

A Socio-Political Analysis of the Personal Growth Ideology of English Teaching

Mary Winefride Bousted

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of DPhil

The University of York

Department of Educational Studies

September 1999

**TEXT BOUND INTO
THE SPINE**

Abstract

This study considers the theory of personal growth through English; its development throughout the late 19th and 20th century and the recent drive to define the content of the subject of English which has provided a major challenge to the personal growth theory.

The empirical data collected for this study are derived from an analysis of the ideology and the practice of English teachers working in three contrasting secondary schools. The analysis of the data reveals the following findings:

The concept of personal growth expressed in the pedagogy advocated by the London school retains its ability to provide, for contemporary teachers of English, an underpinning rationale for their work. The pedagogical practices advocated by the London school writers – the use of oracy, the reading of contemporary children’s literature and the drafting process – are supported by the respondents.

Observation of lessons reveals that the respondents, through their use of mediating practices, are able to ‘deliver’ the cultural products of standard English and the literary canon in ways which retain elements of the process-based pedagogy advocated by the London school writers. The respondents do not, however, recognise this aspect of their work in their rhetorical representation of their work.

The study concludes with the argument that the demand by powerful external agencies for the subject of English to furnish each new generation with icons of cultural stability in the form of spoken and written standard English, and a knowledge of the literary

heritage, has not declined. A less oppositional response on the part of English teachers to the demand that the subject deliver the cultural products outlined above, based upon a recognition of their use of mediating practices may, it is argued, provide a means whereby the practitioners of the subject gain more control over its present condition and its future direction.

List of Contents

Abstract	ii
List of Contents	iv
Glossary	vi
List of Figures	viii
Chapter One - Introduction	1
Chapter Two - Research Methodology	18
Chapter Three - Arnold, Newbolt and Sampson	59
Chapter Four - Cambridge and London	74
Chapter Five - The CPS model of English	110
Chapter Six - The Content of the English Curriculum	132
Chapter Seven - Spoken Standard English	164
Chapter Eight - Literature	184

Chapter Nine - Grammar	227
Chapter Ten - Conclusion	250
Appendix a1	268
Appendix a2	273
Appendix b	283
Bibliography	284

Glossary

An explanatory note for acronyms in the text marked with an asterisk is included below.

General Certificate of Education (GCSE)

A subject based examination taken by the majority of pupils in England and Wales at the end of their period of compulsory, full time schooling when they are aged 16. The GCSE exam replaced, in 1986, the two tier system of assessment – the General Certificate of Education (GCE), taken by pupils of higher academic ability and the Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE), taken by pupils of lower academic ability.

In Service Education and Training (INSET)

All teachers in Britain are required, as a result of the education act of 1988, to undertake five days of further professional development. Many teachers choose to undertake further in-service courses run by local education authorities and by higher education institutions.

Key stage

The national curriculum is divided into four key stages. Each stage contains within it the content to be covered by pupils at different stages of their schooling.

Key stage 1 – the content to be covered by pupils aged from 5 – 7 years

Key stage 2 – the content to be covered by pupils aged from 7 – 11 years

Key stage 3 – the content to be covered by pupils aged from 11 – 14 years

Key stage 4 – the content to be covered by pupils aged from 14 – 16 years

Standard Attainment Tests (SATs)

All pupils in England and Wales are, as a result of the 1988 Education Act, assessed to determine their progress in the National Curriculum subjects at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16. These national assessments are called SATs. Pupils are assigned, as a result of the SATs, to one of eight levels which measure expected, and attained, progress in each of the National Curriculum subjects (e.g. the average pupil is expected to reach level 2 by the time they are 7).

The National Curriculum Council (NCC) and the Schools Examination and Assessment Council

The 1988 Education act established two quangos, the NCC and SEAC.

The National Curriculum Council (NCC) was given responsibility for the development of the National Curriculum in three core subjects (English, Mathematics and Science) and seven foundation subjects (Art, Design and Technology, Geography, History, Modern Foreign Languages, Music, Physical Education). In addition all pupils had to study religious education.

The Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SEAC) was given responsibility for the development of the assessment system for each of the core and foundation subjects of the National Curriculum. In 1993 both the NCC and SEAC were merged into the **Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA)**. In 1988, to reflect its added responsibility for post 16 education and qualifications SCAA was merged into the **Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA)**

List of Figures

Figure 1	The original focus for the study	page 21
Figure 2	Salient features of the three schools In which the data were collected	page 36
Figure 3	Codification of data	page 56
Figure 4	Data audit trail	page 57
Figure 5	A summary of the Cambridge model of personal growth through English	page 83
Figure 6	A summary of the London model of personal growth through English	page 97
Figure 7	A summary of the Centre for Policy Studies model of English	page 123

Chapter One

Introduction

Versions of English ... have always been something more than alternative approaches to competence and knowledge in English language and literature. English has been the means through which powerful groups, especially governments, have sought to achieve ends which were ideological and political and not neutrally 'educational'. Where other groups with other agendas – including, sometimes, English teachers with their own values and priorities – have resisted, English has been a battleground. And this, indeed, is what English has been continuously since mass schooling began. (Goodson and Medway, 1990, p. viii)

The formation and development of English at University and school level has been explored in several major studies of English curriculum history (Matthiesson, 1975; Doyle, 1982; Baldick, 1983; Eagleton, 1983; Ball et al. 1985; Hunter, 1988; Medway, 1990; Ball et al. 1990; Dixon, 1991; Davies, 1995; Protherough and King, 1995; Burgess, 1996). In general terms two perspectives of the development and rise of English are promoted in these studies. Some authors (Matthiesson, 1975; Dixon, 1991) portray the rise of English in a favourable light, arguing that the subject at school level grew from a liberal desire to extend culture to the mass of the working population. Other commentators (Hunter, 1988; Baldick, 1983 and Eagleton 1983) criticise liberal interpretations of the development of English and argue that the subject has operated as a site of social control, complicit in the repression of the working classes.

