the importance of the power language can confer on its users and its relationship with knowledge. Written as a series of invented letters by Cobbett to a fourteen year old son, the grammar was intended for use by 'soldiers, sailors, apprentices and ploughboys': that is, labouring poor men. It assumed no prior knowledge of either Greek or Latin as well as, rarely for the time, that intellect did not necessarily equate with wealth or social status and that 'soldiers, sailors, apprentices and ploughboys' were therefore capable of understanding it.

Although it was written in a prescriptivist tradition, it also drew on the political writings of Radicals such as Tooke and Webster by pointing out the political conflict present in language. Cobbett's main aim in writing the grammar was overtly political. He intended to provide ordinary people with the knowledge they needed in order to express themselves clearly so that they could play a greater part in the affairs of the nation. Believing with Bacon that knowledge was power, he felt it a duty to his country to transmit a knowledge of English to all members of society so that they might become 'so completely capable of detecting and exposing the tricks and connivances of their oppressors, that the power of doing mischief will die a natural death in the hands of those oppressors' (1818:3). Englishmen could not hope to play an effective part in their country's destiny until they could learn to see through the rhetoric with which the political establishment tried to conceal its real purposes. He used examples that were mostly usage-led, taken from the writings of his political opponents to illustrate his grammatical descriptions rather than inventing them to fit the points he made.

Cobbett acknowledged that it was not necessary to learn grammar before one could write. However, he firmly believed that knowledge of grammar enabled one to write more clearly and have a greater understanding of what had been written by others. Through his grammar, Cobbett hoped to counteract a social system which, as Smith (1989) points out, aligned learning with class, from multiple and diverse angles. Cobbett himself was aware that the registers of language inevitably changed in response to wider, socio-cultural changes and

that how a person speaks and writes is also socially and culturally influenced. Although Cobbett was highly sceptical and mocking of standard English as the 'refined' language, he recognised its importance as the language of power. He described its grammar in a way which was accessible to the ordinary man, recognising its importance as a means for engaging in political debate. He was not so much concerned with writing an alternative grammar, but used the one of the time to make his point. He illustrated that the precise terms and definitions used were not as important as recognising how they can be manipulated to certain effects. This point will be returned to in more detail in the second half of the thesis, but it is important to note here that the rhetoric surrounding the purported logic of standard English as the 'refined' language was not without critics in its own time.

Needless to say, Cobbett's grammar was not the one used in formal schooling. Where Cobbett uses sentence analysis to expose 'Errors and Nonsense in a King's Speech', grammars written for elementary schools were prescriptive, reinforcing the imposition of the language variety used by their social superiors upon the lower orders, thus perpetuating the association of learning with class.

3.5 Language, Literacy, Education and Pedagogy

The development of a system of elementary education throughout the nineteenth century, coinciding as it did with the final stages of the standardisation process of the English language, made it possible to become the focal point for national unity. Thus although the techniques associated with moral supervision had been delocated from religion and relocated to literacy, they also relocated the moral together with the social supervision of children as a goal for education. The disciplinary effect of elementary education also came as much from the methods used to teach literacy as from the imposition of standard English as the chief medium of expression.

Graff (1987) and Wardle (1970) point out how the techniques used for teaching children their letters in the early nineteenth century had hardly changed since medieval times, depending upon a system first formulated in sixteenth century primers. The concept of language upon which such primers was based was that of 'building blocks', where language was broken down into its constituent parts and reformed. Vincent describes the process:

After learning the alphabet the child was faced with lists of disconnected syllables, 'ba be bi bo bu' in lesson one in Dyche's primer of 1710, 'ba ab ca ac' in the first lesson in Innes' 'Plain, Pleasing, Progressive System' of 1835, followed by columns of monosyllabic words which might be grouped into sentences of a relentlessly spiritual or moral quality. Once these had been mastered, the procedure was repeated with words of two syllables, and so the child progressed until, in the case of more ambitious primers, it was capable of learning lists of seven syllable words.

Such an atomistic approach, based on syllable/interpretive correspondence is too rough to be applied systematically. Nevertheless, the approach itself is not necessarily harmful and characterises a phonic-based approach. Problems occur more in its application in practice. Such an approach suited the teaching of language as a skill based on the transference of knowledge from those who possessed it to those who did not. It also suited the enterprises of educational reformers such as Bell and Lancaster, who sought to remodel elementary education along the lines of factory production. The thinking that informed the aims of popular education of the time was ruled by a confused acceptance of two contradictory assumptions about child nature that together supported and reinforced the moral, regulating role of education and an emphasis on facts graphically illustrated by Dickens' in *Hard Times*. The first of these aims derived from religious theories which viewed the nature of children as essentially evil in agreement with the notion of original sin for which education would provide redemption, manifested in the curriculum and pedagogy of the church schools. The second derived from the seventeenth century philosophical writings of John Locke, and the rationalists of 'the association of idea' who viewed the child as having no innate tendencies at all, with the mind a *tabula rasa*. Consequent personality was the result solely of experience within an environment which could be regulated to remedy defects and deficiencies. This corresponds with the idea that language is not a natural phenomenon to be discovered and described, but is an artifice that has to be prescribed and learned from superior (adult) users.

Belief in such a doctrine was responsible for much of Victorian optimism about the possibility of solving the problems of poverty, vice and crime, which had been accepted as unfortunate necessities for centuries. As Wardle stated: 'The idea of using a prison as an institution for reforming criminals, rather than merely keeping them out of circulation for a time was typical of this kind of thinking, as was, naturally enough, the enormous importance attached to education' (1970:82). Even the renowned Matthew Arnold, critic of the Revised Code, believed schools together with prisons were necessary regulating institutions of reformation and salvation.

The theory that knowledge was dependent upon the association between the senses and the external world, such as that articulated in Locke's treatise *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, (1690) informed a whole tradition of educational theory. It concerned itself with the swift creation, through a controlled environment, of the rational adult, to be trained out of childish ways into the moral and rational perfection of regulated adulthood as manifested by the upper, rather than the lower, classes. Such an association also made it possible for

pedagogy to be perceived as essentially mechanistic, with cognitive development dependent on and capable of being achieved by mechanistic processes along lines similar to the factory production of goods. Thus it was believed that learning was a logical rather than psychological process. Knowledge about language could be broken down into discrete units, from the smallest elements to the larger ones. It was thought logical, for example, that in learning to read and write children learnt the sounds and script of single letters before progressing to two or three letter syllables, syllables before they learnt words before going on to consider the organisation of sentences.

Children were accordingly divided into classes which progressed from learning the alphabet through progressive stages to passages that were selected from the Bible or paragraphs which also conveyed a moral message. Wardle (1970:84) provides such an example: 'Good boys will not play with bad lads for fear they may be led as bad as they; for good boys may soon be made bad lads, by play-ing with such as are bad boys.' It is not difficult to understand how standard English was promoted as a distinguishing characteristic of 'good boys' and anything else of 'bad lads.' The mechanical nature of such a theory of learning also perceived it as an essentially passive process, with the intellect of the child a kind of blotting paper that soaked up the information given to it. It is clear to see why Dixon (1967) applied the term 'skills' to describe such a view of English, with its emphasis on language and functional literacy as material and objective processes by denying its symbolic and subjective aspects. What Dixon ignores, however, is the role of value in this model. Although 'skill' is perceived as essentially mechanistic and technical, the texts used to teach it also gave lessons in morality.

The learning of standard English in both speech and writing was supported and reinforced by government reports and legislation from the mid nineteenth century onwards. For example, the Newcastle Report of 1858 clearly stated the expectations of the standard of elementary education achieved by its pupils by the time they left school set realistically in the report as ten years of age:

If he has been properly looked after in the lower classes, he shall spell correctly the words that he will ordinarily have to use; he shall read a common narrative - the paragraph in the newspaper that he cares to read - with sufficient ease to be a pleasure to himself and to convey information to his listeners; if gone to live at a distance from home, he shall write his mother a letter that shall be both legible and intelligible.

Maclure (1965:74)

The Revised Code of 1862 set out the conditions for school funding which depended upon examination results based on Standards, and established government inspectors to undertake

them. For assessment purposes, the Code specifically stated the visibly measurable and quantifiable content of the elementary school curriculum on which pupils were to be tested, progressing from short texts to longer ones. The extent to which pupils had absorbed the morality residing in the texts was less easy to assess and probably taken for granted. Progress between Standards was measured in terms of units of vocabulary learnt which had little to do with understanding what was read or written. Lowndes has described in detail how this system worked in operation:

A minutely detailed schedule of work was laid down for each standard by the Code of the Education Department. The children were drilled in this throughout the year and examined on a previously determined day by H.M.I...In 'reading' the examination took place from one of three books in Standards 3 to 7, from one of two in Standards 1 and 2. These books contained a number of stories, poems and general knowledge extracts each preceded by lists of difficult words and followed by a lists of 'meanings' of different words and phrases. In Standard 1 for instance there would be a reader of this type and a geography Reader descriptive of 'The Ball on which we live'...A child who possessed a good memory would often pass, although he could not read at all, if he were given the first word and not told to skip a paragraph, through knowing the set books by heart. Occasionally such children were detected because they held the book upside down!

Lowndes (1937:163)

Writing was tested in Standard 1 by a ten-word spelling test, in Standards 2 and 5 by a prescribed number of lines of 'Dictation', and in Standard 5 by the reproduction of a short story read twice by the Inspector. In Standards 6 and 7, which few reached in 1895, was dependent upon writing an essay. Clearly, such tests tested memory and expertise in test-situations rather than acquisition of knowledge. Education for the poor was thus deliberately limited, different from that provided for the rich and fitting them for their humble station in life. Robert Lowe, the author of the Code, wrote in a pamphlet in 1867:

The lower classes ought to be educated to discharge the duties cast upon them. They should also be educated that they may appreciate and defer to a higher cultivation when they meet it, and the higher classes ought to be educated in a very different manner in order that they may exhibit to the lower classes, that higher education to which, if it were shown to them they would bow down and defer.

Cited in Wardle (1970:25)

Commenting on this quote, Wardle (1970) points out that such an argument has two sides, depending on the relationship between knowledge and power:

On the one hand it could be argued that 'the educated mechanics are better conducted in all that relates to their social duties, more refined in their tastes, and more guarded in their language than the uneducated', but there was an equally good case for maintaining that instead of 'due subordination' education might have the highly undesirable effect of making the poor question the necessity of their poverty.

Wardle (1970:25)

Reactionary thinkers were thus in agreement with working-class leaders about the effects of education, since both saw ignorance as the great ally of oppression. An unresolved tension within formal education in England that still exists has always been how to provide an education for the majority of the population as required by the economy whilst at the same time limiting its social consequences by keeping it from questioning its distribution of wealth and source of power.

Initially, such a tension was resolved by the requirements of the Revised Code and its associated teaching methods modelled on factory production. The system of school inspection whose task it was to ensure that the Code was taught ironically became the means by which its shortcomings were revealed. In the course of their duties, inspectors found that what was taught did not necessarily mean that pupils learnt. The children repeated from memory what they had been taught, but in many cases failed to understand what they had learnt.

As a school inspector, Matthew Arnold was severely critical of the type of curriculum which the Code imposed on schools, risking his post to publish anonymously a pamphlet condemning its methods. In his General Report For The Year 1869 he wrote:

I have repeatedly said that it seems to me the great fault of the Revised Code, and of the famous plan of payment by results, that it fosters teaching by rote; I am of that opinion still...The school examinations in view of payment by results are, as I have said, a game of mechanical contrivance in which the teachers will and must more and more learn how to beat us. It is found possible, by ingenious preparation, to get children through the Revised Code examination in reading, writing and ciphering, without their really knowing how to read, write and cipher.

Arnold (1908:125.6).

Some children could race through the standards, achieving Standard 7 or 8 (added in 1882) very quickly. For these pupils, extra subjects were provided, one of which was 'English', as the teaching of literature as well as grammar of the kind taught in grammar schools, from which secondary education was later to be formed. Arnold welcomed such inclusions in the syllabus for English on the grounds that a knowledge of literature would make pupils in

intellectual sympathy with the educated upper classes and a knowledge of grammar would further their interest in language. However, the principles applied to the learning of literacy were also applied to the teaching of literature, tending to consist of learning an increasing number of lines of poetry and prose by heart and understanding the meanings of any allusions made within it. There was little attempt to understand and appreciate what had been read. Criticisms such as Arnold's of the mechanistic teaching methods together with a move towards a more liberal educational philosophy led the Code being abolished in the 1890's, although the standards continued to form the basis of school organisation, thereby perpetuating their hold on the curriculum.

The examinations which replaced the Revised Code, administered by Boards of Education, were much the same as those of the Code. The main significant change was that funding was no longer directly related to the number of pupils who passed examinations, which allowed schools a certain amount of curriculum freedom. However, the level of competence which children should have reached at the ages of 7, 11 and 13 at the beginning of the 20 century as set out in the 1910 schedules remained little changed to that demanded by the Code. They were:

Standard 1 (7 years)

Reading: To read a short passage from a book not confined to words of one syllable.

Writing: Copy in manuscript characters a line of print, commencing with a capital letter. Copy books to be shown.

‘English’: Pointing out nouns.

Standard 5 (11 years)

Reading: To read a passage from some standard author, or reading book, or history of England.

Writing: Writing from memory the substance of a short story read twice; spelling, handwriting and correct expression to be considered.

‘English’: Parsing and analysis of simple sentences. The method of forming English nouns, adjectives and verbs from each other.

Standard 7 (13 years)

Reading: To read a passage from Shakespeare or Milton, or from some other standard author, or from a history of England.

Writing: A theme or a letter. Composition, spelling and handwriting to be considered.

‘English’: Analysis of sentences. The most common prefixes and terminations generally.

Shayer (1972:45)

Despite Arnold's insistence that reading and writing should involve a degree of understanding, the Schedules perpetuated the teaching of reading as a decoding exercise, with the vocabulary of reading material becoming progressively greater and more complicated as the child got older. Thus attaining a standard in reading meant an increasing ability to decode rather than to understand the text. Similarly writing progressed from copying to writing in one of two forms, a composition or a letter with form and accuracy dominating content. ‘English’ was delineated by a study of Latinate grammar, progressing from naming individual parts of speech to analysing complete sentences, with little attempt to integrate its content with that of the reading and writing curriculum. Nevertheless, by the turn of the century, regulated by external and internal forces, English continued its recontextualisation from a predominantly skills model dominated by grammarian and vocationist discourse to the emerging one of cultural heritage dominated by humanist discourse. Such changes relocated literature rather than literacy and grammar as the privileged text in English as secondary state education came to be formed, set against a background of considerable European social and political change. Once again, as change in society was creating political tensions, education and the teaching of English in particular came to the fore of public debate.

Chapter 4

"English is not really a subject at all" Sampson (1925:44)

4.0 Introduction

Educational provision funded by the state had expanded beyond elementary schooling into secondary by the end of the nineteenth century. Increasing social unrest that culminated in the First World War provided the conditions for a re-assessment of the privileged text in English. The skills model had been preoccupied with functional literacy dominated by the discourses of the vocationist and grammarian. It led ultimately to its recontextualisation as a cultural heritage model dominated by humanist discourse. The focus of moral supervision altered accordingly to encompass the language of literature as well as literacy.

This chapter considers this recontextualisation of the privileged text within English during the first half of the twentieth century up to the 1944 Education Act. It will focus on changing theories of language and learning in so far as they affected the emergence of cultural heritage as a dominant model for English pedagogy. Very briefly, the privileged text in English and the site of moral supervision altered to include English literature.

4.1 Elementary into Secondary Education

By the end of the nineteenth century, a national state system of elementary education for all children replaced one centred around Church schools. Eaglesham (1967) described how secondary education developed from within the elementary system. Standards 1 to 4 were followed by all pupils up to the age of twelve or fourteen in elementary schools. The top classes devoted more time to advanced subjects in the higher grades of Standards 5 to 7 or 8, one of which was English. Changes in the way schools were financed together with the lack of any coherent, organised national policy for education meant that some schools had separate buildings provided to accommodate top classes that became known as 'top grade' or 'higher grade' schools. The existence of these schools was helped by changes in funding which no longer made the provision of elementary education dependent on charity to be given to those too poor to pay for it, and the abolition of 'payment by results' which no longer made funding dependent on teaching 'the three R's'.

As demand for elementary education from adults lessened after schooling became compulsory in 1880, so parental demand for higher grade schooling for children increased.

Commentators such as Hopkins (1979) point out that there was no longer any doubt that working-class education could be confined to simple instruction in the 'three 'R's'. Already there were cases of working-class children actually going to university, and although these cases were highly exceptional, they were a pointer to the future. Partly in response to this demand, a further commission into education was undertaken in 1888, the Cross Commission, that ultimately affected two areas of education the most: the education of teachers themselves and the function of higher grade schools.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the pupil-teacher system was replaced by the setting up of non-residential training and day colleges attached to universities to provide teacher education. The establishment of higher grade schools offered a certain amount of competition to fee-paying secondary schools, including endowed grammar schools attended by middle-class children. The Cross Commission was ambivalent about the existence of these schools, particularly their expansion of provision beyond elementary education:

We cannot therefore regard as completely satisfactory the present position of the class of schools to which we have referred. On the one hand they are obliged to adapt their curriculum in such a way as to bring them within the requirements of the Education Acts and of the Code in order to obtain government grants; on the other hand, their object is to provide a much higher education than is ordinarily understood by the word 'elementary'.

Cited in Hopkins, (1979:126)

Re-organisation of education at the turn of the twentieth century concentrated upon formalising the secondary school curriculum, the oversight of which was placed in the hands of the LEAs. Its blueprint was taken from the model of the public school. Robert Morant, one of the main architects of the re-organised system of education, appointed an HMI called Headlam who had been a Professor of Greek and Ancient History to examine the curriculum of 'A' division secondary schools whose curriculum was loaded towards the teaching of science. Ball (1983) commented that Morant supported a particular view of the curriculum based upon nineteenth century principles of a 'rounded' education which the secondary schools did not share. As was to be expected, Headlam attacked these schools for not teaching Latin, Greek and the English subjects for the effect that a neglect of their study would have on the character and intellect of the nation. As Eaglesham comments: '... the future pattern of English culture must come not from Leeds or West Ham but from Eton and Winchester'. (1967:58).

The Code for Use in Public Elementary Schools (1904-1926) identified the main aim of education in the following way:

The purpose of the public Elementary School is to form and strengthen the character and to develop intelligence of the children entrusted to it, and to make the best use of the school years available, in assisting both girls and boys, according to their different needs, to fit themselves, practically as well as intellectually, for the work of life.

HMSO (1944:9)

Such an aim was enlightened for its time with its emphasis upon 'work of life' that extended the curriculum beyond immediate vocational concerns. The technical tradition of former top grade schools which administrators such as Morant thought of as predominantly scientific and 'useful' had squeezed out the literary subjects which did 'good'. As a result, its curriculum was replaced by one set out within the secondary regulations of 1904. They stipulated the subjects and number of hours to be spent on them that included English, geography, history and Latin as well as science and mathematics. They relocated a modified version of the public school classical curriculum to that of state schools and their curriculum. Eaglesham (1971) interpreted the Code as a 'lost opportunity'. At the time, however, such a curriculum was thought to provide the best education to which all classes should have access. The aims of popular education increased to provide not only training dominated by vocationist concerns but also to make people better citizens based on humanist principles for which the culture of West Ham or Leeds was thought inappropriate and insufficient.

Together with curriculum changes, between 1911 and 1918 regulations governing school examinations were introduced. They severely restricted the freedom of university boards and individual schools to set their own examinations and made them available to all pupils regardless of the school they attended. By 1925 a curriculum framework regulated by assessment had been established and the Board withdrew from direct control over curriculum provision. The relocation of the humanist principles of a traditional, classical education within popular secondary education that informed the public school tradition resisted the narrowly vocationist curriculum that had characterised the elementary school. An informed humanism, therefore, was perceived to be as essential to future workers and citizens as any knowledge of scientific principles.

When the progressive Liberal Government was swept into office in 1906, it aimed at making secondary education available to all classes rather than limited to the exceptional child, with no fees charged for children educated at elementary schools. Nevertheless, despite curriculum changes, educational provision was still based on class since no corresponding attempts were made to bring all secondary provision, state as well as private and public, into the same administrative apparatus that would make all schools open to all children of all classes on equal terms.

Educational principles such as those of Morant were strengthened by the First World War. Before it, arguments for expansion of education had been fought mainly on liberal and commercial grounds. After the war, another, more forcible argument came into play, that of defence. The German army, better educated than the English and with more of a sense of national pride, had proved formidable opponents in war. Education became necessary not only for employment but also for citizenship and defence. Added to this concern was the growing dissatisfaction and unease amongst social classes, particularly the working-class. Anxious to avoid a revolution of the kind that had just taken place in Russia and surrounding nations, the government sought to adapt and change social institutions, including education, to prevent such an occurrence. At the same time, it expanded its military forces whilst it sought to preserve the balance of class power. Fodder for the mill became fodder for the canon. As Vincent observed:

The post-war inheritance was of a workforce which was educated but increasingly ill-trained, of a population which was enfranchised but devoid of a clear sense of citizenship, and of generations of schooled children still struggling to bridge the gap between the possession and use of skills ever more relevant to the task of making sense of their world and giving voice to their conclusions

Vincent (1989:279)

It also left a population bereft of an unprecedented proportion of its young men of all social classes, thereby creating an unprecedented gap between the older and younger generations. At the same time, technological developments enabled first speech then visual action to be captured on tape, radio and film. Printed material became cheaper and was written for the mass market. Magazines, comics and fiction aimed at the younger generation and mass audience proliferated. The correspondingly increased commercialism of these forms posed another threat to civilised, national culture, by appealing to the baser, cruder instincts of human nature. Mulhern writes that:

The condition of British society in the 1920s was, then, one of crisis, defined at the economic level by a complex unity of innovation and decay, and, politically, by a related dislocation of the inherited political order. Within the national culture, the effects of this crisis were pervasive. The economic and social developments of the period led directly to the transformation, or effective creation, of modern Britain's most powerful cultural media, and, at the same time, undermined the habits and assumptions of the established humanistic culture, casting it into confusion and self-doubt.

Mulhern (1979:7)

Thus at the very moment that the values and ideals of a humanist culture were being articulated through education and delivered to the masses, increased literacy through which culture could be accessed on a wider scale also provided access to more popular cultural forms. According to Mulhern, these means of communication appealed primarily to the working class who rejected the imposition of English literature as of no use and irrelevant to their concerns. Just as religious instruction was felt to be of 'no use', so, too, was the teaching of literature summed up by the Newbolt Report of 1922. Before considering the Report and its impact upon the re-location and recontextualisation of literature as the privileged text within English, the next section considers theories of language at the beginning of the century in so far as they affected its teaching in schools.

4.2 Theories of Language and Standardisation.

Language theory at the beginning of the century tended to concentrate on two areas: that of the history and origin of language in general and the standardisation of English pronunciation. The recording of sound had made spoken as well as written language available for study as well as generating popular forms of entertainment. This led to attempts being made to prescribe fixed rules for the form of pronunciation for sounds in speech by proposing a standard accent, received pronunciation, in much the same way as grammar prescribed the rules for standard English.

As standard English in its written form became widely taught in schools and most commonly used in written, public communication, its association with class correspondingly lessened as its use became accepted in virtually all forms of written communication independent of class. The same was not true of forms of speech however, and attention turned from standardising writing, its vocabulary, spelling and grammar to standardising its pronunciation in speech. The invention of the recording of speech made it capable of being an object of study, making the study of speech and its sounds possible.

In 1917 Daniel Jones published an *English Pronouncing Dictionary*. As Reader in Phonetics at London University he was influential in prescribing a standard for pronunciation as well as vocabulary and grammar. His earlier publication, *The Pronunciation of English* (1909), was written with teachers specifically in mind, aimed at correcting 'cockneyisms or other undesirable pronunciations in their scholars.' By applying the elementary principles of phonetics, people would be able to get rid of 'dialectal peculiarities, indistinctiveness and artificialities'. Phonetics was studied along scientific principles similar to those applied to grammar that singled out one form above all others. As a result of publications such as Jones which applied their ideas to education, the Board of Education introduced teaching

pronunciation as part of the curriculum in teacher-training colleges that qualified teachers to teach in state elementary schools.

As a linguist, Jones recognised the variety of pronunciations that existed, but argued that correct pronunciation could be learnt by setting up a standard of pronunciation just as grammars set up a standard of usage. The form he settled on was very specific as to class, region and gender: 'the pronunciation represented is that of Southern gentlemen who have been educated at the great public boarding-schools.' Jones, (1917:viii). The editor of Jones's dictionary writes that:

Every dialect has its interest and appeal; but one who knows only his dialect finds himself at a great disadvantage in social life, when once he passes beyond the limits within which that dialect is spoken, and it may well be doubted whether his aesthetic appreciation of our literature is not impaired...If in our schools we regard it as desirable to deal with the pupils' speech at all, we must have some idea of the kind of speech we wish them to acquire...my own feeling is that our aim should be to secure a form of speech that shall not merely be intelligible but pleasing to the greatest number of educated speakers of English; and that implies not only unobjectionable pronunciation but good voice production.'

Jones (1917:v-vi).

Thus failure to speak a national, common 'standard speech' was thought to be responsible for a corresponding failure to read and to appreciate common, national literature. Dialects, therefore, were a barrier to sharing the 'common culture' of the nation represented in its literature. Spoken standard English as it was pronounced by the upper classes was also the 'standard' for evaluating the speech of others.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, writing in English had a clear history as a uniform, delineated practice recognised and used by anyone who wanted to write in it. Written standard English was the form taught in schools to subsequent generations that accepted its practices, widely used in printed texts of all kinds. With spoken language, however, the situation was very different, not least because it is learnt in the early years at home rather than formally at school. At the same time, studies in historical grammar such as those of Whitney (1896) and Wyld (1909) that used neutral, empirical principles of scientific observation led to two important discoveries about language: firstly, that all living language is constantly growing and changing and secondly, that within a language such as English, every peculiarity of sound, grammar, idiom or vocabulary which exists in a provincial dialect has its reasons and justification every bit as much as the peculiarities of Standard English. These studies led to the conclusion that no one language or dialect within it was intrinsically superior to or 'better' than any other. In a third edition of his *A Short History of English*, Wyld (1927) outlined his theory of dialect differentiation, introducing the notion of 'speech community' as an

essentially homogenous concept, concluding that as many dialects existed as there were communities that used them. However, Wyld also ascribed to the notion of a universal grammar which could be applied to language, and thus any variation or deviation from it was classed as a 'vulgarism' or 'provincialism'. So although 'every peculiarity of sound, grammar, idiom or vocabulary which exists in a provincial dialect has its reasons and justification every bit as much as the peculiarities of Standard English', these peculiarities were foreign to the prescribed grammar and pronunciation, and could be distinctly categorised.

Such beliefs place speakers of dialects other than standard English, which at the beginning of the twentieth century were closely linked to region and class, in the position of outsiders. At the same time they attempt to present standard English as a neutral, common form accessible to all. The increasing prescription for the use of standard English as a spoken as well as a written dialect further fuelled the belief that it would come to be universally used in speech as well as in writing. As a result, linguists thought that dialects other than standard English would eventually die out. Universal educational provision and increased geographical and social mobility led linguists to believe that all dialects were being eradicated and replaced by the common, national form. As Wyld comments:

The main factor in obliterating Regional Dialects is our system of Primary Education, which places, in schools all over the country, teachers trained according to a uniform scheme, whose own pronunciation and general way of speech has been carefully supervised in Pupil Teachers' Colleges or Training Colleges. Another important class of speech missionaries are the Clergy of the Church of England; and last but not least in importance as an agent in smoothing out the most marked peculiarities of dialect, is the wonderful increase in facilities of locomotion, which enables the entire population to move about freely.

Wyld (1907:124-5)

The belief in standard English as socially and culturally cohesive was thus strongly supported by theories of language at the time. The relationship between language, thought, identity and behaviour was presented as unproblematic and simplistic, more of a mathematical equation than anything else. It was, however, highly contradictory. The privileging of standard English rested upon the notion that language was objective and neutral whilst at the same time appealing to its superiority of form and the 'correctness' of its users as testimony for its neutrality. Language behaviour was thus an index of moral behaviour. If people learnt to speak 'properly' they would behave 'properly'. Rather than supporting dialect differences in spoken language, such beliefs served to de-value them by their appeal to one dialect as the only way social levelling could be achieved. It thus continued to place speakers of dialects other than standard English, their culture and behaviour as 'foreign' and on the fringes of

mainstream society. Inclusion could only be achieved through speaking and writing standard English, which, though levelling on the one hand, was similarly exclusive on the other.

Nevertheless, the content and method of teaching language prescribed by writers such as Jones and Wyld and the theories and beliefs upon which they drew were endorsed within education by the writers of the first government report into education, the Newbolt Report. It endeavoured to justify the centrality of the pedagogic subject English in the secondary and higher education curriculum by appealing to it as the means by which classes and culture could be united through literature as well as language.

4.3 English, Pedagogy and the Newbolt Report

In 1906, the year a Liberal government was returned to office, the first professional association for English was formed. With a membership drawn largely from university lecturers and professors, the English Association was extremely influential in determining the content of English as a pedagogic subject in secondary and higher education as it was beginning to be formed at the time. Ball (1983) pointed out that the Association was not a grassroots one but more of an elitist club. Its aims were two-fold: to promote the maintenance of 'correct use of English, spoken and written', and to advance 'the due recognition of English as an essential element in the national education.' Correct use of English, spoken and written referred to standard English and received pronunciation as an index of both character and speech. These aims identified with those of the leading public schools and universities as represented by eminent writers, politicians and educationalists rather than with those of the elementary and higher grade schools and their representatives. As aims, they sought to bring together the three separate elements of grammar, composition and literature into the one subject of English. Of the three, literature was proposed as the unifying element. They sought to replace methods and practices associated with the classical curriculum with ones that gave greater emphasis to literary qualities and the creative expression of pupils.

The terms 'Correct English' and 'English literature' as they were used by the Association and later the Newbolt Report are characterised by exclusivity, defined by the standard language variety and its literature. However, it is virtually impossible to give a fixed, accurate, precise definition of standard English for both speech and writing and its corresponding accent RP, just as it is to give one for a canon of English literature, that will hold across all time. What constitutes these categories alters socially, culturally and historically at any given moment in time. They cannot be accounted for by means of intrinsic or empirically observable, logical or scientific properties. Nevertheless, claims for the objectivity of speech, writing and the textual categorisation of literature clearly dominated collective professional thinking about English in the 1920s that re-surfaced in debates about English and language in the 1990s.

However, in the 1920s language theory supported the arguments put forward for the centrality of English in the school curriculum defined as standard English and its literature in ways that it cannot in the 1990s.

Given the task of formulating a curriculum for the newly created secondary system, the Board of Education for the first time looked directly to the subject association for help in putting forward a scheme for teaching English. Ball (1983) made the point that the work of defining and promoting English as a school subject was literally carried out in various corridors of power, rather than in school classrooms and staff rooms.

In 1910 the Board published its circular on English (Circular 753), *The Teaching of English in Secondary Schools*. Much of the Circular's content was drawn from advice given by the Association. It identified two main aims that echoed those of the Association: to train the mind to appreciate English literature and to cultivate the use of the English language in speech and writing. It also recognised the futility of teaching tradition, Latinate grammar. Phonetics had profoundly affected the content of teaching about language in both schools and teacher education. The history of language had influenced its teaching in a different way. The notion of a universal grammar based on the description of ancient Classical languages became increasingly untenable in the light of observable changes to the lexical and grammatical structures of English over the centuries. The Circular therefore acknowledged the futility of teaching grammar based on a Latinate model, particularly that of applying the structures of a 'dead' language to a 'living' one such as English:

There is no such thing as English Grammar in the sense which used to be attached to the term. Grammar is the structure of language reduced to theoretic system, but no system based on the phenomena of any living language can be final. English is not a language the growth of which is ended and the usages of which can therefore be collected and expressed in settled formulae, but is a living organism in process of constant change. In the past the formal teaching of English Grammar was based on Latin Grammar. It is now realised that this was a mistake founded on a whole set of misconceptions. The rules governing the use of a highly inflected language like Latin are almost wholly inapplicable to English. Nor is English a language like Latin of which the pupils are entirely ignorant before they begin to learn it at school and which accordingly they cannot begin to decipher without the help of grammatical rules.

HMSO (1910:4).

Investigation into the history of language had discredited the notion of a single, universal grammar. However, no satisfactory alternative to replace it was proposed. Consequently, the writers of the Circular were not able to offer any alternative to it other than a vague 'mastery over language' which was to be derived from studying literature. Moreover, since

examinations continued to set formal grammar questions until the late 1960s, it was more than likely that teachers continued to teach grammar in precisely the way attacked by the Circular.

As Shayer (1972) has pointed out, it is extremely difficult to judge the effects circulars such as the one discussed here actually had on teaching English in schools, especially given the kind of English teachers had been trained to deliver under the Revised Code. No doubt many teachers continued to teach grammar, as well as composition and literature, in much the same way as it had been taught in the nineteenth century, given the nature and content of government requirements set out in Schedules. The 1910 Schedules for English, for instance, quoted in Chapter 3 and published in the same year as the Circular, did not reflect the changes in thinking about the nature of the subject. The School Certificate which replaced them in 1917 continued to include grammar and composition as part of its assessment.

Nevertheless, articles in journals such as *The Journal of Education* began to demand 'real' literary study centred on texts rather than on literary history. They also criticised the transference of methods associated with teaching Classical literature being applied to the teaching of English literature. At the same time as attempting to train minds to appreciate English literature with an emphasis on engaging with creativity and imagination, teachers also had to meet examination requirements that tended to measure the quantity, rather than the quality, of pupils' reading.

In 1921, a committee was formed to propose a curriculum for English was chaired by Sir Henry Newbolt, who was himself a well-known and respected poet, with the remainder made up of respected and eminent professionals in the field of English Studies. At the time of his appointment to the committee, Newbolt was president of the English Association and members of the Association held the majority on the committee. As Baldick (1983) points out, the committee's terms of reference were wide enough for it to propose rebuilding national education around English as a keystone. Committee members such as John Dover Wilson, editor of the Cambridge edition of Shakespeare and HM1, professors Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and Caroline Spurgeon were not only sufficiently academically eminent but also respected enough to ensure that the spirit, if not the letter, of the Report would filter through the education system.

Its aim was the development of a system of education centred upon a national consciousness based upon the native language and literature. This national consciousness was to include a new unity between social classes by appropriating Mathew Arnold's statement that culture 'seeks to do away with classes' by altering it to 'culture unites classes'. In this sense, while Arnold's statement positioned culture as a means of abolishing the notion of class altogether,

that of the Report placed it as a way of bringing cultures together while maintaining the notion of class itself.

The Report stated that whereas a study of the Classics had served as a distinction between classes, a liberal education based on English as the national language and the one which all classes spoke, 'forming a new element of national unity, that linked together the mental life of all classes.' This unity was to be forged not just through language, but mainly through literature: 'Such a feeling for our native language would be a bond of union between classes, and would beget the right kind of national pride. Even more certainly should pride and joy in the national literature serve as a bond' (HMSO 1922:121). Standard English, therefore, continued to be perceived as a homogenous variety of language and the values realised through its literature ones to which all people would wish to ascribe.

The writers of the Report recognised that the working classes were suspicious of such an intention: 'We were told that the working classes, especially those belonging to organised labour movements, were antagonistic to, and contemptuous of, literature, that they regarded it merely an ornament, a polite accomplishment, a subject to be despised by really virile men' (1922:121) The Report countered this view, on the grounds that, following Arnold's definition of culture as the best that had been thought and said in the world, literature could bind together 'the vast empire of human society' through its passion and knowledge. Rejecting literature, the report warned, spelt nothing short of disaster for the nation.

Together with advocating literature as a socially unifying force, the Report also advocated unity of language, particularly through the use of the standard language, which was linked to standards of behaviour. It makes it clear that they are not advocating such speech by appealing to class but on the grounds of mutual intelligibility. Thus despite the 'evil habits' dialects exhibited, their eradication by standard English was not advocated, in its words, 'on any grounds of social superiority, but because it is manifestly desirable that all English people should be capable of speaking so as to be fully intelligible to each other and speak Standard English was thus a barrier to successful communication.'

More recent theories of language have pointed out the ideological implications of these decisions. Fairclough points out that:

there is a constant endeavour on the part of those who have power to try to impose an ideological common sense which holds for everyone. Having the power to determine things like which word meanings or which linguistic and communicative norms are legitimate or 'correct' or 'appropriate' is an important aspect of social power, and therefore a focus of ideological struggle.

Fairclough (1989:88-9).

He argues further that dominant discourse types within institutions seek to become naturalised by appearing to lose their ideological character. They do this by becoming the discourse of the institution itself rather than that of a particular grouping within it. The discourse appears to be neutral because it places itself outside the ideology. As a consequence of this, learning to operate within a particular discourse is viewed as the acquisition of the techniques or skills required to use it effectively. In Fairclough's words: 'The apparent emptying of the ideological content of discourse is, paradoxically, a fundamental ideological effect: ideology works through disguising its nature pretending to be what it isn't' (Fairclough 1989:92).

By advocating standard English as the common language for native speakers of English rather than on any grounds of its superiority, the writers of the Newbolt Report were presenting as neutral a position which was itself ideological. Milroy makes a similar point:

A common belief in the western world, where nation states have generally developed highly focused linguistic standards, is that there is one and only one 'correct' way of using the language. As a consequence of this belief, varieties other than those accepted as standard are held to be inferior; one might say that the standard language is LEGITIMISED and structures different from it which are characteristic of other varieties are thought of as corruptions of the standard and as illegitimate. These widely held and deeply entrenched views appear to be highly resistant to conscious reflection.

Milroy (1987:199-200).

Such beliefs implicitly accept an equation between democracy, homogeneity and orderliness. English as a school subject as it was defined by the Newbolt Report generally made no secret of the fact that it viewed one of its main purposes as the provider of orderliness and homogeneity in the name of unity. English was to be a source of levelling up or raising of the moral and intellectual fabric of the nation through reading literature and speaking the standard register. From a critical discourse perspective, the values expressed by the writers of the Newbolt Report can be shown to support and re-inforce social power. Nevertheless, their argument for making the vernacular language and its literature central to the curriculum was an enlightened and heavily disputed argument at the time, even if the language theory supporting such an argument was not.

Structures which differed from standard English such as dialects were deemed corruptions and thereby made illegitimate. But the sharing of one common language by all members of a society is an illusion. Eagleton points out that: 'Any actual language consists of a highly complex range of discourses, differentiated according to class, region, gender, status and so on, which can by no means be neatly unified into a single homogeneous linguistic community'

(1983 : 4). Nevertheless, the dream of homogeneity was strong at the time of the Report. It was supported by rational, empirical, scientific enquiry, articulating a sincere belief that English Studies as defined by it was democratically conceived. Such a belief also suited the purposes of the state that embraced its definition of English as it moved increasingly towards democracy.

Whereas spoken standard English was presented as ideologically neutral in the Report, literature was not. It argued for its aesthetic superiority over other kinds of writing, on the grounds that it was a vehicle for morality and authority and as an alternative to religion in terms of the values which the society sought to present to all its members. It looked back to a pre-industrial age and projected the vision to a time when the poet would ‘...once more bring sanctification and joy into the sphere of common life’ such as had existed in the Middle Ages when literature and life had not been so separate. The Report can be interpreted as an attempt to halt the voice of popular culture and stop the establishment of a distinct working class culture by turning back the clock. Nevertheless, its writers also feared the increasing commercialisation of culture. Its authors hoped to arrest its emerging cultural practice whilst it was still subordinate by presenting its own seductive vision of culture and the practices associated with it by advocating English not so much as a subject, but as a way of life.

Nevertheless the narrowness of its definition of English literature has been severely criticised, as it was at the time. In a contemporary review of the Report, Morant pointed out that: ‘The evolution of a literature and the evolution of the language in which it is expressed do not run along the same lines; often -and most notably in the case of English - the two things are entirely different’ (1922:475). He criticised the separation of English literature from all others, including translations of Classical works. Although Morant was arguing for retaining classical literature in translation as part of English literature, his argument could also be applied to the inclusion of other kinds of literature and suggested rewording English literature to literature in English. Nevertheless, the vision of English which delocated humanism from the Classics and relocated it within English literature as defined by the Report was further popularised through method books for teachers. In his book *English for the English* (1921), Sampson, a member of the Newbolt Committee, reiterated many of the Report’s ideas, reiterating the position of English as synonymous with a way of life. Clearly, Sampson and other members of the Newbolt committee recognised the social cultural significance of language in constituting reality. What most critics of the Report have taken issue with has been with the way of life it projected rather than with its connection between language and life.