As a teacher educator who had recently worked in schools, latterly as a Head of English, I found these commentaries extremely interesting and informative. It was a salutary experience to view the subject in which I had been involved so closely from

several radically different perspectives and to realise that the present position of English as the core of the school curriculum was the culmination of years of contestation not only with other subjects - at its inception as a unitary subject during the late 19th century English had to establish its place as the core of the secondary curriculum in the face of strong competition from Science and Maths (Matthiesson, 1975) - but also within the discipline itself as different aims and purposes for the subject were promoted by competing schools of thought.

However, as I read the studies listed above I felt that there were two significant omissions in their accounts of the development of the subject. The first omission is that although these studies examine the influence of key figures in the history of the subject, and of the groups to which they have been associated, they do not take into account the views of English teachers, an omission noted by Burgess.

. . . there is also a need to keep alive a record of teachers' agency, and to reflect the breadth of the traditions which influenced English teaching . . . the search by teachers for good practice provides, cumulatively, a testimony to English work with children over the years, which has its own significance and importance . . . (Burgess, 1996, p.58)

Several studies have attempted to address this deficit and to record teachers' views on what should constitute the aims of English (Goodwyn, 1992; Hardman and Williamson, 1993; Peel and Hargreaves, 1995). These studies attempt to identify English teachers' views on the importance of different models in the teaching of the subject. The models of English used in these studies are taken from Cox (DES, 1989) and are reproduced overleaf.

A **'personal growth'** view focuses on the child: it emphasises the relationship between language and learning in the individual child, and the role of literature in developing children's imaginative and aesthetic lives.

A **'cross curricular'** view focuses on the school: it emphasises that all teachers (of English and of other subjects) have a responsibility to help children with the language demands of different subjects on the school curriculum : otherwise areas of the curriculum may be closed to them. In England, English is different from other school subjects, in that it is both a subject and a medium of instruction for other subjects.

An **'adult needs'** view focuses on communication outside the school: it emphasises the responsibility of English teachers to prepare children for the language demands of adult life, including the workplace, in a fast changing world. Children need to learn to deal with the day-to-day demands of spoken language and of print; they also need to be able to write clearly, appropriately and effectively.

A **'cultural heritage'** view emphasises the responsibility of schools to lead children to an appreciation of those works of literature that have been widely regarded as amongst the finest in the language.

A **'cultural analysis'** view emphasises the role of English in helping children towards a critical understanding of the world in which they live. Children should know about the processes by which meanings are conveyed, and about the ways in which print and other media carry values. (DES, 1989)

However, although these studies do differ from the curriculum commentaries listed above in that they do investigate and report upon teachers' allegiances to different models of English, they are limited by a different omission, but one which is no less significant: both Goodwyn's and Peel's studies fail to address a further concern expressed by Burgess (1996) who argues that, as well as heeding the views of English teachers, any research into the ideology which they espouse should be conducted within a framework which recognises the complex and multi-faceted nature of the significant schools of thought that have shaped the development of the subject. He warns

...there are dangers that too narrowly critical a reading of the past may suppress the detail of developments and reduce the complex meaning which past initiatives may still hold for contemporary debates. (Burgess, 1996, p.58)

Goodwyn (1992) acknowledges this danger. In the introduction to his study he argues that the models of English identified in Cox do not provide a necessarily complex framework upon which to analyse teachers' rhetorical allegiances to different traditions within their subject.

If it is possible to identify these views with such ease, then exactly where are they to be found and who has expounded them? What are the other views that Cox and his committee were consciously avoiding? If the views are not sharply distinguishable, then how can they be set out as if they are? Is there no tension in this diverse grouping? Is there a hierarchy, in practice if not in theory? Who says they are 'certainly not mutually exclusive', apart from Cox and his committee? (Goodwyn, 1992, p.4)

However, having raised these questions, Goodwyn does not, paradoxically, attempt to answer them and proceeds to use the Cox models as the framework in which his respondents' allegiances to different version of English are analysed. This lack of a necessary complexity leads, as Goodwyn acknowledges, to apparently contradictory results: the author is surprised, for example, to find that the second most popular model after personal growth is cultural analysis which raises the question of how teachers can accept two apparently opposing rationales as a basis for their practice.

Goodwyn's recognition that the five Cox models present a picture of traditions which should more properly be recognised as interwoven - one tradition bearing, as Green (1995) articulates, the 'scars' of the other - might have led him to question their appropriateness as an analytical framework for an investigation into teachers' rhetorical allegiances to different schools of thought.

The research strategy

Knowledge of the limitations of the analytical framework of the studies outlined above led to the search for a different research strategy - one which would answer the concerns raised by Burgess (1996) detailed in the preceding section. The research framework developed for this study is, therefore, based on three key principles.

The first principle is that any account of the formation and the development of English at school level, or of its present condition, needs to be developed within the context of an analytical framework which can accommodate the complex mix of traditions and influences which have historically shaped the subject and which continue to hold influence today. In this account the significance of key continuities within different versions of English would be given proper weight. To give a concrete example: a key argument of this study is that the essential difference between the London and Cambridge schools is not the promotion either of personal growth (London) or cultural heritage (Cambridge) but the means by which the central aim shared by both schools, personal growth through English, is to be achieved. In the London model personal growth is to be generated from within, through the exploration of the pupils' own lived experience and its expression in their own language. In the Cambridge model the achievement of personal growth is located in external influences, in the powerful language and the examples of lived experience in great texts which provide a template for pupils to grow in linguistic ability and moral endeavour. The significant difference between the two models is not, therefore, a divergence of aims but a divergence of pedagogic practice.

The second key principle upon which the research strategy adopted for this study is designed is that the respondents must be allowed to base their articulation of their understanding of the contemporary condition of English (a vast and complex issue) within the practical base of their own classroom practice (which is also a complex issue but one over which the respondents generally feel that they have the greatest degree of confidence). The first stage of the data collection was, therefore, designed to enable the researcher and the respondents to develop a shared understanding of the context in which the respondents worked. This was achieved by the researcher spending a considerable amount of time in each respondent's classroom observing their teaching.

The third key principle which guides the research design upon which this study is based is that the respondents should be given the opportunity to express their own understandings of the aims and purposes of their work in their own terms. They should not be constrained by the necessity to respond within an over-rigid framework of defined models of English which might not be able to accommodate the complex amalgam of historical and contemporary forces which shape their construction of the subject. In this study the period of classroom observation was, therefore, followed by extended individual interviews with the respondents who were given the opportunity to move from a descriptive explanation of particular aspects of their classroom practice to an exposition of the theoretical models which they assert, underpin their work. (It is interesting to note, in this respect, that Peel, in a conference presentation on his survey (IFTE, New York, 1995), admitted that many respondents wrote extensive comments in the margins of the questionnaire in an attempt to explain their own interpretation of the Cox models.) This suggests that the respondents did not find the five versions of English detailed in the questionnaire to be an adequate framework in which to express their allegiances to

different traditions within the development of the subject, nor the use of a questionnaire to be an adequate vehicle to express their views on such a complex issue.

Through the use of the research strategy outlined above it is argued that this study enables the data to account for the ways in which teachers contribute, through their classroom practice, to the development of particular models in ways which were not envisaged by their original authors. In so doing this study attempts to give full weight to 'the complex meaning which past initiatives may still hold for contemporary debates' (Burgess, 1996, p.58). In addition, the use of interviews as a data collection technique, whilst confining the scope of the study in terms of the number of respondents, enables them to expound and develop their responses at some length and in some detail thus providing a large quantity of rich and complex data in which the apparently contradictory nature of teachers' allegiance to theoretical traditions can be analysed.

The research strategy adopted for this study enables another key question to be answered: What convergences and divergences exist between teachers' exposition of their aims in teaching the subject and their actual practice in the classroom? Both Goodwyn's and Peel's surveys rely solely on questionnaire data and cannot, therefore, provide evidence upon this point. This raises a possibility articulated by Green (1995) who questions whether

a sharp distinction remains between the public face of the profession and its private practices, across English classroom life generally? Between a minority rhetoric and the majority practice? (Green, 1995a, unpublished paper).

The extended periods of lesson observation undertaken for this study enable Green's question to be explored providing the data to support an analysis of the extent to

which teachers practise their professed ideology (explored during the interviews) within their classroom teaching. This analysis raises another issue, that of the influence of external forces, particularly those of national assessment regulations, and their role in determining the factors which contribute to the contemporary condition of the subject.

The main conclusions of the study

The central finding of this study is that the aim of personal growth through English continues to be central to the ideology of English teachers, influencing their aims, policies and practice in all areas of the English curriculum: speaking and listening, reading and writing. In this respect this study replicates the findings of earlier work.

There is no doubt at all that at present personal growth is the most important model for the majority of teachers and it is also perceived as the most influential. (Goodwyn, 1992, p. 6)

A high proportion of the respondents agreed, or strongly agreed, with the 'personal growth' models of 'English', that being the one which emphasises the development of the individual as understood in traditional humanist terms. (Peel and Hargreaves, 1995, p. 44)

However the research strategy adopted for this study produces data which show that the pedagogic practices advocated by the authors of the London school (which is the school to which the respondents show the greatest allegiance both in their articulation of the aims of their subject and also in their representation of their classroom practice) do not remain static but are altered and adapted by the respondents to meet the changing circumstances in which they work.

The circumstances in which the respondents in this study were working were subject to extremely rapid change during the period of data collection (1994 – 1996).

Two issues were at the heart of a national debate, conducted during this period, on the aims and purposes of the subject of English: the proposed revision of the National Curriculum (1993 onwards) and the re-imposition of formal, summative testing at key stages* 3 and 4 (1993 onwards). Caught in the crossfire between the demands promoted by external agencies for the subject of English to produce the cultural products of spoken and written standard English, a knowledge of the literary heritage and an explicit knowledge of grammar, and their own ideological commitment to the London model of personal growth through English which emphasises a process-based approach to teaching and learning and promotes a democratisation of forms of communication, the respondents adopt what, in this study, are termed mediating practices.