It is clear why the ideas presented in the Newbolt Report and Sampson's book were relocated so readily within the school curriculum itself. The status of English as a subject was elevated to something more than a subject. Through literature, future generations could find the values by which to live. Mathieson (1975) explored this notion in detail, criticising the burden such an approach places on English teachers themselves. More specifically, she took issue with the paternalism of the cultural heritage model and its predominantly one-sided male interpretation of culture and value.

Following the publication of the Report, the work of 'English' pioneers such as F.D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley laid the emphasis on solidarity between the classes with the cultivation of 'larger sympathies', the instillation of national pride and the transmission of moral values. The rise of 'English' was, therefore, more or less concomitant with an historical shift in the very meaning of the term 'moral', of which Matthew Arnold, then A. R. Orage, and F.R. Leavis were the major critical exponents. Morality was no longer seen in terms of a formulated code or explicit ethical system associated with religion, but rather with a sensitive preoccupation with the whole quality of life itself, particularly of human experience as it was expressed in and through literature.

The move from a skills model to a cultural heritage model and the humanist concern with morality was consistent with changing ideas regarding the nature of learning itself outlined above. The growing influence of a 'child-centred' approach to learning replaced the more traditional one of the teacher as holder of knowledge that lent itself to an engagement with literature. Official sanction was given to such an approach with the publication of the Hadow Reports of 1926 and 1931, which explored in more detail teaching and learning based on 'activity and experience' rather than 'knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored'. Such a shift in the perceived nature of learning meant that further credibility was given to the exponents of literature as a storehouse of meaning and value as defined by one section of the community on behalf of all others.

Consequently, the study of grammar was relegated within the English curriculum to the edges of the subject, taught almost solely for the purposes of examination. Language itself, however, and more particularly the language of literature, was, in the words of F.R. Leavis, a 'living' principle. He described it as: '...a central core in which for generations speakers have met...language belongs to the humanly created world, as along with it does thought (1975 : 58). Leavis became a famous exponent of the civilising and moral influence of literature in the decades following the publication of the Newbolt Report. The connection between thought and language was for him located in the 'humanly created world', with its core to be found in the expression of language as literature.

4.4 Leavis, Thompson, Cultural Heritage and Language

The cultural shift theorised by the Newbolt Report continued throughout the 1930s and 1940s associated with Leavis and the Cambridge School of English, particularly in grammar schools. Its re-evaluation of the national past and language became the focus of different pressures and values as cultural patterns themselves changed. Whereas industrialisation and capitalism had been viewed as progressive in the nineteenth century, Leavis viewed modern twentieth century society as a process of decay. As Donald (1992) has pointed out, part of the cause lay with the increasing standardisation of people and things brought about by the mass market and machines as well as the introduction of new cultural forms such as the cinema. The Leavisites showed contempt for middlebrow culture and loathing for the herd-like docility generated by the cheap and manipulative appeal of the new media.

Leavis and his pupil Thompson pursued their argument about the boundaries between mass culture and education through a highly influential journal they both helped to found called '*Scrutiny*'. Mulhern (1979) has documented the impact of the journal on contemporary thinking about the importance of literature and its role in society. Textbooks written and published by Leavis and Thompson, either separately or jointly such as *Culture and Environment* criticising the alienating and repetitive nature of the industrial workplace were immensely popular and influential in informing a generation of English teachers.

Very briefly, Leavis and Thompson like the writers of the Newbolt Report before them, argued that from the Elizabethan age to the Industrial Revolution shared and settled customs had steadily declined. The Industrial Revolution had ended an order already shaken by the results of the Civil War, an order which was homogeneous, naturally organised and psychologically whole brought about fragmentation. The former organic community became artificially ordered and psychologically splintered. For Leavis, language had a fundamental role as an important upholder of values: 'At the centre of our culture is language, and while we still have our language tradition is, in some essential sense, still alive. And language is not merely a matter of words - or words are more than they seem to be' (1975 : 81). Thus for Leavis language was the purveyor of the living principle of tradition within a humanly created world. Within literature, Leavis pointed to writing such as D. H. Lawrence's, in which the writer's prose endeavoured to be a part of, rather than distinct from, the world represented within it. He relocated English studies as a concern with the relationship between the ideas expressed through prose and the world they represented. Although language was of central concern, Leavis's emphasis was more upon subject matter than upon the relationship between language and the ideas represented through it. The principles upon which nineteenth century grammars had been based had been discredited, and new ones were yet to be worked out. Consequently,

the study of literature filled this vacuum in the absence of any other vision or relocation of English.

The influence of Leavis' position extended to schools and higher education through another journal, founded in 1939 by Thompson first called *English in Schools* then *The Use Of English*, that still exists today. Thompson's influence on the pedagogy of English in schools paralleled that of Leavis in the university. Although Thompson was also vehement in his abhorrence and disaffection with modern society, he rejected a wholesale regression into the past and sought refuge instead in promoting a critical awareness of culture which would look into capitalist economy and bourgeois culture to expose their shortcomings. As a pedagogic subject, English became primarily the transmission and exposition of a unified literary culture designed to inoculate pupils against the ravages of a hostile environment and the growing influence and proliferation of media such as newspapers and film. Within such a definition, Thompson maintained that standards of writing, echoing the 1910 circular on English, should come from literature, arguing that it provided the best guide for writing.

Such a view of English was not without contestation. In contrast to their abhorrence of modern media, the first Director General of the newly formed British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), John Reith, saw the mass address of radio as a solution rather than as a flaw. Means of communication were seen as a channel for education as well as information and entertainment that were based on active listening rather than passive consumption. Radio, rather than literature, could serve as an integrator and provider of unity for a modern democracy. Donald states that:

However marked the contrast between the Leavisite strategy of education as opposition to mass civilisation and the Reithian vision of the mass media as a channel for education, both were concerned to institute structures of cultural and symbolic authority as a means of 'policing' a democratic population, its knowledge, its moral welfare and its potentially subversive pleasures.

Donald (1992:76).

Nevertheless, exponents of literature as a moral force such as Thompson were supported by further government publications on education which advocated a Leavisite, rather than a Reithian, position. A further report into secondary education in grammar and technical high schools was critical of the fact that the teaching of English in grammar schools did not realise to the extent that they should its essential aims. It reiterated the two aims for English stated in the 1910 circular and added a third: the development of 'communication...to benefit the child as a social being, and to help him to take his place as a thinking individual and a wise citizen' DES (1938 : 219).

This Report reinforced the recontextualisation of English by recommending teaching methods associated with putting the aims of English into practice, thus forming the principles for its evaluation. It advocated teaching grammar and punctuation as part of pupils' own writing rather than as dictation or the correcting of passages written for the express purpose of correction. For writing it advocated methods described by Philip Hartog (1908), methods which placed increasing emphasis on individual creativity and less emphasis on formal grammar teaching that prepared the ground for the personal growth model for English. It also exhorted teachers to provide opportunities for oral work and written composition, reiterating the part that speech-training had to play in abolishing class barriers:

Certainly it would be an advantage if all our children could learn the same English speech, though we agree with the Report in recommending the preservation of true dialect, as distinct from affected or debased forms which have no roots in history. Teachers are everywhere tackling this problem, though they are not to be envied their struggle against the natural conservatism of childhood allied to the popularisation of the infectious accent of Hollywood. The pervading influences of the hoarding, the cinema, and a large section of the public press, are (in this respect as in others) subtly corrupting the tastes and habits of the rising generation.

(1938 : 221-3).

The influence of Leavis and his followers is evident throughout, particularly the representation of commercial culture as 'corrupting' the young. It also marks a shift in extending the legitimacy of language variety to include 'true dialects' as well as standard English. The notion of other varieties as debased and 'having no history' perpetuates the metaphor of cultural 'decay' and re-inforces that of the 'organic community'. 'True' dialects with a tradition and history tended to be those located in the country and a pre-industrial and popular past, whilst those with 'no history' were sited in the present, urban communities and were by definition corrupt. Hollywood was the epitome. The association between language and behaviour also persists. The use of these more recent varieties of English was believed to corrupt not only speech, but also 'tastes' and 'habits' of young people, associations which were coming under increasing sociological scrutiny and found wanting. Nevertheless, there was, and indeed still is, a strong belief in the evolutionist theory of language. Despite evidence to the contrary, this sees standard English not only as the superior dialect of English that is also a standard of behaviour but also as having reached a peak of evolutionary perfection in its form which has to be preserved from corrupting influences - as if the process of change came to an end at a specific moment in time and any further change is evidence of a downward, decaying trend (see: Aitchinson 1992). Thus while eighteenth and nineteenth century lexicographers and grammarians sought to increase and elaborate modern English as a literary language, cultural theorists such as Leavis struggled to preserve it from 'corrupting' influences.

Ball (1983) argues that it was the secondary sector, and more especially in girls' high schools and the newly founded state grammar schools, which embraced the cultural heritage model the most. Boys' grammar schools and public schools resisted the move away from the classics and the introduction of English as a separate subject for some time. As Ball writes:

Thus the 'new' version of English made most headway in low status areas of schooling - in the education of girls, the children of the working class community in elementary schools, and the lower middle classes in the new state secondary schools The work of the English Association and the published materials of the Board of Education were clearly in advance of the classroom practice of the general population of English teachers - in so far as such a population existed.

Ball (1983 : 83).

As the century progressed, this 'new' version of English was found to be wanting, particularly its exclusive nature that defined English language and literature as that representative of a powerful minority of the population. As the industrial and increasingly technological workplace continued to demand more sophisticated standards of literacy, particularly of writing, the voice of the vocationist re-emerged and began to be heard. It was conceded that although the study of literature might have a humanising effect to a certain degree, this was not sufficient for a technological society with its corresponding emphasis on written forms, the least of which were literary. There was a growing tension between the increasing demands of ever more sophisticated notions of literacy from within the public arena of the workplace and from within the profession that challenged the privileging of literary text. This tension provided the conditions for a further recontextualisation of English as a personal growth, that broadened the privileged text to language itself.

Chapter 5

A Language for Life?

5.0 Introduction

This chapter considers the impact of research undertaken in psychology, sociology and linguistics upon English pedagogy between the passing of the 1944 Education Act and the publication of the Bullock Report in 1975. It does so in so far as the research undertaken in these areas influenced the recontextualisation of the cultural heritage model into one of personal growth. As with the previous two chapters, the discussion is placed against wider social and political changes that affected the state system of education and its curriculum. De-regulation of curriculum control during this period was matched by expansion of educational provision that ultimately led to conflict between politics and policy, ideology and theory regarding the nature and aims of English pedagogy, resulting in the commissioning of a second report into the teaching of English.

5.1 Secondary Education For All: Grammar Versus Comprehensive and the Secondary Modern Curriculum

From 1918 onwards, despite internal disagreements over how to achieve its aim, the Labour Party had consistently exercised pressure to reform English secondary education to make it less elitist and class-oriented. The influential socialist thinker R.H. Tawney (1922), had argued that there was no defence for a system which provided a grammar school education that almost exclusively benefited children from the middle-class. After its first return to office in 1923, the Party aimed to broaden the provision of secondary education to the children of all sections of society, supported by other political parties. By the 1940's, Tawney's aim of secondary education being made available to all children regardless of class had become one supported by all political parties, culminating in the 1944 Education Act.

The Act re-organised the state system of education, making secondary together with primary education non fee-paying for all children whilst leaving the private including the public one for which fees were charged essentially intact. It was passed under a Conservative government and inherited by Labour a year later when it was returned to office. The key question to be resolved was the kind of education which was to be provided within the newly created secondary schools, since the provisions made by the Act were sufficiently broad to enable its content and structure to be interpreted in many different ways.

Prior to the Act, the Norwood Report in 1943 had concluded, from the evidence presented to it, that children could be divided roughly into three different groupings, each characterised by a different type of mind. From this, it followed that three types of schooling were needed, designed to suit each one. Consequently, schools were re-organised into primary ones for all children aged between 5 and 11 for which no entrance examination was required, followed by a tri-partite division of secondary schools into grammar, technical and secondary modern. Entrance to these schools was by ability regardless of class, determined by an entrance examination. As Chitty (1989) has observed, one would have thought that a divided system of this kind which essentially perpetuated class differences would have been challenged by the Labour Party. In 1938 the Labour Party had formally adopted a policy of multilateral or common schools, later known as comprehensive, as a possible solution to the conditions and status of different kinds of secondary schools. Nevertheless, grammar schools were highly regarded amongst the Labour leadership who saw them as a way of extending the educational opportunity of the brightest working class children.

Secondary education for all, therefore, was taken by some to mean extending the opportunity to attend grammar schools to children from working class as well as middle class backgrounds. For others, it meant challenging their privileged position by establishing comprehensive schools. At the heart of the debate, then as today, was the issue of how to provide for education in ways which would be equitable whilst at the same time recognising the different educational needs of all children regardless of their class. Whilst a comprehensive system might provide equality of opportunity, the kind of curriculum it could offer was a different matter. The danger of a tri-partite system was the concern that one kind of school, namely the grammar school, would be awarded more status than any other. A 1942 memo from Labour's Advisory Committee on Education, for example, argued that if the reorganisation of secondary education later endorsed by the 1944 Act failed to challenge the power and status of the grammar school, 'then we may have to try the multilateral school, but I should still feel we were sacrificing educational to social considerations. I think it may be necessary to do so, but I think we should recognise what we are doing' (quoted in Parkinson 1970:33). Respect for the grammar school tradition and its curriculum, therefore, overcame the desire for establishing comprehensive schools and was an important feature of the Labour Party's education policy during the 1940's.

Secondary education for all, then, was initially taken to mean expansion of the opportunity to attend grammar schools to all children from the working class. At the same time, the number of available grammar school places remained at the same level as during the inter-war years, thereby making less available to the middle class. The 1944 Act also liberated the curriculum from the 1902 regulations, transferring responsibility for it to the regional and local levels of

headteachers, governing bodies and LEAs. Chitty (1989) points out that the divided administrative system of secondary schools mitigated against any notion of a common one and helped to continue the curriculum tradition established by grammar schools dominated by the requirements of public examinations.

In most areas, the re-organisation of secondary education centred around the establishment of grammar and secondary modern schools, with one in five children attending the former, thus creating a bi-partite rather than tri-partite system. The re-organisation did not initially extend to reform of examinations beyond altering the requirements of the School Certificate to General Certificates of Education (GCE) divided by subject. For pupils at secondary modern schools, this was the only examination available to them. As these schools prepared and entered their more able pupils for the school certificate examination and after 1951 GCE, it became increasingly obvious that testing at eleven years of age was not a definitive indicator of future achievements. It was also clear that every child was not born with a quota of intelligence that was genetically determined and remained constant uninfluenced by social considerations. As Chitty observed:

This was at a time when technological change and economic advance were making new demands on the educational system and emphasising the need to raise the educational level of the population as a whole. In other words, the divided system of secondary education was both socially disruptive and at the same time an anachronism in an age which demanded an educated workforce and put a premium on skills and specialisation

Chitty (1989:34).

Concerns of this kind regarding the shortcomings of the divided system proved to be a crucial factor in the move to change the organisation of schools to one based on non-selection. As people's income steadily rose following the end of the second world war, a bipartite system of education also became less politically viable. Middle-class parents saw assurance of grammar school places for their children become less certain as the number available was distributed amongst a greater population that added to that concern. By the early nineteen sixties, the Labour Party were sufficiently convinced that they had the public support necessary to carry out their policy of comprehensive education more fully. Nevertheless, they were still aware of the popularity of the grammar school amongst their supporters and sought to allay anxieties that comprehensive re-organisation would not mean abolishing one kind of school to create another. Whereas comprehensive and grammar schools had their supporters, those of the secondary modern were few, not helped by the lack of clearly defined aims and objectives and a curriculum initially unsupported by public examinations (see: Dent (1958); Taylor (1963)). For many, they appeared to be little more than an extension of the old elementary schools. Nevertheless, it was the curriculum of secondary modern schools freed from the constraints of

central control and examinations that provided the conditions for the recontextualisation of English away from cultural heritage towards personal growth with the public demands of the skills model never far away from either.

Experiments in child psychology, most notably undertaken by Piaget (1955, 1967) had greatly influenced primary education and lent support to the work of educational theorists of the 1940's and 50's such as Wilhelm Viola, Herbert Read and Marjorie Hourd. They all argued forcibly that imagination and experience as expressed through narrative was at the centre of the educational process at secondary as well as primary level. As Shayer summed up:

Imagination shapes experience, and gives it significance; it follows that there must be opportunity for free expression on the part of the child in writing, drama and oral work, to permit the imaginative faculty opportunity to work at its leisure and bring this significance to the individual's experience. Each pupil must be 'the active participant in a creative process' not the passive recipient of teacher's interpretations. Words become an expressive medium like paint; the writing of a poem is, for a child as for an adult, an attempt to 'make' something in a shaping, plastic sense, and particularly through symbol and metaphor children can come to terms with inner feelings which would otherwise be inexpressible, and through such symbolic expression can integrate them into an overall pattern of awareness.'

Shayer (1972 : 137-8).

Hourd (1949) argued that just as writing begins with the experiences of the pupil, so too does reading. Contemporary research into children's reading habits showed that what children read when choosing for themselves was completely different from the literature they experienced at school. This fact led some researchers to draw the conclusion that what children were offered at school should be brought more into line with what children themselves read out of school. Hourd, however, argued that literature played an important part in providing an aesthetic model for children. She claimed that the main aim of literature was: 'to provide a means towards a fuller development of personality-a means, again, of growth...In the English lesson, perhaps more than in any other, it is necessary to cast one's bread upon the waters. But it must be bread and not chaff in which there is no nourishment' (Hourd (1949:13)). Referring to Dewey (1915), Hourd reaffirmed the importance of adult values and the forms produced by artists as a means of evaluating children's work: 'He may read trash when he is alone, but when he becomes creative in the presence of creators only the highest standards are appropriate to his efforts.' (Hourd (1949:17)). The discourse of the Romantic Individualist thus re-focused English with its emphasis upon individual creativity for which literature served as a model and whose values would become self-evident to pupils.

An English curriculum organised on principles such as those summarised above appeared well-suited to an English curriculum in secondary modern schools with its emphasis on

imagination, experience and creativity. By using language as an expressive medium rather than evaluating its use in literature or formally reproducing it in writing, children would be able to come to terms with their feelings and absorb adult values. Such expression was to be carefully modelled on a literary aesthetics of appreciation so that the secondary modern child would come to appreciate literary culture through his or her own creative engagement rather than through its study. This refocusing, with its emphasis on the unique creativity of every child regardless of its social background, clearly suited the state apparatus of education at the time. It re-cast appreciation of literature and associated methods of study that had come to be associated with the elitist and class-based tradition of the private schools and universities to which the grammar schools had been added from its primary location in the texts to the creativity of the child through the writing of theorists such as Holbrook (1961) and Whitehead (1966).

This curriculum was endorsed by the Newsom Report commissioned to consider a curriculum that would be appropriate for pupils aged 13 to 16 of average or below ability. In its recommendations for the teaching of English, it affirmed the link between social awareness and the importance of spoken English. It stated that:

The overriding aim of English teaching must be the personal development and social competence of the pupil. And of all the different aspects of English, speech has by far the most significant contribution to make towards that development. Inability to speak fluently is a worse handicap than inability to read or write...Personal and social adequacy depend on being articulate, that is, on having the words and language structures with which to think, to communicate what is thought, and to understand what is heard or read...Any definition of literacy for them must include an improved command of spoken English....

DES (1963:para 467).

The Report further advocated that: 'having learned, in some degree, how to handle words, the pupils have to be helped to learn now not to be handled by them. They need not merely to read, but to read with increased sensitivity. This may require more attention to what pupils read at their own level, to help them formulate their own responses in words, and so be in a better position to criticise for themselves' (1963 : para 472). In other words, the Report widened the scope of the text privileged in English to include all spoken language and broadened the range to written language to include the study of written media such as magazines and newspapers together with literature. It also made a strong claim for the study of visual media, film and television including advertising which were considered to be culturally powerful forces and significant sources of language and ideas.

The Report justified their inclusion on the grounds that not enough attention had been paid to these media nor the significance of their impact and influence of pupils' attitudes and values in terms of training children. Nevertheless, although the Report widened the sphere of English beyond that encompassed by the teaching of standard English and its literature, such teaching remained central. Rather than recontextualising its content, it was more the teaching methods associated with it which led pupils to an appreciation of the importance of standard English and the value inherent in literature of the kind advocated by Hourd.

According to the Report, pupils were to be guided towards the use of a particular variety of speech and its associated literature to teach culture and value through a process of implicit self-discovery rather than explicit transference. The inclusion of other forms such as the media was more by way of providing a contrast and to highlight its corrupting influence on such value. Although Newsom did not use such emotionally charged words as those of the Newbolt Report to describe particular uses of language as 'evil' and 'corrupt', their presence can be inferred in the more neutral choice of words and phrases such as 'the significance of its impact' and the need to 'train' children. Just as pupils would be led to 'see' the value of literature, so too would they be led to 'see' the worthlessness of the media. Social competence and personal development, therefore, remained firmly entrenched within one particular view of the world not dissimilar to that of cultural heritage which pupils would implicitly come to realise was 'better' than others.

Theories of child language development, such as the one outlined by Watts (1944) added further support to a more creative and child-centred approach to teaching language. Like Vygotsky, Watts attempted to show that far from learning language by imitation, children acquired language in progressive stages, moving from the concrete to the abstract. Watts argued that children internalise the various stages of language development as they are ready for them. To impose adult language structures on young pupils either in writing or in reading before they were capable of absorbing them, resulted in pupils reproducing them mechanically and superficially when a school situation required them or failed to reproduce them at all. He argued that pupils should be given opportunities to work and experiment freely at their own levels of linguistic competence. His theory implied that teaching the formal, adult, grammatical structures of language was inappropriate and a waste of educational time.

Watts' theories were further supported by a growing body of research undertaken into the teaching of grammar that demonstrated the inappropriateness of teaching it to young pupils. (E.g. Baranyai (1949) Macauley (1947)). Throughout the nineteen fifties the debate continued in articles published in journal *Use of English* with titles such as 'Grammar, Language and Style', 'Meaningful Grammar' and 'The Teaching of Formal English Grammar', which

generally decried the teaching of formal grammar exercises in favour of pupils learning about grammar through their own writing.

Method books such as Holbrook's *English for Maturity* (1960), *English for the Rejected* (1964) and *Secret Places* (1964) proposed counteracting the 'anti-life' of mass entertainment by bringing to pupils' attention the social world they inhabited through a consideration of its cultural manifestation in literature and through their own writing inspired by literature or their own experiences modelled upon literary forms. English had truly become 'a way of life' by making its subject matter, particularly creative and imaginative interpretations, life itself. Within such a model, the methods associated with the traditional teaching of grammar had no place. Like Watts (1949) before him, Holbrook (1961) insisted that it was through the use of language that pupils would learn to develop their writing rather than through formal lessons in grammar and composition. He reiterated that it was quality of expression regardless of technical accuracy that should form the main criterion by which pupils' work was judged. Similar to Hourd, he opened the way for less able pupils and those from working class speech communities to produce imaginative work of high quality, illustrating his point by publishing a collection of children's writing.

Such a recontextualisation was furthered when the Schools Council was created in 1964 following recommendations made by the Lockwood Working Party, the Council allowed teachers and schools, rather than university departments, to hold the initiative in curriculum and assessment for the first time. It also allowed the theories associated with a changing model of English to be translated into curriculum practice. One of its central principles was that examinations should follow the curriculum, rather than the other way around. Politically, in the nineteen sixties all parties seemed to agree on widening educational opportunity on an egalitarian basis, irrespective of class, race or gender that also extended to the curriculum. The National Association of the Teaching of English (NATE) was formed in 1963 with its own journal, *English and Education*. Unlike the English Association, NATE was a grassroots organisation that included teachers from both primary and secondary sectors of education. Given the lack of government control concerning curriculum initiative, NATE and its members were influential in promoting personal growth as a curriculum model for the secondary modern school and its assessment, designing the Certificate in Secondary Education (CSE) introduced during the nineteen sixties. This model was further supported by changes in twentieth century language theory that altered the emphasis from a prescriptive approach to language study of the kind described in 2.2 and 3.2 to a more descriptive one that no longer supported the inherent superiority of one language or variety over another. Taken together with the research and arguments outlined above, they provided a strong case for the abandonment of formal grammar teaching and its associated methods of teaching and assessment. They also

challenged long held beliefs regarding the nature of the association between words and their meaning that took longer to impact upon the pedagogy of language study.

5.2 Changing Theories of Language

At the beginning of the twentieth century, language study began to move away from history. Recognition of the fact that language changed had made it difficult to sustain the idea of a universal grammar. In the posthumous publication of his lecture notes (1916), Saussure drew the distinction between the synchronic and the diachronic approaches to language study and concentrated his studies in the former. Saussure's distinction made it possible to study language scientifically as 'an absolute state...defined by lack of change'. He made a further distinction between language as an abstract system of conventions and signs shared by all members of a speech community (*la langue*) and the individual use of words (*la parole*). Saussure made it clear that his emphasis was upon language study concerned with a scientific study of ' *langue*' rather than of ' *parole*', since ' *langue*' contained regular patterns.

Saussure has been criticised for separating the study of language from its history, a criticism Crowley (1996) has answered. In his re-reading of Saussure, Crowley shows how that, far from being ignored, change is at the heart of the definition of the synchronic state of language. He argues that Saussure did not deny linguistic change at a synchronic level, but, in the interest of science, ignored it and relegated it to a secondary position. The interpretation often placed upon Saussure's *Cours* is that he was anti-historical is too simplistic. Crowley takes issue with this:

The account then of Saussure as the creator of anti-historical linguistics is...both accurate and reductive: accurate if we take Saussure's 'anti-historical' stance to mean a study of language which relegates the importance of linguistic change through time, but reductive if it is taken to mean a study of language which rejects altogether the significance of language in history. It is fair in terms of his theoretical stance, since the delimitations he makes are in his view required for the purposes of science. But the account is unjust in taking these methodological manoeuvres as indicating a negative stance on Saussure's part towards the type of relations between language and history which he outlines under the title of 'external linguistics'.

Crowley (1996 : 27).

Crowley further argues that it is unfair to brand Saussure as an anti-historical linguist for limiting his study of language in the way that he does. Following Saussure, linguistic study altered its focus from a concern with the history of language to a scientific study centred upon discovering regular patterns of language with which structuralist theory became concerned. Saussure made one other distinction that was also to influence subsequent investigation into language. He distinguished between the signifier - the physical representation of a word, such

as the letters or sounds t-r-ee and the signified - the tree itself. The distinction between *langue* and *parole* began to influence the writing of grammar and its teaching in that grammarians endeavoured to explain how language appeared to both conform to certain patterns and at the same time allowed for an infinite range of expression and variety. As a result, grammatical description of the kind proposed by Jespersen (1924) became concerned with describing the rules that existed in language rather than with prescribing rules for its use. In his *Essentials of English Grammar*, he writes that:

The chief object in teaching grammar today - especially that of a foreign language - would appear to be to give rules which must be obeyed if one wants to speak and write the language correctly-rules which as often as not seem quite arbitrary. Of greater value, however, than this *prescriptive* grammar is a purely *descriptive* grammar which, instead of serving as a guide to what is said or written, aims at finding out what is actually said and written by the speakers of the language investigated, and thus may lead to a scientific understanding of the rules followed instinctively by speakers and writers.

Jespersen (1933:20).

Jespersen attempted such a grammar in his book. It was historical, in that Jespersen was also concerned with why usage had come to be formulated as it did rather than confining himself to contemporary use. He adapted and altered the terminology of traditional grammar by introducing new technical terms to describe English not found in Latin - such as amorphous sentences, expanded tenses and nexus - as well as dispensing with others which 'really say nothing that cannot be expressed clearly in simple everyday language'. The notion of an abstract, universal grammar which framed individual use of language was very strong. That this system was realised through social and psychological activity, however, led to an emphasis upon pupils' own writing and speech as the best way to learn grammar rather than through formal study.

In 1923, the English Association had published its pamphlet called *The Problem of Grammar* in which changes in language theory as they applied to the teaching of grammar were discussed. In the pamphlet, Professor Allen Mawr, a distinguished language scholar of his time, attributed the 'grammar problem', as had the 1910 Board of Education Circular, to the realisation of the different grammatical structures that existed between modern European languages and those of the ancient classical ones. The function of a grammar that described a living language, he argued, was to recognise the inevitability of change rather than to retard it. Furthermore, since grammatical categories no longer corresponded to logical ones, grammar itself was in need of reconstruction. In the meantime, he advocated that until such a time as new terms and definitions were fully worked out, stating that 'we must...hold our hands off teaching grammar, and in so far as we do teach it, confine ourselves to the simplest and most elementary phases of it...' (English Association (1923 : 12)).

Mawr warned that the Newbolt Report's recommendation that 'pure' grammatical reform should include the adoption of terms proposed by the Committee on Grammatical Terminology based upon 'time-honoured parts of speech' was ill-advised. He argued that 'so far as they rest upon distinctions of form now vanished, there is room even here for a reconsideration of things' English Association (1923:13). The Committee had failed to recognise the new and important aspects of grammar which the Report had acknowledged, but at the same time endorsed the Committee's attempts to pin down and fix grammatical teaching that was inappropriate at a time when the theory underlying it was rapidly changing.

The Pamphlet also included the minutes of a discussion on the subject. Members of the conference debated the social and psychological aspects of grammar that discussed language as a social product and punctuation as a matter of fashion. They reiterated that teaching grammar bore no relation to pupils' ability in composition. George Sampson summed up the feeling at the Conference:

What children need to be taught in the elementary school was not English grammar but the English language. To attempt to teach them formal grammar was to thrust upon them a science for which they had no data. The elementary school child began his education with his language in a state of disease, and it was the business of the teacher to purify and disinfect that language.

English Association (1923 : 28)).

The general consensus amongst members of the English Association was that teaching grammar had little educational effect. Since language theory had shown the grammar that existed to be inappropriately defined and had little to offer the English teacher in its place, teachers were in a position to redefine it for themselves. This redefinition emphasised language as distinct from grammar which subscribed to standard English and its expression in literature as 'pure' and any other form as 'diseased'. At the same time, it located language within the social world of human experience as represented through literature which laid the foundations for the recontextualisation of English as personal growth.

In 1954, a Ministry of Education pamphlet on English Language distinguished between the two main aspects of language, similar to Saussure's distinction between language as an abstract system (*langue*) and language as individual use (*parole*) in a way which emphasised the study of *parole* over that of *langue*. The study of language as an abstract system which did not change was separated from its creative and imaginative capabilities:

There is, on the one hand, a skeleton of rules and precedents, handed down from generation to generation, to which men and women must conform if they are to communicate within a speech community. On the other hand are all the individual, private and personal variations of the accepted base. Thus, language operates on two levels simultaneously or, as it were, with two gears. There is within it a slow, ponderous element that belongs to the ages and that changes only slightly unless there is vigorous interference from outside, an invasion or migration. There is also a private and personal element of a lighter and more imaginative kind, which, though based upon the code, delights in variety, in personal flourishes, in specialised associations and sometimes in deliberate and evocative ambiguity.

Ministry of Education(1954:3-4).

Such a distinction located the formal study of grammar to that of discovering the skeleton of rules and precedents that belonged to science and the study of language upon the personal, individual and creative use of language, particularly as they were expressed in literature, to English.

Changes in language theory summarised by the pamphlet and its associated pedagogy continued to stress the importance of using language rather than formally studying it. It is difficult to assess the impact publications such as this and those of the English Association had upon the teaching of language in the classroom, given that assessment still required the formal analysis of sentences based on the categories of traditional, Latinate grammar. As Gurrey summed up:

It is regrettable that the belief is still current that the main aims of the English teacher are to ensure that his pupils know the facts of grammar, to teach them how to write a good 'school' essay, and to inform them about the great literary figures of the past and their works...The best teachers of the mother tongue...now use their subject to enable their pupils to grow and develop in mind and spirit. Thus their pupils will not only acquire mechanical skill with language; but with the help of literature and drama, and the free expression of their interests, experiences and knowledge, and a critical assessment of this expression, they will become better and more intelligent human beings.

Gurrey (1958:21-22).

As part of this teaching, Gurrey advocated a different approach to the study of grammar than the one advocated by the 1954 Pamphlet. In his book *Teaching English Grammar*, Gurrey argued a case for teaching grammar based on meaning, reiterating many of Vygotsky's arguments for its importance in developing higher levels of language use:

For many pupils the mastery of the techniques of handling language is essential for their effective use of their mother tongue, for adequate expression, communication and for improvement in their thinking. Mastery of these techniques includes always the conscious control of meaning: how to eliminate ambiguity, how to smooth out awkwardness, how to clear up obscurity, how to give a detail prominence and so on. Of course, in our pupils' writing and in our own, ambiguity, obscurity, roughness may often be eliminated without the aid of any grammatical knowledge; but a training in grammar that is focused on meaning should enable one to see quickly where the fault or weakness lies, and what changes in structure or diction will clear up the difficulty.

Gurrey (1961 : 119).

Gurrey saw the unifying centre of English as not only literature but also language as integral to the general development of the child and its intellectual development. He emphasised the role of language in organising experience as it is lived in life as well as represented in literature. In an earlier work, Gurrey had acknowledged the influence of Jespersen's philosophy and more recent work in cognitive and developmental psychology that stressed the importance of language for organising experience: 'It is by using language to express his experience, even when the language is imperfect and incomplete, that the child is able to form concepts related to his experience, and so to perceive and understand it...' (Gurrey (1958 : 12)).

Like Jespersen before him, Gurrey based his grammatical description upon Latinate categories that were no longer applicable to a modern European language such as English. At the same time as Gurrey was writing his grammar, others began to be written that were based on different categories. The American linguist Chomsky (1957) demonstrated how grammar could be studied in a scientific way. He did this by building completely explicit formal models of grammar generated by language and testing them against the facts. The fundamental shift in thinking evident in Chomsky's grammar was the formulation of transformative rules based on those which occurred in language, rather making language conform to rules. Generative and transformational grammars of the kind proposed by Chomsky make a precise distinction between the structures they allow and those they do not. Such a theory of language, therefore, may be useful to the scientific study of language in general, but applied to how a particular language is actually used, may fall short of describing all the structures possible in it. Although highly technical, Chomsky's categories do not allow for a complete description of specifically English grammar on their own.

To account for these structures, Chomsky proposed the idea of an innate, language acquisition device (LAD) with which all children are born, emphasising the biological, rather than social, nature of language learning. Acquiring language, therefore, was perceived to be innate rather than learnt. This view regarding the nature of language acquisition has been recently supported

by Pinker (1995) who has argued that language learning is an instinctive activity. Others, such as Halliday (1973) stress the social and functional nature of language rather than its innateness.

In the late 60s and early 70s the linguist Michael Halliday published his work on functional grammar. Halliday's central thesis is that all aspects of language have a role to play, and that the role of grammar is to offer a description based on these different functions, rather than with one. In contrast to Chomsky, he was also concerned with how children acquire grammatical concepts that made his theories applicable to the teaching of grammar. Halliday identified various models or functions of language: the instrumental, the regulatory, the interactional, the personal, the heuristic, the imaginative and the representational. He pointed out that different concepts of the role of the English teacher tended to emphasise different functions at the expense of others. He also stressed the wide range of human needs that language serves, stressing its social aspect:

What is common to every use of language is that it is meaningful, contextualised, and in the broadest sense social....The child is surrounded by language, but not in the form of grammars and dictionaries, or of randomly chosen words and sentences, or of undirected monologue. What he encounters is 'text' or language in use; sequences of language articulated each within itself and with the situation in which it occurs....The child's awareness of language cannot be isolated from his awareness of language function, and this conceptual unity offers a useful vantage point from which language may be seen in a perspective that is educationally relevant.

Halliday (1973 : 20).

Halliday's theories led him to write a functional grammar of English upon which the Language in the national Curriculum (LINC) project was later to base their materials for in-service work in 1989 following the introduction of a national curriculum. The term 'grammar', therefore, singular, applicable to a single rule-governed system that was universally applicable to all language altered to include different approaches to its study that turned it into a plural, rather than singular, concept. Their common characteristic was a principle of description rather than prescription. Various grammars of English, therefore, came to be written, including Quirk's and Greenbaum's *University Grammar of English* (1973) which cast doubt upon Saussure's distinction between a universal abstract language system and individual use of it. Instead, the two are connected and generate one another, rather than being separate and distinct. The fundamental shift in approach from prescription to description of grammar and the integration of *langue* and *parole* within a grammar such as Halliday's have not yet fully impacted upon its teaching in the English classroom.

The implications for teaching about language that include teaching the grammar of standard English were made more immediately visible by the fact that its superiority as a language variety could no longer be supported by language theory. When a model for English language came to be written in the late nineteen eighties, language theory was not able to provide a model based on prescriptivism and a Latinate grammar of the kind that had been taught for examinations until well into the nineteen fifties and beyond. The writing of a national curriculum subsequently became a site of struggle between established theories of language and more recent ones that had fundamentally altered the relationship between language and thought.

Grammars such as Halliday's were complemented by studies into the relationship between language and thought that provided evidence for the belief that language was as much a social product as an innate ability. As the century progressed, emphasis in language study began to move away from the study of its abstract system and became more concerned with how language was used in society. Consequently, the focus in language study began to shift its attention to language as discourse, re-interpreting language as constituting and organising reality rather than reflecting it. Theories of discourse, particularly those associated with French theorists such as Derrida, and Foucault and the Russian Bakhtin, have highlighted the relationship between language, thought and power, which has become a dominant theme of language theory in the late twentieth century.

Studies undertaken in America to describe American Indian languages were particularly influential in problematising the relationship between language and thought. More especially, the belief that language was an innate instinct began to be challenged by the idea that it was an acquired one. The American linguist Sapir argued that despite the physical naturalness of speech similar to that of walking, language was not a natural function, but a purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntary produced symbols. Sapir likened language to an instrument, capable of many uses. The physical, outward form of language is constant, but its inner meaning 'varies freely with attention or the selective interest of the mind, also, needless to say, with the mind's general development.' According to Sapir, language was not a neutral carrier of thought, and to confuse language with thought was a mistake:

At best language can but be the outward facet of thought on the highest, most generalised, level of expression...language is primarily a pre-rational function. It humbly works up to thought that is latent in, that may eventually be read into, its classifications and forms; it is not, as is generally but naively assumed, the final label put upon finished thought...It is, indeed, in the highest degree likely that language is an instrument originally put to uses lower than the conceptual plane and that thought arises as a refined interpretation of its content. The product grows, in other words, with the instrument, and thought may be no more conceivable, in its genesis and daily practice, without speech than is mathematical reasoning practicable without the lever of an appropriate mathematical symbolism.

Sapir (1921:paras 13-14).

Sapir and his student Benjamin Whorf developed their hypothesis through their research into native American languages that came to be known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. This hypothesis is, very briefly, that language constructs reality, rather than reflecting it. Sapir and Whorf pointed to the ways in which grammatical aspects of language such as tense were different in languages that led to a very different organisation of time. Vocabulary associated with, for example, colour and snow was also very different in different languages, leading them to the conclusion that the physical environment also had an influence upon the language spoken by its population. Through its grammar and vocabulary, particular languages appeared to construct reality in very different ways. Learning a language, therefore, whether at home or at school, also involved learning to think in a particular way. The main criticism of this hypothesis is that, taken to its logical conclusion, once concepts have been learnt through a particular language, then the world view constrained by them makes it impossible to construct an alternative. However, language escapes such constraints. People's abilities to be bi-lingual and their ability to construct different ways of using language point to the fact that whereas language has an important part to play in constructing reality, it has the simultaneous capacity of realising alternatives. Whether or not language is an instinctive, innate ability also remains a debatable point. It is clear from research such as that undertaken by Sapir Wharf and others, that whether or not language is innate, social, cultural and environmental factors all have an important part to play in their formation and development.