Mediating practices enable the respondents to meet the demand to teach a more clearly defined and content-filled English syllabus in ways which retain key elements of the process-based approach to teaching and learning advocated by the London school. For example, when engaged in oral work, the respondents accept responses from their pupils in any form in which they are given, both in standard and non standard English; thus the respondents fulfil the aim established by the London school to show respect for pupils' dialect and to use their natural speech as the basic and fundamental tool for learning. However, balanced by this careful signalling of respect for their pupils' language is the respondents' routine re-modelling of their pupils' initial answers, often expressed in colloquial language, into the correct language of the subject, expressed not only in standard English, but also utilising the subject specific terms which will be needed by their pupils to gain high marks in the subject. This evidence, reproduced in other areas of the curriculum, most notably in the teaching of literature, leads to a central conclusion of this study which is that teachers of English, with all their expertise in language and communication, have, paradoxically, been poor communicators to the

powerful external agencies who now control the content of the subject, appearing to be reluctant, or unable, to acknowledge their expertise in providing key cultural products in ways which are acceptable to themselves and palatable to their pupils. This reluctance to publicise their expertise in delivering the cultural products of spoken and written standard English, and some knowledge of the literary canon, has, this study will argue, left the subject of English weakly defended.

The divergence between the respondents' rhetoric and the evidence produced by observation of their classroom practice leads to another central conclusion of this study which is that there is a divergence between what English teachers say that they do, and what actually happens in their classrooms. Here Green's (1995a) suspicions are, in some respects, shown to be justified by the data produced by this study.

The divergence between the respondents' rhetoric and their practice results, it is argued, in the lack of acknowledgement, on the part of the respondents, of the influence of a model which appears to have fallen out of favour in the respondents' public presentation of the subject but is, the lesson observation data reveals, centrally present in their practice. Thus, whilst the respondents articulate their belief in the importance of a personal, creative response to literary texts, based upon the pedagogical practices advocated by the authors of the London school, they demonstrate in their classroom practice a value system which places the practice of the Cambridge school (the training in the writing of the literary critical essay) as the most important response to a literary text.

The power of rhetoric to mask reality is also revealed through a scrutiny of the notion of 'relevance' - a concept much used by the respondents as an explanatory framework for their preferred choice of literary texts - and one which they cite in opposition to the list of pre-twentieth century authors mandated in the National

Curriculum for English (DfEE, 1995), which they deem to be irrelevant to their pupils' lives and interests. However, the study presents evidence to suggest that there are strong similarities between the 'irrelevant' DfEE texts and the 'relevant' texts chosen by the respondents, both underpinned by the Cambridge notion of a 'good' text (redolent with life and the explorations of the problems of living, expressed in powerful prose). In the teaching of literature the tenets of the Cambridge school are, it is argued, still central to the practice of the subject of English, but, at school level, remain unrepresented in the respondents' rhetoric. Again it is argued that it is the respondents' rhetoric, not their practice, which leaves the subject 'weakly defended' when attacked by external agencies who charge the English educational establishment with a reckless relativism in its approach to the teaching of literature which results in a failure to inculcate in pupils standards of judgement which would lead them to appreciate good literature.

There is, however, one area of the curriculum where the subject is left weakly defended not only by the respondents' rhetoric but also by their practice. In the teaching of grammar the respondents display an uncharacteristic lack of surety in defining the meaning of the term (for themselves and for a wider audience). Their articulation of their practice (rooted in the drafting process) offers, it is argued, a very weak defence against the powerful meanings encoded in the term 'grammar' which has accrued to itself concepts not only of linguistic, but also of social and moral order (taking the mantle of metaphorical allusion conferred upon literature by the early authors of the English curriculum). English teachers need, it is argued, to have a better answer to the question of grammar if they are to satisfy the demands of the wider external agencies who finance and control the content of the subject.

The final conclusion of the study is that the concept of mediating practices provides a much more powerful defence of the subject than that which the English

establishment, rooted in the rhetoric of an unreconstructed personal growth model, is at present mounting. English teachers need, it is argued, to have a clearer understanding of the reality of their classroom practice. This understanding will enable them to establish a position which moves away from the false oppositions to, and antagonism against, powerful external agencies, putting in its place a clear articulation of pedagogic expertise which enables English teachers, often very effectively, to mediate between the familiar and the unfamiliar in pupils' lives. From this base English teachers could present, with much greater effectiveness and power, their arguments for a revision of the present shape of the subject, and their view of its future development, thus attaining a greater degree of control over their professional lives and ambitions.

Summary of the content of the study

The philosophy of personal growth through English has, this study reveals, retained its power to provide, for the English educational establishment, an underlying theoretical rationale for the practice of the subject. The origins and development of the philosophy of personal growth are, therefore, considered in the opening chapters through an examination of the work of the earliest authors of the English curriculum, Matthew Arnold (whose claims for English established the philosophy of personal growth as the subject's central aim), Henry Newbolt and George Sampson (who shared Arnold's vision of English as a humanising force for the nation and whose work pre-figures the Cambridge school and the London school in its differing emphasis on Literature (promoted by Newbolt and advocated by the Cambridge school) and Language (promoted by Sampson and advocated by the London school) as the means by which personal growth was to be achieved. The development of the concept of personal

growth through English throughout the twentieth century is then considered through an examination of the work of the two schools which have had the greatest influence upon the teaching of English this century, the Cambridge and the London schools. The central conclusion of this examination is whilst the aim of personal growth through English is common to both schools their advocated pedagogical practices differ greatly. The latter emergence of the London school philosophy is evidenced in an examination of national policy documents upon the teaching of English ranging from the Bullock report (DES, 1975) to the Cox report (DES, 1989)

The reaction against the philosophy of personal growth through English and the pedagogic practices advocated by the London school is focused, for this study, in what is termed the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS) model. The authors of the CPS model advocate aims for the subject of English and attendant practices which are wholly oppositional to those advocated by the English establishment who are charged, by the CPS writers, with showing a reckless disregard for the cultural products which the English curriculum should, they assert, deliver, namely spoken and written standard English and a knowledge of the literary heritage. The adoption of the CPS model by the Conservative administration led by John Major (1992 – 1997) is outlined. The lasting influence of this model and the sources from which it gains its popular appeal and its power with external agencies are examined.

The data obtained from interviews and lesson observations investigates the extent to which the respondents' rhetoric, taken from the pedagogic practices advocated by the London school, is evidenced in their classroom practice. One important conclusion resulting from this analysis is that there are clear divergences between the respondents' rhetoric and the reality of their classroom practice. Even the concept of 'experience' which is most central to the philosophy of personal growth, and to the

respondents' rhetoric, is shown to have much greater limitations in the respondents' classroom practice than in their rhetorical claims. The work of Keddie (1971) and Bousted (1992) is summarised in order to provide an explanatory framework in which these divergences can be understood. The concept of mediating practices is introduced.

The three cultural products which are routinely demanded by external agencies as a product of a state education in English (the ability to speak standard English, to write standard English and to have a knowledge of the literary canon) are then examined.

In the consideration of the issue of standard English, the rhetoric of the respondents is, it is shown, divided on this issue. Those working in school 3, which has the most multicultural catchment area, display a strong opposition to the move made by the 1992 - 1997 Conservative administration to place spoken standard English at the centre of the programmes of study for speaking and listening. These respondents articulate a rhetoric rooted in the philosophy advocated by the authors of the London school and argue that an individual's language is intimately connected to their sense of identity and that overt correction of non standard forms of speech would be perceived by pupils as a criticism of themselves as individuals. They consider the imposition of standard English to be a politically driven move to establish 'middle class' values and norms on working class children. The respondents in school 1, teaching in a largely middle class area, argue, in contrast to the respondents in school 3, that standard English is a powerful form of communication to which all pupils must be introduced, as long as this is done in a sensitive way which retains respect for the pupils' existing dialect.

The data also reveals, however, that the respondents in both schools are skilled in developing mediating practices which enable them to manage the potentially divergent imperatives to respect their pupils' expression, whether in standard or non standard

forms, and to add standard English to their pupils' linguistic repertoire. As in the previous chapter the concept of mediating practices is used as an explanatory framework in which to analyse the data.

The teaching of literature is a topic on which the respondents' show a greater degree of rhetorical uniformity. Collected at a time of intense debate over the content of the literature curriculum at key stages 3 and 4 the respondents' opposition to the imposition, through the revised (1995) National Curriculum, to the prescribed pre-twentieth century list of authors, is detailed through an analysis of the interview data. Analysis of the data gathered through lesson observations questions, however, the validity of the main argument made by the respondents against the prescribed list, namely that the prescribed authors are not relevant to their pupils. It is argued that the respondents' notion of relevance might not be one which is shared by their pupils and that there are more links between the respondents' preferred texts, and the prescribed list of authors, than they are prepared to acknowledge. Further questions are raised about the respondents' rhetorical advocacy of a personal response to a relevant text. Data gathered through observation of their classroom practice reveals that the formal genre of the lit. crit. essay (with the attendant practice of practical criticism) remains the most highly favoured response to literature. This data reveals, moreover, that the respondents have developed highly effective mediating practices to enable their pupils to translate their initial, personal response to a text into a more formal, critical response. Here the merging of two approaches to the teaching of literature, those advocated by the London school and by the Cambridge school, becomes evident. Finally, it is argued that, as in the case of the teaching of standard English, it is the respondents' rhetoric and not their practice which leaves the subject vulnerable to the charge that it is not delivering the

product (knowledge of the literary tradition) which external agencies advocate as an essential outcome of the English curriculum.

The final area of the English curriculum to be examined is the teaching of grammar. The power of the term grammar (with its metaphorical elision between the issue of correct language use and correct forms of social behaviour) is contrasted with that of drafting, the term used by the English establishment to articulate a process-based approach to the development of writing abilities. It is argued that in this area of the curriculum it is not only the vocabulary of a process-based pedagogy which leaves the subject weakly defended, but also the practice of the respondents which does not, as in the teaching of standard English and the teaching of literature, demonstrate the development of mediating practices which enable the respondents to respond to an external agenda in a way which preserves the integrity of their pedagogy. The emerging consensus amongst linguists - that an explicit knowledge of the structures of the language is needed to enable pupils to interpret and respond appropriately to the multiplicity of communication (both media and text based) which they encounter in their everyday lives - leaves the respondents, and the subject, more exposed in this area than in the ones explored in earlier chapters.

In the concluding arguments of the study the aim of personal growth through English is revisited. The legacy of this aim is explored through a summary of the mediating practices which enable the respondents to preserve important aspects of a process-based pedagogy in the successful delivery of the key cultural products of standard English and the teaching of the literary heritage.

The issue of the respondents' apparent inability to recognise, in their rhetoric, the reality of their practice, and its consequent results for the public presentation of the subject of English is discussed. This analysis of the weakness of the position taken by

the English educational establishment leads to an outline of various curriculum commentators' visions of the ways in which the subject of English will need to develop in order to meet the communicative needs of the twenty first century. The clearness of the path created for the development of English by the curriculum commentators is, however, questioned. It is argued that the demand for English to furnish the delivery of key cultural products is as strong at the end of the twentieth century as it was at the beginning, and that practitioners of the subject of English ignore this demand at their peril.