The development and formation of concepts had been a concern of psychologists such as Piaget, who had made a distinction between spontaneous concepts - the child's idea of reality developed through its own efforts - and non-spontaneous ones - ideas of reality influenced by adults. Interaction between these two, in which the home and formal schooling played large parts, worked to construct the growing child's picture of reality. Vygotsky criticised Piaget for failing to see the interaction between the two kinds of concepts in the total course of a child's development. He argued that 'if his views on the nature of non-spontaneous concepts were correct, it would follow that such an important factor in the socialisation of thought as school

learning is unrelated to the inner developmental processes.' Vygotsky (1962 : 851). Piaget (1962) in turn criticised Vygotsky, accusing him of excessive bio-social optimism in assuming that every exchange between a child and its environment tended towards successful adaptation. He claimed that Vygotsky had failed to fully appreciate egocentrism as the main obstacle to the co-ordinating of viewpoints and to co-operation. Indeed, if the relationship between the two kinds of concepts were as interactive to the degree Vygotsky implied, then school learning would have a far greater impact on children's development than it actually has. The potential to develop pupils' intellectual capabilities to the same level and degree, Piaget argued, failed to take account of the degree to which a child will resist as well as embrace the interaction between spontaneous and non-spontaneous concepts. It also failed to take account of the influence of home and cultural background upon the intellectual development of the child. Vygotsky's theories appeared to take a stable cultural and social background for granted, that ignored the way in which transfer between spontaneous and non-spontaneous concepts might be affected by a variety of social and cultural factors.

Nevertheless, the theories of both Piaget and Vygotsky were tremendously influential in education. Schooling became an institution not only concerned with imparting knowledge, but the process and degree of success of so doing was dependent upon balancing the knowledge to be acquired with the intellectual and conceptual abilities of the child, within which language was crucial. On the teaching of language itself, particularly grammar, Vygotsky's studies led him to the conclusion that the study of grammar was of paramount importance for the mental development of the child, particularly in understanding the nature of the sign as symbolic of thought. He pointed out that although children unconsciously learn the pronunciation and grammar of their language long before they begin school, instruction in grammar and writing would enable the child to use language in a more conscious way. He writes that:

Just as the child realises for the first time in learning to write that the word Moscow consists of the sounds m-o-s-k-ow and learns to pronounce each one separately, he also learns to construct sentences, to do consciously what he has been doing unconsciously in speaking. Grammar and writing help the child to rise to a higher level of speech development. Thus our investigation shows that the development of the psychological foundations for instruction in basic subjects does not precede instruction but unfolds in a continuous interaction with the contributions of instruction.

Vygotsky (1962:100-101).

What Vygotsky appears to imply is that formal instruction is crucial in developing pupils' abilities to a higher level of speech development, since it brings to consciousness that which is unconscious. If grammar is central to mental development, the question remains of which grammar should be taught. It is unclear the extent to which theorists such as Gurrey influenced the teaching of language in the classroom. The idea that using language to express experience was central to the formation of concepts was further theorised in the nineteen sixties by John

Dixon and James Britton. They advocated the importance of English as the subject within which the ordering, through language, of personal experience took place. The English lesson became time when order could be brought to the more bewildering elements of the adolescent situation and where the individual was encouraged to make sense of his or her personal world.

The relationship between language and thought stressed the crucial role of language for intellectual development. That it also constructed reality did not immediately influence curriculum developments. Rather, language as the expression of experience drew support from language theory in formulating its pedagogy. Ideas regarding the nature of language outlined above rejected the notion of language as located in the external, objective world and located it instead within the subjective, social one. The implications for education were far-reaching and have yet to be fully realised. One consequence has been that teaching a particular, narrowly defined variety of language and its literature could no longer be supported by language or literary theory. Neither could the use of this variety be used as a measure of intelligence. Studies into the relationship between language, education and social class together with those into child psychology helped to shift the centre of attention away from teaching grammar as a means of enhancing competence to encouraging children's own expression in speech and writing as a way of achieving this. Consequently, language study became subsumed within language use.

5.3 English and the Comprehensive School

From the mid-nineteen sixties onwards, LEAs were requested to submit plans for comprehensive re-organisation that included building, staffing and local needs but did not include curricular ones. Pressure from middle-class parents who were anxious to avoid sending their children to secondary modern schools helped to provide a climate of opinion that supported the abolition of the 11 plus examination and subsequent re-organisation of secondary schools into comprehensive ones. Support for the re-organisation was added to by sociological studies that provided evidence for the relationship between social class, schooling and child language acquisition and the corresponding relationship between social class and educational achievement. They also endorsed a child-centred and creative psychological theory of teaching and learning.

The claim made for intelligence testing, accepted in the nineteen thirties and forties that it was able to measure intelligence divorced from social determinants, was increasingly challenged and criticised during the nineteen fifties. In 1953, Brian Simon's *Intelligence Testing and the Comprehensive School* cast doubts upon the accuracy and validity of the testing instruments used. By 1954, sociologists and social psychologists such as Glass (1954) were publishing results which accepted that there was evidence which pointed to the fact that working-class

children do relatively less well on the tests of attainment than those from middle class backgrounds.

A report published in 1954 by the Central Advisory Council for Education called *Early Leaving* demonstrated the link between class background, academic achievement and the influence of social class on school performance. The report stated that success at school might have more to do with family circumstance and social class than with academic ability irrespective of family circumstance and social class. In 1959, the Crowther Report investigated studies which showed the extent to which children's access to grammar schools was differentiated from within the two main social classes, with a heavy leaning towards the middle class.

The Crowther Committee's concern with sociological analysis and the definition of educational objectives was repeated in reports throughout the nineteen sixties that, as Lawson and Silver sum up: '... showed a concern, implicit or explicit, with national economic needs, with the rights and requirements of the individual, the distribution of resources and acceptable philosophies for educational processes' (Lawson and Silver (1973:432)). A further, influential piece of research was that undertaken by J.W.B. Douglas in 1964, in which a sample of 5000 babies born in 1946 were followed through to their youth. This study concluded that, however well-intended, the administration of a selective secondary education had to considerable 'wastage' of ability, especially amongst children from working-class backgrounds. In the nineteen sixties, Bernstein argued that the distribution of educational access was very clearly tied to class, particularly through the language used in its distribution, and that educational failure was often in a very general sense, language failure. In volume 3 of his series *Class, Codes and Control*, Bernstein states that: 'How a society selects, classifies, distributes, transmits and evaluates the educational knowledge it considers to be public, reflects both the distribution of power and the principles of social control'. Bernstein (1975 : 85). He goes on to argue that class acts crucially on all agencies of cultural reproduction and therefore on both family and school:

I know of no class society which deliberately and rationally attempts to ensure that all social groups can participate equally in the creation, production and distribution of what are considered as value, goods and services. From this point of view, it must necessarily follow that lower working class children are today crucially disadvantaged...Class is a fundamental category of exclusion and this is reproduced in various ways in schools through the social context and forms of transmission of education.

Bernstein (1975:27-8).

Briefly, Bernstein argued that education employed predominantly middle class language structures to the disadvantage of pupils from other backgrounds. He formulated a theory of language as codes of which one, the elaborated code associated with the language of the middle class, was used in educational settings. It privileged children familiar with the code to the detriment of those who were not, particularly children whose code was more restricted. Bernstein did not intend his theory of codes to equate with degrees of sophistication in semantics, lexis and syntax, but he was severely criticised, particularly when his work was placed alongside that of the American linguist William Labov (1979), who demonstrated that youths employing a restricted code could articulate ideas just as complicated as those employing elaborated code. This is to miss the point made by the distinction, which has essentially to do with the different kinds of language use expected in different social situations. Educational and other public, formal settings demand a particular pattern of linguistic behaviour that favours standard English, and failure to understand or participate in these patterns may lead to educational failure rather than lack of intellectual capability. However, drawing attention to the ways different social situations demanded different language behaviour of the kind advocated by the Newbolt Report by 'correcting' pupils' speech and writing also drew attention to the uncomfortable issue of the relationship between language, class and social power. It was unwelcome in a society that throughout the nineteen sixties increasingly viewed itself as 'classless'. In commenting on Bernstein's theory Halliday supports such an interpretation. He writes:

...it would appear that the child who, in Bernstein's terms, has only a 'restricted code' suffers some limitation in respect of linguistic models...because some of the functions of language have been developed one-sidedly. The 'restriction' is a restriction on the range of uses of language. In particular, he may not make unrestricted use of his linguistic resources in the two functions which are most crucial to his success in school: the personal function, and the heuristic function....Restricted and elaborated code are in effect, as Ruqaiya Hasan suggests, principles of semantic organisation, determining the meanings that the syntactic patterns and the lexical items have for the child who hears or sees them.

Halliday (1973 : 18-19).

This is not to say that either code is of itself a better or worse principle of semantic organisation, but that it is different. The language of the Bronx street is not accorded the same social value as that of the middle-class classroom, regardless of the complexity and nature of the ideas they are capable of expressing. Bernstein's premise that class is fundamentally a category of exclusion reproduced in various ways in schools and forms of transmission of education could be said to have been illustrated in the ways in which comprehensive re-organisation was established.

Rather than doing away with grammar schools, Labour argued instead that comprehensive ones would provide, in the words of the Labour leader Hugh Gaitskill, 'a grammar school education for all'. This slogan was repeated by Harold Wilson leading up to the 1964 general election which returned Labour to power with a tiny majority and a programme that included a promise to introduce comprehensive education. The institutional reform of the late nineteen sixties and early nineteen seventies as determined by Circular 10/65 viewed comprehensive schooling as socially good in itself, although educationally, the kind of curriculum suitable for such schools was never fully explored. Instead, it implicitly assumed that a grammar school curriculum was the one to be adopted.

The terms of the 1944 Act had been sufficiently broad to allow such a change without the necessity of legislation. Chitty writes that: '...there was a real sense in which, to begin with at least, comprehensive schools *did* become the new grammar schools in that many of them were content to perpetuate the assumptions of the grammar school curriculum'. Chitty (1989:40). He goes on to state that:

With the grammar school model seemingly unassailable after 1965, and in the absence of a clear concept of the *educational* purpose of the comprehensive school, objectives that were primarily *social* soon acquired considerable popularity, particularly among 'reformist' and Fabian elements within the Labour Party. Many of the earlier supporters of comprehensive education believed in the concept of 'equality of opportunity', but they had taken it to mean that in each school, all pupils should have equal access to all the opportunities it offered. Now the concept of 'equality' was widened to apply to situations in the wider world beyond the school walls.

Chitty (1989:43).

Without accompanying debate about the nature and purpose of the curriculum and the internal organisation of the school, comprehensive schools were initially welcomed by middle-class parents, particularly if they retained streaming or setting that did away with the anxieties caused by the 11 plus entrance examination that gave their children places within the upper streams or sets. Given the lack of legislative support, the rate and extent to which LEAs effected the reorganisation differed from region to region. Similarly, the extent to which individual regions and schools within them embraced principles of equality varied a great deal, with some retaining the word comprehensive in name only, but to all extent and purposes remaining a grammar and secondary modern under the same roof. Reorganisation of schools was not followed by either curriculum or examination reform. Instead, comprehensive schools continued to offer both GCE and CSE, often organising groups based upon the examination destination of pupils that mirrored the internal organisation of the grammar and secondary modern school under one roof. The principles by which schools selected their entry were controlled by the LEA and based upon the area where pupils lived. Middle-class parents, more

mobile than their working class counterparts housed largely on council estates, defied urban planners' social engineering by choosing their homes on the basis of a secondary school's catchment area and the primary schools that fed into it.

Consequences such as these led the one-time supporter of comprehensive education, Sir Rhodes Boyson (1975), to argue that such a basis of selection created schools whose intake was largely determined by class, thus perpetuating inequality rather than abolishing it. At the same time, the halt of economic expansion during the early nineteen seventies helped to create a climate that eventually led to the educational reform of the nineteen eighties that sought essentially to transform a state system of education into a private one (Chitty, 1989).

One government sponsored curriculum initiative sought to re-introduce the teaching of standard English on a firmer basis. Throughout the nineteen sixties, the Schools Council funded various curriculum initiatives that were largely subject-based and with no overall curriculum strategy linking the various individual projects. Many of them were supported by the teaching profession and incorporated into the curriculum of various subjects. The one for English, a large-scale project, called *The Schools Council Programme in Linguistics and Language Teaching* directed by Michael Halliday was criticised rather than accepted by the profession. The programme designed curriculum materials that sought to incorporate change in language theory into English pedagogy. However, it was not this project but another of a more informal and grass-roots type which provided the conditions for the recontextualisation of English from cultural heritage to personal growth.

5.4 Language in Use

The Schools Council programme in linguistics and language teaching produced various papers, articles and books outlining its approach during the time it was preparing materials for classroom use. One of these was called *The Subject Matter of English* written by Hasan and Lushington (1968). In it, they summarise the language theory that had discredited prescriptive approaches and methods to language teaching. The authors take issue with the prescriptive approach and with the notion that literature could serve as a model for writing that proved sufficient for all situations and for all time. Both were based on the assumption that by learning to use language in one context such as a grammar exercise or by writing a poem, pupils would be able to transfer the language used across a variety of different situations.

To illustrate their argument, they pointed out that languages are subject to change, change itself should not be equated with decay or corruption. Presenting literature, particularly that from the past, as a model for students to follow as a way of teaching language was, the authors claimed, based on false assumptions. These were that literature subsumes language;

that all language aspires to be literature and that by studying literature pupils would also study language. Just as the teaching of Latin and Greek prose had been based upon a study of the classical authors, the same principle was at work when creative writing was substituted for essay writing. This principle was based on the idea that if pupils read or studied the “best” literature then its use of language would transfer itself to them and enable them to write the best English. Hasan and Lushington objected to an exclusively literary study of this kind on the following grounds:

...one of the main aims of teaching English is, surely, to enable the pupil to use, both in its spoken and written form, the language of the speech community of his day. To further this aim the models which are presented to him should be those in which the language used is that of contemporary speakers and writers. Within this the model ought to take into account the varieties of language. For reasons determined externally we may choose to teach the standard English to the exclusion of others, but this does not imply that other varieties are in some way internally inferior or wrong.

Hasan and Lushington (1968 : 39).

Above all else, the authors stressed that language is a social activity whose meaning is derived from the context within which it is used. The authors attacked the traditional English curriculum as it was taught in grammar schools on the grounds that the experiences it reflected were not ones common to all pupils. Children will learn most readily, it was proposed, in contexts that have relevance to them as social and individual beings:

If the teacher's accent is different from theirs, and if the words and grammatical constructions he uses are unfamiliar to them: if their first Readers are full of stories about children from a different social class, with whose lives theirs have nothing in common: if they are required to write essays on subjects of no interest to them, their motivation for learning is not being tapped and they remain either bored or bewildered.

Hasan and Lushington (1968 : 57).

The authors urged that the English taught in schools should have a connection with that of the world outside it for educational as well as social reasons. Like the Newsom Report, they advocated teaching contemporary language and literature as the best way of engaging pupils and of making their experience of school closer to that of their life outside it than as a means of bringing students closer to the traditional literary canon. A programme based on such ideas was highly ambitious and suggested a radical recontextualisation of the cultural heritage model of the kind that had dominated the grammar school curriculum. It altered the focus of English from the predominantly literary, historical one, to the social, everyday world as lived through language. The curriculum materials it designed for use in classrooms, however, placed far more emphasis upon the public and official, rather than the private, communal and poetic

aspect of language that clashed with the theories being developed upon which the personal growth model rested, most notably those of James Britton.

The curriculum materials it produced aimed to develop an awareness of the formal structures and properties of language and how it is used, which, at the same time, the authors claimed, would extend pupils' competence in using language. In the foreword to the *Language in Use* materials, the authors wrote:

Language in use offers a form of language study which can be valued as a rewarding end in itself, namely the development of awareness. However, a basic premise of the volume is that the development of awareness in the pupil will have a positive effect upon his competence, although this effect is likely to be indirect and may not show up immediately. A second premise is that what is well-rehearsed through being talked out in discussion, especially where the discussion involves groups of three to five, will have similar oblique, delayed, but quite positive, effect upon pupils' command of written language.

Doughty, Pearce et al (1973:10).

Despite its ambitious intentions, the programme failed to recontextualise English as a concern with language study for several reasons. Firstly, the status of the folder itself as a text was unclear. It did not appear to be a method book for teachers but neither was it a textbook for pupils. The folder tried to address both audiences at once with the result that it pleased neither. Its explanations were insufficient for the teacher and its dull presentation did not make it attractive for use in the classroom. It outlined sequences of lessons for the teacher without providing the supplementary materials that pupils would need to undertake them. Secondly, the linguistic knowledge required by teachers to teach the materials was beyond the scope of many and the folder did not provide sufficient explanation of the linguistic theories on which the material was based. In addition, most English teachers had a literary background and did not feel confident enough to teach the materials. Thirdly, the move from the language of literature to every-day uses of language was far too great for it to be accomplished at once. With no corresponding measures to include such knowledge in teacher education or in-service programmes, the materials proved insufficient in themselves to fill gaps in teachers' knowledge. Fourthly, and at the time most damagingly, the materials were also criticised for their objective approach to language study on the grounds that they did not question the attitudes and values implied by such study. The materials emphasised the part language played in constituting social reality, but failed to engage with its underlying attitudes and values.

At the time of their publication, the materials were severely criticised regarding their premise that awareness would lead to competence on the grounds that such an assumption was unsupported by any theory based on evidence or research. They were also criticised for their

lack of critical engagement with the issues they raised. This criticism was loudly voiced by Inglis:

...there is no proposal to study how it is that language carries its values, nor how that coding changes. Obviously the authors know that language carries values; the decision not to study the morphology of these values must therefore have been conscious. But why? It is not a matter of keeping the work 'value-free', for one can describe values and their changes without espousing them. It looks like simple timidity. In the study of values we are in the very difficult and creatively human zone where the conservative codings of language are retrieved and transformed by unprecedented and radical groupings. If he ignores this form of action, and the reservoirs of social experience which it both expends and replenishes, the language teacher frees himself from anything but technical training. His ignorance empties language of morality.

Inglis (1971 :79).

Anxious to avoid charges of prescriptivism, the materials' authors had described language neutrally with the consequence that they failed to engage with the ways in which language is both a carrier *and* a conveyor of meaning and value. Halliday (1991) in personal conversation stated that the authors of the *Language in Use* materials had resisted the attempts made at the time to explain or describe the methods which would translate the materials into classroom practice on the grounds that they did not wish to appear to be seen as telling teachers how this was so. They preferred to leave this particular issue to individual teachers.

One of the chief authors of the project, Doughty (1972), defended the materials and criticised Britton's and Dixons' alternative. He argued that it limited English to personal, individual development, rather than including within it the social and more public aspects of life, ignoring '...what was publicly expected of those who have passed through the education system'. Doughty claimed that the alternative proposed was too limiting and made sense a closely integrated and non-industrial society of three or four million people, reminiscent of Leavis' organic community. Nevertheless, scepticism in theoretical debate was matched by problems in the classroom. Translating the materials into classroom practice was a daunting task for most English teachers, not least because their content was so different to their current practices in English, dominated by written, rather than spoken, language. By contrast, method books explaining how to put the personal growth model of English into practice supported by commercially published textbooks were far more appealing to teachers faced with the task of teaching English in the classroom.

An alternative approach to English teaching was proposed by The Schools Council pamphlet *An Approach to English* (HMSO 1968) co-authored by James Britton. It also re-located the privileged text in English from literature to language but in a very different way. The ideas in it were further developed in two seminal books, *Language, The Learner and The School* by

Douglas Barnes, James Britton and Harold Rosen, first published in 1969 and Britton's *Language and Learning*, published the following year.

Influenced by the theories and research of Vygotsky and Sapir amongst others (see section 5.2 above), the central theme of *Language, The Learner and the School* was its consideration of pupils' total language experience in secondary schools, not just in English lessons. The book recorded studies undertaken by the authors of observed and recorded speech and writing undertaken by pupils and teachers during lessons. Through these observations, the authors showed the importance of talk and writing in the learning process, demonstrating that the process of learning is communicative as well as interactive. Moreover, they also showed that in conveying information to pupils, teachers of all subjects also communicated values through the language they used: Britton summed up his ideas in the following way:

I believe learning in all subjects of the curriculum involves both 'coming to know' and the adjustment of values; but that in the science-like subjects the former is dominant, whereas in the art-like subjects it is the latter which is dominant. What is important is that the two modes of learning should complement each other and achieve a kind of balance. It is the purpose of this book as a whole to stress that both modes of learning rely upon specific uses of language and that the quality of learning in all subjects will improve when we as teachers apply a fuller understanding of the language-using and learning process.

Britton (1969:130).

The authors of the book stressed how important it was for teachers to recognise the importance of language for all learning, and how such a recognition of teachers' as well as pupils' uses of language could aid or inhibit pupils' learning. Taking account of and accepting pupils' language home backgrounds irrespective of class or race was an important aspect of this process. The authors argued that if teachers were more sensitive to the language needs of their pupils in the language they used in their teaching, pupils would learn more effectively. The authors advocated accepting pupils' use of language in all its varied forms, particularly in speech, rather than imposing a particular one. They also insisted on avoiding judging pupils' intellectual ability by the extent to which their use of language conformed to the standard form. Teaching standard English, or awareness of differing accents and dialects, with the corresponding connotations of class and social value, had no place in the democratic strand of English which began to re-focus the growth model of English into a cross-curricular view. *Language in Use* emphasised the role of language in the world at large and its form that demanded more linguistic knowledge on the part of teachers than most possessed. By contrast, *Language and Learning* emphasised individual use of language, its creative content and role in learning generally in ways which appealed to English teachers with a predominantly literary background. Changes to the curriculum were further supported by changes to examinations which required no formal study of language. Unlike the GCE, CSE syllabi for English were

written by teachers and assessed by coursework that included an oral element. This allowed the curriculum of personal growth to be endorsed by assessment.

Examination by coursework with its emphasis upon pupils' own expression relieved the English teacher of the necessity to teach grammar as part of English for examinations that had kept the teaching of traditional grammar alive. It encouraged instead the practice of correcting pupils' written work individually, or dealing with grammatical points as they occurred within the classroom, rather than as set formal lessons which was consistent with the pedagogy of personal growth as described by Dixon. The gap thus created by the abandonment of formal study in the classroom was filled by increased language activity, both through discussion and imaginative writing. In 1969, a series of pamphlets written by academics, writers and commentators was published called *The Black Papers* signalled a change in public support for changes in education that marked the end of post-war consensus regarding the organisation and purpose of education. They were edited by C.B Cox, a Professor of English literature who later chaired the Cox Committee, and A.E Dyson, under the auspices of the literary called 'Fight for Education' which attacked the influence psychologists from Freud to Piaget had had on education and educational pioneers such as Froebel. It criticised schools for failing to educate pupils for gaining qualifications and subsequent employment by emphasising the individual nature of learning. These had been fuelled by a media campaign regarding the state of the nation's schools and by research published by NFER in 1972 which seemed to indicate that in the late 1960's reading standards had declined amongst certain groups of children. This study reflected the underlying public concern regarding modern methods centred on learning through experience and 'child-centred' education rather than on a more passive method of instruction that did not prepare pupils adequately for the world of work. As a result, Margaret Thatcher, then Conservative minister for education, instigated an enquiry into the whole issue of reading and use of English chaired by Sir Alan Bullock.

By 1974, when the Labour Party was returned to office once again, concerns regarding the comprehensive system surfaced as the period of economic expansion following the end of the second world war ended together with the expansion of educational provision. In 1975, an editorial introduction to the latest of the *Black Papers* began to advocate a more proactive than reactive approach to educational change that had already begun. A year earlier in 1974, Margaret Thatcher and Sir Keith Joseph had established the Centre for Policy Studies which became influential in the nineteen eighties and nineties in term of shaping the education policy of what came to be known as the 'new Right' discussed in Chapter 8.

Research into class inequality in Britain by Westergaard and Resler published in 1975 had concluded that, contrary to expectations, the educational changes of the 1960s and early 1970s

had not resulted in any major redistribution of the educational opportunities between children from different social classes. Categorised by their father's occupation, children of those with a professional and technical one were nearly nine times more likely to progress to university than those whose occupation was manual. What the research also showed was that changing opportunities through education was slow and did not depend upon education alone. Nevertheless, the research was used to show that comprehensive schools had failed in their aims of providing equality of opportunity beyond its four walls. It is unsurprising, therefore, that the findings of the Bullock committee presented in its Report that endorsed a child-centred approach to education were not fully supported by the state.

5.5 Bullock and the Teaching of Standard English

Unlike the committee under Henry Newbolt, membership of the committee chaired by Sir Alan Bullock, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford, was more diverse. As James Britton later commented, compromise was built into the Report at the outset. 'There is a sense, however, in which any government report by its very nature is one that consists of compromise if the overriding principle upon which it is written is that it should achieve a consensus of opinion. Compromise is evident in the sections which deal with the issue of teaching standard English. In its section on oral language, the Report stated that: 'the child's language should be accepted, and most teachers appreciate the importance of this' (DES (1975 : 43)). Citing Labov's research into phonological correlates of social stratification, the Report further stated that: 'We believe that a child's accent should be accepted, and that to attempt to suppress it is irrational and neither humane or necessary' (DES (1975 : 143)). Nevertheless, compromise is evident in the following paragraph which states that:

However, a view that has long been held by linguists is that an utterance may be 'correct' in one linguistic situation but not in another. Any one person belongs to a number of speech communities, and correctness therefore becomes a matter of conforming to the linguistic behaviour appropriate to the situation in which he (sic) is talking...The aim is not to alienate the child from a form of language with which he has grown up and which serves him efficiently in the speech community of his neighbourhood. It is to enlarge his repertoire so that he can use language effectively in other speech situations and use standard forms when needed.

DES (1975:143).

The Report emphasised the differences between speech and writing that served to re-inforce them as separate, rather than interrelated, modes of language and further re-inforced the separation of language study from pupils' experiences of written texts, including literary ones. Language study remained firmly rooted to pupils' developing ability to use written language themselves characterised by the teaching of formal grammar. It reiterated the emphasis of language study as the teaching of grammar, criticising the prescriptive nature upon which such teaching had been based that stressed more what was deemed inaccurate or 'incorrect' or what

was to be avoided rather than the quality of pupils' expression. Such an approach, depending upon pupils' own speech habits, either nurtured the expectation of failure or drilled them in what they already knew. Despite this criticism, the Report did not suggest an alternative grammar that could be taught. Rather, it took issue with the nature of its teaching than with the grammar itself. The Report expressed reservation about leaving explicit instruction to chance whilst stressing that everything depended upon the teacher's judgement and his or her ability to ensure that what was taught matched the needs of pupils' written expression. Whilst the Report stressed the importance of explicit instruction in grammar, therefore, language study remained firmly linked to the written expression of language with more advice given about how not to teach it whilst at the same time offering little guidance as to the kind of approach which could be used in place of formal instruction of the kind that had characterised it. The recognition of the change and fluidity accorded to speech and its repertoire did not extend to that of writing, which assumed it to be always formal and concerned with the correct use of written standard English. Changes in language theory outlined in 5.1 that stressed the social and fluid nature of all language clearly had not yet fully impacted upon English pedagogy.

Britton's dissatisfaction with the compromises evident in the final drafts of the Report led him to include a Note of Extension. In it, Britton reiterated his conviction stated in the Report of the link between a child's use of language and the satisfaction of deeply felt, unconscious needs. These depended more upon the uses of language built directly upon the speech of the home than upon acceptance and compliance with more widely acceptable standards of the kind associated with standard English. He argued that:

In claiming this, I take it as axiomatic that any form of spoken English, be it cockney or Creole or anything else, is capable of moving from an expressive to a poetic function - that it can produce spoken or written utterances that have the status of 'literature'. *Expressive* language (essentially the speech of the home) is the appropriate form, it seems to me, for the development of activities *within a culture group*. In *poetic* language a culture group embodies its essential values, expresses its uniqueness, and in so doing makes that embodiment available for interchange *within a network of culture groups*. *Transactional* language, spoken or written, is the embodiment (at one level) of what is *common across culture groups within a society* - the language of government, of commerce and the professions, of information exchange in all forms from the most practical to the most theoretical. It is here, then, in the use of transactional language, that demands for widely acceptable forms of some kind ('Standard English', for example) are most obviously justified.

DES (1975 : 555).

Britton ended his Note by stating that a pupil's needs embrace all three uses of language, but that the priority given to each one remained a matter of timing and tact on the teacher's part. Britton's categorisation of the function of language assumed that the social and cultural value

attached to the language of each of the three categories remained constant, whereas this is far from the case. It also assumed that moving across from the language used within a culture group to link with that of others and further networked across society was unproblematic and equitable for each individual within a particular group, a point which Bernstein (1975) had shown to be questionable. As Halliday had argued (see 5.1 above), a child's awareness of language necessarily includes an awareness of its function if he or she is to understand the social value placed upon it and upon their individual use, recognising the situations which demand the use of any particular one. The Bullock Report endorsed the view that language was integral to the development of the individual and therefore the curriculum that took account of pupils total language experience in both primary and secondary schools, not just in English lessons. The most significant recommendation it made (of over 300) for both primary and secondary schools was that: every school should have an organised policy for language across the curriculum and suitably qualified teacher to take charge of it. However, the Report provided little in the way of explaining what such a policy meant in practice, particularly in secondary schools where the curriculum divided into subjects taught by different teachers, each with its own distinctive demands of language use.

The Report was severely criticised at the time of its publication both for its length and scope. Britton (1978) observed that the status of the Report as establishment, its size and the diversity of views of its membership all contributed towards its lack as a convincing document. The extent to which its recommendations were enacted in schools also varied from LEA to LEA and from school to school. Nevertheless, language across the curriculum and the corresponding move to mixed ability teaching were developed in method books with titles such as Marland's collection called *Language Across the Curriculum* (1977) and Mills' *Teaching English Across the Ability range* (1977) that informed a generation of classroom teachers.

The Bullock Report sanctioned the recontextualisation of English from its central concern with the culture and value of language expressed in a narrow definition of language as standard English and English literature to the potentially limitless one that took account of the total language experience of the child. Dixon (1967) had accused the cultural heritage model of English, with its stress on adult literature, of turning language into a one way process with pupils as the receivers of the master's voice. He also accused it of neglecting the most fundamental aim of language: to promote interaction between people. The personal growth model of English stressed the personal, interactive nature of language as expressive and poetic at the expense of its more public and social aspect encapsulated by the transactional. By contrast, Stuart Froome's Note of Dissent in Bullock expressed reservations regarding the work of the committee which endorsed a policy of free, uninhibited creativity. It also argued

that there was sufficient evidence to suggest a decline in the reading standards of pupils in their first year of junior schools compared with the standards of 1938 that justified a return to methods of teaching reading widely used before the Second World War. Finally, he remained unconvinced of the benefits of mixed ability teaching as opposed to setting or streaming of pupils for English.

Concerns such as Froome's might have appeared anachronistic at the time, but they anticipated the debate about the teaching and place of language within English when a national curriculum for the subject came to be written. In 1979, a Conservative government was returned to office and continued to be re-elected throughout the nineteen eighties and nineties. Democratisation and curriculum change in education were subsequently re-defined along very different lines. Within the re-definition, the issue of language became crucial.

PART 2

English, Language and the Writing of a National Curriculum

Chapter 6

English in Crisis

6.0 Introduction

It is clear that the models of English as described by Dixon did not move from one to another in smooth transition. Rather, each one carried elements of the other as part of their recontextualisations. Rather, as the principle of distribution regulating the State apparatus of education altered in response to wider social changes, that of recontextualisation regulating changes in the curriculum responded accordingly.

The central place of English in the school curriculum had co-incided with the final stages of the standardization of English paralleled by the growing public demands for an increasingly literate population. As the subject charged with teaching pupils how to read and to write standard English, the demand for accuracy and competence was never far away. Attitudes towards language use and the values expressed through language were based upon the belief that one form of speech and writing, that of standard English, was inherently superior to others, and that a consequent hierarchy of language use was self-evident. However, as has been argued in Chapters 2 and 3, such attitudes and beliefs were inextricably linked to issues of class and therefore political power, as the language forms and structures of one section of society became the standard by which all other forms were judged. They were also based upon eighteenth and nineteenth century theories of language, which had aimed to demonstrate the inherent superiority of one dialect and accent over all others. These also presupposed that language behaviour was linked to moral behaviour, and that learning to speak, read and write in a particular way was indicative of a particular way of behaving. In the elementary school, primers used to teach pupils to read and write were designed as much for their moral messages as for their usefulness as a way of teaching literacy.

The clear vision of the privileged text in English shared by the English Association and expressed in the Newbolt Report as the teaching of standard English and its literature also carried with it expectations of accuracy in pupils' use of language. At the same time, the moral

values found in biblical literature were transferred to literature written in the English of a particular variety, that of standard English. The concept of standard English was largely a product of the systemization of the State, which sought to standardize many aspects of public life. Language, as the instrument of this process, did not escape from it, particularly the language associated with bureaucracy and public communication. Literary language, however, did not fit or lend itself easily to such standardisation. The language of canonical literature could not be characterised solely by its use of standard English. Rather, standard English was the product of the bureaucratisation of experience into which the canon was made to fit, trimmed of its rough edges and regulated by the publishing industry. Moreover, studying literature was largely concerned with interpreting a representation of the world that was essentially anti-modern. Such an approach took little account of the relationship between the content, form and structure of language and how all three related to the social and cultural contexts within which they were produced.

The increasing democratisation of society throughout the twentieth century included the expansion of educational provision to all sections of society. The subsequent personal growth model of English explored in Chapter 4 coincided with changes in language theory that questioned the accepted superiority of a language variety, showing that this was more to do with the attitudes people had towards language use. The recognition of the importance of language for learning as a whole had expanded the teaching of English to include a re-focusing into a horizontal, cross-curricular, approach to learning that was consistent with a curriculum organised along more democratic principles. This approach focused on the language development of the individual that took little account of the established norms of expression, most notably those associated with grammar, spelling and punctuation. Attention to these aspects of language were perceived as a barrier to creative expression, whilst also being required as necessary in the spheres of employment and education. Thus, whilst the privileged text of English had become language itself as expressed through speech and writing in all subjects, the study of language itself played a minimal part.

The demand placed upon the subject by such an approach meant that English was virtually responsible for all pupils' learning, a demand that was clearly impossible to fulfil. At the same time, Cultural theory, derived from semiotics, drew attention to the social nature of language in ways that challenged the idea of language as an internal system of reference. Consequently, the boundaries of English became to be defined by cultural analysis in ways which challenged the accepted cultural dominance of English literature. This threat is summed up by Hollingworth:

The 'civilising influence' of literature, which has been taken more or less for granted by generations of English teachers is now being scrutinised - and categorised, not as a sign of the redeeming power of the word, but as a sinister course towards addiction in the opium of bourgeois morality...We are victims of capitalist ideology; language is the tool of capitalist oppression, and literature is a major vehicle by which bourgeois values are inculcated and reinforced. So literature, which the English teacher naively thought was humanising his charges, and even mildly subversive, turns out to be, by its emphasis on individualism and self-fulfilment, a running dog of establishment capitalism. It helps to create capitalism's oppressive social reality.

Hollingsworth (1983:3-4)

Language theory, therefore, as summarised in Chapter 4, had significant implications for the way literature was taught, not least by the questions it raised regarding the categorisation of texts as 'literature'. Briefly, structuralist and post-structuralist theories relocated value from the text to the reader and the society which produced it. The notion of a single, authoritative interpretation of a text was challenged by contemporary theory, replaced by the possibility of a plurality of interpretations. This in turn led to a questioning of the homogenous nature of the 'Englishness' of the English State. At one and the same time, the subject English was defined in terms of multiculturalism and populism, literature for elites and for circumscribed cultures. Representations of the world evident in the canon of 'English literature' were similarly criticised, as they proved to be inconsistent with the experiences of the pupils in the classroom drawn from all sections of society and, increasingly, varying cultural backgrounds.

Rather than recontextualising the model itself, these re-focusings extended the demands made of personal growth and language across the curriculum into cultural analysis as schools attempted to put these into practice. At the same time, the strands of both the cultural heritage and skills models were pulled alongside these changes. One version of a good society was replaced by another in ways which altered the nature of the relationship between schools, the State and the individual. Part of this change was the shift from principles based upon an horizontal axis of democracy and equality of opportunity for all to ones based upon a vertical axis of meritocracy and equality of access to opportunity. The writing of a national curriculum in 1988, therefore, took place against a very different set of relationships between schools and the State to those that had existed since 1944.

6.1 English, Language and the New Right

Hartnett and Naish (1990) point out that the organisational changes surrounding the introduction of the national curriculum have largely reversed the tradition of substantial local control over education that had existed since the 1902 Act discussed in Chapter 4. Since that time, LEAs had worked in partnership with central government that, as Harnett and Naish recognised: 'gave institutional form to the importance of local democratic control of

education, and provided a bulwark against the excessive cumulation of power by the centre' ((1990:1-2).

Since the days of the English Association, teachers, LEA advisors, university and college lecturers, HMI and subject organisations had been consulted by the state apparatus of education as central authorities regarding the definition of the privileged text in English. During the nineteen sixties, the Schools Council had provided a forum for making assessment together with the curriculum the responsibility of teachers which the change to GCSE in the nineteen eighties had centralised and bureaucratised.

The introduction of a national curriculum continued the centralisation of curriculum control. It relocated the responsibility of its definition from professional associations, organisations and institutions recognised by the English teaching profession to ones organised and controlled by the State. This relocation altered a tradition dating back to 1906 and the days of the English Association which regarded consultation with the teaching profession as central to recontextualisations of English. Instead of being consulted as expert, the profession found itself relegated to its margins. Consequently, a potential recontextualisation of English created by the writing of a national curriculum was paralysed as control over its definition became a central concern of both the profession and the government.

One of the main differences was the relocation of the education system's main principle of distribution from LEAs back to central government that included state control over the curriculum together with its administration and organisation. Such a relocation occurred following the return to office of the Conservative Party in 1979 and its continued re-election throughout the nineteen eighties and into the nineties.

This relocation altered the more democratic principles of school and curriculum control that had characterised educational change during the twentieth century to ones that were hierarchical and centrally regulated. As Hartnett and Naish observed: 'Democracy has no appeal to a central tradition of conservative thought' (1988:7). This tradition is clearly evident with regards to the curriculum where the recontextualising principle governing curriculum change was relocated from the teaching profession and delocated back to central government in a way reminiscent of the schedules written for the Revised Code of 1870.

Following the return of a majority Conservative government to a second term in office in 1984, a series of educational reforms began to pull control over education back towards the centre in a relatively short space of time. The curriculum envisaged by this reversal amounted to a restoration of a grammar school curriculum, with the privileged text in English returning

to the teaching of standard English, its grammar and its literature. The decision to write a subject-based curriculum ignored the very different curricular and pedagogic traditions of many primary schools that taught subjects in an integrated way. It also made teaching the 'three R's' as English and mathematics central to that curriculum by giving them the status of 'core' subjects, to which a third, that of science, was added.

Jones has described the changes that have taken place in education since 1979 as a 'passive revolution', a term borrowed from the *Prison Notebooks* of Antonio Gramsci (1971). These changes have been characterised by efforts from the right to respond to historic problems of development through increased planning and state intervention. Jones states that:

Passive revolution is a means of ensuring that these relations are perpetuated, not by achieving stasis, but by renewing hegemony - by changing the *means* by which a class organises leadership so that they appropriate to new conditions. 'Things must change,' wrote Lampedusa, 'so that they can remain the same.'

Jones (1992:6)

A renewal of cultural hegemony was clearly signalled by Conservative education policies and publications published throughout the nineteen eighties and early nineties. For example, following the return of the Conservative Party to a second term in office in 1984, the Conservative Political Centre published a pamphlet ironically called *No Turning Back* (1985). This pamphlet set out a political agenda for education, employment, health and housing. In its section on education, changes to the funding and administrative structures of schools were proposed. These structures would effectively make them self-governing and independent of local authority control, regulated by the application of the principles of consumerism to education.

During its second term in office, the government laid out its agenda for the public sector, including education, which it was able to consolidate during its third and fourth terms. As part of its implementation, the principle of distribution was taken away from regional, autonomous LEAs and given to the central state. The change from a mediational and supervisory role to one of administration shifted the location of power and distribution of knowledge from LEAs, subject organisations and regional examination boards to central agencies. Pupil numbers would in future determine the level of funding for each school and parents would be free to choose to send their children to any school with places available. Equality of educational opportunity, therefore, which had been the main guiding principle of distribution that had regulated education policy throughout the twentieth century, became responsible instead for its failure and replaced by the principle of 'quality'. The 1985 pamphlet from the Conservative party stated that:

There is a widespread and pernicious myth in the education profession that it is somehow important to make children more equal. This is not what parents want and it is not what children need. It is the kind of idea which seeks to ration bright children between schools, as if they were some scarce commodity, in order that their beneficial influence might be spread equally. It is not equality that is needed but quality. We need a system which will not make children equal, but will make them better educated. If our school system can bring out and develop the best in each child, then we have achieved the best result for both individuals and society, regardless of any differences between children

CPS (1985:13)

Equality of opportunity was thus seen as detrimental to the educational process itself, hindering 'better education'. Selection by ability was to be re-introduced under the banner of parental choice, although 'ability' became more widely defined to include technical and vocational as well as academic. As consumers of education in an open market-place, parents would be free to choose a school for their child unregulated by a common entrance examination such as the one which had divided pupil entry into grammar and secondary modern schools or by the social engineering of LEAs. At the same time, quality of education was to be achieved through a national curriculum to which all pupils would be entitled. Thus educational aims were altered from their basis of equality which provided equal distribution of and access to educational provision regardless of class, ethnicity and gender to those based upon 'quality' and the reintroduction of selective entry to schools. Issues of justice and fairness were thus deleted from public, if not professional, debate.

Hartnett and Naish interpret such changes as characteristic of a long line of Utopian thinking. This perspective sees education as capable of providing solutions for complex educational and social problems without specifying how the solutions are linked to problems. In this instance, the solution confuses education and economic development. They write that:

Its curricular aims are defined largely in economic terms, but its curricular content is a resuscitated, academic, grammar school, subject-based curriculum which is largely divorced from these aims....it represents a political compromise between the neo-Liberal and the neo-Conservative wings of the government. The neo-Liberals emphasise the free-market and choice; the neo Conservatives social authoritarianism and strong government.

Hartnett and Naish (1990:4)

The compromise effected was that the economic function of education which sees education as demand-led and responsive to consumers was achieved through changes to its administrative structures. At the same time, curriculum content that had been undermined in traditional terms by non-selective comprehensive schools was to become more prescriptive and centralised.

White (1990) has pointed out that de-regulation of centrally prescribed subjects for elementary schools in 1926 and for grammar schools in 1945 both took place under a Conservative government. Given this historical precedence, he argues that it appeared strange that a Conservative government would seek to bring the school curriculum back under state control. His conclusion is that the Party was following the same traditional, right-wing educational objective, that of shaping pupils for their destination in the socio-economic system.

The curriculum in elementary schools from the 1880s onwards, White argued and as Chapter 3 discussed, had been closely monitored to ensure that it remained centred on 'the three Rs', with moves to teach more advanced subjects curtailed. The introduction of a divided system at the turn of the century was composed of elite secondary schools teaching a grammar school curriculum and an elementary system that was confined to teaching 'the three Rs' and various manual subjects. In 1926, following the work of the Board of Education in establishing a secondary curriculum, central control was withdrawn.

The Conservatives denationalised the secondary school curriculum in 1945 to prevent an incoming Labour Party from introducing a national curriculum of a more liberal and non-divisive nature in accordance with its policy of 'secondary education for all'. At the same time, administrative structures were set in place to ensure that elementary schools continued to teach their lowly curriculum. The objective in both cases had been to prepare children for their place in a formal and class-stratified socio-economic order which was not the same for all.

The introduction of a national curriculum in 1988 fulfilled the same objective of preparing children to fill certain slots in the socio-economic order by establishing a national curriculum centred upon three core subjects. Two of these were mathematics and English, the 'three R's' that had dominated the nineteenth and early twentieth century curriculum. The third was science. A DES memo sums up this objective when it justified the introduction of entry into school by selection on the grounds that: 'we are beginning to create aspirations which increasingly society cannot match...People must be educated once more to know their place'(quoted in Chitty (1988: 88)) As Oliver Letwin, a government advisor on education who was himself the product of public schools and Oxbridge put it (TES:1987): 'Perfectly normal children...had better learn from the earliest possible age to come to terms with their capabilities.'

Commentators such as White and Jones criticise Conservative educational policy for its blatantly unequal and therefore undemocratic principles. Whereas such principles had been acknowledged during the nineteenth century, those of the Conservative government of the

nineteen eighties were disguised within a rhetoric of 'quality', 'opportunity' and 'freedom of choice'. As earlier chapters in the first part of this thesis have argued, the overriding governing principle of distribution in education during the nineteenth century had been the maintenance of social stability in an unequal society. During the twentieth century, equality replaced inequality as a major principle of distribution. From 1979, the principle moved back to the maintenance of social stability once again. Hartnett and Naish write that:

The statutory curriculum, and its testing, will teach children in state schools from the age of seven exactly what their capabilities and future destinations are, if it teaches them nothing else. Children in the private sector, without the benefit of a statutory curriculum, will also be taught about their capabilities and future destinations. In a decade or two it may even get back onto the public agenda whether or not this divisive system is fair or appropriate for a modern technological society

Hartnett and Naish (1990:15).

Given that it took the Government until the mid-nineteen sixties to introduce common secondary schools for children, and even then allowed private schools to exist alongside them, the English political system has, as Hartnett and Naish put it, 'learning difficulties in coming to terms with what democracy means for its educational and cultural institutions'(1990:15). As Bernstein (1990) argued, pedagogic discourse and the principles which regulate it are dependent upon both macro and micro relations that exist between and within social, economic and political institutions. When these relations alter, educational aims and objectives also change. According to Bernstein's theory, a governing principle of all State education is that it provides education that meets pupils' aspirations in so far as these can be matched within the society which provides it. The defining characteristic of any State education system could be said to be the desire to shape pupils for their destination in the socio-economic order. When conditions in society change and alter that order, as they did from 1979 onwards, political, including educational, policy shifts accordingly. The introduction of a national curriculum in the late nineteen eighties clearly illustrates how educational policy shifted in response to changes in the political order of society.

As liberal-egalitarian principles of distribution controlling education altered, versions of equality similarly changed. The horizontal access to jobs, housing, welfare, education and health regardless of race, class gender and wealth also changed to a vertical one that placed some at the top, others at the bottom and the large majority unevenly distributed in between. Movement up or down the socio-economic ladder was to be determined by people's own efforts supported by the regulating principles of a free market economy and the values and aspirations of a new version of the mercantile middle class. Discussion of the degree to which either version best represents equality is beyond the scope of this thesis. Rather, the point to be made is to re-inforce Bernstein's premise that the principles of distribution which

regulate educational policy are themselves in turn regulated by the distributive principles of the politics that control the state apparatus of education and the relationship between knowledge and power.

The task which faced the Conservative government during the nineteen eighties was how to give pupils knowledge without also giving them the power that goes with it. A tension within state education in England when the right has been in a dominant position has always been how to provide an education for the majority of the population as required by the economy whilst at the same time limiting its social consequences by keeping them from questioning its distribution of wealth and source of power.

One way of achieving this was to concentrate attention on standards of literacy. Although the centrality of English in the curriculum as the provider of initial literacy had long been established in infant schools, the methods used to teach it that had embraced progressive pedagogy were relocated along more traditional lines. Its other major role as a unifying agent of social cohesion, had considerably lessened. Rather than celebrating Englishness, English had come to celebrate cultural and social diversity that led to the concern expressed by Margaret Thatcher that: 'people are rather afraid that this country might be swamped by people with a different culture'.

It is clear that the first set of 'people' referred to in this statement is not the same as those of the second. Together with a concern for increasing standards of literacy, therefore, was the need to re-establish a sense of a distinct, homogenous national cultural identity so that the second set of 'people' did not subsume the first. All should be educated to know their place in a very different way from the one which had informed previous post-war educational policy. The national curriculum in English was written with these requirements in mind.

6.2 Changing Theories of Language

Linguistics as a discipline in higher education throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had concentrated its study on spoken language as an empirical science organised along scientific principles. Its study consisted of separate areas, including the separation of syntax from semantics, that objectified language as a physical and biological phenomenon. Studies in applied linguistics and the philosophy of language discussed in the previous chapter challenged such an approach. They cast doubt upon the notion that language was a mirror of the mind and a reflection of reality, arguing instead that language was a part of the mirror and reflection itself. To repeat Bernstein's metaphor, it was both a carrier and a wave. Cultural values, therefore, were similarly constructed by as well as carried through language in ways which located them within the human context.

Semiotic theory has been influential in extending the study of systems of communication beyond language to include the non-verbal well as verbal. Like Chomsky's theory of transformative grammar, semiotics is a globalised theory. Nevertheless, it has significant implications for English pedagogy, not least in its role as the reproducer of cultural value and the developer of pupils' engagement with the sign systems that constitute them. However, like Chomsky's theory of transformative grammar, semiotics is a globalized theory that has yet to establish a coherent set of accepted practices that applies to all symbols and signs that includes language. They have been developed more within media and film than literary theory, although recently the work of theorists such as Kress (1989) have attempted to develop a more semiotic approach to language study that includes the study of visual images alongside those of the printed word.

Semiotic theory is most often associated with Saussure (1916). It rests on the distinction between the signifier- the symbol that represents an idea and the signified - the idea itself. Together they constitute the language sign. The sign is arbitrary in the sense that the connection between its two constituent elements is socially determined, rather than dependent upon any inherent or logical link. The example that Saussure gives is that of 'tree'. The relationship between the *tree* that is seen (the signified) and the symbol that represents it, in language speech or writing (the signifier), together make up the sign 'tree'. However, the relationship between the two is in a sense arbitrary, rather than logical, depending to a large extent upon historical, social and cultural conditions.

Semiotics suggests, therefore, that communication is a key factor in human existence. It draws heavily upon linguistic concepts, particularly those of 'text', 'grammar' and 'structure', in ways which alter traditional meanings of these concepts. Turner (1990), amongst many, including Ricoeur (1971), stresses its importance as a theoretical strategy that has developed the concept of 'reading' to include cultural products, social practices, even institutions as 'texts'. Similarly, attempts to discover underlying grammars or structures of texts associated with structuralist theory such as Formalism, have been concerned with the structure of complete texts and the units within them although the obvious objection is that signs, unlike languages, cannot be said to have rules of reference, let alone a grammar. .

More recently, theorists such as Kristeva (1989) have observed that no text is an island on its own. Each text exists within a vast 'society of texts' in various genres and media. Such a concept blurs the distinction between spoken, written and non-verbal acts of communication. It makes the classification of a definitive genre of writing or register of speech impossible to contain and define, since all run into one another as an intertextual weaving rather than forming discrete communicative acts with exclusively definable structures.

All texts, therefore, exist not only by themselves but also in relation to others. For example, a formal frame such as a television programme may be part of a series and part of a genre, and links can cross boundaries of frames by sharing topics with other genres (e.g. the theme of war is found in a range of different genres: film, documentary, news, current affairs). Some genres are similarly shared by several media (e.g. soap, gameshow and phone-in are found on both radio and television) and texts allude to others in adaptations of novels into films, 're-makes' of film and the contemporary mixing of textual forms in contemporary television advertising. Signs are thus dynamic as well as conventional structures that allow for an infinite variation of textual interplay.

This plurality is tempered by a framework of cultural and social conventions and values, with the terms grammar and text becoming far more fluid concepts than as they had been defined by earlier theories of language. Eco extends Wittgenstein's analogy of the game by using a box of marbles to illustrate this point:

If the marbles, when free, represent a model of an informational source with high entropy, a system is a rule which magnetizes the marbles according to a combination of mutual attractions and repulsions on the same plane. The code which, on the other hand, couples different systems is a biplanar rule establishing new attractions and repulsions between items from different planes. In other words, every item of the code maintains a double set of relations, a *systematic* one with all the items of its own plane (content or expression) and a *signifying* one with one or more items from the correlated plane. Now, to maintain that there exists a structure of the Human Mind or a sort of ontological system of Essences, on which signification and communication rely, means that the magnetization is *inherent* in the marbles as a 'property'. if, on the other hand, the code is a social convention, the magnetism is a *transitory*, (that is, *historical*) condition of the marbles box.

Eco (1979:126)

Eco proposed that the magnetism is a cultural phenomenon, a magnetism Bernstein theorises as being rule-governed rather than arbitrary in its interplay and transference from one site to another. Eco argued that 'the fact that every item of the game can simultaneously maintain relations with many other elements makes it difficult to draw explanatory but simplifying graphs such as a compositional tree' (1979:126). Thus any code is 'better viewed as a complex network of sub-codes which goes far beyond such categories as 'grammar', however comprehensive they may be' (1975:125).

The distinction between codes such as those associated with spoken and written language therefore, or between literacy and other forms of textual study became increasingly blurred. Consequently, English as a subject further expanded its boundaries to encompass within it the study of visual together with printed texts. As a result, English became responsible not only for

all pupils' learning but also their interpretation of the world as it was represented through all semiotic texts. Such an overloading of the subject made it impossible for teachers to fulfil all its demands. It also shifted the emphasis from individual use of language to language and society in a very general sense. The growth model of English started and finished with the pupil. As part of this, pupils' accents, dialects and languages other than English were viewed as resources rather than impurities to be overcome. At the same time, standard English remained socially superior, valued and required by the more formal and more public aspects of language use. Rather than tackle the issue of language and how it should be taught, the cultural analysis view of English concentrated more on how language represented the world drawn from the theory and practices of established literary criticism. The approach taken to the pupils' own language use was one which recognised and celebrated its diversity whilst virtually ignoring the social norms pupils were expected to learn. The Government initiated two national curriculum development projects in language to redress this balance. It also sought ways to ease the integration of pupils from ethnic minorities, particularly those of former Commonwealth countries, into mainstream English society.

Post-Second World War migration into England had continued from countries all over the world. It included refugees from Communism and immigrants from former Commonwealth countries such as those of Indian sub-continent, Africa and Jamaica as well as immigrants from China, Greece and middle-eastern countries. Education was perceived as an important means whereby ethnic groups could be assimilated into English society. Although comprising a very small total of the populations as a whole (5%), black ethnic communities, always very difficult to define, tended to be concentrated in particular areas, especially in large cities. Tensions between black and white communities erupted into street riots in the early nineteen eighties. Against this background, the focus in education turned towards multiculturalism and issues concerning social integration that inevitably included a questioning of what it meant to be 'English'.

6.3 Education For All

Throughout the late nineteen seventies and into the nineteen eighties, publications and in-service provision worked towards re-focusing the cross-curricular view of English into one concerned with cultural analysis, embracing multiculturalism alongside issues of class and inequality. In 1978, NATE published a discussion booklet called *The Teaching of English in MultiCultural Britain*. This was followed by a Working Party on social class in 1982 and committees being formed specifically to consider issues of multiculturalism and anti-racism. A National Association of Teachers of Multicultural Education (NAME) was also founded, aimed at promoting increased awareness of pupils' cultural diversity.

A large-scale, multi-disciplinary project, funded by the DES, was initiated called the *Linguistics Minorities Project*, based at the University of London's Institute of Education. The aim of this project was to survey the languages used in Britain at the time. It also provided detailed information about them that included a consideration of patterns of language use in different social contexts and the teaching of community languages inside and outside mainstream schools. It considered the educational implications of this linguistic diversity for children who would become future English citizens. The report produced by the project concluded that bilingualism should not be perceived as a problem or be ignored. Rather, it should be regarded as a valuable potential resource for individuals and for society. The editor of the Report was Michael Stubbs, a linguist, who later became a member of the Cox Working Group where conclusions such as those summarised above became influential in the writing of a national curriculum for English.

In response to public concerns regarding the integration of ethnic groups into English society, a government committee was commissioned to report on multicultural provision in education called *Education For All* (The Swann Report (1985)). Of the Report's various and bitterly contested recommendations, one was that funding should be made available for children from former Commonwealth countries to have extra support in the classroom to help them to learn English. LEAs responded to this recommendation by providing support teachers in classrooms and employing advisory teachers to offer support in multiculturalism. The principle underlying such support was the one advocated by the *Linguistic Minorities Project*, that linguistic diversity was a valuable educational resource, both for the range of diversity of English itself with its varied accents and dialects as well as for languages other than English.

Nevertheless, the model of English continued to be based on language as individual growth, with the more public demands of language, most notably accuracy in standard English grammar and punctuation, remaining implicitly rather than explicitly taught. The emphasis rather was upon linguistic equality, based on the premise that since no one language or variety was linguistically superior than any other, no one person's speech or written expression could be deemed superior to any other. This application of a particular linguistic theory was applied at the expense of recognising the fact that socially, some varieties of a language will be valued over others, regardless of how equal they may be linguistically. Consequently, many pupils left school or progressed to higher education where they found it difficult to use the more public, formal structures of speech and writing demanded of them.

The main consequence of such a well-meaning approach to language use, therefore, was to encourage pupils' own speech and writing practices at the expense of those demanded by the world beyond the school. Since the main function of English since its inception as a school

subject was to teach pupils to read and to write standard English, such an approach was consequently heavily criticised by employers, the Government and its advisors.

A project into the practice of English in the classroom by Barnes, Barnes and Clarke (1984) had concluded that public topics should be included alongside the explorations of private experience and literary studies. They recommended that reflection upon use of language should be included as part of the teaching of English. By reflecting upon language as well as using it, by including public topics as well as literary ones, the authors of the project suggested that such study would provide students with the principles upon which pictures of the world were based. Informed by these principles, it was argued, pupils would be able to see their place in the picture and realise that the picture itself can be changed. However, what these principles actually were, precisely *what* reflection upon language meant, *how* it was to be taught and how it related to these principles remained unresolved and unexplored.

Although the altered principle of distribution had changed the way schools were organized, the curriculum remained essentially unaffected by these changes. Consequently, throughout the nineteen eighties, curriculum development projects in language continued a cross-curricular and horizontal rather than subject specific and vertical approach to the curriculum. Politically, their approach also pulled curriculum objectives from left to centre. These acknowledged that society was based upon unequal relationships, whilst doing little to alter their nature. Two nationally co-ordinated projects funded by the government were initiated, called *The National Oracy Project* (1985-91) and *The National Writing Project* (1987-93) to restore the teaching of more formal, public aspects of language use.

6.4 Language and the Curriculum

Both *The National Oracy Project* (NWP) and *The National Writing project* (NOP) were very much concerned with raising teachers' awareness of the importance of language for learning across all subjects. They were also influenced by developments in modern language theory, particularly their emphasis upon the social aspects of both speech and writing. For example, Czerniawska, in a book informed by NWP, wrote that:

Writing, like all other aspects of language, is a social process, something that happens in different ways in different contexts and in different cultural groups. When children learn to write, they learn more than the *system* of writing. They learn about the *social practices* of language.

Czerniewska (1992:2)

Drawing upon the work of Cook-Gumperz (1986), she argues that this process also involves learning about the cultural values of different types of writing, such as the fact that some

writing is kept, whilst another kind is thrown away. She points out that each subject is shaped as much through the language varieties it uses as through the content it selects for study. The task of a writer, Czerniawska argues, is to work the information required of a subject into an appropriate pattern. Every subject had its own ways of organising the patterns through which its information was structured. Consequently, one major aim of the Project was to make teachers realise that the demands made of the writing tasks associated with their subject were an important aspect of the learning process. Its concern, therefore, was with the writing demanded by all classroom contexts, rather than limited to the ones demanded by the subject of English.

At the same time, like the various newsletters produced by the Project, Czerniawska stressed the interactive nature of the ways in which pupils learnt to write, based upon negotiation between the pupil and the teacher. The model was not one of pupils being taught these writing patterns and their associated habits in a passive way, but one in which choices were available to be discussed and pupils made aware of the freedoms and constraints of different language norms. These were located within the demands made upon the content, purpose and context of the writing task. However, the immediate classroom context is also part of a wider cultural and social context that sets the boundaries of the norms within which language functions. Thus, although the NWP recognised the interactive nature of writing, its teaching, as it had to be, was based upon teaching pupils accepted forms of writing.

Whilst the NWP recognised the social and cultural aspects of language, thereby redressing the balance placed upon its individual development, it made little attempt to appraise critically the values and principles upon which language norms were based. Rather, it accepted the norms for what they were, and saw the task of the school as one whereby pupils were shown how to engage in these norms without questioning their assumptions or origins. Its emphasis was also more upon educating teachers to recognise the factors which influenced language use, especially those of audience, context and purpose than upon the explicit teaching of the structures and patterns associated with their subject. For this, a common, grammatical terminology would have needed to be developed. Rather than undertaking such a task, the NWP left the teaching of the terms with which to describe the language patterns demanded by different subjects to the teachers themselves.

Like the NWP, the NOP stressed the social, interactive nature of language and its relationship with culture and society. Edwards, in a reader that accompanied the NOP, draws upon the work of Hymes (1972). He writes that 'communicative competence includes being able to draw on a repertoire of ways of speaking...knowing how to manage unequal relationships, to choose the 'right' forms and do the 'right' things, is an important part of being

communicatively competent.(1992:72)'. Citing Bruner, Edwards argued that the process of learning how to negotiate communicatively was also one of learning how to enter a culture. He also pointed out that much of the debate surrounding the description of standard English as a social dialect rather than a superior one came from confusing different kinds of superiority: Languages, and varieties of a language may be equal but different from a linguistic perspective, whilst also being very unequal from a social one. Rather than exploring the sources of this inequality, the NOP advocated an approach by which pupils improved their communicative competence by extending their linguistic repertoire.

Rather like learning the patterns of use demanded by the writing practices of a particular community and culture, teachers were similarly advised to teach their pupils their various patterns of speech. These patterns often placed constraints upon speech that positioned people in very unequal terms, such as the difference between a casual conversation and being introduced to the Queen. Likewise, classrooms had been marked by highly asymmetrical relationships, with the transmission of knowledge creating unequal communicative rights. Part of pupils' development in speech, Edwards and NOP stressed, was learning what it is 'appropriate', a key if cloudy concept, to do, say and know in particular relationships and settings. In a setting which draws people together from a wide range of backgrounds, it is thus unlikely that such knowledge was common, or shared, and needed to be made explicit. As Edwards points out:

This powerful notion of talking one's way into forms of social relationship raises questions about how closely what is learned in the 'home world' corresponds to the communicative demands of critical contexts in the wider society. Since school represents the first and most important move out of the home world, those children who experience a great deal of continuity between how language is used in the classroom and in their homes stand a much better chance of being identified and sponsored as successful pupils. Ignorance of, or resistance to, those communicative demands - whether the demands are for 'appropriately' standard or formal speech, or for particular ways of taking turns or answering questions - may be interpreted as indicating a general unfitness for learning.

Edwards (1992:73)

The approach taken to make pupils fit for learning, therefore, was to help pupils from home worlds whose ways of talking did not correspond to those required by the school, and therefore society, by teaching them those ways. Such an approach self-perpetuated the social inequality and class bias that led to children from particular social and linguistic backgrounds being identified and sponsored and others as being made fit for learning, before such identification was made. But class, as has been noted, had been deleted from the debate.

Like the NWP, the NOP sought to educate pupils into the communicative norms of both speech and writing across all subjects demanded by the context of the school in order to improve pupils' use of English. Its essentially benevolent and paternalistic approach did not extend to the critical appraisal of the norms themselves. Rather, they were presented objectively in ways that ruled out any consideration of the underlying implicit values on which that objectivity was based. Furthermore, although concerned with communicative norms, neither the NWP nor NOP saw it as their task to provide a set of terms, a metalanguage, for describing the patterns of their use. Although described as national, it is also difficult to assess the effect these projects actually had on classroom practice, since participation in them was regionally concentrated, with not all schools taking part. Nevertheless, as national projects, their influence upon the subsequent writing of a national curriculum for English was substantial.

Whilst the NWP and NOP concentrated upon developing pupils' use of language in classroom contexts across all subjects, another, parallel curriculum development was also introduced into schools that stressed the wider, social and cultural influences upon language use. This was the introduction of courses based upon Language Awareness (LA). These courses were designed for pupils of a specific age range, those in upper primary and lower secondary schools. They took a historical and sociolinguistic approach to language study, by considering issues such as accent and dialect and the history of language. The emphasis in such courses was how language related to society and thus the contexts within which pupils learnt language and social and cultural influences upon it, rather than with the development of individual use. Consequently, they failed to make the connection between pupils' own use of language and the social aspects of language upon which such courses concentrated.

In his book on Language Awareness, Hawkins (1984), a prominent figure in the Language Awareness movement, stressed the importance of pre-school language experience for later success in language development. He was particularly concerned with the language development of children from ethnic minorities and those of unskilled manual workers. He argued that an important aspect of raising pupils' awareness of language in general was to make pupils' as future parents aware of the importance of language in raising children.

Hawkins argued that awareness and greater sensitivity on the part of educators towards the language of pupils from disadvantaged class and ethnic backgrounds would go some way towards alleviating the 'linguistic parochialism' prevalent in British society. By raising pupils' awareness of language, particularly in relation to its social and cultural background through courses on language, Hawkins and others like him hoped to change such parochialism to tolerance. Alongside these more long term aims of courses in LA, lay the more immediate one as a bridge in the transition from primary to secondary school, when pupils begin to study

foreign languages alongside English. It was with this aim in mind that many schools introduced courses in LA as part of the curriculum for foreign languages rather than as part of any other subject.

Since courses in Language Awareness were not tied to a formal syllabus or examination, they varied greatly from school to school. The degree to which any course was subsequently incorporated into other courses, most notably child care or foreign language teaching, varied even more widely.

Clark, Fairclough, Ivanic and Martin-Jones were critical of LA courses for much the same reason that Inglis was critical in the 1970's of the Schools Council 'Language in Use' project. Much the same criticism can also be applied to the NWP and NOP. That is, that such courses and approaches purport to explain and describe how language is used without explaining how or why it is used in the way that it is. They point out that much of what is considered is presented as 'objective' without consideration of the underlying implicit values on which the objectivity is based. They argue that it awareness by itself was insufficient and ought to include a critical element of the kind they proposed:

Critical Language Awareness of the world ought to be the main objective of all education, including language education. Language Awareness programmes ought therefore to help children develop not only operational and descriptive knowledge of their world, but also a critical awareness of how these practices are shaped by and shape social relationships and relationships of power

Clark, Fairclough, Ivanic and Martin Jones (1988:12-3)

Their main criticism was that looking at and studying how language is shaped 'operationally and descriptively' was a far safer and less contentious option than considering language in a critical and questioning way. By contrast, they argued that Critical Language Awareness (CLA) involved a consideration of the social, political and economic circumstances that lead the pre-school language experience of children from ethnic minorities and working class backgrounds being poorer when compared with those of children from other backgrounds. It also involved a return to language issues related to class, such as why Standard English is perceived as a superior form of speech to any other, why Received Pronunciation is perceived as a 'better' accent than any other and why some forms of writing are valued more than others.

Clark et al argued that making pupils aware of these issues as advocated by LA does not of itself do away with linguistic parochialism and encourage linguistic tolerance since, having raised the issues, it leaves them unexplored. Exploring such issues is uncomfortable because they raise fundamental questions of inequalities and prejudices that exist in our society rather

than implicitly fostering acceptance of the status quo. LA describes people's attitudes towards language but fails to examine the reasons why people hold such attitudes which CLA does.

Medway (1995) has argued that that neither CLA/CL are of themselves sufficient as a dominant pedagogy for English as, despite encouraging students to analyse and criticise texts, in speech and in writing, and to consider the discourses from which they are drawn, they have one major shortcoming. This is that they do not take account of students' own expressive writing practices that recognises pupils' development as language users which are still an important and vital element of English in schools. Consequently, both CLA and LA run the risk of ignoring their own student's experiences at the expense of theorising those of others. Medway argues that theorising pupils' own experience of life that they bring to the classroom through the expression, imagination and creativity of language does not occur elsewhere in the curriculum, or happen by itself:

theoretically orientated thinking *on that sort of content* - the experience students bring to school with them - is not in practice going to happen anywhere else...It is a matter not just of those first order representations and enactments, narratives that stay close to the concrete specificity of the occasion and in which the prime virtue is vividness and freshness; it is also the oblique expression of knowledge and experience that cannot, at least for the moment, be expressed discursively at all....after all the discursive knowledge has been extracted and the conclusions formulated, experience is never exhausted.

Medway (1995:7-8)

Such a recontextualisation of English, therefore, involves theorising language in a way which includes the expression of experiences as part of reflecting upon language itself that recognises the part language has to play in constituting experience. The growth model ignored the ways in which experience is mediated through language, concentrating instead upon the experience itself. It ignored the contribution of linguistic philosophy, most notably that of Wittgenstein (1953), for whom experience is only *there* as mediated and made by a necessarily public language. One example Wittgenstein considers is that of the concept of *pain*. Unlike that of *'tree'*, the concept of *'pain'* does not have such an immediately visible correlation between the signifier and the signified. We learn how to understand what it means to be in pain, to voice the experience of being in pain, by tallying the behaviour associated with pain with the language used to describe it, just as we learn that a smudge on a canvas represents a leaf. The experience of being in pain is individual, but its expression is linguistically constituted. As Wittgenstein argued, 'Nominalists make the mistake of interpreting all words as *names*, and so of not really describing their use, but only, so to speak, giving a paper draft of such a description' (1953:118). Language itself is thus an important factor in determining the reality and experience expressed through it. As the Government sought to reinstate explicit language study in the English curriculum, it also found that the concept of language itself had

altered, that led to definitions of language becoming a struggle of power between the teaching profession and the Government. The Government had begun to prepare the ground for the introduction of a national curriculum in schools as early as 1977, although its educational reforms did not initially extend to the curriculum. Towards the end of the decade, as the Conservative Party continued to be re-elected to office, the changing principle of distribution began to affect the recontextualisation of the curriculum. One of its consequences was to organise the curriculum around a hierarchical, vertical, subject-based approach based upon clear demarcations of subject identity and purpose. Since teaching language had been absorbed more readily than other subjects into a cross-curricular approach, re-defining its content in terms of the subject English proved contentious and controversial from the very beginning, with the area that came to be known as knowledge about language the most controversial of all.

6.5 English Matters: The Beginnings of a National Curriculum

In 1977, following Callaghan's (the Labour Prime Minister) speech at Ruskin College in 1975 that initiated 'The Great Debate' on education, the Government published its green paper called *Education in Schools: A Consultative Document*. After the return of the Conservative Party to office in 1979, this was followed by a further papers including one called *A Framework for the School Curriculum* (1980) that divided the curriculum into subjects. Two series of HMI reports were published in the mid-eighties that dealt specifically with the curriculum. One had the self-consciously ambiguous title of *Curriculum Matters* intended to 'stimulate discussion about the curriculum as a whole and about its individual components'. The other was called *Education Observed*. Together with the white papers on *Teaching Quality* and *Better Schools*, these documents preceded and signposted subsequent government legislation that established a national curriculum in all school subjects.

The 'Curriculum Matters' series of pamphlets written by HMIs began the process of defining a curriculum for each subject. The consultative pamphlet *English from 5 to 16* (1984) was written by HMIs and provoked considerable controversy. It reaffirmed the centrality of language as it had been defined within the growth model for English and, like Bullock, identified four interrelated modes of language: speaking, listening, reading and writing. It outlined aims for each of the three areas: the spoken word (speaking and listening), reading and writing, based on the principle of developing and promoting pupils' use of language through a variety of forms and range of purposes, influenced by the work of both the NWP and NOP. It also outlined one further aim for English; which was to teach pupils about language. This included knowing 'the names of all the main parts of speech' based on nineteenth century prescriptive and Latinate grammar that had characterised formal teaching about language until the 1960s. At the same time, it embraced the study of language as defined by traditional literary study in pointing out that learning about language involved becoming

sensitive to the ways language embodied values, conveys attitudes and defines relationships. How language itself embodied values and attitudes did not form part of its definition. 'Awareness', consequently, had no critical-cognitive purchase.

The pedagogy of personal growth had located teaching about language as part of English rather than as a separate activity dependent upon individual teachers' practice. How this teaching related to the processes and products associated with English was also a matter left to teachers' discretion that, in many cases, led to it being ignored. That of cultural heritage located it within the language of literature, whilst that of the skills model located it within the teaching of spoken and written standard English. To these three strands had been added an 'awareness', whatever that may be, of language, patterns of language and their functions in a society that perpetuated the social inequality upon which such patterns were based. *English for Ages 5 to 16* located teaching about language firmly at the centre of the curriculum as a cement binding together the three earlier aims. However, to which of the various definitions of 'learning about language' it referred was by no means clear, since its vagueness could encompass all four. Nor had a common set of terms for describing language or a common approach to teaching them been agreed by the profession. Consequently, the Government was able to propose its own. It is not surprising, therefore, that the *Responses* pamphlet (1986) reported that: 'nothing divided the respondents more than the issue of knowledge about language'.

The *Responses* pamphlet reiterated that the original paper had excluded such an approach. Nevertheless, the one which was to replace it was by no means clear. It stated that:

...there may be some grounds for believing that there may be wide accord with the aim though there is little agreement, as yet, about alternative objectives. There is also a clear need and some growing willingness to settle an agenda and ultimately a curriculum for this aim, but it will be a long time before the professional unity required to implement such a policy can be arrived at.

HMSO (1986 : 8)

The English teaching profession broadly agreed that the aim to teach pupils about language was an important one. What was involved in achieving it, however, was by no means easy to determine, particularly as *Curriculum Matters 1* had moved the focus of English away from pedagogic concern with the development of the individual through language towards a desire for pupils to learn more formal and public forms of language, characterised by standard English. It drew upon prescriptive attitudes towards language use that associated language with self-evident standards, correctness and values. Clout (1987) has argued that the statements made by HMI in *English from Ages 5 to 16* were a desire on the part of the

government to correlate performance in language with levels of achievement that drew attention away from the absence of any real attempt to understand the complex origin of educational failure. Instead, schools were presented as having failed children.

Shortly after the publication of the *Responses* pamphlet, an alternative version of the curriculum for English was published by the CPS. Its author, Sheila Lawlor, argued that Conservative government under Mrs Thatcher had challenged orthodox assumptions, replacing them with ones that had changed the nature and premises of political debate. As part of this change, Lawlor acknowledged that the administrative balance of education had shifted from LEAs and the education establishment towards schools and parents. Nevertheless, she criticised the Conservatives for not having challenged the content of the curriculum itself. She states that:

The National Curriculum proposed in the new Education Reform Bill presents an opportunity for change but the danger exists that far from tackling orthodoxies, it will further entrench them. If the content of the proposed national Curriculum merely reflects the views of members of the 'education service' - teachers, their unions, LEAs, education theorists and worst of all Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) - then the National Curriculum, instead of serving to raise standards, will lower them.

CPS (1988:6)

Lawlor attacked the HMI's proposals put forward in *English from ages 5 to 16* on the grounds that the document reiterated the recommendations made in Bullock, including the rejection of the concept of 'correctness' in English in favour of 'appropriateness'. She criticised Bullock's version of English for its ambitious but vague aims and its neglect of basic skills and knowledge. In place of the growth model, Lawlor's version binds the earlier ones of skills and cultural heritage. Literacy as mechanical 'skill' and knowledge as grammatical terminology and the literary canon form the basis of this alternative model. She argued that a national curriculum for English should set out the minimum requirements for such basic skills and knowledge that totally ignored its discursive aspects. These minimum requirements were summed up in the following way:

(1) Reading

Emphasis today tends to be placed on ability to catch the general sense of the passage, rather than to correlate individual words with a set of sounds. But it is important to be able to read precisely - word for word - as well as to gauge the general sense. So our curriculum demands that pupils should be able to read and write.

(2) Writing

This curriculum will expect pupils to be taught how to distinguish and identify the components of a sentence. Without knowledge of grammatical terms, pupils are not equipped to form a correct sentence. The knowledge of such technical terms in learning to write English well should be regarded as no less essential than that appropriate for other skills (such as driving a car or playing tennis or working a computer).

(3) The literary heritage

This curriculum leaves the general choice of texts and authors to teachers and schools. Its only specific requirement is that pupils should be acquainted with the recognised classics of English literature - as a first step towards understanding the literary heritage. It will expect pupils to learn by heart certain passages of literature, and to read carefully certain books.

Lawlor (1988:22-3)

As well as containing several false words, the vision of society projected by such an approach implies a hierarchical, unequal one where those who have the knowledge pass it on to those who do not. It is not difficult to see that the assessment proposed to accompany such a curriculum would not be very far from that required by the Revised Code a century earlier. Its appeal, if any, lay in its assumptions that if pupils were taught in a way that concentrated on 'basic skills', grammar and literature, then this would of itself lead to pupils becoming future English citizens. Lawlor's version of English had been expounded in a pamphlet written by her husband, John Marenbon first published by the CPS called *English Our English* (1987). In it, Marenbon attacked what he called the current orthodoxy of linguistic equality that rejected the notion of correctness and devalued the importance of standard English. He writes that:

At the centre of the new orthodoxy is its devaluation of standard English. From this derives its exponents' hostility to grammatical prescription: *because* they do not think that standard English is superior to dialect, they do not believe that its grammar should be prescribed to children (a position they try to support by mistakenly insisting that grammar cannot ever prescribe); *because* they cannot accept that standard English is superior to dialect, they insist that the language schoolchildren use can be judged only by its 'appropriateness'

Marenbon (1994: 22)

Marenbon argued for the superiority of standard English on the grounds that it has developed over centuries to fulfil a far wider range of functions than any other dialect and by the very fact of its being the standard. At the same time as acknowledging that standard English has evolved historically and that standard languages change, Marenbon appeared to suggest that this process was complete and inalterable. Nor did he acknowledge the part social attitudes played towards marking standard English as a superior form above all others.

Marenbon's criticisms did not remain unchallenged by the profession (see: Allen (1989), Winch (1988)). However, in forming a committee of inquiry into the English language, it is clear that the new Right hoped it would propose a model based upon the ideas represented in publications by the CPS. Government desire to settle an agenda and a curriculum for teaching about language was too pressing and important for it to wait the long time referred to in the Responses pamphlet for professional unity to settle the debate. A further government inquiry into English was commissioned in 1988 to propose a model of language upon which the subsequent national curriculum could be based. The political background against which this inquiry took place under the chairmanship of Sir John Kingman was very different to those of either Newbolt or Bullock, written a little over a decade previously.

Chapter 7

English Matters: Kingman, LINC and Cox

7.0 Introduction

The conditions and background against which a national curriculum for English was written demonstrate the tension that existed between both its internal and external relations. The external demands made by the formalisation of the curriculum served to highlight internal divisions and diversions of the subject rather than to pull them together into a compromise of the kind which had characterised the curriculum envisaged by the Newbolt Report. Bullock had attempted a consensus that had become diversified even further after the publication of its Report and tensions continued, tangling and unravelling the subject as its strands jostled for control.

The 1988 Education Reform Act laid the foundations for the writing of a national curriculum linked to assessment at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16 as proposed by the Black Report (1988). Black tried to make testing both formative and diagnostic whilst at the same time making it summative and comparable between individuals and schools in ways that could also be used to determine funding. Thus, although choice and diversity were key elements in reforming the organizational structure of schools, the same principles did not apply to the curriculum which was to be centrally prescribed for all schools.

In preparation for the writing of a national curriculum in English, a further Government committee was formed to inquire into the teaching of language. Government concern regarding the teaching of standard English discussed in Chapter 5 was such that it was thought necessary to prescribe a curriculum for teaching standard English before one was written for English as a whole. The committee formed to design a model of the English language was carefully chosen. After invitations had been variously rejected and accepted, Kenneth Baker, then Secretary of State for Education, publicly announced the committee, chaired by the mathematician John Kingman. The main aim of the Committee was to consider what pupils should be taught about the English language, particularly its grammar. Baker stated that pupils needed to know about the workings of the English language if they were to use it effectively. This issue, however, of the relationship between using language and studying language, had long been vigorously debated in English pedagogy as Chapters 4 and 5 have discussed. The conclusion reached by Mawr (1923) that teaching grammar was best left alone until such a time as language theory could support pedagogy had been something of a guiding principle regarding the teaching of language for several decades. Nevertheless, arguments put forward

by campaigners of the new Right designed to resurrect the teaching of grammar were based upon pupils' perceived inability to write and speak accurate standard English. At the same time, twentieth century language theory had also re-defined the boundaries of grammar, its relationship to semantics and the relationship between different dialects and varieties of language in ways which did not support the pedagogy desired by the new Right.

Cameron (1995) has pointed out that what she has called 'the great grammar crusade' illustrates a paradox, which is that false arguments succeed in convincing people that they are based on a true premise. This success rests upon engaging with underlying assumptions of its audience, in this case that grammar of a certain kind, namely 'correct' grammar needs to be taught if people are to use English 'correctly'. The opposing argument put forward by experts that redefined notions of grammar failed to engage with these underlying assumptions and is therefore rejected as nonsensical. The debate about teaching grammar was nothing new, as previous chapters have shown. What had altered was the shift of its centre of gravity from a professional domain and its associated publications to more a public one that included the media. As part of this shift, the debate - particularly in the press and news broadcasts - became polarised between 'traditionalists' positioned on the right and 'progressivists' positioned on the left. 'Traditionalists' were portrayed as representing order in the classroom with a defined sense of what was right and wrong, whilst 'progressivists' were represented as child-centred, relativist and presiding over chaotic classrooms. Cameron summarised the debate in the following way:

In the sphere of education, the radical Right focused on two related problems: an alleged decline in standards, and a drift away from the values education had traditionally sought to transmit. Influential conservatives on both sides of the Atlantic proposed to address this crisis of standards and values by instituting a 'core curriculum' - a set of skills, competencies, ideas and canonical texts, exposure to and mastery of which would form the common inheritance of all educated people. In each case this proposal encountered resistance from opponents who found it over-prescriptive, elitist and ethnocentric. And, in each case, questions of language played a key role in what American commentators dubbed 'the curriculum wars'.