The concluding argument of this study acknowledges the ability of the concept of personal growth to provide, for English teachers, an enduring rationale for their work, embodied in a pedagogy which, within boundaries, aims to empower individual pupils through a recognition of the worth of their experiences, their culture and their aspirations. The aim of personal growth must not, however, lead the English establishment to portray their practice in a false light, and in particular one which leaves the subject vulnerable to attack and to the imposition of content over which teachers of English have little control. English teachers, in the final analysis, need to become better themselves at what they teach their pupils, identifying their audience and mediating their message in order to protect their practice.

Chapter Two

Research Methodology

The research focus

It is the influence of previous researchers whose ideas, while dealing with relevant aspects of the phenomena under investigation and being accorded high status in the field of study, are nevertheless rejected as a basis for the theoretical framework. Sometimes the work of such researchers can be at least as significant an influence as more positive sources, not least because it motivates: dissatisfaction may generate curiosity (Walford, 1991, p.43).

The research focus for this study, as is detailed in the previous chapter, grew out of a dissatisfaction with other research studies which are designed to investigate the model(s) of English which are dominant in the contemporary practice of the subject (Goodwyn, 1992; Hardman and Williamson, 1993; Peel and Hargreaves, 1995). Two main weaknesses are felt to have limited the findings of these studies. The first is that in each of them respondents were given definitions of different theoretical models of English and were asked to which they felt the most allegiance. Thus, a predetermined definition of each of the given models was imposed upon the respondents which gave them little opportunity to articulate their own understanding of the models, or to generate other models of English than the five defined by Cox (1989), which were included in all the listed studies. The second weakness is that the reliance on questionnaire data did not allow the researchers to investigate the issue of the possible divergence between teachers' rhetoric and their practice in the classroom. The reliance on interview and questionnaire data in

the above studies generated a search for a new research strategy which, as the previous chapter details, had three key principles.

1 Any account of the formation and development of English, or of its present condition should be developed within the context of an analytical framework which can accommodate the complex mix of traditions and influences which have historically shaped the subject and which continue to hold influence today.

2 The research strategy should enable the respondents to base their articulation of their understanding of the contemporary condition of English within the practical base of their own classroom practice.

3 The respondents should be given the opportunity to express their own understandings of the aims and purposes of their work in their own terms and should not, therefore, be constrained by the necessity to respond within a framework of pre-determined models of English.

The context in which the study was conducted

The initial period of data collection for this study was conducted shortly after the key stage 3 testing dispute which occurred in 1993. The core of this dispute was over the system of assessment for achievement in English which should be imposed on all 14 year old pupils in state schools in England and Wales. The dispute was remarkable in that it gained a large amount of coverage in the national media, both newspaper and television, particularly during the summer term of 1993, spreading out from a London-based resistance to the government-imposed testing regime, spearheaded by the London Association for the Teaching of English (LATE) to a national dispute taken up by English teachers in state schools across the nation. The dispute also spread to the other 'core'

areas of the national curriculum, notably maths and science, and resulted in teachers in all three core subjects (English, mathematics and science) refusing to administer the end of stage tests.

The dispute over the English key stage 3 tests was fuelled by the two distinct ideas of what English teaching should be about: namely whether English should be engaged in a process (the view of the English establishment based upon the pedagogic practices advocated by the London school) or deliver a product (the view of the then Conservative administration led by John Major with John Patten as the Secretary of State for Education).

The initial aim of this study was to explore the ideological convictions of the English professionals involved in the debate and those of the government officials in the agencies charged with regulating the curriculum, the National Curriculum Council (NCC*) and the Schools Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA*).

Such a focus was attractive because it was generated from my intense interest in the fierce political battles which took place over the English curriculum during 1992–3 and because of a personal connection with key players on the teachers' side (the department in which I had previously worked as Head of English was at the centre of the test boycott and was featured on BBC news and in numerous newspaper articles).

Figure 1, overleaf, summarises the original research focus for the study.

Figure 1 – The original focus of the study

<p>Strand one – Teachers' Perceptions of the Key Stage 3 Battle</p> <p>a) What do teachers of English perceive to be the key issues?</p> <p>b) What groups do they perceive to be influential?</p> <p>c) Do they, as professionals, feel that they have the right to contribute or the power To influence the debate?</p>
<p>Strand two – Curriculum Change over the Past Five years</p> <p>a) What do teachers of English perceive to have been the most significant events in the curriculum history of English over the past five years?</p> <p>b) What effect do they perceive these events have had upon their classroom practice?</p>
<p>Strand three – What do English teachers want?</p> <p>a) What do teachers of English argue should be the aims and the outcomes of an education in English?</p>

However, an attempt to write a literature review which set in context the key stage 3 battle revealed that this focus was too narrow. The significance of the key stage 3 tests dispute could only be fully realised in the light of the historical development of English as a subject, in which historical continuities over the teaching of literature, grammar and standard English, the key areas of contention in 1993, could be traced in

the development of the subject throughout the twentieth century. This widening of the focus would enable the theoretical traditions upon which previous disagreements over the aims and content of the English curriculum had been based to inform and set in perspective the current debate.

The focus of the study was further widened as a result of my attendance at the International Federation for the Teaching of English conference in New York, July 1995. The participation in a week-long working party investigating international models of English as they were framed in different state curriculum documents revealed a striking international similarity in the key areas of disagreement between government and the profession, although the conclusions of these debates were very different. It appeared, therefore, that the key stage 3 battle, whilst having tremendous immediate significance for the key protagonists (leading, ultimately to the demise of the then education secretary John Patten), was part of a much more extensive debate, conducted on an international basis and over a long period of time, exploring what should be the aims and the purposes of the English curriculum.