Cameron (1995:79)

Questions of language became key issues regarding the teaching of literacy, literature and standard English in the formation of a national curriculum for English. Standards of literacy were said to have declined during the period when English pedagogy had become less concerned with teaching the formal properties of language as a separate component of English. At the same time, a decline in standards of behaviour was also attributed to the lack of such teaching. Re-introducing the requirement that all pupils should learn to speak standard English and read its literature, would, it was believed, bring about a corresponding rise in

standards of both literacy and behaviour. The much quoted words of Norman Tebbit, a Conservative government minister spoken as part of an interview illustrate this belief:

...we've allowed so many standards to slip...teachers weren't bothering to teach kids to spell and punctuate properly...if you allow standards to slip to the stage where good English is no better than bad English, where people turn up filthy...at school... all those things cause people to have no standards at all, and once you lose standards then there's no imperative to stay out of crime.

Tebbit (1985)

Tebbit's use of the word 'standards' alters its meaning every time he used it. Firstly, it is taken to mean a concern with achieving a certain degree of literacy. Secondly, it is used as a judgement regarding the kind of English that is used, with standard English presumably being 'good' and everything else 'bad'. Using 'bad' English is taken as an indication of a lack of moral standards that leads to its users committing crime. A person's linguistic behaviour, therefore, is linked to their moral behaviour. Bourne and Cameron point to the social significance of beliefs such as those expressed by Tebbit. They write that: 'anxieties about grammar are at some deeper level anxieties about the breakdown of order and tradition, not just in language but in society at large' (1988:149-50).

Anxieties of this kind had increasingly been expressed, particularly in the media, by self-styled public commentators including George Walden writing in the *Daily Telegraph* and Janet Daly in *The Times*. Bourne and Cameron (1988) refer to one such article written by John Rae, an independent school headmaster, published in the Observer newspaper in 1982. Rae had attributed the demise of grammar to the self-indulgence of the nineteen sixties when its rules, like others governing behaviour, were perceived to threaten personal freedom. Ignoring finer points of grammar equated with ignoring finer points of behaviour such as honesty, responsibility, property, gratitude and apology.

Just as learning to speak and write standard English and studying its literature had been proposed as a way of unifying English society after the First World War, the same arguments were used in the nineteen eighties in an attempt to transform an increasingly 'free' society in danger of dissolving into anarchy and becoming subsumed by other cultures into a culturally hegemonic one based on the beliefs outlined above. As Bourne and Cameron point out:

A return to traditional grammar marks a return to the associated social values...An authoritarian state frequently uses the 'national language' as a point of unity and social cohesion, and, analogously, finds linguistic diversity threatening, a force to be contained or even eliminated

Bourne and Cameron (1988:151)

The growth model of English had failed politically by emphasising linguistic diversity. Its emphasis upon individuality and creativity in language whilst ignoring the structure and rules of standard English as unimportant was consequently seen as analogous with a corresponding breakdown in law and order on the part of pupils taught in such a way. Cultural hegemony, therefore, was to be re-organised around standard English and its literature. However, the Latinate grammar described by Rae had long since ceased to function as an accurate description of the English language. The terms of reference for 'grammar' and 'language' had also altered. As Chapters 5 and 6 have illustrated, language theory could no longer sustain the teaching of an old-fashioned Latinate grammar. Politicians and government advisors, however, such as those associated with the Centre for Policy Studies and campaigning organisations such as the one for Real Education turned to those theories of language which supported their beliefs regarding language and its pedagogy and ignored those that did not. As a precursor to the writing of a national curriculum, the Government commissioned a further report into English with the aim of providing a theoretical model of the English language.

7.1 Defining Language

Charged with the task of providing a pedagogic model of language to fill the gap left by the abandonment of formal grammar teaching that was both theoretically credible and politically desirable, the Kingman Committee was inevitably faced with a very difficult task. Members of this Committee were chosen to reflect a wide variety of interests regarding the nature and function of language in education. They included well-known prominent critics of progressive pedagogy such as Brian Cox, Professor of English literature and one of the authors of the controversial 'Black Papers' on education. Media representation was made by Keith Waterhouse, a well-known Tory journalist and Robin Robinson, a BBC broadcaster. Linguistic representation was made by Gillian Brown and Henry Widdowson, applied linguists prominent in the field of teaching English as a foreign language. Consumer and business representation was made by Patricia Mann, editor of *Consumer Affairs* and Sir Charles Suckling of ICI. The writer and Oxford professor Iris Murdoch had been initially approached by the then Secretary of State for Education Kenneth Baker to chair the Committee, but declined the invitation. In her place, Sir John Kingman, a mathematician and Vice-Chancellor of Bristol University, had accepted.

Of the fifteen committee members, four were directly concerned with English teaching in schools: Leonard Ellis, a senior lecturer in Education, Richard Knott, a county English advisor, Pramila Le Hunte, head of an English department in a private school and Jeanne Strickland, a deputy head of a private secondary school. Harold Rosen (1988) summed up the composition as 'bizarre'. He also questioned the impact its Report would have upon the

teaching of language, since the committee did not include any significant figure who had made a major contribution to the theory and practice of English teaching. Unlike both the Newbolt and Bullock Committees, the Kingman Committee did not have any member closely associated with classroom practice in the tradition of Sampson and Britton. Given Government hostility and suspicion towards theorists whom they saw as responsible for a decline in standards of literacy, their absence was not so surprising.

The brief presented to the Kingman Committee was much narrower than the one given to either Newbolt or Bullock. It was asked to recommend a model of the English language as a basis for teacher training and professional discussion. It was also asked to consider how far, and in what ways, that model should be made explicit to pupils at various stages of education. Achieving these two aims was clearly a difficult one, and although it fulfilled the first, the second remained unresolved. Whilst members of the Committee were probably in broad agreement on the merits of teaching about language, like the respondents to *English from ages 5 to 16*, precisely *what* should be taught and *how* remained a hotly disputed issue amongst them. The Report stated that: 'Widely divergent views are now held on the value of the formal elements of knowledge about language' (DES (1988:12)). Despite the belief that standards in use of English would rise dramatically if the formal teaching of grammar which was normal practice in most classrooms before 1960 became so once again, the Report did not recommend a return to the kind of teaching associated with it. Instead, it called its model one for 'knowledge about language' (KAL) rather than grammar. This model divided the learning of language into four parts: Part 1: The Forms of the English Language; Part 2: Communication and Comprehension; Part 3: Acquisition and Development and Part 4: Historical and Geographical Variation. At what stage of pupils' education any one part of the model was to be made explicit, however, remained undiscussed by the Report.

In an article written prior to the sitting of the Committee, Wilkinson (1987) argued that any model the Committee devised should be developmental, drawing on the work of social and child psychology, with criteria that would enable the growth of each individual child to be taken into account. Instead, the Model adopted a more theoretical approach. Nevertheless, linguistic and educational representation on the Committee argued for its pedagogy to be located within the sphere of language use rather than as anything which separated use from its study. Its Report affirmed the principle that knowledge about language was not a separate component of either the primary or secondary curriculum. It argued that teaching about language should inform children's talking, writing, reading and listening in the classroom rather than forming a separate activity. How the Model it devised could be translated into such practice, however, remained unresolved.

In its discussion of speaking and listening, the Report stressed the importance for teachers to have clear and informed views regarding accent. Regarding dialects and varieties of language, the Report reiterated the fact that no language is intrinsically superior to any other:

The relationship between personality or identification with a community is so close that there is a tendency for people to feel that *their* language is best. But facts are otherwise. All languages are rule-governed systems of communication, and none is linguistically superior.

DES (1988:43)

It stressed the ways in which language use was informed by context, audience and purpose. The implications for teaching were taken to be teaching pupils how to become aware of this so that they could alter their use accordingly. Despite its recognition of the variety of accents, dialects and other languages that characterised the English population, the Report emphasised the teaching of standard English as an important aspect of developing pupils' linguistic repertoire. The importance of standard English was justified in terms of pupils' entitlement and right to its use rather than its inherent superiority.

The Report acknowledged the function of language in identifying the individual in relation to the society, or societies, to which he or she belongs. Learning standard English was not recommended as a replacement of native dialect but as the development of pupils' versatility in language just as the Newbolt Report had advocated bi-dialectalism. The reason given for the importance of standard English was its use in the public sphere:

...as adults move from their localised speech communities into a wider world...one of the school's duties is to enable children to acquire Standard English, which is their right.

DES (1988:11)

The Report also re-affirmed the importance of the study of English literature, again on the grounds that it was their right:

It is possible that a generation of children may grow up deprived of their entitlement - an introduction to the powerful and splendid history of the best that has been thought and said in our language. Too rigid a concern with what is 'relevant' to the lives of young people seems to us to pose the danger of impoverishing not only the young people, but the culture itself, which has to be revitalised by each generation.

DES (1988:11)

It asserted the importance of taking grammar into account in writing:

All writing demands craft to ensure that the final product is readable as well as reaching to the heart of what needs to be expressed. It is not enough to write 'freely' with no thought given to the audience for the writing, or the shape and patterns of the language used.

DES (1988:11)

The legitimisation of social order and control as defined through language were thus justified by acknowledging the 'flexibility' and 'versatility' in the use of spoken language rather than the 'evil habits of home' referred to by the Newbolt Report, by 'craft' and 'shape' in writing rather than writing 'freely' which took on pejorative connotations and by the 'entitlement' of literature of which a 'rigid' pre-occupation with 'relevance' had deprived children. Any other kind of pedagogy, it was implied, was illegitimate and even damaging to children. The terms of reference for KAL were thus characterised by exclusion and opposition rather than by inclusion that, given the history of English teaching outlined in the first part of this thesis, narrowed the terms of reference for the subject itself.

Regarding assessment, the Committee was wary of practice modelled upon comprehension and grammar exercises of the kind that had characterised GCE O Level, advocating instead assessment through coursework of the kind used at GCSE. It recommended that formal assessment should concern itself with assessing pupils' language use and that assessment of KAL be left to individual teachers and schools to determine rather than forming separate assessment. Chapter 4 of the Report provided illustrative examples of how KAL could relate to and inform pupils' language activities. For younger pupils, KAL was defined more by developing pupils' understanding of the written word for both reading and writing. Rather, explicitly learning about language was to be introduced into the upper junior and continued throughout the secondary curriculum.

Such oppositions and the underlying ideology of its discourse made the Report an easy target for criticism by the profession, not least its economic metaphor of language as a 'social bank' upon which all members of a community draw. Extending the metaphor to the bank balances upon which individuals draw shows those using standard English to have the largest. Freire sums up the principles upon which a banking concept of education is based:

In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry. The teacher presents himself to his students as their necessary opposite; by considering their ignorance absolute, he justifies his own existence. The students, alienated like the slave in Hegelian dialectic, accept their ignorance as justifying the teacher's existence - but, unlike the slave, they never discover that they educate the teacher.

Freire (1972:46)

Within such a concept, standard English is viewed as a commodity that is to be acquired, one which had become de-valued and needed restoring to its rightful place in the market. It is the teacher's task to train students in its use, students who are perceived as passive and compliant, adapting to the world as it is rather than intervening in the world as transformers of it. Such a concept ignores the part language itself plays in communicating the values expressed through language and its use in either spoken or written modes and how these could be critically evaluated. It places the teacher as the holder of knowledge and the pupil as a more passive receiver. At the same time, the Report advocated a child-centred pedagogy inconsistent with such a view. Not surprisingly, the Model was consequently heavily criticised, not least by Committee members themselves. Like Frome before him, Widdowson, who did not stay with the committee until the end, included a note of reservation to the Report. Unlike Frome, however, whose voice as the headteacher of an infant school was a lone and relatively uninfluential one in 1975, Widdowson's, as an eminent professor of linguistics in 1988 was far more powerful.

He criticised his colleagues on the Committee for failing to show how the functions of language represented in the Report interrelated. They failed to: 'come to grips with the central question of how knowledge about language can be shown to be relevant to the educational aims of English as a school subject' (1988:77). Particularly, he criticised them for failing to establish the purpose of English as a pedagogic subject:

...what English is on the curriculum *for*, is not really explored here with any rigour, but simply asserted in very general (and traditional) terms...only when English has been clearly defined as a subject in relation to such purpose, when the vague notion of 'mastery' is given more specific content, can a statement be logically made about the knowledge about language necessary to achieve the objectives of English as a subject

DES (1988:77)

Widdowson's criticism was echoed by that made by another member of the Committee, Richard Knott, an LEA English advisor. Knott stated that:

...the Report, for all its intermittent power and conviction, has a rotten core. The case for Knowledge about Language is not made. No proof is offered that it leads to better performance...The Model - perhaps the fiercest battleground of all - is a cadaverous affair. We should not, looking back, have begun with *forms* of language. Meaning comes first, after all.

Knott (1988:17)

Both Widdowson and Knott criticise the Model for ignoring and failing to make clear its relationship with the expressive side of language. Despite the compromises made by the Committee, the subsequent debate generated by the Report made it clear that teachers, educational linguists, politicians, policy makers and the public did not agree on what should be taught about language and how pupils should display their knowledge. An important aspect of this debate was that neither the public, those responsible for policy making nor the teaching profession had a reliable body of knowledge about the effectiveness of teaching about language that would help them to determine what could realistically be expected of pupils. The Committee was able to recommend a model of the English language, but unable to say at which stages in a pupils' education how the model should be made explicit because it did not know. Consequently, its Model was highly theoretical.

Knowledge about language, therefore, as it was defined by the Report, failed to satisfy on all counts: it failed to satisfy the new Right by rejecting old-fashioned grammar, but it also failed to satisfy the teaching profession by failing to convince them that the alternative proposed by the Model would succeed where old-fashioned grammar had failed. The debate continued as a working group was established to write a national curriculum for English set the task of incorporating the model into a national curriculum for English.

The English Working Group (EWG) was faced with the task of writing a curriculum which integrated the Kingman model of language that corresponded to the Black Report's key stage and ten level framework of curriculum and assessment. These two requirements meant that the Group had to translate the Kingman model into a curriculum and assessment framework that also took account of pupils' development as users of language as speakers, listeners, readers and writers.

7.2 KAL and the Cox Curriculum

Membership of the EWG chaired by Professor Brian Cox was chosen with even greater care than that of the Kingman committee. It was small, comprising of ten members one of whom, the writer Roald Dahl, was asked to resign shortly after it had formed. According to Cox (1991), this was because Dahl's comments regarding committee papers sent to the EWG did

not correspond with those of the rest of the Group. The example that Cox gave was that, in response to one paper, Dahl appeared to suggest that a teacher should offer no advice at all to a child when it came to selecting books for reading. Cox wrote that: 'I knew that, when we reported in September, if he (Dahl) expressed his adverse opinions to journalists he would dominate the headlines, and the Report might be irretrievably damaged' (1991: 6). Cox asked for Katharine Perera, Senior Lecturer in Linguistics at Manchester University, to take his place.

With the exception of Charles Suckling of ICI, membership was comprised of two teachers, one from a primary and the other from a secondary school; one LEA advisor; and four university lecturers. One of these represented English and media, another drama and the remaining two, Perera and Stubbs, represented educational linguistics. Rosen had called the Kingman committee 'bizarre'. By contrast, the majority of EWG members were largely concerned with the teaching of English, chosen to reflect a more conservative approach. Cox summed up the principles for selecting the membership of the original EWG:

The Kingman Report was not well-received by right-wing Conservatives because they wanted a return to the traditional teaching of Latinate grammar, and the Report came out firmly against this. Many politicians and journalists were ignorant about problems in the teaching of grammar and about the status of Standard English, and simply desired to reinstate the disciplines of study typical of schoolrooms in the 1930s. ...Because Kingman was deemed unsatisfactory, my Working Group was carefully chosen by Mr. Baker, with the assistance of Mrs Angela Rumbold, Minister of State at the DES, to reflect a more conservative stance to the teaching of English.

Cox (1991:4)

By choosing Brian Cox as its chair, the government had supposed him to be traditional and right wing in his view of education since he had been one of the editors of the Black Papers on Education published in the nineteen sixties. However, Cox's views regarding education since that time had altered, particularly with regard to the inclusion of creative writing as part of the curriculum for English. Cox's account of the EWG's membership, its work and the speed with which it was required to submit its proposals are well-documented in his book *Cox on Cox* (1991) and the more autobiographical *The Great Betrayal* (1992).

Cox's approach in formulating the curriculum was a conciliatory one, aiming simultaneously to appeal to teachers and to satisfy the Government. Stubbs (1989) accused the Report produced by the EWG as one based on compromise, attempting to please everyone. Britton had voiced the same criticism regarding the Bullock report. However, it has become the nature of government reports in politics today to achieve a consensus, which inevitably involves compromise. Consequently, given the task of formalising a curriculum for English, the report written by the EWG known as the Cox Report reproduced contemporary orthodoxy. Indeed, it

is difficult to envisage how it could have achieved any thing else at the time. It also managed to prescribe a curriculum that left teachers with a great deal of choice in interpreting its requirements into practice, with the exception of the requirements for knowledge about language. Even there, the Report resisted prescribing linguistic terminology that had to be taught. Nevertheless, language was placed *self-evidently* at the heart of the proposed national curriculum for English with no rationale offered, as Wilkinson had pointed out, as to its relation with the remainder of the curriculum. The curriculum then, was written as two halves that did not quite come together: English as it had been taught based on the principles of the growth model that stressed the individual and creative use of language and English as the study of language as a social and cultural activity but divorced from the everyday experience of the pupil.

The Cox Report identified two aims for English, the first of which echoes Bullock in stressing the private world of the child, whilst the second adds a more publicly accountable dimension, particularly in terms of the accuracy of language use demanded by the world outside the classroom:

English contributes to the personal development of the individual child because of the cognitive functions of both spoken and written language in exploratory learning and in organising and making sense of experience....English contributes to preparation for the adult world: people need to be able to communicate effectively and appropriately in all the widely differing social situations in which they find themselves.

DES (1989: 2.14)

The Report identified five 'views' of English, all of which it attempted accommodate. These were listed as personal growth, cross-curricular, adult needs, cultural heritage and cultural analysis. The stated aims privileged the skills model as 'adult needs' and the personal growth models, although that of cultural heritage was not forgotten. The Report stressed the importance of literature for making sense of experience when it stated that:

An active involvement with literature enables pupils to share the experience of others. They will encounter and come to understand a wide range of feelings and relationships by entering vicariously the worlds of others, and in consequence they are more likely to understand themselves.

DES (1989: 7.3)

It is clear that the EWG attempted to accommodate very different traditions and views of English that clearly conflicted in their aims and the texts each one privileged and the pedagogy implied by each one. Rather than altering any existing boundaries within English, the curriculum included them all. Cox (1991) justified this decision on the grounds that he had

been conscious of the ways in which the teaching profession had been marginalised in writing the national curriculum. He attempted to gain their support by writing a curriculum they would recognise and support. The pedagogic device, therefore, rather than determining the boundaries of the subject in a clearly defined way, attempted to incorporate all the demands that had been increasingly placed upon it.

The EWG divided the curriculum into the three main attainment targets of speaking and listening (AT1), Reading (AT2) and Writing (AT3). When it came to Writing, the Group also included separate attainment targets for spelling, handwriting and presentation. Responding to advice from *The National Writing Project*, such a move kept the assessment of the secretarial aspects of composition distinct from composition itself. This led to discussion of whether KAL as grammar should also be separated in the same way. Michael Stubbs, Professor of Education at the London Institute of Education and author of books on educational linguistics, was particularly keen for KAL to be a separate attainment target. Whereas the curriculum generally was framed in a way that gave teachers the maximum amount of freedom in its interpretation consistent with the dominant views of English under the terms of the personal growth model, this did not extend to the requirements for Knowledge about Language. These had been set out in the Kingman Report and had to be incorporated into any curriculum that was to be written.

Initially, supported by Stubbs, a separate attainment target for KAL was written. After considerable debate, the EWG decided to integrate its requirements across the three main attainment targets. In private conversation with Katharine Perera (December 1991), the main reason given for this was that the EWG were concerned that subsequent weighting accorded to such an attainment target could become disproportionate, marginalised or cut altogether. It was also feared that separating KAL might lead to its being taught as 'old-fashioned' grammar and the methods associated with it, rather than as part and parcel of the English curriculum. Furthermore, it left it open to separate assessment which the Group was anxious to avoid. Integrating KAL would also make alterations to it difficult without altering the whole curriculum. Cox (1991) explained the decision to integrate rather than separate KAL in the following way:

As pupils extend their skills, abilities, understanding and responsiveness in speaking and listening, reading and writing, the teacher's role is to highlight those aspects that will lead to a greater awareness of the nature and functions of language. This awareness should, in turn, contribute to the pupils' own sensitivity as language users. For this reason, we did not propose that knowledge about language should have its own profile component. To treat it separately would be to risk giving rise to the misconception that it should be separately timetabled, taught and assessed, rather than integrated in the speaking, listening, reading and writing activities of any English lesson.

Cox (1991:56-7)

Stubbs took issue with the Group's decision. He argued that the reason for it was more because to have done otherwise would have been too different from contemporary practice than anything else. He stated that:

... knowledge about language is not cumulative or coherent... its potential material is infinite: any instance of language use, literary or non-literary, in the mass media, in the language of social groups, etc., or topics such as language acquisition or the languages of the world. Sense must be made of this endless material. An informal permeation model is not enough. You cannot say everything at once. Therefore a framework or model is needed to provide focus and a principled selection. p243/4

Stubbs (1989:56-7)

Earlier, Stubbs (1986) had argued that KAL, like all other aspects of English, needed a framework that was coherent and developmental as much as any other area of the curriculum of the kind he had proposed in an earlier publication (Stubbs 1986). It broadly outlined a course on modern English language that could be taught at widely different levels of sophistication, between secondary school and university. The content of this framework was bound by the three organising principles of textual analysis of both speech and writing, language variation and language planning.

The framework, however, is lacking in three important areas: it ignores teaching about language in the primary school; it fails to make clear how its content relates to other areas of the English curriculum such as pupils' development of literacy and their own experience of the world. The degree of sophistication required remains unclear, as does its relationship with pupils' development and use of language. These same criticisms can be applied to the knowledge about language strand as it appeared in the statements of attainment from level 5 onwards across all three attainment targets. The requirements for teaching standard English and its grammar were integrated more into the programmes of study, linked to broader considerations of language variation according to situation, purpose, mode, region and social group and into considerations of language change. The requirement to teach standard English and its grammar, therefore, remained implicit rather than explicit within both the frameworks for curriculum and assessment.

As the curriculum was written in key stages, account had to be taken of cognition as well as knowledge at each one. Acquiring grammatical concepts and adult structures of language had been shown by psychologists and linguists to be progressively acquired (see 4.2 above). Perrera's work (1984) on children's acquisition of language structure showed that the developmental process of language acquisition, although well-developed by the time children were five years old, continued until they were well into their teens. Although a large

proportion of the linguistic forms found in informal speech have been acquired by most children by the time they start school, her studies indicated that there were many grammatical constructions common to the more formal language patterns required by reading and writing that they did not understand. These included the common SVO clause pattern, verb and object ellipsis in compound sentences and *how* questions. Concepts such as these are acquired once children are able to read fluently and begin to use them in writing.

Perera's studies demonstrated that the competent writer is required to use constructions that are rarely heard in unplanned speech. They also showed that development does not follow a smooth, linear and unbroken progression, nor is it characterised by steady, incremental steps of the kind envisaged by the framework of the national curriculum. Rather, it is more a matter of instability and 'regression' in some structures as others are learnt. Perera's conclusion was that when pupils' are learning to read, grammatical constructions should be close to those of their everyday speech. They should progress with help and support to more literary material that enriches both their written and spoken language. Precisely how this progression occurs and is achieved, however, is not discussed by Perera.

The acquisition of print literacy, as it is required by our society, unlike the acquisition of speech, is characterised by formal instruction. Through the texts used to teach it, it also constructs the world in a particular way and requires the child to adopt the constructions it uses. These can be very different to those they have learnt as speech. It is for this reason that these structures should be explicitly taught as part of formal instruction, and which inevitably raise questions regarding why some varieties of use are valued more than others. This argument is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8 which argues that greater account should be taken of the social influences as well as the individual nature of the language we use.

For the purposes of devising a curriculum for knowledge about language, the FWG altered the starting point to a consideration of what it is important for children to know about language rather than starting with the Kingman Model itself. Having established this, then the terminology that was required would become apparent. This terminology would refer not only to grammar, and the reasons for using the terms would therefore precede the teaching of the terminology itself. What it was important for children to know fell into five distinct categories, the forms of the English language, the study of language functions, language acquisition, language varieties and literary texts. Although the first category included textual structure as part of its definition of the formal structures of language, the texts specified for study formed a separate category defined by literary texts. However, definition of this category, as was noted in Chapter 5, had become a highly contentious issue. Separating form from the other categories could also lead to linguistic terms being taught in a de-contextualised, formal way

devoid of any relation to a text, with the exception of literary ones. Although the Report made it clear that it is the teacher's responsibility to decide on and to introduce terms as they become necessary at different stages in teaching, it gave them too little indication of its content. Given that the terms associated with language study had altered from those associated with Latinate grammar with which most teachers would be unfamiliar, it was not surprising that subsequent research revealed that the national curriculum for English had done little to alter the position regarding language study and its practice in the classroom.

Furthermore, the terms of reference for language study ignored the social, cultural and creative aspects of language that influenced and altered its use. Thus, although modern language theory such as Halliday's functional grammar and sociolinguistic studies had clearly influenced the broadening of the terms of reference for language study in the national curriculum by extending grammar beyond sentence parsing and analysis to the dimension of text and language study beyond grammar, it had not gone so far as to take account of the social and cultural contexts within which meaning and value were derived. For example, Halliday and Hasan (1985) view language as a social semiotic system rather than as a formal, abstract one. The social dimension of language implied by their approach is, they argue, crucial to discussions of language in education. They point out that learning is, above all, a social process. The classroom, the school and the education system form a social institution, each with clearly defined social structures. Consequently, knowledge is transmitted, acquired and learnt in social contexts through relationships that are defined in the value systems and ideology of our culture. (see also: Bruner (1986), Edwards and Mercer (1987), Gee (1992)). Halliday and Hasan further make the point that: '...the words that are exchanged in these contexts get their meaning from activities in which they are embedded, which again are social activities with social agencies and goals'(1985:5).

Neither Kingman nor Cox were prepared to prescribe an agreed grammar and associated terminology that all teachers in all schools would have to teach. The decision was left instead to individual teachers and schools. Rather, the prescription was that such teaching should be accompanied by social considerations towards language regarding its context and purpose. At the same time, these considerations were to be presented in a neutral way, abstracted from the day to day life of the pupil.

The Report resisted prescribing a single policy for teaching standard English and grammar, on the grounds that schools differed widely in terms of their linguistic profiles, acknowledging that use of language remained heavily class-based. To define KAL as teaching standard English and its grammar would, therefore, have highlighted social as well as linguistic inequality. Since standard English remained a dialect defined more by class than by region, it

was clear that pupils from homes where standard English was spoken were at an advantage over pupils from homes where the dialect was different. Rather than engage with this issue, the Report generalised it in terms of the requirement for pupils to become aware of the differences between various accents and dialects without the corresponding requirement that they became aware of what it meant for *them*. By prescribing that pupils' should be taught about accents and dialects and attitudes towards them before being taught standard English, the Report stated that it hoped that such an approach would prevent such inequality. However, as Clark, Ivanic, Fairclough and Martin-Jones had pointed out with regard to the Language Awareness movement, the issue was one that was too important to be left to chance.

Emphasis was placed instead upon drawing out pupils' individual implicit knowledge based on the assumption that competence preceded performance rather than on the need to impart shared, explicit knowledge that assumed competence could enhance performance. The teacher's role was to highlight those aspects that would, by virtue of being pointed out, automatically lead to greater awareness of the nature and functions of language and contribute to pupils' own sensitivity as language users. How this implicit understanding was to be made explicit, however, remained unclear. It also meant that teachers could continue with their existing practice which encouraged pupils to learn language by using it rather than by studying it and by teaching linguistic terms. The Cox Report in this respect remained as unhelpful as either Kingman or Bullock before it in terms of providing a coherent framework for language study. It provided little incentive and challenge to existing practices, being almost wholly reliant upon individual teachers' enthusiasm and willingness to update their own knowledge and alter their practice accordingly. Existing practice was also supported by the Report's position on assessment, which was that pupils' use of linguistic terminology would be implicitly assessed as part of children's use of language as a whole, rather than as something separate from it. The task of changing practice in accordance with the requirements of the national curriculum fell to a major, national project called Language in the National Curriculum (LINC).

7.3 Language in the National Curriculum

At the same time as the Cox Report was being written, the final recommendation of the Kingman Report, to establish a National Language Project (recommendation no.18), had been put into immediate effect. Administratively, this Project was modelled upon the structures of the national projects on writing and oracy, discussed in Chapter 5. It aimed to provide in-service training (INSET) for teachers in all schools based upon the 'cascade' principle of in-service provision where one teacher took part in a programme, in turn training the staff in their school. The result hoped for was that all teachers would subsequently amend their practice accordingly. As the introduction to this thesis observed, altering teachers' practices is not so

straightforward. Nevertheless, a national programme called Language in the National Curriculum (LINC) was formed under the directorship of Ron Carter, Professor of Modern English Language at the University of Nottingham. Together with providing INSET, the project was also given the task of making its INSET materials available as a published package.

LINC had an explicit two-fold purpose: to consider what teachers should know about language in line with the recommendations of the Kingman Report and to produce for the DES materials and a training programme for teachers of pupils 5 - 16 which would support the requirements of National Curriculum English. These materials provided an opportunity for an agreed set of linguistic terms to be decided upon that schools would teach together with agreed methods on how they should be taught. However- and inevitably-ideological divisions and conflicts amongst the project co-ordinators and its Director resulted instead in linguistic description forming a very small part of its in-service work and the materials finally produced by the Project (Nottingham 1991)

As a national in-service training programme, LINC was the first of its kind. Administratively, it was organised around LEAs grouped into 25 regional consortia, each with a consortium co-ordinator, with funding for in-service going directly to the LEA. Co-ordinators were drawn from a wide range of professional and academic backgrounds that included teachers, LEA advisors and college and university lecturers of education. Primary Advisory Teachers (PATs) were drawn from the classroom or LEA advisory teams, appointed to work alongside the regional co-ordinators. An ad hoc committee was formed to maintain a watching brief over the project, consisting of HMI, civil servants and academics, with a senior HMI, Peter Gannon, entrusted with evaluating the Project.

The regional consortia aimed to provide a training programme which would be attended by every language co-ordinator in primary schools and every Head of English in secondary schools, ultimately transmitting its programme to every teacher in every school. An (unpublished) HMI Report into the first year of the project commented that in practice, its aims were hard to achieve as the delivery and quality of the INSET programme varied widely from LEA to LEA. They pointed particularly to the quality and conditions of appointments, release of teachers for training and the amount of time allowed for attending in-set as particular weaknesses. It further observed that the project developed at different speeds in different consortia which cast doubt on its validity as a national project. A study undertaken by Winch (1991) concluded that advisory teachers tended to dilute the LINC aims into ones with which they felt more comfortable and that fell within their own areas of experience.

Problems of administration and dissemination also arose. For example, by interviewing regional co-ordinators, Winch discovered that some LEAs were obstructive in setting up the project and withheld information regarding its existence from teachers. In other LEAs, pressure from teachers themselves had led them to reluctantly agree to their advisory services joining in the LINC Project. The NCC English Project based at the University of Warwick, although not directly concerned with the LINC project, supported Winch's findings. For example, teachers in some of the LEAs which took part in the Project had never heard or participated in LINC training. In one such authority, the LEA had pooled all the funds it had received, including those for LINC, into a general fund for National Curriculum training rather than for organising courses specifically for English. The extent to which this training included and disseminated the aims of LINC in this particular authority, therefore, was not made clear.

Nevertheless, despite these criticisms, HMI were impressed by some of the work undertaken as part of the project. The best practice, they found, shared four characteristic features:

...sound linguistic knowledge and teaching experience on the part of the PAT and consortium consultants; an attention on the part of the providers to both the functions and forms of language; a well-judged mixture of straight transmission and interpretation of linguistic concepts, often unfamiliar to teachers, with exploratory and inductive learning techniques such as seminar and discussion groups, 'workshop sessions', or the setting of precisely focused tasks; an integration of knowledge about language with the main strands of the NC programme for English.

HMI (1991)

The Warwick English Project discussed in more detail in Chapters 7 and 8 visited schools in one LEA where primary language co-ordinators had clearly benefited by such LINC INSET. Those who had attended it and whose status in the school was prestigious had been able to influence school policy and practice regarding teaching about language in exciting and innovative ways described in Chapter 8. HMI concluded that:

At its most effective, the project fired individuals with enthusiasm; more widely, it has helped many teachers to understand more about language for themselves, to appreciate its role and importance in the processes of children's learning and to see more ways in which pupils' language development may be enhanced.

Even so, HMI found that amounts and quality of training varied sharply, as did the Warwick English Project. Furthermore, HMI pointed out that those involved in initial teacher training should also have been included in disseminating the model of language it proposed. Unless teacher educators were involved, the benefits and effects of a training programme such as LINC probably remain uneven and diluted. Although LINC organised courses for those involved in ITT, there was no real attempt to integrate its work with that of ITT.

Given the political peculiarities within which the Warwick English Project undertook its work detailed in Chapter 7, neither the Project nor HMI Reports give the fuller, *sociological* context that would make it possible to translate research into a coherent map of the subject. Such a translation would necessarily situate its conclusions in recognition, among other things, of social class and regional differences within which the curriculum was to be promulgated. So much is familiar to all teachers of English. At the same time, however, definitions of such subject activity would need to take into account what Bernstein called the 'subject identity' as well as the knowledge structures to which individual teachers give their allegiance. By the same token, curricular formations should also take into account the range and depth of professional experience involved. In other words, when subject identity comes under scrutiny, account has to be taken of teachers' own theories and practices which may be based upon a previous subject identity. Teachers take from, absorb and accommodate changes into their own existing frameworks and practices, rather than discarding one for another. This point is fundamental to the relationship between subject identity and classroom practice, yet it is one barely understood by policy makers, who appear to believe that changing subject identity is solely and merely a matter of documentation or attendance of a course. For example, the Warwick English Project found that even where LINC INSET was at its most successful, how its theories affected school policy and practice was also uneven and difficult to determine. The degree to which individual language co-ordinators were able to do this also depended to certain degrees upon their status within the school, the degree to which a language policy had been formalised and implemented together with the support of the head to implement changes.

A more serious difficulty regarding the work of LINC itself discussed by Winch (1991) was the organisational and ideological tensions that existed between regional co-ordinators and between regional co-ordinators and the project director. Given the lack of consensus amongst teachers and the profession regarding teaching about language that the earlier Responses pamphlet had noted, this was not surprising. Like the HMI report, Winch also found a gap in expertise between different levels of the project, particularly between those of advisory teachers and classroom teachers, regional co-ordinators and the Project Director. These were further added to by tensions between the Project and the DES as the following account of an interview with one co-ordinator, Mr B, illustrates:

This difficult political context was made more difficult by countervailing political pressures from the DES. The DES, according to Mr B, was also suspicious of LINC but for different reasons. The DES and ministers feared that the aims of LINC were not being recognised by the project team and was anxious to keep the project under control...The DES committee had been particularly upset by some of the LINC draft publications, including the material on standard English and the material on reading. They were also unhappy about what they took to be the 'sociolinguistic drift' of much of the material, losing the emphasis on linguistic terminology which was felt to be one of the main features of the original project. The evaluator was quoted by Mr.B. as asking project members 'Where are the drills?', meaning exercises in grammatical terminology.

Winch (1991:45)

The LINC project and its director found themselves caught in the middle of ideological tensions between the teaching profession and the government. As a result, the material it had been commissioned to write was never published. HMI, who might under different circumstances have resolved such tensions were timid of defending its approach at a time when their own roles in the education process were being re-defined and marginalised.

Nevertheless, the Project Director and his team of regional co-ordinators attempted to fulfill Kingman's recommendation of integrating knowledge about language as part of English teaching. The language theory its pedagogy drew upon was a functional one rather than any other, which located language theory as well as its use firmly in a social and cultural context. In the introduction to the Project's reader, Carter (1990) acknowledged his debt to functional theories of language, particularly those expressed by Michael Halliday which were the same as those drawn upon for the *Language in Use* project twenty years previously described in Chapter 5. Unlike *Language in Use* however, Carter's application of Halliday's theories located the study of language in a textual context that also took account of social and cultural contexts. He drew together the common features shared by a functional model of language and Britton's theories of language development. Carter wrote that:

The making of meaning is the reason for the invention, existence and development of language; All meanings exist within the context of culture. Cultural values and beliefs determine the purposes, audiences, settings and topics of language; Texts, spoken and written, are created and interpreted by making appropriate choices from the language system according to specific purposes, audiences, settings and topics

Carter (1990:10).

People are also capable, however, of making inappropriate choices. The approach advocated by Carter was that by making explicit issues of how audience, purpose and context influenced the choices pupils were expected to make would help them to make appropriate, rather than inappropriate choices regarding their language use. Consequently, the LINC model of language

reaffirmed the importance of learning about language in a contextual manner that paid attention to the structure of texts as well as sentences as part of the language process. It included textual organisation and its relation to socio-cultural forms and influences alongside the structure of sentences and words. Such teaching acknowledged and drew upon any implicit knowledge of language pupils possessed with the aim of making language structures explicit. As Carter explained, '...the centrality of context, purpose and audience in language use and the salience of this understanding for children's learning' (1990:9) were of the utmost importance. Such theories had been evident in the Bullock Report and had become central to the national curriculum for English. A crucial aspect these theories was that '...forms and the making of meanings are shown to be inextricably interrelated in the creation of complete texts' (Carter 1990:10)

Such an approach clearly diverged from the one proposed by the Kingman Model and the EWG Winch (1991) identified two main ways in which the Kingman model and LINC differed. The first was that LINC proposed much more of an emphasis on the social nature of language and attitudes towards its use than the Kingman model had acknowledged. The second was the view that competence preceded reflection and analysis. The approach taken by LINC assumed that all pupils, barring physical disability, were competent language users regardless of their social and cultural background whose performance could be enhanced by learning what was expected of them, expectations which were socially and culturally derived. As Winch (1991) pointed out, it had long been one of the claims of traditional prescriptive KAL teaching that competence should be enhanced by reflection and analysis. Such a view had been shared by Kingman. There was a possible tension, therefore, Winch concluded, in reconciling the assumption that competence would be enhanced by reflection and analysis with the assumption that competence followed reflection and analysis.

LINC justified its divergence from Kingman on pedagogic grounds, as it also had to produce materials that could be used for INSET after the Project had finished its in-service programme. Writing the materials proved to be a time-consuming exercise. The collaborative approach used involved all those involved at the various levels of the project, including teachers. Drafts were overseen by the project team and officials at the DES that led to constant revision. Nevertheless, the emphasis in the materials upon the social and ideological nature of language evidenced by draft chapter headings such as *Language, Communication and Power* was coolly greeted by ministers and DES officials that led eventually to the banning from publication of the materials, although they are still available at the University of Nottingham in a desk-top published form.

Goddard (1992) attributes ministerial disapproval to the fact that ministers did not like the feel of the materials which made them uneasy. One of the major difficulties the materials had posed for government ministers had been their approach to variations of language, which did not subscribe to the view that standard English was in any way a superior variety of English. This is not to say that the materials did not advocate teaching standard English. Rather, the approach taken located the value placed upon its use firmly in a socio-cultural context as one variety alongside many others rather than as a criteria by which to judge competence and performance. As Carter pointed out, such an approach was not helped by the vocabulary used to describe language variation which generally offered oppositional or negative terms:

To talk about non-standard, for example, as opposed to standard English is taken as a departure from 'standards' themselves; to talk about the fallibility or dangers of absolute rules of 'correctness' is seen as endorsing the 'incorrect' use of pupils' English and a failure to mark their work... Space does not allow further exposure of these antinomies (others are traditional/trendy; national/unpatriotic; basic/progressive; simple/complex) but it is easy to trace how the generally moderate and balanced English teacher is constructed as an offender against order, decency and common sense.'

Carter (1992:19)

Furthermore, Carter also pointed out that it was paradoxical that government ministers should criticise the small sections of the materials that explored the relationship between language and power with the aim of helping pupils and teachers to 'see through' language should be those which government ministers criticised as a secondary agenda whilst at the same time exercising their power by banning publication. As Carter acknowledged: '...debates about language and education have always been between those who have the power but do not have the knowledge and those who have the knowledge but do not have the power' (1992:20)

Debates about language and education are regulated by forces external to the teaching of language and education and their relationship with those within rather than exclusively being regulated by either. But the question always remains of what counts, who decides, and on whose authority is 'properly spoken and written language' constituted? If the view taken by the forces within accords with, or is accepted by, those without, then the issues become less contentious. If, however, they differ, then they become a fierce battle for control. That our society currently places value on a particular dialect and associated accent and particular forms of writing is clearly evident: what is not so clear is whether it is the purpose of English as a pedagogic subject to subscribe to and uphold the values and attitudes upon which such a view is based. The Newbolt Report won English its central place in the curriculum by advocating such a purpose with its corresponding attitudes and values that underpinned that of the cultural heritage model for English. Personal growth and the Bullock Report altered this purpose to argue for the centrality of language for all learning in ways that depended upon

acknowledging variety of accent and dialect rather than teaching a particular one. The Kingman Report attempted to reconcile the two approaches by recognising that children's accents and dialects should be respected but that they were also entitled to be taught standard English. The difficulty for Kingman, as it was for Newbolt, was how to reconcile the two in ways which did not advocate superiority of the class with which standard English is associated and therefore the inferiority of other classes.

Kingman attempted this reconciliation by supporting the argument put forward by the new Right which was that access to standard English is an educational right. According to this argument, failure to teach children standard English is to effectively disempower them. Employers, after all, will probably favour the candidate who speaks standard English over one who does not and examiners will favour candidates who write in a standard way over those who do not. What is at issue here is, as Carter pointed out, is nothing less than a fight for power, freedom and equality. Appealing to the notion of empowerment paradoxically places those who are ostensibly 'empowered' on the side of those with power, thereby removing them as a potential threat to the status quo. The values and beliefs given to standard English are thus legitimised by appeals to 'common sense' and right of access. Attempts made by the LINC Project to present an alternative, more tolerant and equitable perspective foundered for a variety of reasons, not least as a result of tensions and conflicts between the project's regional co-ordinators, the varied administrative procedures adopted by individual LEAs and the virtual collapse of official support following re-organisation of HMI and their role of impartial advisor to that of an agent of the Government.

LINC sought to adopt an approach to language study that started from pupils' own use of language, recognising the cultural and social significance of standard English whilst giving equal consideration to other varieties of English and promoted bi-lingualism, an approach which broadly accorded with that of the EWG. The LINC Project failed to provide the government with the kinds of materials it had expected it to write, namely a grammar textbook, just as both Cox and Kingman Committees had failed to define language study as solely concerned with teaching its formal aspects.

When the Cox Report was sent out for consultation, one of the responses it received was from the LINC Project (1989). Amongst the many concerns it raised, one was over the confusion between providing appropriate contexts for using standard English and the obligation for teachers to supervise pupils' spoken language as, in their words, 'a kind of dialectical speech therapist.' It points out that the proposals suggest teachers should, from level 7 onwards, correct pupils' speech. LINC was opposed to this proposal, arguing that pupils who speak with a regional dialect also have access to standard English as a result of varied experiences of

social contexts of language use including the classroom, peer group, family, through their reading and the media. In the majority of cases, pupils code-switch successfully, and in very few instances does the use of non-standard grammar and vocabulary prevent communication for more than an instant. LINC suggested that rather than the requirement to correct speech, the curriculum should provide pupils with opportunities to code-switch in appropriate ways through drama, role-play and discussion rather than through supervision of their speech.

Finally, LINC was concerned about the possible vacuum in assessment that could arise as the result of the lack of explicit KAL in the programmes of study for levels 1 to 4. It stressed that more guidance was needed at these earlier levels that linked to the requirements for levels 5 to 10 to ensure systematic teaching and progression. LINC pointed to the seemingly arbitrary nature of the KAL curriculum as it appeared within levels 5 to 10. It strongly recommended that 'the integrity of the KAL curriculum is acknowledged in much broader and more recursive sets of experiences and attainments'. Alternating, for example, language change with literary language across levels was not conducive to either good teaching or effective progression. Reservations of the kind expressed by LINC were borne out by the Warwick English Project discussed in the next chapter, but they had little impact upon the KAL strand as it was written within the National Curriculum Order for English.

As it was, the KAL strand as designed by the EWG mediated through the newly formed government quango, the National Curriculum Council (NCC) and the LINC Project were not thought to have gone far enough towards re-introducing the teaching of standard English in ways demanded by the Government. Nevertheless, the desire to have a national curriculum introduced into schools before the next general election due in 1992 took precedence over all other considerations. Once the 1992 General Election had returned the Conservative Party to its fourth term in office, revisions to the curriculum began to be undertaken that redefined knowledge about language in terms of standard English. Before considering these revisions in more detail, the following chapter details research undertaken into KAL as part of a two-year research project into the implementation of the national curriculum for English funded by NCC and undertaken at the University of Warwick.

Chapter 8

Teachers, Classrooms and Knowledge about Language

8.0 Introduction

This chapter considers the conclusions of research into KAL undertaken by the Warwick English Project as part of its evaluation into the implementation of the national Curriculum in English (SCAA 1994). It discusses the ways in which teachers interpreted curriculum policy in relation to their own beliefs regarding English pedagogy and their practice in the classroom. As such, it is concerned with the third principle of pedagogic discourse, that of evaluation as defined by Bernstein and summarised in Chapter 1 as the work that goes on in classrooms.

Bernstein (1990) saw the relationship between the three principles of distribution, recontextualisation and evaluation as hierarchical and temporal, with that of evaluation at the bottom. This is not to say that the principle of evaluation never affects the other two, but that in terms of the relationship between the three the evaluative principle gives an indication of how far changes in distribution and recontextualisation are accepted by teachers and affect classroom practice. As discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, since the founding of the English Association earlier this century, recontextualisations of English had largely been determined by the English teaching profession and supported by the educational establishment. This tradition had continued throughout the nineteen sixties with the creation of the Schools Council and into the nineteen seventies as NATE became instrumental in recontextualising English as personal growth, discussed in Chapter 6. The State apparatus of education, through changes to examination procedures, supported teachers' increasing control over assessment together with the curriculum.

However, from the late nineteen seventies onwards, however, the centre of gravity regarding curriculum control and regulation shifted from the teaching profession to central government in ways that shifted the balance of power regarding control of the curriculum. The position and status of classroom teachers and their educators progressively altered following a sustained and successful attack from government and its politicians, publicly conducted in the media. Hartnett and Naish summarised the underlying rationale for this attack: 'Teachers need to be told what to teach, how to teach it and how to find out if they have taught successfully. They need to be controlled by beaurocrats; they need to be managed; and they need to be appraised. If they are found wanting, they need to be sacked'(1990:9).

The images of teachers created by the media during the nineteen seventies and eighties were dominated by incompetence and subversion with their unions portrayed as being out of touch and self-interested. It also returned teachers to a non-professional, instrumental status. Hartnett and Naish summed up the implications such an image had for the education reform:

On this analysis, professionals with the autonomy they enjoyed were not groups whose co-operation had to be won. They were, rather, part of the problem - an interest group who had 'captured' the education system and whose views about what was needed to be done to remedy its defects were systematically biased. The solution was to reduce their professional autonomy, to reduce them to agents-for-others or to minor technicians, in a process largely conceived of along industrial lines...At the same time, educational institutions from universities to infant schools have been required to adopt the ideology and structures of 'Fordist' type management with its emphasis on strong power control, pyramidal structures and vertical lines of authority.

Hartnett and Naish (1990:10)

Bennett, Wragg, Carre and Carter (1992) make a similar point in stating that the introduction of a centrally developed and imposed national curriculum has radically shifted educational philosophy. Consequently, instrumentalist views of the kind summarised above together with economic rationalist arguments came to dominate public consciousness and discourse, sharply changing the educational environment within which schools work. A school both reflects and defines the structures of the society of which it is a part. Changes to the State apparatus of education during the nineteen eighties reflected schools and their administrative structures as hierarchical pyramid ones reminiscent of the factory or army. In crude terms, within this system teachers became the factory floor workers who carried out instructions without questioning them in order to produce pupils whose level of output determined income. Such changes dramatically reversed the principles of education that had characterised educational reform during the nineteen sixties and seventies.

8.1 Telling Teachers What to Teach: Schools and the Introduction of a National Curriculum in English

Given the tradition of curriculum autonomy that had existed within the teaching of English, it was unsurprising that teachers, particularly in secondary schools, resisted formalisation of the curriculum. Nevertheless, they found the terms of reference within the Cox curriculum to be sufficiently wide in ways that allowed them to accommodate their existing practices. Several articles in the NATE journal *English in Education* had been cautiously critical of its lack of a clear vision for English (e.g. R. Protherough (1990); C.Davies (1991); J.Snow (1991). Those in *Use of English* (e.g. G. Barton (1990); F. Inglis (1990)) evoked the vision of the English curriculum presented in the Newbolt Report as one which recognised that, in Inglis' words, '...teaching English was of its nature an argument about *value*, and that listening, writing and

speaking were all verbs with object, direct and indirect' (Inglis 1990:11). Davies summed up the general response to the document, which was that:

National Curriculum English has not managed to map out the next generation of English teaching to anyone's satisfaction, as far as I can tell ... far from delivering the subject to us, in fact, National Curriculum English merely presents us with its history.

Davies (1991: 29)

Eagleton (1991) argued for the recontextualisation of English studies in higher education as critical analysis and rhetoric. Snow (1991) and Andrews (1994), argued that such a redefinition should replace personal growth as the starting point for a rationale for English in the school. Dissatisfaction with the national curriculum for English was not limited to the teaching profession and it is clear that from the start, it did not have the full support of the Government. As Duncan Graham (1995), head of the newly formed National Curriculum Council (NCC) stated, officials at the then DES and members of the NCC had never been entirely happy with the content proposed by the Cox Report.

Nevertheless, the imperative to have a national curriculum in place before the following general election was greater than issues regarding its content, which could be altered at a later date. In the meantime, teachers were charged with teaching it. An immediate problem became the ordering of the document itself and the vast amount of bureaucratic paperwork that accompanied the recording of pupils' achievement. The requirements for assessment divided into levels came first, followed by those for the curriculum. The very act of ordering the curriculum in this way at the same time as the introduction of record-keeping for assessing pupils' progress led teachers to emphasising the requirements for assessment over those of the curriculum, allied to the natural obedience of teachers.

At the same time as the National Curriculum was introduced, a system of evaluation designed to monitor its implementation in schools also began. During the first two years, this evaluation was undertaken by NCC and HMI. In 1990, as a result of NCC's evaluation of the implementation of the first year of the curriculum (NCC 1990), three independent projects were commissioned to undertake a detailed evaluation into the three core subjects of English, maths and science chosen by competitive tender. The tender for the project into the evaluation of the national curriculum for English was won by the University of Warwick.

Until the introduction of the national curriculum, those responsible for monitoring the curriculum in terms of its quality and provision had been HMI at a national level, answerable in theory to the DES but in practice undertaking their activities in relative autonomy. Local authority advisers had been responsible at a regional level, working in partnership with HMIs.

The 1988 Act altered this relationship, by including in it a section (section 14) which set out the general functions of the NCC. One of these the requirement to keep all aspects of the curriculum under review as it was implemented into state schools without specifying how this was to be done. Thus responsibility for monitoring and advising on the curriculum at both national and regional levels was taken out of the hands of HMI and local authorities and put into those of the NCC, a Council whose members were appointed by government invitation.

The discourses of HMI and LEA advisers were delocated from their role of curriculum monitoring, development and advice to administration and school inspection. The way inspections were undertaken was also altered, centralised by a documented framework for inspection and administered through The Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). Changes in school funding, the introduction of a national curriculum, requirements for inspection and the publication of school league tables completed the relocation of curriculum autonomy, regulated by the advisory and pastoral roles of LEA and HMI, to curriculum accountability, regulated by the OFSTED inspection framework.

The introduction of a centrally developed and imposed national curriculum not only affected the environment within which schools worked, but also the conditions under which funded research into the curriculum was undertaken. These were characterised by strict control and supervision by the funding body, NCC. Given the release of economic forces from central government control that accelerated during the nineteen eighties leading to increased mobility, constant re-training and periods and unemployment, the government had to be seen as governing *something*. It turned its attention to governing the curriculum and the teaching of language. Frustratingly for authoritarian governments, language has a way of resisting definition and restriction. An earlier attempt to regulate language for a small minority undertaken by Swan discussed in Chapter 7 had broken up in confusion, and the issue of teaching about language had proved to be the most controversial when the national curriculum came to be written.

In an attempt to win control of the curriculum for language, the research undertaken at Warwick was confidential, reporting directly to NCC, who used its findings, amongst evidence gathered from other sources in the interests of 'impartiality' to justify its revisions to the curriculum. Although based in an office at the University of Warwick, to all intents and purposes that office could just as easily have been sited at the NCC offices in York.

The project reported directly to NCC with no intermediary steering committee to oversee its work. A meeting between at least one professional officer for English and the project team

took place every fortnight where the officer or to monitor its progress. It was divided into four phases linked to reporting that triggered funding. Presenting a report, however, was not sufficient in itself to release funding. Draft reports were monitored and vetted by NCC officials at each phase, constantly re-written to highlight or suppress the various points they made, often to the point of unintelligibility.

The evaluation project undertaken at the University of Warwick was itself part of a far larger chain of re-distribution and re-organisation, not only of the curriculum itself but also of the ways in which a curriculum is monitored and reviewed. Changes in monitoring procedures illustrate the pedagogic device in action, in which the principles of delocating, relocating and refocusing specialised discourses bring them into a new relation with each other and introduce a new, temporal ordering. In this case, the specialised discourses of HMI, local authority advisers and their relationship with the DES were delocated, relocated and refocused within OFSTED, the re-named Department for Education and Employment (DFEE), NCC and SEAC (merged and re-named as the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority). These by now powerful institutions held control over knowledge on behalf of the Government.

The task of monitoring the curriculum, then, as well as the curriculum itself, became part of a specific Government apparatus rather than independent of or separate from it. Consequently, the role of Government sponsored curriculum research and development was delocated from a primary function to identify and develop areas of the curriculum which might benefit from changes in policy and practice and relocated to one of providing evidence for specific areas to justify changes in policy that had already been made.

As a new body, NCC had available to it a wide range of different organisations and institutions upon which it could draw for information. In its evaluation report it states that: 'Council will negotiate access to reports from a wide range of agencies such as HMI, SEAC, LEA, CWW, subject associations and research bodies. This will provide a national perspective on the implementation of the core subjects...' (NCC 1990:150). Thus any organisation or institution concerned with the curriculum within this discourse was awarded the same status, that of an 'agency', with its connotations of brokerage and distribution, in this case, of information. At the same time it placed the onus of giving information upon the 'agency', an indicative name, with little or no reciprocity implied. Its function was consequently very different from the one undertaken by its predecessor, the Schools' Council.

The series of education acts from the mid nineteen eighties to the early nineteen nineties radically altered the whole nature of the discourse between schools, local authorities, the inspectorate, research and national Government departments and agencies of the kind outlined

in Part 1 of the thesis. A Government apparatus which had supported and provided the mechanisms for a liberal education through its administrative procedures on both local and national levels whilst remaining detached became instead its controlling regulator. It was also supported by a proliferation of government quangos with committees established by invitation rather than by nomination and election whose task it was to oversee the management of the curriculum and its assessment, inspections, funding of grant-maintained schools and university departments of education. All were responsible directly to and commanded by the DFFE, and advised by further government advice centres such as The Centre for Policy Studies, or public campaigns which supported the policies of the new Right such as The Campaign for Real Education. Habermas (1975) has argued that changes of the kind described above are an attempt by Government to displace economic crisis into the ideological realm, where meanings prove more controllable even if economic events do not.

The chief executives or chairs of these quangos, together with the members of their constituting committees and councils, were drawn from areas largely outside education. Such appointments cut adrift the very people upon whose advice so much educational policy throughout this century had depended upon. Questions and issues surrounding the implementation of a national curriculum, therefore, intersected with wider issues of accountability, funding and general mistrust of educationalists themselves. A further relocation of the discourse was that identification of issues for further monitoring into each national curriculum subject as it was implemented was a task given to the NCC rather than to HMI or LEA advisors used to working within a tradition of autonomy and independence. Against this background, the project undertook its work. Schools were suspicious of it as they thought its researchers came directly from NCC, and LEA advisors were equally suspicious of it as they saw it undertaking work they themselves should be doing.

8.2 The Warwick English Project and KAL.

The main focus of the Project's research was teachers' practice, and consequently classroom observation formed an important part of the Project's work. The research methods used by the project were consequently mainly ethnographic and triangulated in the interests of validity. Classroom observations, interviews with teachers and document analysis were undertaken in a nationally representative sample of sixty schools in seven LEAs. This was complemented by a national survey sent to schools in all other LEAs of which approximately 700 were completed and returned. Despite the political constraints imposed upon the Project therefore, its scale was sufficiently large to obtain a general picture of how teachers were responding to the national curriculum and its affect upon their practice.

The identification of issues that formed the focus of the Project's research had already been undertaken by NCC, based upon its own monitoring and drawing upon HMI Reports. Four of the ten issues specified related specifically to KAL. They were: the practicability of the statements in the knowledge about language strand; the identification of teachers' difficulties in teaching KAL; the sequencing and appropriateness of the statements which formed the KAL strand and whether it should appear below level 5 for assessment. In essence, these four issues required an entire overhaul of the KAL curriculum.

Investigation of these issues presupposed the existence of a clearly defined framework for KAL which proved difficult to determine. For the purposes of assessment, KAL was defined from level 5 onwards by general issues regarding the nature of English rather than specifically related to its form. Given teachers' interpretation of the curriculum, this led many to conclude that teaching KAL was something which did not concern primary teachers. At the same time, statements related to the forms of English were interwoven amongst statements that related to their use of English from the very beginning which clearly did.

If such statements were taken into account, then it was clear that KAL was included below level 5 in both the curriculum and its assessment. For example, in AT1, *Speaking and Listening*, reference was made in the programmes of study from the early years regarding the development of pupils' awareness of how their language use is influenced by purpose, context and audience. Similarly for AT 3 *Writing*, pupils were required for the purpose of assessment to use punctuation which demanded that punctuation was taught. Dividing the curriculum into different language modes also produced inconsistencies and anomalies within the KAL curriculum itself. For example, reference to language change was made with regard to writing but not speech, and similarities and differences between speech and writing were located in AT3 *Writing* but not in AT1 *Speaking and Listening*, a consequence of distributing the original attainment target written for KAL amongst others. Similarly, AT 4 *Spelling* clearly formed part of KAL but was not recognised as such.

It was clear, therefore, that whilst there was a recognised, separate and defined KAL strand defined by the requirements for assessment, KAL was also intertwined and interwoven into the curriculum as a whole in a way which made it almost impossible to disentangle. It was this second aspect of KAL relating to the forms of language and pupils' own use and competence in English, particularly in writing which teachers would normally consider as part of KAL that was virtually impossible to define.

To define a framework that took account of both aspects of KAL, a distinction was made between those statements of attainment and programmes of study which required pupils to use language from those which required pupils to learn about language. This second category was identified by verbs which indicated conscious and explicit teaching about language. The KAL framework revealed by this analysis was, unsurprisingly, broader than it at first appeared to be, defined by the following areas at each key stage:

Learning about:

Key stage 1:

- spoken language use according to audience, context and purpose (i.e. register variation);
- the processes of reading;
- the structural organisation of written language, discerning and evaluating how it conveys meaning;
- the processes of writing;
- spelling and spelling patterns;
- grammar and punctuation;
- the range of forms and purposes of written language.

Key stage 2:

- spoken language use according to audience, context and purpose (i.e. register variation);
- the structural organisation of written language, discerning and evaluating how it conveys meaning
- organisational differences between written texts according to audience, context and purpose
- reading in different ways for different purposes
- spelling and spelling patterns
- grammar and punctuation
- drafting and editing processes

Key stages 3 and 4:

- spoken language use according to audience, context and purpose (i.e. register variation);
- social and regional variations of English accents and dialects, including standard English, and attitudes towards such variations;
- the structural organisation of written language, discerning and evaluating how it conveys meaning
- reading in different ways for different purposes
- language change
- organisational and grammatical differences between speech and writing
- spelling and spelling patterns
- grammar and punctuation
- drafting and editing processes
- the history of writing
- paralinguistic features of language

It was clear that a framework for KAL was evident across all four key stages and many aspects remained constant at each key stage, with the difference between each characterised more by increasing complexity than additional content within each of the two phases, primary and secondary. It was weighted predominantly towards writing, with the requirements for speech related to learning about register from the early years, with social and regional variations of accents and dialects and attitudes towards them added to this in the secondary years.

The KAL framework for the primary years related primarily to pupils' development of written standard English as it applied to their own growing competence and understanding of reading and writing. It required pupils to learn written standard English and its grammar, extending its study beyond the level of the sentence to the text, including knowing about the different organisational features required by different kinds of writing they were asked to write - description, narrative, report, diary etc. - and the texts they were required to read - atlases, history books, encyclopaedias etc. together with those of narrative. The requirements for KAL and English generally, therefore, made the subject responsible for pupils' reading and writing practices associated with all subjects and not restricted to English as defined by literary writing or narrative, but rather widened to include every kind of text pupils may encounter in the classroom, including media and those generated by the computer. Since it is generally the practice that one teacher teaches a class for all its lessons in a primary school, then the considerable degree of overlap between the reading and writing practices associated with English and those of other subjects was possible.

In the secondary years, the emphasis upon writing continued, with the KAL curriculum remaining virtually the same as that for the primary years, with the addition of the official KAL curriculum that included spoken language variation, language change and similarities and differences between speech and writing. At the secondary level, the texts traditionally associated with English had been literary ones, to which media texts had been added, organised around narrative. To make teachers of English responsible for the reading and writing practices associated with other subjects as was the case in primary schools was not possible to achieve, since it implied working with the texts themselves.

The division between the two separate aspects of the KAL curriculum was deepest at secondary level. On the one hand were those aspects of KAL that related to pupils' experiences of reading, writing and speech organised around narrative, whilst on the other were sociolinguistic considerations of language change, language variation and issues regarding speech and writing that were devoid of any textual context, with little indication of the degree to which any one should be studied, or its relation to pupils' own experiences.

Anxious to avoid the teaching of form devoid from context and to make assessment of pupils' competence part and parcel of use, the Cox curriculum appeared to suggest that pupils did not need to be taught grammar at all, in the sense that it was not formally taught and assessed. The framework outlined above shows that this was not the case, but rather that the requirement to teach grammar was linked to pupils own use of language. The exception to this was the three official KAL areas which did not appear to be specifically related to grammar, in the sense that they did not specify that pupils' to be taught grammatical terms, although such a situation is difficult to imagine. Nevertheless, lack of clarity was also unhelpful to teachers. Since they had no choice but to teach the curriculum and indeed generally welcomed its introduction, particularly in the primary sector, lack of clarity regarding its content was not of much use when it came to interpreting its requirements into classroom practice.

Confusion between the two different aspects of KAL was not made any clearer by the non-statutory guidance (NSG) that accompanied the curriculum. The section called *Understanding Language* advocated an approach similar to that of LINC, in that it stressed locating pupils' learning about language within the context of their use:

Systematic study of language is needed to meet some aspects of the programmes of study and will be most productive when related to children's own experience, their pleasure in investigation and their curiosity. When, for example, a pupil and teacher are assessing the first draft of a piece of writing, there may be opportunities for reflecting on the effects of vocabulary choice and syntax. It does not follow, however, that extended study of vocabulary choice and syntax is required at that point. nevertheless, such study should be provided in ways which the programmes of study make clear and which are designed to develop pupils' knowledge about language, including linguistic terminology.

What reflecting on the effects of vocabulary choice and syntax actually involves, however, is not specified. It is not surprising, therefore, that the teachers interviewed as part of the Warwick English Project experienced a great deal of difficulty in interpreting the requirements for KAL, far more than for any other aspect of the curriculum. Since it did not form part of the assessment frame below level 5, primary school teachers tended to interpret this as meaning that they were not required to teach it. However, they also recognised that much of what they taught could be termed knowledge about language, particularly knowledge about English, but such teaching did not form part of the recognised KAL frame. Secondary teachers of English had a designated content area for KAL, but one which many felt they were ill-prepared to teach and unsure as to how it should be taught. Naturally obedient, teachers found the requirements for KAL puzzling, not least because its stated terms of reference were unclear.

NCC's published INSET resource called *Aspects of English* (1991) illustrated approaches to teaching about language. In it, the approach taken locates the development of pupils' KAL within the personal and social world of the pupil rather than one abstracted from it. It stated that: 'It is most important that pupils' knowledge about language develops from their experience of using it (NCC 1991:31).' Development and progression in KAL were marked by pupils' growing sophistication regarding the nature and role of spoken language and its relationship with the individual and society. It also located words and sentences within the different textual frames or genres of writing within which pupils learnt to read and to write. Nor did the resource differentiate or separate spoken and written modes of expression, but related the two to one another as a continuum. It advocated ways in which consideration of pupils' own use of language could lead to investigation of how it was used in their local community and finally the world beyond it.

Radiating language from the individual outwards and across communities, inevitably raises questions of the attitudes and values people hold towards language use and where attitudes and values come from. It integrates learning about language into every aspect of the curriculum for English in all its communicative modes in ways that had been advocated by LINC. Given Government desire to regulate and control language, however, such an approach was clearly not conducive to achieving such aims and no further resource of its kind was made. Furthermore, how successful it had been at reaching its target audience, was not at all clear. Certainly none of the teachers interviewed by the Project had seen the resource. Rather, teachers responses to KAL as defined by the national curriculum document testified to its confused and inexplicit frames of reference.

8.3 Teachers, Classrooms and KAL

Shortly before the introduction of the national curriculum in English, a small-scale interview survey explored secondary English teachers' knowledge and beliefs about KAL. (C. Brumfit and R. Mitchell (1991)). It found that teachers mainly taught about language as it arose in response to pupils' queries during the course of a lesson or as part of marking pupils' work, rather than as an integrated and coherent part of any programme. This approach was consistent with the cross-curricular, 'language in use' approach to teaching language discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

A further classroom-based study (R. Mitchell, J. Hooper and C. Brumfit (1994)) found that such work was in fact more varied and idiosyncratic in practice. They stated that:

While many effective KAL episodes were seen, they did not add up to a developmentally coherent strand. There was some evidence that the limits to teachers' own linguistic knowledge were a constraint... This could be seen even in some KAL-focused units, which at times seemed to have conveyed inaccurate messages to pupils; more generally, teachers' tendency to avoid technical vocabulary in KAL-related talk seemed linked at times to insecurity in using grammatical or discourse terminology.

Southampton (1994:19)

Research undertaken by the Warwick English Project came to similar conclusions as those summarised above. The scale of the Project, however, was sufficiently large to enable a collective, national picture of teachers' practice across both primary and secondary age phases to emerge.

One of the main problems teachers cited regarding KAL was their uncertainty over its precise terms of reference. More specifically, they were uncertain as to whether their interpretation of knowledge about language corresponded to that required by the designated KAL strand. Over half of the teachers interviewed as part of the project stated that lack of clarity and explanation of the framework and the term 'knowledge about language' itself was probably the greatest cause of their uncertainty and confusion.

When asked to give their own definitions of KAL, teachers included both the content of the designated KAL strand and knowledge about English as it related to pupils' own use of it. Overall, teachers' definitions of KAL fell into three distinct categories:

teaching about words and sentences, including spelling, punctuation, grammatical terminology and sentence structure

teaching about text and discourse structure, including how these are influenced according to audience, context and purpose

teaching about social and cultural aspects of language such as awareness of the distinction between accents and dialects and attitudes towards them; the effects of language change upon language use; differences and similarities between speech and writing and the influence of audience, context and purpose upon them.

Teaching this third aspect of the KAL curriculum posed particular problems for teachers. Questions of attitudes towards language use, language change and the social and cultural contexts of language use all affect the ways in which language is actually used. The link between this third strand, however, did not appear to link clearly with pupils' own developing use and knowledge of English implied by the other two. Consequently, it was very difficult for teachers to understand how this strand related to the other. Nor was it clear how much emphasis they should place upon it, given considerable public debate and a Government *Back to Basics* campaign that implied such considerations detracted from the teachers' task of improving pupils' literacy. It might also have led to pupils' questioning the authority that controlled attitudes towards use. As Chapter 5 has already pointed out, the problem for state funded systems of education is how to ensure a certain level of knowledge, understanding and skills on the part of its future citizens and workforce whilst keeping them in sufficient ignorance so that the status quo is maintained. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the subsequent revisions to the national curriculum for English, the first two categories became prominent whilst the third, which introduced the notion of variety, attitudes towards language use and the fact that language constantly changes was virtually ignored.

Nevertheless, although teachers' definitions and teaching of KAL fell into one or all of the three categories outlined above, the degree to which any one was taught differed from key stage to key stage which suggests that there is a progressive, cognitive element to KAL as follows:

8.3 I Key Stage 1

At key stage 1 (5 - 7 year olds), teachers defined KAL almost exclusively in terms of pupils' learning how to read and write. It was defined as the explicit teaching of letters, words, punctuation and sentence structure including the textual organisation within which this teaching occurred.

Strikingly, teaching reading and writing as described above occurred almost exclusively in a narrative context. Pupils were taught to read primarily by engaging in stories, either by reading individually with an adult or by listening as a class to the teacher read and discussing what they had read. Where pupils completed exercises associated with reading and reading schemes, these were more often than not associated with a story they were reading. Similarly, pupils were taught to write primarily by engaging in their own narrative composition of events, real or imagined, based upon and reproducing the structures they had encountered in their reading. In learning to read and to write, therefore, pupils were doing far more than learning a 'skill'. They were also learning how to take part in a textual, as well as discourse, community. As part of this process, they were also learning the attitudes and values expressed through the texts they were required to read and to write in the same way as when they had learnt to speak. As Olson remarks:

To become literate in a domain is to share its "paradigm." ... To be literate it is not enough to know the words; one must learn how to participate in the discourse of some textual community. And that implies knowing which texts are important, how they are to be read and interpreted, and how they are to be applied in talk and action

Olson (1994:273).

Such a definition of literacy extends the initial teaching of literacy in the early years to the entire school curriculum for English and beyond. Street (1995) argues that literacy is *never* neutral or autonomous and any study of literacy will involve bias. Teaching literacy is thus never neutral and always involves far more than learning to decode script. Through the words that are taught a particular interpretation of the world is given. Scripts thus control reading and the views of the world represented through them.

Although pupils were taught to read and write words and sentences through a predominantly narrative structure, the organisation of narrative itself or of any other kind of text, was not taught explicitly, even though many teachers had included this as part of their definition of KAL. Some teachers drew to pupils' attention to features such as the use and function of speech marks in a text, or how to structure the ending to a story, although such occasions were rare. Thus vocabulary and punctuation were taught, but the organising text of which they formed a part remained an implicit rather than explicit feature of their teaching.

It was also striking that discussion regarding the reading and writing process did not draw upon its similarities to or differences from those of speech. Many pupils' initial writing tended to include speech-like features such as using the conjunction 'and' to join clauses rather than forming distinct sentences or writing contracted words rather than separate ones. No discussion of speech or the influence of audience, context and purpose upon speech that had been emphasised both within NC programmes of study, LINC and the earlier *National Oracy Project* was observed in the classrooms visited by the Warwick English Project.

8.3.ii .Key Stage 2

At key stage 2 (7 - 11 year olds), teachers continued to define KAL as at key stage 1, with greater emphasis placed upon pupils' abilities to read and write an increasing variety of texts in a more sustained way. Teachers teaching the older year groups included elements of the social and cultural aspects of language, as required by the designated KAL strand.

Having spent the majority of their time on learning to read and write in key stage 1, the picture regarding the nature of English changed significantly during the junior years. Language across the curriculum had endorsed the view that all pupils' use of language was instrumental in developing it. Consequently, within topic work that integrated curriculum subjects, pupils were continually developing their language through use and so 'doing English' all the time. Plays, poems, prose and topics for creative and expressive writing, therefore, were usually chosen to link with a theme rather than forming the basis for a topic.

Although pupils spent much of their time in the classroom reading, writing and engaged in discussion, very little explicit teaching about language occurred. The growth model for English and its re-focusing as language across the curriculum had taken a very strong hold within primary schools, with the result that English as a subject had been almost completely subsumed within the teaching of other subjects, themselves integrated into topic work. Where teaching about language did occur, it was mostly to do with teaching vocabulary and spelling or teaching pupils a particular, traditional part of speech based on a text-book or teacher-devised exercise. In other schools, long-forgotten English textbooks were resurrected from the backs of stock cupboards and used in the classroom.

The requirements for writing fell into two separate categories, those of language use and the structure and the organisation, form and patterns of writing. These included both chronological and non-chronological patterns of writing, thus putting the onus on the curriculum for English to teach the structure and organisation of the various forms of texts required by all subjects. Teachers had assumed that requirements of this kind had been integrated, taught as part of a

curriculum, as a matter of course. However, requirements of the kind mentioned above implied a greater degree of explicitness in their teaching than many teachers had been used to.

Separating the two categories also implied that they could be taught separately, without taking account of one another. The growth model of English and the accompanying policy of language across the curriculum had assumed that pupils' learnt language by engaging with it. It had also assumed that learning to read and write in different ways was not something that needed to be explicitly taught, but rather developed through exposure to an increasing variety of texts. Such assumptions, however, did not bear close scrutiny. For example, one teacher who took part in the project had undertaken research into pupils' developing ability to read and retrieve information across a variety of different texts as part of her work for a higher degree. To her surprise, she found that pupils who achieved the highest reading scores based on reading narrative did not necessarily achieve the highest scores when it came to tests devised to assess competence in reading texts structured in different ways. The demands of the curriculum at key stage 2, therefore, forced teachers to re-examine their teaching practices in ways that highlighted the shortcomings of the growth model and the policy of language across the curriculum in the junior school. It also required them to teach grammar and punctuation for which many, including specialists in English, felt ill-prepared. The requirements for speaking and listening on the other hand, were ones with which they were familiar, concentrating upon widening pupils' opportunities to engage in discussion and conversation of various kinds in a variety of contexts than on the use of spoken standard English.

To supplement the research into the practices associated with teaching about language in the primary curriculum, a survey was undertaken of a sample of publications produced by the LINC Project by individual consortiums or LEAs and the second LINC reader (Bain, Fitzgerald and Taylor 1992) that documented primary teacher's accounts of their KAL practice. A common feature of teachers' curriculum planning described in these publications was the desire to exploit pupils' existing interests. Thus discussion that centred upon reading included positioning the pupil as a reader together with investigations undertaken from reception class onwards into the semiotic environment that surrounds pupils' every day experiences of the world: road signs, shop logos and drain covers together with the writing on bus stops and shop fronts. Classifying texts into different types of genres and learning the organisational structure of non-narrative texts such as a dictionary were all activities that were designed to teach pupils about text as defined in the introduction together with learning to recognise individual letters, blends and morphemes. Similarly, accounts which centred upon writing positioned the child as writers. Learning to write letters, words and sentences was located within a context that involved learning a whole range of conventions and choices open to writers such as manipulating newspaper convention to reinterpret the story of the Three

Little Pigs or by finding appropriate words to fit the meter and rhyming structure of poems pupils' were writing with the express intention of persuading their audience to accept their message.

The approach taken to teaching grammar is summed up by the second LINC reader (Bain et al 1992) as the investigation of the structures of the English language, identifying and discussing rules and patterns. Such a definition acknowledges the creativity of language and includes all its forms, rather than confining itself to the more narrow sentence grammar of standard English or as a preoccupation with 'literary' language. It also makes its teaching part of the activities summarised above rather than separating it from them. In this broad definition pupils remain insubordinately creative and cognitive, and at odds with larger government purposes.

Accounts were also given that considered pupils as talkers and how spoken language use varies according to audience, context and purpose from year 1 onwards. Those in the early years concentrated upon language acquisition in a very broad way, including discussion of the 'rules' for talk that included an awareness of how the overall structure of a discussion influenced the choices made about how to participate in it. Activities with older pupils were increasingly more sophisticated. One article described work undertaken with a year 6 class that clearly demonstrated pupils' were aware of social judgements upon language use, how language is implicated in one's sense of identity and related to social class. The research also concluded that the distinction between written and spoken modes of language as a basis for developing pupils' KAL was not a helpful one. For example, watching television programmes had led to a discussion of how uses of words in speech changed over time. Clearly, investigating the patterns and structures of language included media texts that included scripted speech together with those of more conventional books.

Finally, it was evident that bilingualism and multilingualism were important considerations for teaching about language. Research into the development of children's metalinguistic awareness has suggested that children with access to more than one language develop concepts about language sooner than monolingual children (see: Ianco-Worrall, 1972; Rosenblum and Pinker, 1983). Activities described by the LINC project included comparing different language scripts and alphabets that also compared uses of punctuation. One activity described the effect of Year 2 pupils compiling their own language histories as demonstrating how all languages are systems that basically fulfil the same task of communicating concepts and understandings through a variety of varying structures. The review concluded that:

...knowledge about the deployment of language and linguistic conventions to convey meaning effectively and in particular ways is developed through learners' interaction with written texts as both reader and writer. This is most clearly illustrated by the use of textual models from which children learn through their reading how other writers have used language and the conventions of writing so as to be able to use similar techniques themselves

NCC (1992:21).

The research suggested that pupils' KAL developed recursively through interacting with models provided by other writers, including the opportunity to experiment with the use of similar techniques themselves. The Warwick research also showed that pupils do not learn to read and write in a vacuum. Just as their development of spoken language takes place within the context of the language they hear spoken around them, so their development of written language takes place within the context of the texts they read and write. Learning to read and write, as with speech, involves learning the shared structures and conventions through which language conveys its meaning as well as the actual sounds and words used. It is the learning of these shared structures and conventions that has characterised much of the teaching of English as a school subject, although the structures and conventions themselves have remained implicitly taught. What this thesis is arguing is that this teaching should be made more explicit. This is not to suggest that such teaching should imply that structures and conventions are fixed and unalterable, but as conventions which are also capable of change.

Approaches to language study at primary level of the kind described above recontextualise teaching about language in ways that acknowledges children as having an active, constructive role as makers and users of language. It does this in the context of drawing upon the language that surrounds them in the culture and society within which they live that inevitably includes the learning of a particular set of cultural values and attitudes as they learn to take part in a textual community. Such a formulation would have been recognisable to Arnold, Newbolt, and Denys Thompson. As it includes the notion of choice, of the possibility of change together with that of acceptance, such an approach easily lends itself to one of a more evaluative kind as pupils progress to secondary school. It moves language pedagogy forward from the theories of language and learning associated with James Britton to one that acknowledges the social and cultural influences and limitations put upon individual language use whilst at the same time acknowledging its more creative and expressive aspects.

Britton (1988) discussed the effects of Vygotsky's theory of language and learning for pedagogy. In it, he recognised the importance of Vygotsky's contribution to a theory of consciousness as one which he summarises as implying that human consciousness is achieved by the internalisation of shared social behaviour. He also pointed to Bruner's ideas which

develop those of Vygotsky by perceiving the child not as a solo child mastering the world by seeking to represent it on her own terms, but rather as someone who makes knowledge his or her own in a community of those who share his or her sense of belonging to a culture. Formal learning of the kind that takes place in school is a communal activity that involves a sharing of culture and value. Views such as these have led theorists, Britton included, to revise their view of the teachers' role as the 'middle person' in all learning, since education becomes an effect of community. Pupils pick up the rules of social behaviour by taking part in it. However, Britton warns against attempts to analyse and codify these rules, teaching them to pupils' as a recipe. To do so reduces language to a set of specifications that denies their capacity for change.

8.3.iii Key Stages 3 and 4

What counts as English is less problematic in secondary schools since it is the name given to a time-tabled subject. How to teach KAL, however, and its relationship with the practices of English teaching was problematic. A solution to this was found in one of two ways. The first, most obvious way to teach KAL was as separate, self-contained schemes of work concentrating on language change, language variety and speech and writing. Such an approach sat uncomfortably with the more integrated, text-centred one used for the rest of their teaching. It resulted in some English departments relying heavily on published text-books and television and video resources rather than integrating them with other aspects of English teaching. Some teachers, quite clearly, knew no more or even less than what was to be found in these books, programmes and videos, relying upon them exclusively to teach KAL and unable to follow up the issues pupils consequently raised.