Further developments in the research focus came as a result of my initial experience of conducting research in school 1. Analysis of the teacher interviews and the lesson observations revealed areas of divergence between teachers' rhetoric (what they said they believed in) and their practice (what they actually did in the classroom), a point noted elsewhere.

Keddie (1971) shows how teachers, knowingly or unknowingly, present accounts of their teaching in interviews which are strongly at variance with direct observations of their teaching. (Vulliamy and Webb, 1992, p.223)

Thus, another strand was added to the research focus. How much convergence was there between teachers' ideologies and their practice?

The different elements of the revised research focus, and the research questions generated from it are summarised below.

The aims of the study

The aims of this study are to:

Explore the ideology of personal growth through English as expressed in the theoretical concepts and the associated pedagogical practices advocated by the Cambridge and London schools.

Explore the opposition to the ideology of personal growth articulated in the late 1980s by the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS) writers in their demand that the subject of English should furnish the nation with the cultural products of spoken and written standard English and a knowledge of the literary heritage.

Explore the pedagogical practices, and the ideological positions, advocated by the respondents in their rhetoric.

Identify the pedagogical practices, and the ideological positions upon which these practices are based, which are demonstrated by the respondents in their classroom practice.

Identify the continuities and the discontinuities between the respondents' rhetorical positions and their actual classroom practice and assess the significance of these.

Research questions

The study will address the following research questions:

How is the philosophy of personal growth through English expressed in the theoretical concepts and the associated pedagogical practices advocated by the Cambridge and London schools?

What was the focus of the opposition to the personal growth ideology expressed by the Centre for Policy Studies (CPS) model? Why did this model achieve such significant power and influence over the form, content and assessment of the English curriculum in the late 1980s and why does it continue to exercise influence upon the form, content and assessment of the contemporary English curriculum in the late 1990s?

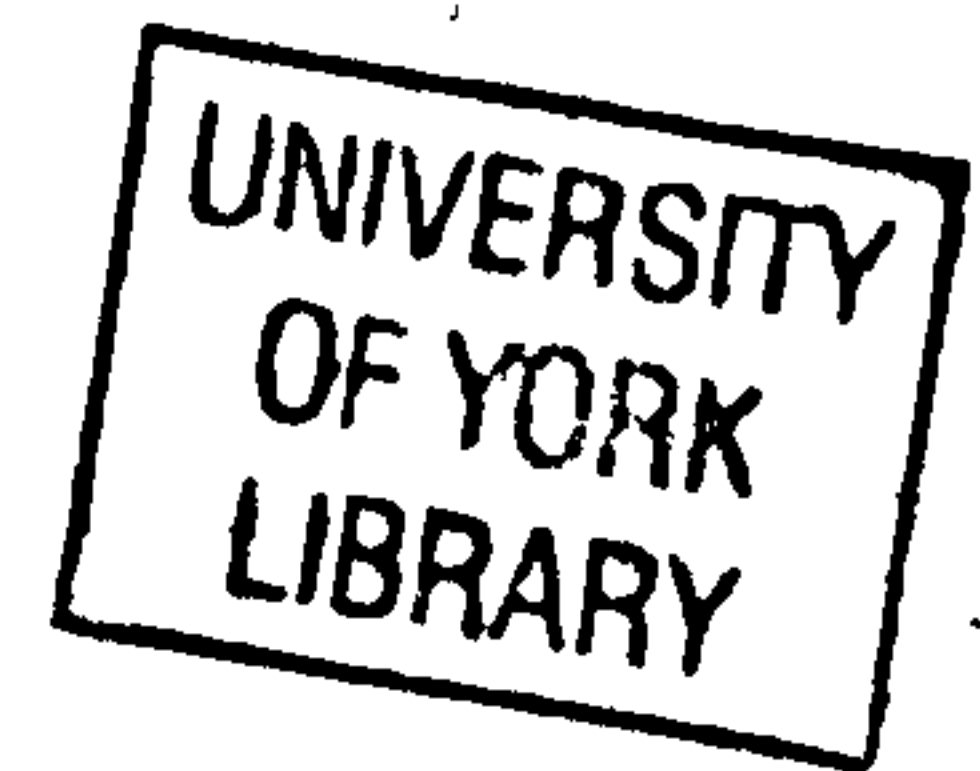
What aspects of the personal growth models advocated by the Cambridge and London schools can be seen to be evident in the respondents' rhetorical representation of their practice?

What aspects of each of the personal growth models advocated by the Cambridge and London schools can be seen to be evident in the respondents' classroom practice?

What aspects of the respondents' practice are underrepresented or omitted from their rhetoric?

What effect do the divergences in the respondents' rhetoric and their classroom practice have upon the ability of English teachers to present their practice in ways which are understood by external agencies (e.g. the government, business people, parents)?

The research design



Two research designs, those of the case study and condensed fieldwork were combined in order to collect the data for this study. The combining of two research strategies was necessary because of the physical location of the three schools in which the research was conducted. The case study approach, pioneered by Stenhouse (1978), is based upon the collection and analysis of a range of evidence, in this study gathered from observations of lessons, teacher interviews, and the collection of a range of written data from pupils' books, to departmental and school policy documents. The range of evidence, it is argued, enables data addressing a particular research question to be generated from different sources, thus enabling the researcher to counter-balance different sets of evidence in order to build up a study of a particular case, and so to gain a more detailed picture of the complexities of the issues which influence the research

question. Cohen and Mannion (1989) argue that the purpose of a properly conducted case study should be to allow the researcher to probe 'the diverse influences which make up the whole of the particular event' with the aim of 'generalising about the wider population to which that unit belongs' (p.124–125).