A second, less common but more coherent approach was to integrate the requirements of the KAL strand into schemes of work as recommended by *Aspects of English*. This approach proved more difficult, since it required considerable linguistic knowledge and understanding on teachers' parts. One successful attempt at such an integration was at a school where KAL formed part of schemes of work based around a class reader that provided the focus for a host of related activities. KAL was thus an integral part of a text-based approach with supplementary materials written by teachers that linked or developed its theoretical aspects outwards from the text. Teaching about accent and dialect was similarly text based. Discussion of attitudes towards accents and dialects followed a class reading of a text that featured characters talking in a non-standard dialect. The reading was followed by a discussion of the dialogue, the effects it had upon readers and how its use affected pupils' attitudes towards the characters. This led to a discussion of pupils' own use of language and their attitudes towards that use.

Even so, teachers were generally shy of and unwilling to teach pupils linguistic terms. Rather, such teaching remained embedded and implicit rather than explicitly discussed. More often, teachers taught pupils about text structure related to the content of their own writing, such as re-capping with pupils that a story has a beginning, middle and end. Teaching sentence structure remained as part of the drafting process, a practice endorsed by the national curriculum. Although most teachers said that they taught grammar, what they meant was that they corrected pupils' individual work based on an intuitive response rather than as an explanation of linguistic terms. As the project progressed into its second year, teachers increasingly cited teaching 'old-fashioned grammar' as the single most important aspect of KAL. This publicity included David Pascall, chairman of NCC, being interviewed on television in which he stated that the revisions would make the teaching of standard English central to the curriculum, with pupils being made to speak it in the playground as well as in the classroom (BBC 1992). Rather than positioning pupils as active participants in textual community, such an approach implied a more narrow, prescriptive and controlled definition of language that positioned them instead as passive recipients of knowledge.

Proposed revisions resulted to the KAL curriculum re-defined in KAL a much more prescriptive and authoritarian way defined by pupils' growing ability to use standard English. These revisions were based in the main upon views of English that were deeply rooted in prejudice and opinion, drawing upon a prescriptive tradition of language study and ignoring the move too one based on description. Consequently, as revision followed revision, the tensions between prescriptive and descriptive approaches to language study, between knowledge and power came to a head, resulting in a curriculum based more on compromise and opinion than on coherence and theory. The next chapter considers the various revisions to the national curriculum for English that took place between 1992 and 1994. It focuses particularly upon the debate regarding the teaching of standard English.

Chapter 9

Re-ordering English: from Knowledge about Language to Standard English and Language Study

9.0 Introduction

As Chapters 7 and 8 have described, the introduction of a national curriculum in England and Wales was set against a background of legislation that had radically altered the principle of distribution in education, locating curriculum control within central government. The recontextualisation of the curriculum for English, however, was far from complete, and control of language remained a controversial issue. One of the most heavily revised areas of the national curriculum for English was the knowledge about language strand, re-written to emphasise the teaching of standard English. However, in seeking to re-establish the teaching of standard English as a keystone of the curriculum for English in the way that it did, the Government unravelled the consensus achieved by the Cox curriculum. Rather than defining the curriculum in such a way that it ensured the maximum degree of flexibility regarding how and what teachers taught pupils about English that admitted of a plurality of cultural representations, it narrowed them to a single one, bound by the teaching of standard English, defined categories of texts and named authors.

The all-inclusive nature of English as a subject which had allowed for and encouraged linguistic, and therefore cultural, variation became suddenly defined in more exclusive terms. This definition sought to realign pupils' relationship with society in ways which dictated the authority of the State based upon a hegemonic and unified notion of culture. In other words, to learn to do as they were told. However, such a realignment inevitably raised questions regarding the source of that authority and the right of one small section of society to prescribe a particular version of society upon all its members and regardless of their class, race or gender. Struggles over definitions of language, therefore, are essentially struggles over versions of society.

Bernstein saw the principle of evaluation as being indicative of how far changes in distribution and recontextualisation were accepted by teachers. In the case of the subject English, proposed revisions to the curriculum and its version of society were overwhelmingly rejected in an unprecedented way. The realizations of the pedagogic device through these rules maintains and reproduces knowledge irrespective of whether the dominant principles of a given society are based upon capitalist, collectivist or dictatorial principles. Teachers could not accept the reproduction of knowledge that, although it made political sense, did not do so

educationally. From the teachers' perspective, proposed revisions to the national curriculum for English recontextualised the subject in ways which did not make sense, particularly in denying the inherently creative nature of language and emphasising language as product rather than process. It also reversed dominant pedagogy, with pupils positioned as passive recipients of knowledge rather than as active participants in the learning process. Nevertheless, Government policy makers used its own research undertaken at the University of Warwick to justify contradictory policies that sought to increase central control over the content of English and definitions of language. The Cox curriculum had failed politically in that it did not provide such a definition. Even though language constantly escapes legislation, this does not stop modern states from attempting to keep it bound within defined parameters. A right wing, authoritarian Government will, by its very nature, attempt to control language more forcibly than other kinds in realising its desired version of society, hence the proposed revisions.

Opposition to the proposed revision gathered force as the first assessment of key stage 3 approached. In an unusual, personal intervention, the Conservative prime Minister, John Major, had announced earlier in 1992 that assessment by coursework of the kind used at GCSE was in future to be limited to twenty percent. Assessment by examination would form the remaining eighty percent, thereby removing teachers' autonomy to determine topics for assessment. It also introduced lists of set texts to be studied, rather than leaving that choice to individual teachers. Thus although the Cox curriculum may have provided teachers with the flexibility to choose their own material, the requirements for assessment severely curtailed that freedom. Consequently, pupils at key stage 3 were required to sit formal examinations based upon set texts designed by an external agency rather than by submitting coursework based upon texts and associated tasks chosen by their teachers. The balance of power, therefore, shifted from teachers to politicians in determining the version of society that was to be taught through the curriculum, a version characterised by control, regulation and cultural hegemony. Unhappy with the prescriptive nature of such assessment and its subsequent domination of the curriculum coupled with their concern over proposed revisions to the curriculum, secondary teachers refused to administer the tests. Their primary colleagues, also unhappy about the nature of assessment and the increasingly unmanageable workload generated by the national curriculum, joined in the boycott. As a result, the teaching unions mounted an astonishingly unanimous and successful campaign to boycott the tests at both key stages 1 and 3.

This boycott, together with the growing evidence of the impossible teaching and administrative workload being generated by the curriculum, led the Government to announce a whole-scale revision, chaired by Sir Ron Dearing whose manner of conducting the review was far less secretive and confrontational than that of NCC and SCAA. These two agencies merged to form one body, known as the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA),

responsible for administering both the curriculum and its assessment. In terms of affecting any recontextualisation, it was clear that a curriculum had to have the support and cooperation of the teachers charged with teaching it. As part of rebuilding the link between recontextualisation and evaluation, the teaching profession was included as part of the review.

However, a review of the national curriculum for English was already in process. Amongst others, NATE had argued that since the whole curriculum was to be reviewed, that of the English curriculum should be suspended and be undertaken as part of it. Despite appearing to agree to this request, NCC published its consultation report in September 1993 based upon the consultative document of April 1993, shortly before the Dearing review began and its own merger with SEAC took place to form SCAA. Consequently, when the working parties met to undertake their reviews of each subject, it was this third published version of the English curriculum upon which they were asked to work, rather than the original 1989 Cox curriculum.

9.1 Redefining Standard English

The term standard English is a difficult if not impossible one to define, not least because its terms of reference are too inclusive and not sufficiently neutral. This difficulty is not helped by the fact that it is also used to describe both speech and writing, whose contexts of use can be very different. The standard English debate that accompanied revisions to the national curriculum for English between 1993 and 1994 tended to polarise the two modes of spoken and written language in ways which drew much attention to the differences between them in ways that obscured the important issue of how written standard English should be taught and the nature of the relationship between its spoken and written forms.

This thesis has argued that as a school subject English came into existence during the nineteenth century once the language had been standardised with the express purpose of teaching pupils written standard English, a standard based upon the grammar and vocabulary of a once regional dialect. Teaching spoken standard English was equivalent to teaching pupils to speak as they wrote.. The justification for this was based upon the belief that standard English was a superior form of the English language whose use belied superior ways of moral and social as well as linguistic behaviour. Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, grammars of modern written standard English had been developed based on categories that derived from how the English language actually functions and is used. This is not to deny that some forms of language are accorded more prestige and social status than others, nor the fact that prestigious forms of language exist. What has altered is the justification of their existence which locates prestige and status as internal rather than external to its community of users. Control of what counts as prestigious, therefore, resides within the community rather than by appealing to any absolutes outside it. This shift in justification was ignored by the Government

through NCC in its revisions to the English curriculum, which continued to rest its notions of 'correctness' and 'canonicity' on absolutes and by justifying the teaching of spoken standard English on grounds of authority, opportunity and access. Again, this is not to deny that pupils need to be taught forms of language valued by society, but that the reasons for teaching them should make it clear that these values reside within the community, as does their authoritative status. To do this, however, inevitably raises questions regarding who has the power and status to decide which forms are valued and on what authority that may challenge the existing status quo that Governments, particularly authoritarian ones, work so hard to maintain. The revised curriculum centred upon the teaching of standard English, rather than knowledge about language which left its writers in the position of having to define what they meant by the term.

The Kingman Report had defined standard English by its written form, stating that: 'It is the fact of being the written form which establishes it as the standard.'(1988:16) However, the term standard English was used in the revisions to apply to both speech and writing, often used as if the two modes of communication were interchangeable or the same. As part of its consultative role, the Warwick English Project had been asked to provide a definition of standard English. It defined standard English in the following way:

Spoken standard English is a dialect with particular grammatical forms. It is socially prestigious and is expected and appropriate in formal public contexts (e.g. presentation, formal job interview). Spoken standard English excludes by definition certain non-standard grammatical forms (such as 'I'll wait here while ten o'clock') and vocabulary items (such as 'geezer', 'canny'). Although the dialect is usually associated with formal contexts, it can also be used informally... Written standard English is that form of English which is used in most written or scripted contexts (e.g. newspapers and news broadcasts). Spoken standard English incorporates this but also includes features that are inherent in unscripted spoken language

Raban, Clark and McIntyre (1994:99).

The definition ends with the reminder that: '...any definition of standard English must also include the notion of appropriate usage in different contexts' (1994). Although the term standard English applies to both speech and writing, recent definitions of standard English testify to the primacy of its written form as a key characteristic. For example, Carter defines standard English in the following way:

Standard English may be defined as that variety of English which is usually used in print and which is normally taught in schools and to non-native speakers using the language. It is also the variety which is normally spoken by educated people and used in news broadcasts and other similar situations. It is especially characterised by a rich and extensive vocabulary developed over the centuries for a range of functions.

Carter (1995:145)

Beyond school, standard English is used widely in public and professional life. Carter quotes McCabe (1991) in making the point that to be unable to write standard English or use its spoken form in public contexts is to be essentially disenfranchised and deprived of true citizenship. For a curriculum not to stress pupils' entitlement to standard English would be to effectively disempower pupils both socially and culturally. Nevertheless, the question of variation within standard English remains unexplored. Ideologically, the standard variety has become associated with values of order and conservatism that have confused the debate regarding its teaching. There is little professional disagreement over the teaching of written standard English as both necessary and desirable. Disagreement has been more sharply focused upon the teaching of spoken standard English and the assumption that there is a single accent corresponding to it, that of RP. The line between aesthetics and what is thought to be 'good form' is a very narrow one, and the aesthetics of speech based upon class remain implicit in any discussion regarding the use of spoken language.

Carter also points out that there is a strong connection between the standard and the written medium. Leith (1983) has argued that writing is an indispensable component of standardization, involving a process of selection, whereby one variety is selected from a range of possibilities, becoming a powerful agent for its dissemination as literacy spreads. A standardised language gives its speakers a sense of historicity, since influences upon that process of standardization can be traced. The standardization of English during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries deliberately selected one variety out of many, justified on the grounds of superiority. When appeals to superiority crumbled, alternate grounds for its established power, authority and status were sought by the Government, based upon rights of access to the language of power.

Carter (1994) in his work on a grammar of spoken English, has observed that rather than being different forms characterised by distinct sets of characteristics, different types of speech and writing appear to form a continuum, with informal, highly context-bound speech at one end and formal forms of writing at the other, such as academic and legal texts. Olson (1994) has argued that rather than forming a continuum, which implies a linear structure, forms of speech and writing influence one another in a much more circular way. He argues that writing is not a transcription of speech but rather provides a model for speech. The codified representation of speech as writing allowed language to become the object of conscious, rather than unconscious, thought. It changed us from speakers to language users. The invention of a writing system, he suggests, does two things at once: 'It provides a graphic means of communication but, because it is then verbalized, that is, read, it comes to be seen as a model of that verbalization.' (1994:86).

The development of a writing system for standard English came to provide a model for speech that also included particular attitudes towards language use based on notions of superiority and correctness. How one spoke was also thought to have a direct correlation with how one thought and behaved. Historically, spoken standard English had been, as must always be the case, ratified by the ruling upper class, and it was the values and beliefs of this section of society that were taught as part of the teaching of standard English in state schools. A writing system, therefore, provided a model not only for speech but also for behaviour. Teaching literacy, therefore, is always ideological, in the sense that it is based upon a particular set of beliefs of the ways in which language both represents and is part of the world. Since writing allows for a relatively close transcription of speech, it also allows us to speak like a book.

A recognition of the social and cultural forces that have affected the development of writing could go a long way towards an understanding of how scripts control reading. Olson (1994) illustrates this by citing Boorman's (1986) discussion of the history of musical scores. During the sixteenth century, composers added notations to their scores as a way of restricting performers' interpretation of a musical composition. This development was paralleled in conventions for punctuating texts. Writing also allowed for the formation of grammars and dictionaries (Goody (1987)), thus turning some structural aspects of speech into objects of reflection, planning and analysis.

To learn to read, therefore, *necessarily* involves more than simply decoding script. It also involves matching or mapping one's own implicit linguistic structure onto the one represented by that script. Frith (1985) offers a three-stage model of learning to read that illustrates this point. He suggests that early readers view an alphabet in similar terms to a logograph, with each letter string representing a word. As pupils learn to write, they also attempt to spell words, breaking the logographs into their alphabetic constituents, each representing a phoneme. Finally, they learn to detect morphemes as they begin to see the relationship between letters, for example seeing the "road" in "crossroad" or the "-ing" in "showing". A further mapping is that of matching what is experienced of the world with its representation on paper or, increasingly, on the computer screen. As pupils' experiences of both worlds increases and develops, their mapping of the one onto the other may become inconsistent. In these cases, tension and resistance can come between the authority and the power vested in the world on paper and an individual's experience of that world.

Although scripts represent a world on paper, this representation is not total, and meaning does not, as has often been assumed, reside solely in the words of a page, including what the author intended them to mean. Olson (1994) argues that lexicalizing alphabetic scripts created what he terms a blind spot. Since an alphabetic script is capable of transcribing what is said, it may

also be taken as representing all of a speaker's utterance, when this is far from the case. Writing represents only part of the meaning, and gives little indication of its illocutionary force (Searle 1969). In other words, *how* words should be spoken or read is open to a great deal of interpretation, allowing for a multiple of interpretations of the same script, a fact that directors and actors regularly exploit. Assuming that writing is capable of representing all that it means, has led to the belief that any meaning a reader personally 'sees' in a text is actually there, and any other reading is the product of ignorance. It has also led to an oversimplified notion of what it means to read. As Olson points out, what is critical is not so much a question of conceptualising reading as decoding versus understanding, but an understanding of what a script represents and what it fails to represent. He makes the point that:

...the models of language provided by our scripts are both what is acquired in the process of learning to read and write and what is employed in thinking about language; writing is in principle meta-linguistics...Writing systems, then, do represent speech. But not in the way that is conventionally held. Writing systems create the categories in terms of which we become conscious of speech. *To paraphrase Whorf (1956), we introspect our language along lines laid down by our scripts.*

Olson (1994:89-90).

What writing does, therefore, is provide a set of categories for thinking about language. As a consequence of learning to read and to write, this set of categories can then be applied to speech. 'Writing provides a series of models for, and thereby brings into consciousness, the lexical, syntactic and logical properties of what is said' (Olson (1994:259)). This set of categories applies most readily to the speech that closely resembles the printed word, that is, standard English, which itself provided a model for the writing system. Such reflectiveness occurs with the growing consciousness of the structure of speech in terms of the structure of the writing system. Olson points out that: 'Systematic analysis of that speech, now "heard" in terms of the writing system, would be required to isolate the grammar from the meanings usually expressed through language. This took some time historically and it takes some time and effort to develop in children' (Olson (1994:260)).

Furthermore, the writing system is often thought of as a closed, complete category, whereas its edges are in a continual state of change. As Carter and McCarthy (1994) point out, typicality, rooted in shared social practices, is the foundation of linguistic competence. Nevertheless, written (and spoken) modes can be used creatively in untypical contexts which bear testimony to the creative nature of language. Let us say that a writing system serves as a picture for some of the dominant properties of language, although learning to use it does not of itself bring about awareness of its capabilities. For example, the ability to read and to write, particularly to spell, requires grasping the correlation between the graphic system and the sound patterns of a language. Successful readers grasp this connection early on, and much of their success is

linked to them having done so. Learning to read and to write with understanding is thus an intellectual achievement, involving as it does the understanding of how what is said can be represented by graphic symbols rather than a 'skill' that can be trained.

An individual may develop the linguistic competence needed to engage in any number of literate or textual communities, but, as Olson points out, there is also the need to acknowledge the fact that any society is organised around a set of beliefs, including those expressed in textual form, which are a source of power and prestige. Criticism of texts, as Olson argues, is an important part of thinking and an important link between literacy and thought. Concepts of wording, meaning and intention, the distinction between saying and meaning, the literal and the figurative, all play a part in the discourse of the school. The proposed revisions to the national curriculum for English as detailed in the NCC document justifying such a move (NCC 1992), sought to re-organise the teaching of language around a particular set of beliefs that were narrowly and contradictorily defined in an attempt to stabilise and control the texts through which these beliefs were represented. The *Case for Revising the English Order* argued that one of the reasons why the curriculum needed revising was that a 'clearer definition' of standard English was required for the purposes of teaching and learning. In other words, a definition that was all inclusive, neutral and 'fixed', which was impossible to achieve, as Stubbs (1986), amongst others, pointed out.

The debate during the nineteen eighties and early nineties regarding the teaching of standard English stemmed from a very narrow view of what it actually was, as Wilkinson has argued. What is thought to be 'good', 'correct' and 'proper' is also that which is thought to be graceful and stylish, appealing to an implicit but powerful aesthetics. Such a prescription was justified by appealing to canonical rather than absolute forms, thereby begging the question of who decides and chooses what they are to be that inevitably raises the issue of power and status. Aesthetics is the implicit, ubiquitous influence in the 'correct English' argument.

The April 1993 revision to the curriculum extended the requirement in Cox for pupils to learn written standard English to learning its spoken equivalent from the early years. The definition that appeared in the April 1993 consultation document was phrased in the following way:

The phrase 'standard English' refers to the grammatically correct language used in formal communication throughout the world. To become competent users of standard English, pupils need to be taught to recognise its characteristics and the rules which govern its usage.

In its introduction to AT 1 Speaking and Listening, it reiterates its definition:

Standard English is characterised by the correct use of vocabulary and grammar. Pupils need to be able to speak and to write in SE in order to enhance the communication skills necessary for social and professional development.

The debatable statement that pupils need to recognise the characteristics and the rules that govern standard English usage in order to speak it is given as unquestionable fact.. It also extended the requirement to teach spoken standard English alongside written standard English from the beginning of schooling. The debate surrounding these definitions was not whether standard English should or should not be taught. Rather, it was far more of an issue to do with its definition as a concept. O'Rourke and O'Rourke (1990) point out that in standard English the term 'standard' is used to express a consensual view, implying a definition agreed by most people. As Raymond Williams (1976) observed, this makes it hard to disagree with any official, authoritative definition such as that given in national curriculum documents without appearing to disagree with the notion of standard English itself.

The connection between standard English and notions of 'correctness' and authority had been replaced by the LINC Project with one of 'appropriateness' and sociability. Winch (1989) argued that the acquisition of a sense of appropriateness as well as a sense of what is correct, is fundamental to our use of language. Primarily, language is a social activity. Thus being initiated into or learning notions of appropriateness also involves learning to behave within discourse situations which, in a class-based society, are hierarchical. As Foucault and others have pointed out, the creation and maintenance of social, political and cultural institutions by language and the corresponding senses of appropriateness such as the current emphasis on standard English are themselves socially determined and negotiated. Winch comments that: 'Those who wish to defend the teaching of SE must do so on the grounds of its *social* efficiency as an internationally recognised form of communication, its close association with the written medium, (making it vital for the acquisition of literacy) and its use in scientific and academic contexts.' (1989: 240)

To balance 'correctness' by 'appropriateness', then, can be seen as more of a change in words than of ideas, since an appeal to appropriateness such as the one proposed by Winch appears to acknowledge and maintain a status quo in much the same way as an appeal to 'correctness', appealing to a consensual or hegemonic social order. Fairclough has challenged this view in that it projects '... an idealized image of socio-linguistic order which is hopelessly at odds with indeterminacies, unevennesses, diversity, tensions and struggle of real sociolinguistic orders, such as that of modern Britain'(1995:247) He points out that the notion of 'appropriateness' helps to rationalize a policy of teaching children to understand and produce spoken and written standard English whilst apparently respecting other dialect and languages. He writes that:

This policy is justified in terms of 'entitlement' of children to the 'opportunity' which standard English opens up for them...it uses the educational system to transmit shared language values (if not practices) based around the hegemony of a particular dialect, but in a way which overcomes on the surface the contemporary dilemma of how to do that while making the politically necessary concessions to liberalism and pluralism. On the other hand, appropriateness helps rationalize the extension to language of a competence-based model of education.

Fairclough (1995: 241-2).

What counts as appropriate or inappropriate use of language is something that is more a matter of social rather than linguistic consideration. Notions of appropriateness, therefore, are just as important as the actual words that are spoken and written when it comes to language use. Appropriateness, therefore, is as key to government definitions of language as it is to any other. Corresponding to pupils' initiation into notions of 'appropriateness' is the realization that these notions are socially determined and negotiated, that there are different ways of regarding appropriateness and that a hierarchy of discourses exist, including the one surrounding standard English. Learning to use standard English, therefore, allows pupils access to that discourse. However, it does not follow, as Fairclough appears to suggest, that using standard English of itself denies the plurality of language use. Rather, it is one, albeit powerful, way amongst many. The Government defended their definition of standard English on the grounds that standard English was a form to which all pupils had a social right which is perfectly justifiable. At the same time, the narrowness and prejudice of their definition precluded discussion or consideration of any other variety or definition of standard English itself.

There is little disagreement over the teaching of written standard English as a unitary form, since it is widely, if not exclusively, taught in schools regardless of the methods used to teach it when pupils are taught to read and to write. The history of standardisation, however, as discussed briefly in Chapter 3, shows the extent to which it was culturally and socially influenced. Standard English is not immune to the forces of social and cultural change that vary in the degree to which they affect its vocabulary, spelling and grammar. This makes the writing of a definitive grammar or dictionary that will suffice for all time is virtually impossible, and is the reason why these texts need periodic updating and their content reviewing. Standard, descriptive grammars, like their prescriptive predecessors, have tended to be based upon written examples or speech in very formal contexts that apply the same grammar to both speech and writing.

Let us take as an example of such a grammar is Quirk et al's *A University Grammar of the English language* (UGE). This grammar drew upon a small corpus of 11/2 million words

largely drawn from written texts representative of a small, highly educated section of the population. Stephens (1990), analysed the illustrative examples given in UGE which featured two characters, John and Mary, in terms of their portrayal of male-female difference and male-female relations.. She concludes that:

The world of John and Mary has an identifiable character. It is a world of fixed role relations, of academic success and failure, of intelligence and foolishness, of books and letters, and leaving notes and giving presents. It is a world of girls who are pretty or not pretty and where it is worth stating that their intelligence is respected. It is a world of men who play football, drive cars and attend meetings - men more active than their female counterparts, but hardly themselves divergent in tastes and interests.

Stephens (1990: 94)

The point here is that even when language is purportedly being described in a neutral way, that is, which distances the author from its content as is usually the case in a grammar or in a dictionary, some process of selection on the author's part is inevitably involved that betrays a particular world view.

Grammars and dictionaries are often based on a description of written language, as is the case with the UGE. As Carter (1994) points out, applying this grammar to spoken English means that its form is judged by the codified standards of written English. Thus disagreement over the terms of reference of standard English are most evident over teaching its spoken form together with a single 'correct' accent rather than its written one. Defined in such a way, teaching pupils to speak standard English is to teach them to speak formal written English, rather than teaching pupils that certain situations require them to speak in certain ways which may or may not be one in which they are used to speaking. .

Unsurprisingly, responses to the definition of standard English that appeared in the April 1993 revision were overwhelmingly critical. When the consolation document was published in September 1993, one of the amendments to the April 1993 version was that the requirements for standard English prefaced the whole curriculum. This definition was as follows:

In defining Standard English, the following features should be noted:

Standard English comprises **vocabulary** as found in dictionaries, and agreed conventions of **spelling** and **grammar**. It develops and changes over time.

Written and spoken Standard English are not synonymous. Written Standard English adheres to accepted rules and conventions, notably of sentence grammar, except where non-standard forms are used for technical reasons. Spoken Standard English closely follows the written form but differs in a small number of grammatical and lexical ways.

Core grammatical features of Standard English include subject verb agreement, correct and consistent use of verb tenses, correct use of pronouns, adverbs and adjectives. In spoken Standard English significant features are standard forms of irregular verbs; agreement between person, case and number (especially with the verb 'to be'); the correct use of pronouns.

The richness of dialects and languages in England and Wales can contribute to pupils' knowledge and understanding of language. The aim should be to equip young people with the ability to use Standard English when circumstances require it: in their written work and in many speaking and listening contexts. It is important to encourage pupils' ability to extend their speaking and writing repertoires: to make their language 'fit' the context.

NCC (1993b: 16)

Again, contradictions abound in such a definition. *All* dialects of English adhere to accepted rules and conventions, such as subject and verb agreement, and the consistent use of verb tenses. Similarly, the definition pays lip service to the 'richness' of dialects whilst at the same time stating that all pupils should be able to use standard English 'when circumstances require it'. This is not to deny that they should, but the definition narrows these circumstances to those contexts that require the use of standard English and to exclude all others, thereby denying the existence of other dialects. It also narrows the range of variation permissible to 'formal' and 'informal' standard English, whatever these may be.

Nevertheless, it was this proposed definition of standard English that the review group for English was given as their starting point as part of the Dearing Review. In the Dearing curriculum, the requirement to learn standard English forms a section at each key stage within each attainment target rather than as a general definition prefacing the entire document. Originally, the section had been called *Language Study and Standard English*, but in the mediation process between proposed documentation and the final outcome, the phrase had been reversed, thereby emphasising the teaching of standard English. The framework for language study, therefore, is bound by the requirement that pupils learn to speak and to write standard English in ways that do not allow for any other kind of language use, or for its prestige and power to be questioned.

The economic need for a mobile workforce following the deregulation of market forces during the nineteen eighties, brought along with it the need for a national curriculum whose requirements were as specific as they could be to minimise the disruption to pupils' education. The introduction of a national curriculum designed to standardise knowledge across a mobile society also heavily bureaucratised cognitive development. A national curriculum for English that did not specify precisely what was to be taught at which stage escaped the boundaries of that bureaucratisation and those being established for a common culture. This is not to say that

such a move was not necessary, since pupils need certain, perhaps arbitrary fixities upon which to anchor their experiences of the world. Nevertheless, neither should a curriculum lie, and pretend that no other, alternative versions exist, as is the case with the current curriculum for English.

Programmes of study for each attainment target are divided into three phases corresponding to key stage 1, key stage 2 and key stage 3 and 4. Each one is divided into three sections: section 1 *Range*, section 2 *Key Skills* and section 3 *Standard English and Language Study*. Despite being placed third, the requirements of section 3 clearly define the language use required by the other 2. For example, at key stage 2, section 2 *key skills* of the programme of study for speaking and listening requires pupils to 'express themselves confidently and clearly...and to listen carefully' (1994:11) The term standard English is not used on the page that outlines sections 1 and 2. Once the page is turned over, then it becomes clear that talking 'confidently' means talking in standard English and clearly implies with a 'standard' accent, that of RP.

Although the range of texts included in the programmes of study for reading includes media texts and a variety of others, texts are arranged into eight categories, of which six are exclusively literary with two specified authors for study, thereby effectively narrowing the range of possible texts for study. The programmes of study for writing concentrate upon learning the forms of written standard English characterised by grammar, vocabulary and spelling. For writing, models for writing are categorised as narrative, poetry, scripts and dialogue and non-fiction. The language study section requires teachers to teach about their structures. By adopting such an approach, texts are characterised more as fixed, set patterns of meaning rather than as interactive and capable of change. Consequently, the world they represent is a fixed, stable social order that is at the same time hierarchically constructed by but also independent of its individual members. The creative capacity of language to invent new forms and different ways of representing the world does not form part of this picture. It positions the pupil as a passive receiver of this world order and its values through their use of language, controlled by Government regulation.

The requirements of section 3 in the programmes of study for speaking and listening define developing pupils' use of spoken language in terms of their ability to speak standard English. From key stage 2 onwards, as already mentioned above, speech is defined solely by standard English by virtue of the requirements made by section 3, although the phrase is not used in either sections 1 or 2. The terms 'register' and 'linguistic repertoire' are similarly replaced by the phrase 'formal and informal standard English' as if these two categories were homogenous and clearly defined by a set of rules pupils needed to learn. Thus the fixed, stable, hierarchical social order represented through the ways pupils are taught to read and to write

and to interpret the texts they read is complemented by the way they are taught to speak. Of course, it can be argued that pupils 'need' these fixities, but if so, it is at the cost of lying to them. That is to say, that the possibility and existence of other social orders is kept from them.

The current curriculum for English does not, therefore, as Protherough and King (1995) suggest, offer a flexible framework that includes greater emphasis upon linguistic diversity, nor does it allow for a creative response in bringing the curriculum alive in practice. On the contrary, its terms of reference are characterised by rigidity and inflexibility based upon outdated theories of language.

9.2 Alternatives for English

Peim points out that the latest version of the English curriculum is formulated along well-established traditional lines. He writes that:

Literature remains defined as literary texts and the examination of language is constructed around the traditional categories of comprehension, letter writing and creative writing... These are ideas adhering to such central assumptions of the subject as the notion of standard forms of responses to texts are the response itself; or that 'grammar' and appropriate forms of writing can be defined as good or bad according to universally established criteria. The new orders are merely the old orders

Peim (1995:179).

Peim suggests an alternative approach to textuality and textual issues than the traditional one enshrined in the 'new' order. He identifies several guiding principles underpinning the recontextualisation of English as a textual model, one of which is that all texts relate to, are read against other texts on a culturally horizontal plane. However, he fails to recognise that texts are placed in a culturally determined vertical hierarchy, with some texts being ascribed more value than others. Street (1995) points to the situation within which a text appears as providing a great deal of information that informs our attitudes towards its content. An article in an academic journal and the status of the journal, its paper quality and typographical style all contribute to the reader's expectations of its content that are further signals for its intended audience.

Peim recognises that the context of texts, the limits of texts and their meanings cannot be singular and assured. Consequently, he concludes that textual meanings are capable of multiple interpretations and no single reading of any text can claim superior merit above any other. However, such a claim denies the fact that there are culturally dominant readings of texts, even if they are incomplete, selective and contradictory or the possibility of mistaken readings. Such a belief also contradicts his statements that texts belong to a specific discourse related to social practices, and to specific institutional contexts which help more or less to

stabilise their potentially divergent, contradictory meanings. Education is a powerful instance of such a practice or set of social practices within its own various and powerful institutions. As the curriculum subject charged with teaching literacy, English has a vital role to play in teaching pupils how texts belong to specific discourses, how these relate to social practices and how to make sense of divergent and contradictory meanings.

The texts used in undertaking such a role have been predominantly literary ones. Part of the claim for the 'worth' of literature was that its use of language was somehow special, and that its surface meaning hid a deeper, less obvious meaning. But texts recognised as 'literary' are not the only kinds to do this. Analysis of a diverse range of texts such as political speeches, newspaper articles and television reports, not usually recognised for their literariness, can also reveal meanings beneath the surface. Similarly, the use of 'literary language' such as metaphor and simile occurs in every type of text. That 'literary' language is different from other kinds is not in dispute. It generally displays a particular style of narrative patterning and interaction between a variety of linguistic levels, producing a more complex message and a more intellectually demanding experience for the reader. Its difference lies more in terms of its function, rather than its worth. To limit the creative possibilities of language, however, is impossible. The same criteria for judgement can be applied to all other texts, the main one being the extent to which any one succeeds in achieving what it sets out to do, which includes giving pleasure, provoke thought, to persuade or achieve an artistic effect.

What is in our heads are rich networks of associations, some of which are our biological "gift" ("innate"), and many others of which are built up by our experiences in the physical and social world from birth on. These associations are *cognitive tools* with which we get into and "play" social "games" or, put another way, "act out" social roles. These "games" are always serious matters in which power, status, and solidarity ("social goods") are at stake. The roles we play always involve assuming or acting as if certain sorts of people and things are "right", "normal", or "good" and certain things are "wrong", "marginal", or "bad".

Gee (1992:xvii).

When pupils learn to read and to create their own texts they do so in relation to others, learning to take part in a textual community as both readers and writers. As they progress to the upper primary years and to secondary school, they learn to analyse the ways in which a text is structured, how it relates to other texts, what its function is and the social and cultural contexts within which its value is ascribed. This involves not only learning the various forms and functions of texts, but the representations of the world they provide, including its values and social practices. Gee (1992) has argued that meaning and memory -consciousness - do not reside in the brain but in the social world of action and interaction.

Echoing Wittgenstein's analogy of language as a game, Gee argues that psychological entities such as memory, beliefs, values, meanings are like strikes in a game of baseball, that requires interaction between a set of rules, people playing various roles and discharging various functions, a ball and a field. A memory, meaning or belief also involves the integration between actions or words with social practices of given groups of people playing certain roles across time and space that also involves material props such as buildings, books and money. Like Wittgenstein, Gee makes the point that there are no strikes outside the game of baseball. The game does not reside in anyone's body: 'there are no memories, meanings, or beliefs without social practices, and the social practices do not reside in anyone's head. The game and the social practices are in the material and social world' (1992:xviii). In other words, in the linguistic world.

As an institution, education plays a large part in teaching pupils and students the frameworks or sets of rules of various language games, of what can and cannot be said and how it is said. As a subject, English in schools has been concerned with, firstly, teaching pupils what the "moves" are and, secondly, how their rules and associated social practices define meaning. From the moment a pupil begins schooling and is taught how to read and write, what is also being taught are the practices of specific social groups and the meanings, beliefs and values that are ascribed to words and actions.

A textual model of English, then, is based upon the principle that learning to read, write and understand texts necessarily involves a consideration of the various forms and functions of language as text and discourse, their relationship to one another and the representations of the world, its values and social practices, as they appear within them and of which they are a part. In the Introduction to this thesis, the term 'text' was defined in its broadest sense for the purpose of the argument developed within it. Within the school curriculum for English as described above, its terms of reference need to be more defined, bound by a consideration of printed texts. As has been argued in Chapters 6 and 7, the personal growth model of English and the subsequent policy of language across the curriculum dissolved the boundaries of the subject, particularly in primary schools. Although forms of literacy as a semiotic practice have increased to include the study of visual together with print literacies, to broaden the subject of English in such a way also dissolves its boundaries in a similar way. English cannot do everything, and there have to be boundaries between subjects if teachers are to make sense of what they are doing in the classroom. Firstly, all subjects have a distinctive subject matter, which in the case of English is language. Secondly, they also have a set of characteristic concepts, of which one of the most important for English is that of standard English. Thirdly, they have an idiom and finally they have a set of sacred texts. Rather than defining these texts

by a category, such as 'literature' or 'media', the model proposed by this thesis is more inclusive, in that all writing is 'text'.

By tradition, English has been concerned with the creation and study of imaginative texts. There is no other place in the curriculum where the study of such texts takes place, nor where pupils can experiment with the creativity of written language, and for this reason if no other, they should continue to hold a central place in the secondary curriculum. The cultural heritage model of English defined the range of texts studied in a very narrow way, whilst the personal growth model placed no limits on the range of texts that could potentially be studied, including as it did media. A textual model for English would, it is hoped, redress the balance.

Since the accepted, standardised, written form of the English language is the one taught to pupils in schools, then any model for English has to include the teaching of written standard English and a consideration of its relationship with speech. Writing is not speech written down, nor is speech writing that is spoken. Rather, the relationship between speech and writing is more symbiotic, with the written form characterising the standard more than its spoken. Conversely, the written form also influences the spoken, in that speech seeks to imitate the printed form, particularly with regard to its phrase structure and pronunciation. It is not the teaching of standard English itself, particularly its written form, which lies at the heart of the issue, but how it is defined and conceptualised.

A textual model for English would place the development of an individual's language use within the context of its social practice. It would study not only language in society but also society in language. That is, study how our structures of knowledge, our personalities, our social and political institutions are created and maintained in and through language. It is central to the main purpose of a curriculum for English that pupils are taught the structure of language alongside its use in ways that take account of their hierarchically and socially constituted nature that also explore the basis of that hierarchy. It involves teaching the structure of texts alongside and in the context of its content, taking account of pupils' own development of literacy and their experience of the world. Such teaching recognises the variety of textual forms that exist and the capacity of language to change and to create new ones. The final chapter of this thesis offers a framework for such a model of English, bearing in mind the historicity of the subject as it has been outlined.

Chapter 10

Towards a New Definition for English

10.0 Introduction

This thesis has shown that the history of English as it has been taught in schools is characterised by diffusion and plurality that render it largely incoherent. One way to make sense of this confusion is to see it as a chronicle, as Dixon (1967), amongst others, has done. However, even when viewed chronologically, it is clear that models or recontextualisations of English do not progress smoothly from one to another, but rather, contain a number of discursive strands. At any one time, elements of one discourse remain residual in another whilst others provide the conditions for the emergence of different ones. At the same time, these discursive strands are intertwined with wider institutional considerations of the education system, employment and the State whilst also being located in the more immediate context of individual schools and classrooms. Finally, there are the social contexts that confer privilege, directly or indirectly, upon issues of social class, race and gender (Bernstein 1990).

Tracing a history of English within the state system of education, particularly its teaching of language, is as much a history of the tensions and struggles between individuals, society and the State as of a subject, since, as Williams (1977) pointed out, definitions of language are always, implicitly or explicitly, definitions of human beings in the world. Consequently, issues regarding the teaching of language are never simply about its pedagogy. They are also to do with concepts of the self and an individual's relationship to society. Professional debates about the teaching of language are a permanent feature of English teaching. However, it is not coincidental that debates about language surface into public consciousness at times of social change, since language is as much a part of reality as a description or image of it. As realisations of the world change, that change is consequently reflected in and through language. The concept of a modern nation State is largely dependent upon the use of a unified, prestigious form of language that belies the social and regional differences of the various networks of linguistic communities that exist within it. Consequently, participation in public life demands the use of that form. Education as a state institution plays a central role in teaching the standardised language and the realisations of the world expressed in and through it. This is not to deny, however, that other varieties of language exist and that language can change, but that some varieties are accorded more prestige than others organised around a particular set of beliefs and linguistic structures. As the subject charged with the teaching of

language, English has a key role to play in both the teaching of standard English and its relationship with other varieties of English to which it owes its central place in the curriculum.

10.1 Versions of English

English as a subject within the national state elementary system of the nineteenth century owed its existence to the completion of the standardisation of the English language as the national language of the modern English State. Historically, this standardisation centred upon a once regional dialect that had come to be associated more with social class than with region, justified on the grounds of its aesthetic superiority. It was also the dialect that by that time had come to be used most commonly in print. Consequently, the primary function of English in elementary education was to teach pupils to read and to write standard English. Such a function suited the purposes of both the State and to a certain degree those of parents, since economic prosperity and social status were increasingly dependent upon education.

At the same time, the religious and secular texts used to teach pupils to read and to write invariably contained a moral message designed to teach pupils how to behave. These can be criticised for their obviously controlling nature in ways that emphasise the pejorative connotations of the word 'control'. However, since the purpose of all texts and discourses is to communicate, learning to read and to write as well as to speak is always linked to learning to behave in a particular way. In a formal, institutional context, this degree of control and regulation is more overt, explicit and centralised than in others.

Within the elementary school system, the teaching of reading and writing and the representation of the world realised through the texts used to teach literacy was highly regulated, defined by the requirements of the Revised Code upon which a school's funding also depended. Such a curriculum was characterised by its mechanistic approach to teaching and learning that took no account of understanding and was much criticised, not least by the HMI charged with its overseeing its teaching, of which one of the most critical was Matthew Arnold.

After the abolition of the Revised Code, central regulation consequently lessened. In the early twentieth century, as secondary education developed out of elementary education, increased emphasis was placed upon the critical understanding of the texts pupils read. After the First World War, the first government report into the teaching of English, the Newbolt Report (1921), centred its definition of English upon the teaching of English literature and a critical understanding of the texts chosen for study that extended the teaching of English beyond the teaching of initial literacy. At the same time, public demands, particularly those of employment, also had to be met together with those required by the State. As spoken standard

English became the form of language most commonly used in public life, the Report also added the teaching of spoken standard English to that of the written form. Again, such a definition of English suited the purpose of the State in re-aligning class formations after the War as pupils continued their schooling beyond the elementary years and thus increased their employment prospects.

Consequently, the subject divided into 'English literature' and 'English language'. The emphasis in the former was upon the creative and expressive nature of written language through the accounts and images of the world represented in the texts chosen for study. The emphasis in the latter was more upon accuracy of expression and form in the use of written standard English and upon its grammar than its creative expression. The study of literature was pulled away as a distinctive strand of language use and evolved its own categories of description and hierarchy of texts, based upon a liberal, humanitarian definition of human beings in the world. Such a view of English was expounded by Sampson, Denys Thompson and others through their method books for teachers and endorsed by the State through its examinations, regionally controlled and regulated by the universities. It has also been criticised for the narrow exclusivity implied by its terms of reference. However, the Report succeeded in broadening the terms of reference for the subject to include not only the notion of language as product and the 'skill' necessary for its production but also to include the notion of language as a creative and dynamic process by studying the ways in which texts represented the world and taught respectable views of the self.

As the twentieth century progressed, increasing numbers of pupils continued their education beyond the elementary stage. After the Second World War and the 1944 Education Act, secondary education became compulsory for all pupils up to the age of fourteen, extended to sixteen in the nineteen seventies. Administratively, education was regulated and controlled by LEAs centrally co-ordinated by the Department of Education and Science whilst the development of the curriculum was left largely to the profession to determine. By the nineteen fifties, the Newbolt definition of English literature had become too narrow and exclusive with regard to taught views of the self and an individual's relationship to society. The Newsom Report (1966) advocated broadening the range of texts to be studied in the classroom beyond canonical literature to include media and contemporary writing. It also emphasised the importance of pupils' own creative writing. Such an approach emphasised the role of English as the expression of private experience and its manifestation in contemporary texts as a way of approaching the study of canonical literature. Consequently, far greater emphasis was placed upon the expression of creativity and personal writing as a way of leading pupils to the study of literature and the more formal demands of written expression that subsequently became ends in themselves.

Under such a model for English, studying language became synonymous with using language, and the emphasis consequently altered from language study characterised by the products of language as either grammar or the literary canon to the processes associated with language use. The Bullock Report of 1975, influenced by the work and presence of James Britton, emphasised the importance of speech and language for learning in general rather than in subject-specific terms. Such an approach widened the boundaries of the subject of English to include all uses of language and supported the policy of language across the curriculum. It endorsed the recommendation made by the Newsom Report that the range of texts to be studied in schools should not be confined exclusively to literature that extended analysis beyond a consideration of literary texts that included those of the media. Nevertheless, the texts studied as part of English remained largely anchored by the organising concept of narrative as the telling of stories even though the range of texts studied and imitated in the classroom had broadened. Learning about language through use rather than study also avoided uncomfortable issues regarding the relationship between pupils' own language use, social class, power and status.

Consequently, the teaching of a single, culturally dominant way of being in the world defined by the texts pupils studied and wrote became marked by plurality and difference. At the same time, the emphasis upon use ignored the study of the structures through which and in which ways of being were socially constituted in the narratives pupils wrote, read and studied. It also ignored teaching the more formal, public aspects of language use required by employment. In an attempt to restore language study to the curriculum for English, a major government project sponsored by the Schools Council during the nineteen seventies under the directorship of the linguist Michael Halliday and his project team aimed to restore language study to the classroom. This project developed materials for the classroom called *Language in Use*. They failed to capture teachers' imagination, not least because they required a great deal of mediation and explication that the authors failed to provide. Instead, the curriculum for English stressed the individual experience of the child and the importance of language for cognitive development in the early and middle years of schooling whilst the study of language and literature characterised the later years determined to a large extent by the requirements of examinations. The introduction of the CSE examination, whose syllabus and examination was written and undertaken by teachers and regionally administered, moved assessment away from examinations and lists of set texts towards coursework based upon texts and written tasks chosen by the teacher and included an oral component designed to assess pupils' spoken use of language.

During the nineteen eighties, following rapid deregulation of market forces that released the economy from State control, the Government turned its attention to other areas of public life

that it *could* govern, of which education was one. The introduction of a national curriculum under a right wing, authoritarian government during the nineteen eighties and nineteen nineties sharply reversed curriculum control and sought to regulate subjects in a way that was unprecedented since the days of the Revised Code. Such a reversal became the site of struggle for power between the Government and the teaching profession, especially those concerned with the teaching of English, as the Government sought to re-establish a culturally dominant way of being in the world centred upon the concepts of standard English and English literature.

The first step towards increased centralisation and bureaucratization of the curriculum came in the early nineteen eighties, with the amalgamation of GCE and CSE into GCSE, set against a background of industrial dispute between the teaching unions and the government. This examination nationalised criteria for assessment, but retained examination by coursework and an oral component that left the texts pupils studied and writing tasks unspecified. Teaching the formal properties of language separately from its use had formed an important aspect of English teaching from the days of the elementary school to its demise as part of the GCE O level examination in the nineteen sixties. This teaching was based upon the belief that there was a direct correlation between such teaching and pupils' corresponding use that was shown to be false. At the same time, the categories used to describe the English language, derived from Ancient Latin, were also shown to be inappropriate. These two considerations taken together created a vacuum that the growth model of English filled. Where pupils did study language, it was as part of their study of literary texts as practical or literary criticism. This criticism was selective in the ways it used the language of texts to support their interpretation and evaluation. It included the study of semantics and grammar as elements of coherence and cohesion together with a consideration of lexis and phonology known as 'imagery' or 'literary language'. What this teaching did not involve was the sterile analysis and parsing of individual sentences devoid of any context. Such activities were left to the examination papers in English language, whilst critical analysis of language use part of examination papers in English literature. With the move to assessment by coursework, the requirement to teach formal grammar finally ended. The critical analysis of language remained as part of the study of texts, not all of which were literary but were generally characterised by narrative. This analysis, however, rarely took account of the structures through and in which their representation was realised.

GCSE did not go far enough towards meeting Government desire to define language. This desire brought the Government into conflict not only with the teaching profession, but with different, one could say opposing, traditions of defining language and the theories upon which such definitions were based. Nineteenth century definitions of language had been based upon eighteenth century prescriptive theories. These had sought to justify the superiority of English,

and standard English in particular, on scientific grounds that studied language as something external to human nature. Twentieth century definitions of language since Saussure have adopted a more descriptive approach, studying language as part of human nature and its function in the constitution of human and social experience. The introduction of a national curriculum for English brought these two very different traditions into conflict as the basis upon which a definition was made, together with the definition itself, became fiercely contested. This contestation was a tribute to the role language plays in constituting human and social experience. As Williams wrote:

A definition of language is always, implicitly or explicitly, a definition of human beings in the world. The received categories - 'world', 'reality', 'nature', 'human' - may be counterposed or related to the category of 'language', but it is now commonplace to observe that all categories, including the category of 'language', are themselves constructions in language and can thus only with an effort, and within a particular system of thought, be separated for relational inquiry

Williams (1977:21)

Williams goes on to observe that such efforts and systems form an important and major part in the history of thought. Definitions of language, then, are undertaken within a particular system of thought. A definition of language as required by the national curriculum, brought into conflict two very different systems of thought regarding the nature of language and consequently, definitions of human beings in the world. Attempts by the government to regulate language according to one system of thought that denied the existence of the other repeatedly failed. The Kingman Report in 1988 failed to endorse a prescriptive tradition of language study, basing its model instead upon descriptive, sociolinguistic theories of language that studied language both as product and as process. The introduction of a heavily bureaucratic and autocratic national curriculum that demanded the content of each subject was made specific rather than based upon guiding principles, brought to the surface the tensions and rifts that had accompanied the various recontextualisations of English.

By virtue of being the subject charged with developing pupils' use of language, English is more directly responsible than any other subject for pupils' social being. The formative elements of existence - perception, consciousness and communication - are inseparable from our encounters with language and our development as language users and human beings. Consequently, the concepts that have historically characterised the teaching of English have been the values, beliefs and meanings represented through and constituted in language. As such, the teaching of English is always and *inevitably* political and ideological, since it, more than any other subject, teaches and constitutes respectable views of the self. How those views were to be taught and what they were, however, brought into sharp conflict two very different systems of thought upon which definitions of language drew. The Cox Report and LINC

Project similarly failed to alter the basis for defining language along prescriptive lines, and a national project into the teaching of the national curriculum also failed to endorse such a definition. Consequently, revisions to the curriculum were undertaken by NCC itself which forced a prescriptive definition of language that was professionally and educationally untenable. The present curriculum for English is an uneasy compromise between prescriptive and descriptive traditions of language study evidenced by the requirements for the section 'Standard English and Language Study'.

There is little professional disagreement over the fact that public demands of literacy require that pupils should know how to use language appropriately in formal contexts, which normally require the use of standard English. Government desire to reintroduce language study, however, was largely based upon an outmoded pedagogy that concentrated heavily upon learning the forms associated with standard English. The discipline upon which language study draws, namely that of linguistics, could no longer support such a pedagogy. It could, however, support one that included the study of language variety that was not acceptable to the Government.

However, attempts to provide a definition of standard English have proved virtually impossible, not least because language continually defies and escapes confinement. It is continually changing, and no amount of government legislation designed to control it can stop that from happening. Nevertheless, the demands placed upon English as a school subject require it to teach pupils language. That is, to teach them to read, to write, to speak and to listen so that they can participate as members of a society. Through the texts used to teach language, as a subject English also teaches culturally dominant forms that teach them how to become members of society. These texts have more often than not centred upon the organising principle of narrative as the telling of stories. Although the texts used to teach English have altered, the principles upon which they have been chosen have not. The study of language through narrative, therefore, is an important and integral part of the day to day practice of English classrooms rather than something apart or distinct from it, since it brings to the surface ways in which the world is structured through language. The degree to which this study is made explicit, however, or the concepts and categories upon which it draws, remain ill-defined. The following sections tentatively attempt to outline a textual model of English that draws from modern grammars of English and the principles and practice associated with the subject of stylistics. Stylistics has brought together the study of language and literature. Consequently, narrative remains a centrally ordering principle upon which the selection of texts is based that allows for the range of texts studied in the classroom to be broadened beyond those traditionally associated with the category of 'literature'. Such an approach necessarily relates a study of particles to the study of totalities and representations of the

world. Already taught at Advanced level and in higher education as part of English, a stylistic approach to language study is one that can be applied to all phases of schooling from the early years in infant school to those of the compulsory examination years in secondary school and beyond.

10.2 A Rationale for Language Study

English as a school subject historically fulfils three important functions: it teaches pupils to use language so that they are employable, so that can take part as citizens in a liberal democratic society and, by virtue of its tradition, makes them into *people*. Language is central to this education, since without it none of these aims can be met. That teaching language is important is undisputed. What is meant by teaching language, however, is not so straightforward. Under the growth model, teaching language had come to be associated with pupils' use of language rather than its study, since pupils can and do use language successfully without having studied it. Nevertheless, not all pupils do. Teaching language has been heavily dependent upon intuition rather than upon explicit knowledge. Teaching pupils about language, studying language, aims to bring to pupils' consciousness the ways in which language structures, represents and constitutes their encounters with the world and the various historical and social influences that affect its use. Language study, therefore, is not something that can be separated from language use, but is integral to it. All of us, barring disability or solitary confinement, learn to speak and to hear the language of our home effortlessly. Reading and writing, however, have to be taught. Writing, as Olson (1994) and others suggest, allows language to become an object of consciousness and to be categorised in ways which provide a framework for its study. Writing is thus central to the pedagogy of English, both in terms of the texts pupils write and the ones they read and study.

Modern grammars of English provide the means whereby the study of form, content and structure are integrated. Stylistics studies the ways in which form, content and structure are realised in texts that, together with our experience of the world, allow for more systematic interpretation and evaluation. Modern grammars of English such as Halliday's functional grammar extend the unit of study beyond the sentence to the text and its situation in ways that integrate the study of syntax with that of semantics. It also includes the study of metaphorical modes of expression anchored in the practice of seeking to explain *what* it is that texts do and *how* they do it.

Such a grammar provides much of the linguistic description associated with the subject of stylistics which aims to account for the relationship between language and the experiences of the world it structures and represents. Stylistics attempts to discuss the relationship between linguistic description, analysis and interpretation as explicitly and systematically as possible.

Consequently, it has come to be concerned not only with *what* a specific text or group of texts mean but *how* they come to mean what they do based upon common procedures of inference. It relates linguistic description grounded in linguistics to interpretation and evaluation that is in turn grounded in our experience of the world, that is, in society. What these common procedures actually are are culturally encoded, and in spite of individual differences, there is a great deal of agreement over what texts mean based upon the shared interpretations of the language they use and without which communication would be impossible. Linguistic description is grounded in the study of language structures from which grammatical categories are derived. Grammar thus becomes an instrument of textual practice and analysis rather than something separate or apart from it that can be, and is, taught from the early years onwards. The categories used for this description, however, and their relationship to the texts pupils read and write and their situation remains ill-defined.

English, as the subject most directly concerned with the teaching of literacy and textual study, is concerned with teaching shared interpretations and the language structures through which and in which they are constituted. A model of English based upon stylistics and a functional approach to language study locates the teaching of grammar as part of textual study upon which interpretation and evaluation are based. This approach readily lends itself to the teaching of English from the early years onwards. It also provides a more systematic and inclusive framework for textual study than that which characterises the current national curriculum for English. Such an approach necessarily includes teaching the grammar of written standard English and representations of the world associated and realised through it as part of textual study which also allows for the study of variation and questions regarding the relationship between language, the individual and society to be legitimately raised. Teaching grammar thus becomes an instrument of textual analysis rather than something apart from or distinct from it.

Defining language study by the study of texts does not exclude or ignore teaching those elements that characterised the KAL curriculum as defined in Cox, namely differences and similarities between speech and writing, language change and language variation. All three are important in that they contribute to the cultural and social contexts within which texts are situated. A teacher's understanding of the relationship between speech and writing, for example, can help in the teaching of literacy in the early years, whereas a pupils' understanding of the relationship between the two modes can help them to understand differences in the function of the texts they speak and write and expectations associated with the contexts in which they are used. A consideration of accents and dialects and language change testifies to the essential variety and creativity of language that belay its definition as static, homogenous and unified. The addition of electronic texts and word-processing all have important implications for the future of the practices associated with written texts that have yet to be

realised and cannot be predicted with any certainty, again testifying to the creative potential of language. Recognising that language changes can also help pupils to read texts which do not follow the conventions associated with contemporary writing. Nevertheless, teaching aspects of the relationship between language and society in the years of compulsory schooling makes more sense to pupils and teachers alike when it is grounded in the texts studied in the classroom, rather than as separate areas of study.

The categories of linguistic description and associated terms that make such textual study possible centre around the four categories of *word*, *sentence*, *text* and *context* or *situation*. Extending the unit of study from the sentence to the text allows texts to be studied systematically. These, in turn, are related to the contexts in which they are situated. The terms used in modern grammars of English thus build upon and extend the traditional categories, retaining some, discarding others and adding new ones. The requirements of the national curriculum have re-instated the teaching of grammar in ways which appear to mark a return to the teaching of the formal properties of language and the pedagogy that characterised it. However, the notion of a single grammar upon which such teaching was based has been replaced by a plurality of different grammars and the invention of different categories used to describe it. In most modern grammars of English, for example, the phrase 'parts of speech' has generally been replaced by the term 'word class'. The concept of 'grammar' itself has extended to include the structure of texts together with those of sentences and words. In a functional grammar, the cultural and social contexts within which language manifests itself as text or discourse play an important part in construing the culture. As Halliday observes:

As a language is manifested through its texts, a culture is manifested through its situations; so by attending to text-in-situation a child construes the code, and by using the code to interpret text he (sic) construes culture. Thus for the individual, the code engenders the culture; and this gives a powerful inertia to the transmission process.

Halliday (1995:xxxix)

To understand this code, an overview of the grammatical system is needed to interpret texts construed in the code. A text cannot be interpreted in its cultural context without an overall picture of the grammar through which it is encoded. Although we all effortlessly learn how to do this as part of learning to speak and to listen, to read and to write, such interpretation remains implicit until it is brought to the surface and studied in a much more systematic and explicit way that has characterised much of the study of English in the classroom. Since the transmission of culture is an integral aspect of education and the interpretation of texts central to the teaching of English, it follows that teaching the grammar through which interpretation is realised is an important aspect of teaching English. A textual model of English such as the one proposed in this chapter aims to make the teaching of grammar an important and integral part

of the interpretation and evaluation of texts that is explicit and systematic. Before outlining what such a grammar could look like, the following section considers definitions of the term 'text' that could serve to define the boundaries of the subject and provide the context within which teaching grammar takes place and makes sense.

10.3 Defining the Boundaries of English

Traditionally, English has been concerned with the teaching of literacy that includes the study of written texts and pupils' own speech. These three aspects are all linked by the concept of text, since the practices associated with the teaching of literacy occur in the context of textual practice. Potentially, the range of texts upon which English draws is limitless. Nevertheless, the boundaries of a subject have to be drawn somewhere, even if they remain permeable. Historically, the range of texts that constitute English broadened, so the range of texts available for study correspondingly widened to such a degree as to become virtually limitless. A more inclusive definition, however, runs the risk of including some texts or categories of texts at the expense of others. Rather than defining text by reference to categories such as literature, media, fiction or non-fiction, for example, a textual model of English of the kind being proposed is bound by the concept of narrative.

Texts organised around the principle of narrative have traditionally formed a large part of the textual study associated with English since it is through narrative as the telling of stories that representations of the world are constituted. It involves selecting details, descriptions and information from a wide range of possibilities and organising them into a story told from a particular point of view that also depend upon shared cultural knowledge for their interpretation. Narrative provides an important ordering principle for a textual model of English in that it attempts to gather descriptions of the world together in ways which makes social action coherent and intelligible to individuals. The idea of a story is publicly intelligible and has historically formed much of the substance of the teaching of English. Rather than being narrowly or exclusively defined, narrative allows for a variety of texts that form part and parcel of English teaching such as television scripts, the reporting of events and magazine advertising alongside the traditional categories of novels, plays and poems. It also allows the inclusion of new forms as they emerge, since narrative as a structure is independent of the range of texts through which it is realised that make new ways of representing and being in the world possible.

Narrative structure itself, following the work of Propp (1975), Chatman (1978) and Rimmon-Kenan (1983) has been shown to be independent of the forms through which it is realised, such as those of a novel, play or film. The boundary of English would consequently be better defined by the concept of narrative in an inclusive sense as the telling of stories. Historically,

narrative has formed an important aspect of English as a subject from the early years onwards in that the texts through which it is realised give voice to ways of being in the world. Narrative provides the boundaries for the range of texts that can be studied as part of English and also provides the context within which language study takes place as the description of internal particles and their relationship to the totality not only of the text but the situation in which it is located.

The following section outlines a working grammar that could provide the categories for the linguistic description of texts. It does not aim to be exhaustive, but rather gives an idea of what such a description could look like. A functional approach to grammar lends itself most readily to the educational context, since it brings together the study of syntax and semantics and is underpinned by the general principle of discovering what it is language is actually doing related to the contexts in which it is situated that in turn relate to how language represents and structures experience rather than with the analysis of structure as an end in itself. In other words, that it is grounded in text, context and use. It draws upon several grammars for the purposes of its teaching such as *Collins Cobuild English Grammar* (1990), Leech's *Introducing English Grammar* (1992) and Halliday's second edition of *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (1994). Any one of these grammars presents a very detailed description of English that would be inappropriate to teach in its entirety. Nevertheless, there are elements common to all of them and descriptions in one or another that transfer more easily to an educational context, bound by the concepts of *word*, *sentence*, *text* and *context*. It is the inclusion of the latter two which makes the study of grammar an important aspect of textual analysis and narrative a central ordering principle.

10.4 English and the Teaching of Grammar

As pupils' development of language occurs most naturally through its use, then it would follow that the study of language itself should occur in a context of use. Such a pedagogy does not subscribe to the view that pupils need to learn about smaller units of language before progressing to larger ones. Rather, development is viewed as both cumulative and recursive rather than linear. Studies by linguists such as Perera (1984) have shown that development in reading and writing does not follow a smooth, linear and unbroken progression, nor is it characterised by steady, incremental steps. Rather, it is more a matter of instability and 'regression' in some structures as others are learnt. As Clay (1975) pointed out and the Warwick English Project confirmed, learning takes place across all three levels of word, sentence and text simultaneously. Rather, it is the degree to which any one is the focus of study that alters as pupils progress from one stage of their education to another. The terms outlined below, therefore, are not hierarchically organised, but rather form the categories for the description of language that can be used from the early years onwards. The descriptions also

presuppose that their teaching occurs as part of reading, writing or studying a text rather than as separate from it. This does not preclude teaching terms as a distinctive activity, but that such teaching relates to and is integrated with pupils' experiences of language as it occurs in the world.

The study of language structures has traditionally been called grammar, divided into the two categories of syntax and morphology. Syntax explained how words combined to make a sentence, and morphology how parts of words combined with one another. Vocabulary also divided into two parts, lexis and semantics. Lexis described all the individual words in a language and semantics the meaning or meanings of the words themselves. A modern grammar such as Halliday's functional grammar (1994) is much more concerned with how the grammatical forms of syntax and morphology connect with lexis and semantics. It also includes a consideration of phonology and graphology. This is not to say that it is concerned with defining how words should be read aloud or how they should appear on the page, but more with the prosodic features of language as in the case of rhyme and rhythm and the relationship between, for example, punctuation and interpretation. Consequently, the term 'grammar' has firstly come to describe not only how words link to form sentences and sentences into texts, but also with the meanings, sounds and appearance of the words themselves. Secondly, the meaning of particular utterances, spoken or written, or whole exchanges between people depends as much upon the context of the exchange and the purposes of the speakers or writers as upon the literal meanings denoted by the sentences or phrases themselves. To account for such use of language in context, the discipline of pragmatics has developed, based upon Searle's theory of speech acts derived from Austin (1962).

This is the notion that utterances not only contain a message but also have a social force in themselves. For example, saying *I promise I'll give you a lift* or writing *I promise to be home by the weekend* not only conveys information but itself constitutes the act of *promising*. The communicative purpose intended or achieved by such an utterance or statement was dubbed by Austin its *illocutionary force*. The illocutionary force of an utterance or statement depends to a certain extent upon its *perlocutionary force*, that is, the *effects of its being* uttered or written. Whether an utterance or statement is being made by the right person to the right person at the right time and in the right manner has nothing to do with the literal meanings of the words themselves but everything to do with the circumstances in which they are used.

Studying the grammar of a written text, therefore, involves not only identifying patterns of words in sentences, but also investigating how these patterns and the meanings of the words within them combine to convey a message and the circumstances in which they occur that

includes a consideration of the authority attributed to them and its origins. Such an approach involves what Carter and Nash (1990) call 'seeing through' language to discover its actual meaning, which may or may not be the same as its surface meaning. A grammar of this kind aims to describe how language is actually used, rather than making language fit 'rules', as was the case in traditional, prescriptive grammar.

Whereas the traditional units of grammatical analysis were those of words and sentences, a modern, functional grammar extends the unit of analysis beyond the sentence to that of text and its relationship with the cultural context within which it is situated. It uses many of the terms associated with traditional grammar, adding new ones or replacing others with different terms. The following paragraphs outline the categories of linguistic description that could form the basis of a grammar taught in schools. It is clear that language description of some kind needs to be formalised for language in education that gives teachers and pupils a common basis for its teaching. The current national curriculum for English states that pupils should learn grammatical description whilst leaving the choice of such description open to teachers. This leaves the way open for assessment to determine curriculum content and for language to be potentially defined in a very narrow, exclusive and static way. Given that the national curriculum requires that the content of each subject be made explicit, then the terms associated with language study and its associated pedagogy should be clearly defined since it is they, after all, that define the boundaries of its teaching.

A text is not simply a collection of sentences, and its grammatical or stylistic analysis is not simply confined to analysing patterns within individual sentences in a text. Any piece of writing, if it is to make sense at all, uses both vocabulary and syntactic structures to bond or to connect its sentences together. The linguistic features of themselves, however, do not constitute the meaning of a text. Nevertheless, as Short (1996) points out, they constrain or limit the number of possible interpretations that can be placed upon it that also depend upon contextual and general, shared world knowledge. Taken together, these three aspects of a text -linguistic description, context and shared knowledge- limit the number of possible interpretations that can be made. Just as a random selection of words do not of themselves make a sentence, so too a random collection of sentences does not of itself create a text. A text 'makes sense' because there is continuity within the information it contains, whereas a text is 'senseless' or 'non-sensical' where there is a serious mismatch between what it describes and our prior knowledge of the world, or if it appears in an unexpected context. For example, we would find it odd if a scientific report suddenly changed its style of reporting to become a narrative about something completely unrelated to the subject of the report. We would not find it odd, however, to find a letter, poem or report forming part of a novel

The smallest unit of language study is the morpheme, which combine to form words that in turn combine to form *phrases*. Phrases are expanded into *clauses*, which in turn combine to form *sentences*. Sentences are then patterned into *texts*. How these various elements combine is more a matter of convention than adherence to strict rules, since new ways of combining them are constantly being found. Newspaper headlines, for example, have a distinctive, telegraphic syntax of their own which pare words to a minimum, often omitting closed word classes yet still making 'sense', whilst new words are continually entering the English lexicon and others falling out of use related to changes in the world at large, such as the invention of computers.

To make sense, the sentences in a text connect with as well as within one another. The ways in which this happens is through *cohesion* and *coherence*. *Cohesion* refers to the ways in which syntactic, lexical and phonological features connect within and across sentences in a text, whilst *coherence* is more to do with semantic features, referring to the way or ways a text makes consistent sense with or without the help of cohesion. The two concepts work together rather than independently in forming possible interpretations of a text. As such, they are relatively new ideas developed from the work of Halliday and Hasan (1976) and de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981). They also allow the well-established patterns of language usually studied as and grouped under the heading of imagery or figurative or literary language to be included as part of linguistic description such as rhythm, patterns of stress and metaphor, since as they refer to patternings within texts as well as those of sentences.

A text does not have to include cohesion in order for it to be coherent. For example, in the two sentences: *It's Saturday tomorrow. I'm going on holiday* the two sentences are coherent, even though there are no conjunctions or other commentary items like 'nevertheless' or 'but' which might indicate a causal or adversative relation between the two statements. Nevertheless, they make sense because the concepts to which they refer (*day, tomorrow, holiday*) imply a relationship of cause and effect consistent with our knowledge of the world that makes such an interpretation a likely one. If it were subsequently discovered that the 'I' was not going on holiday on Saturday, then the interpretation of the two statements would have to be rethought.

Coherence, unlike cohesion, is not simply a matter of grammatical, lexical and phonological features of texts. It also involves a degree of interaction between the text and the reader, since when a text is read, part of that reading includes drawing on previous experience of the world to make sense of what is read. This includes positioning the text in relation to others and using existing knowledge to fill in the gaps or discontinuities present in a text by the inferences that are made. The degree to which texts explain everything and leave very little to inference varies, according to the function that they perform. Texts which do make everything explicit such as

legal contracts and acts of parliaments can be very repetitive and difficult to understand for the very reason that they have to make everything explicit. Similarly, instructions may be difficult to follow if the amount of inferencing assumed on the part of the reader is too great to fill in all the gaps, such as previous knowledge of car mechanics in a car repair manual or computer literacy in an instruction booklet on word-processing. Letters between friends, on the other hand, often assume a considerable amount of shared knowledge which makes them perfectly understandable to the writers, but are meaningless to anyone else. Conversely, texts which do not make it clear which particular kind of reader they are intended for may lead to confusion. For example, a leaflet about drug abuse may mix information intended for the drug addict with that intended for those living with drug addicts within the same paragraph, thus leaving the implied reader confused as to which bits of information relate to his or her particular situation.

The unit of study traditionally associated with grammar has been that of the sentence, to which those of text and context have been added. It is the addition of these two categories as units of analysis that provide the means whereby the study of language and literature have become integrated and make it possible to redefine literature as text. Such study involves analysing sentences not as an end in itself but as an aid or means to subsequent interpretation of a particular text based upon linguistic description. Teaching linguistic terms is thus a means to an end, rather than an end in itself, since the description is always linked to the practices associated with texts and takes account of the situations and implied significance or otherwise in which they occur. The categories used for description also make it impossible to define a text solely by the language it uses, since uses occur in a variety of different types. Metaphor, for example, is used in advertising and everyday conversation as much as it is in poetry, although its function is very different in all three cases.

Words can be categorised grammatically according to their function in a sentence. The most common word classes are: *noun*, *adjective*, *verb*, *adverb*, *determiner*, *pronoun*, *preposition* and *conjunction*. These eight word classes can be further divided into the two categories of open and closed word classes. The first four - *noun*, *adjective*, *verb*, *adverb* - form open word classes, in that the number of words belonging to each class is not limited. Words are constantly falling in and out of use and it is also possible for a word to form part of more than one word class. Thus, *walk* can function both as a noun (I went for a *walk*) and as a verb (I *walk* in the woods). The words belonging to these four word classes form the largest part of the English lexicon. The remaining word classes - *determiner*, *pronoun*, *preposition* and *conjunction* - form closed word classes, in that a limited, finite number of words belong to each class and it is not possible for them to belong to more than one class.

Nouns and *verbs* are two open word classes that can be further sub-divided according to their form and function, as can the closed word class of pronouns. Nouns can be divided into the categories of *proper nouns* that refer to individual people, places or titles and of *common nouns*, sub-divided into the three categories of *concrete*, *abstract* and *collective*. They can also be categorised as to whether they are single or plural, as *count*, *uncount* and *mass nouns*. Count nouns, as the term suggests, are those which refer to things that can be counted. Uncount nouns refer to things that cannot be counted, to general things rather than to individual ones, such as *death*, *money*, *religion*, *industry*, *care*, although it is possible to quantify them by the use of a determiner e.g. *some money*, *a little peace*.

An analysis of how nouns are used in a text can provide clues as to how a text can be interpreted. For example, it can make a difference whether a noun takes the definite or indefinite article or none at all, or whether a proper noun is used instead of a common noun or vice versa. A writer may use *a girl*, *girl* or *Joan* or any other actual name of a character, with each use providing slightly different information. The word *girl* applied to a mature woman means something different from when it is applied to describe a two year old, for example. Writing, like speech, constantly refers back to people and things already mentioned. In order to avoid being repetitive, *pronouns* stand in place of a noun, for example *she* for Lucy, *him* for Harry, *it* for *the film*. Confusion or ambiguity can often occur when more than one thing or person has been mentioned and it is unclear to which the use of a pronoun is related. Their use, therefore, is grammatically and semantically linked to that of nouns. Although pronouns are a relatively small and closed class of words, they are used a great deal in sentences. Their form changes, amongst other things, according to their grammatical function. The list of different forms and functions is very large, given how few pronouns there actually are. They can be categorised into at least seven different types: *personal*, *possessive*, *demonstrative*, *indefinite*, *relative*, *reflexive* and *interrogative*.

An example of the way in which language changes can be illustrated by contemporary uses of pronouns. The use of *he* is no longer accepted as being referentially inclusive of both male and female, thereby constituting changing relations between men and women that have affected the use of language. Such changes testify to the essential creativity of language that continually defies being confined by rules and which makes exceptions and deviations continually possible.

By the same token, verbs, like nouns, are a major word class in English and must be understood as the central or pivotal element of a clause. A verb is the main element of a verb phrase, with other words in the phrase operating as *auxiliaries*, sometimes called operators, before the main verb or as adverbs following the main verb. Auxiliary verbs fall into two main

categories: *primary* which are *be*, *have* and *do* and *modal*. Modal verbs are those which signal attitudes, concerns, requests, suggestions, wishes and intentions, or are used to be tactful or polite. The list of modal verbs is generally thought to be invariable and closed, consisting of the words: *can*, *could*; *may*, *might*; *shall*, *should*; *will*, *would*; *must*; and *ought to*. The degree to which any text uses modals can be significant, since their use with a verb alters the meaning of a sentence from a definite statement of fact, allowing for degrees of uncertainty, or, conversely, statements that are uncertain can be presented as fact.

Verbs can also be used actively or passively, with very different consequent effects. The active voice of a verb will have a *recognisable* subject, which performs the action of the verb in any clause or sentence. The subject can also be called the *agent* of the verb. For example, in the sentence *The dog ate its dinner*, '*The dog*' is the subject and the agent of the verb '*ate*' and '*its dinner*' is the object of the verb. The active voice, therefore, makes it quite clear who or what is performing the action of the verb, and who or what the action is done to, if this is appropriate. Using the passive voice reverses the position of the subject and the object, thereby placing the emphasis upon what has happened, the consequences of the action, rather than on who or what has caused something to happen. *The dog ate its dinner* becomes *The dinner was eaten*. It hides the agent's identity, and as such is commonly used in scientific writing where the emphasis is upon what happens, in political speeches and newspaper headlines.

In the semantics of English, verbs are processes where something is happening, or somebody is doing something, whilst nouns define things as products. Spoken language presents a much more dynamic view of the world, defining the universe primarily as process, where phenomena happen rather than exist. Written language presents a much more synoptic view of the universe, seeing it as product rather than process, as things that exist but which makes it less obvious how they have come to be there. Nominalising the verb takes away the agency associated with the verb and the action thus becomes less directly related to experience. What would typically appear as a verb in speech is often represented as a noun in writing: announcement for announce, applause for applauded, discovery for discover, for example. Nominalisation 'fixes' processes as products and allows for a much more static version of the world to be represented.

Nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions and determiners combine to form *phrases* and the addition of verbs forms *clauses*. Phrases can be divided into three main kinds: *noun*, *verb* and *adverbial*, whilst clauses can be divided into four main types: *single* or *independent*, *coordinate*, *main* and *subordinate* or *dependent*. Analysing a text for the types of phrases and clauses used to discover any emerging patterns and what this suggests can be important

identifying features of a text. For example, legal documents, like much nineteenth century fiction, tend to use multi-clause sentences as part of their desire to make sure that everything is explained that make them difficult to read, whereas adverts, slogans, book titles and newspaper headlines tend to use short, single clause sentences to attract attention. To function as a sentence, a group of words usually has a subject, verb and an object or a complement which links the parts semantically as well as syntactically.

The linguistic terms described above are by no means exhaustive or definitive, and provide at best a brief and exemplary summary of the kind of linguistic description required by this textual model of English. They serve rather to illustrate the ways in which grammatical description has changed from the traditional one based on the analysis of parts of speech bound by the sentence to a description of texts that is always related to their functional purpose and the situation within which it is located as an important part of the process of interpretation. The linguistic features present in a text do not of themselves constitute its meaning, but serve to constrain the possible range of interpretations. This involves taking into account the context and situation in which the text is placed and the shared world knowledge it presupposes. Interpretation is thus constrained yet variable because of the interaction between readers and what they read. As Short observes:

Readers are different and so bring the possibility of fresh ways of interpreting a particular text; but the linguistic configurations in a text are stable and common to us all, as are the multitude of rules and procedures which we use in order to interpret utterances. It is these *shared* phenomena that we must concentrate in order to understand how we interpret texts as well as what we *understand* them to mean.

Short (1996:9)

Linguistic configurations are characterised by stability which makes it possible to study them, but they are also capable of change. New ways of using language often demand a re-appraisal of shared processes of interpretation or a re-examination of the basis upon which texts are chosen for study. Teaching linguistic description as part of narratives that represent and constitute ways of being in the world thus forms part of the teaching of English from the early years onwards.

When pupils learn to read and to write, they do principally through narrative which structures the language they read and write in ways which approximate, but can be very different from, the ways that they speak. Such teaching is very explicit, concentrating largely on word recognition, morphology and spelling, the ordering of words in sentences and their punctuation and the ordering of the sentences themselves into narratives through the texts they read and write. It also structures their experience of the world since the texts they read not only rely

upon shared cultural knowledge but also teaches them culturally dominant ways of being in the world. Consequently, they are also responsible for furthering the shared cultural knowledge upon which these ways of being are based. This is true of all the narratives pupils encounter in the classroom which inevitably makes the texts chosen for use in the classroom subject to political scrutiny and relate to culturally dominant ways of being.

In the early years, then, language study forms an important part of the teaching of literacy. A textual model of English aims to extend the forms of language and linguistic terms explicitly taught to include ones associated with the narrative structure through which they learn alongside those of 'word', 'sentence', 'full stop' and 'capital letter'. Language study includes, for example, understanding that stories have a beginning, middle and an end, that events are chronologically organised and that they can be told from different perspectives depending upon the point of view from which they are told. It also includes relating pupils' individual experiences to the ones they read and write about which can be very different from their own that can lead to an exploration of the reasons for these differences.

In the junior years, the variety of textual patterns, and organisations broadens to accommodate the reading and writing practices associated with a range of subjects which structure language very differently. Although pupils' understanding of these texts does not depend upon the explicit teaching of these patterns, nevertheless, a degree of explicitness regarding linguistic forms would bring to pupils' consciousness features of writing associated with different subjects as well as those associated with English that they may otherwise fail to notice. This includes the teaching of linguistic terms as part of pupils' reading and writing practices associated with a range of subjects.

Similarly, as their own ability to read and to write increases, an understanding of clauses and the conjunctions used to connect them can draw pupils' attention to ways in which their own reading and writing might progress beyond the use of single clause or co-ordinated clause sentences. Re-writing texts for a different purpose, for example, investigating a specific question, writing for a particular audience, are all activities that would help to make the processes whereby language fulfils its functions more intelligible than the all inclusive topic work that still characterises much of the writing and associated reading pupils undertake in the junior years. Such teaching presupposes that the teaching of linguistic description relates to the texts pupils use in the classroom, either as part of a discussion of pupils' reading or their own writing that continues the personally formative process of language learning in ways that are also publicly intelligible. It also involves teaching pupils the names of word classes and phrase and clause structure in order that they may understand and begin to evaluate how language constructs the representations they read and write.

In the secondary years, the range of texts pupils encounter broadens even further, and it becomes the responsibility of every subject teacher to teach pupils the linguistic forms through which their subject matter is constructed. Those associated with English have traditionally centred upon the organising principle of narrative in a variety of forms, such as novels, stage plays, radio, television or film scripts and newspaper reports or news broadcasts, bureaucratic language and ordinary gossip. Their subject matter is characterised by representations of social and individual life that require pupils to understand not only what those representations are but how they are structured and constituted in and through language. In other words, not only *what* is represented but *how*. It also allows for the study and creation of a far greater range of linguistic variation in texts and the degrees of formality and informality that relate to the situations within which texts are written.

Language study thus involves not only teaching the formal properties of language as grammar, but also its function in relationship to society. Consequently, a textual model of English purports a theory of narrative texture and all linguistic life because it is publicly intelligible, personally formative and conceptually inclusive. Hence, it is democratic, moral and technical. Who a text is written for, the circumstances in which it is written and the relationship between the writer and the reader are just as important considerations as the words themselves in terms of performing their communicative function. It is dishonest to pretend that public expectations regarding the appropriate use of language do not exist, but this is not the same as stating that such forms are fixed, incapable of change or not open to question. Rather, such a model of English is predicated upon the view that the relationship between the pupil, language and the world is dynamic rather than static. As Meek observed:

All literate societies are influenced by writings that remain from their past, however these are regarded in the present...Children enter culture at a given point in history. Language and literacy are there when they arrive; they change both.

Meek (1991)

To deny that capacity for change by defining language in narrow or exclusive terms aims to halt change and to fix ways of being as unalterable, denying the essentially dynamic and creative nature of language.

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