A case study approach was a suitable research strategy in schools 1 and 2 which are located in the vicinity of my former work place and in which, therefore, I was able to spend several weeks watching lessons, talking to members of the English staff of both schools, interviewing them and collecting a range of documents related to the working practices and the policies of both departments. In both cases time was available for me to have several conversations with members of staff both prior to and after their interviews. This was invaluable as it enabled me to probe further into particular questions and to ask for further evidence which was not always immediately available (e.g. departmental documents, pupils' books, examples of marking etc.), and to observe more lessons. Time was also available to investigate more intangible questions, for example, the relationship between the department members themselves and between the department and the rest of the school.

In both schools 1 and 2 I was regularly available at break and at lunch times which proved to be very valuable sources of data for my field notes. Thus, my experience of research in these two schools was a cumulative one, occurring over a period of two years, from 1994 to 1996, in which initial impressions could be tested against data gathered formally (in interviews and lesson observations and through examination of documents), and informally (in break and lunchtime chats).

School 3 was chosen in an attempt to widen the sample base. As I was present in this school for a period of only a week in January 1997 a strategy of condensed fieldwork outlined in Vulliamy and Webb (1994) appeared to be more appropriate. This

strategy utilises the same method of data collection as case study but the research is conducted in a more concentrated time span which creates a more intensive, less discursive, research approach. Condensed fieldwork did, in this case, enable me to widen my sample of schools adding a multi-cultural and urban perspective which was offered by school 3. The value of this approach is endorsed by Vulliamy and Webb (1994).

It also has the benefit of broadening a sample to enhance population validity as a supplement to the high ecological validity which ethnographers argue typically characterises the in-depth study of a single institution. (Vulliamy and Webb, 1994, p.5)

As I had also previously worked in this school for five years, first as Second in Department and then as Head of Department, I felt that I needed less time to become familiar with the school and with the department, the members of which were largely unchanged since my departure four years previously.

The research sample

This study is based on research conducted in three departments of English. Within the limited range of the sample there was a concern to maximise, if at all possible, the differing range of factors which might influence the respondents.

By attempting to increase the diversity or variation in the sample, the evaluator will have more confidence in those patterns that emerge as common among sites whilst at the same time being able to describe some of the variation that has emerged to make programs unique as they adapt to different settings. (Patton, 1980, p.102)

Schools 1 and 2 are located on the outskirts of a small northern city. The city itself is a major tourist attraction. Despite the proximity of their location these schools have a very different intake. School 1 has a largely middle class intake with an academic ethos. School 2 is located in the middle of a large council estate; many of its pupils come from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The school does not have a strong academic ethos. School 3, by contrast, is located in one of the outer London boroughs. It has a mixed catchment area and a multi-cultural intake.

School 1

School 1 is located close to the local university. It serves a largely middle class area and many of the pupils have parents who work at the university. The overall standard of the pupils' attainment in all three National Curriculum profile components is noted in its OFSTED report.

Most pupils are articulate and courteous and respond well to questions...Overall, the standard of reading aloud in class is very good: pupils read clearly, confidently and with expression . . . the standard of their personal and descriptive writing is good . . .

The school has a large sixth form, with a total intake of approximately one hundred and fifty at the time of the study. The department consists of seven full-time and two part-time members of staff. The majority of the members of the English department have worked at the school for a considerable period of time (between 10 and over 20 years). The school appointed a new Head of English two years before the study was undertaken. This appointee had not previously taught in the city and had introduced new policies and practices into the department, the aims of which were to co-ordinate a more common

approach to the English curriculum. Before her arrival there had been in the department a very individualistic approach as each teacher constructed their own curriculum. This had, at the time of data collection, been changed into a marginally less autonomous working environment as each teacher was then obliged to cover, in the course of a year, agreed topic areas, and to record what had been done in each. There was then a practice, also, that the Head of Department looked at a sample of each teacher's pupils' books to ensure that agreed departmental procedures were taking place (e.g. drafting), and that the syllabus was being followed.

However, despite these innovations, the general 'feel' of the department was a place where an individual, liberal approach to teaching was still the underlying philosophy. Members of the department did not share schemes of work and the more established members of the department did not follow the contemporary practice of teaching units of work as a whole but still split the English curriculum into separate parts (e.g. of five timetabled lessons a week, one would be a drama lesson, one private reading, two for the class reader and one for writing). I got the impression that, despite the advent of the National Curriculum and of national testing, much of the teaching of the more established members of the Department had not changed greatly in recent years. This view was confirmed as I saw a text book which had been written by the previous Head of Department and a colleague over twenty years ago still in constant use by the longer serving members of staff, all of whom stated that the National Curriculum had not had any significant effect upon the way they worked.

Younger members of the department adopted the practice of basing the various activities of the English lesson, speaking and listening, reading and writing, on a unified scheme of work. The Head of Department expressed, on several occasions, her sense of frustration that she had not been able to 'move the department on' in the ways that she

wished. She was, at the time the research was being conducted, beginning to realise the difficulty of effecting change when colleagues, whilst not being determined to resist, were, nevertheless, happy with their practice and not motivated to reform it.

This school was the only one in the sample where I was able to observe sixth form teaching.

School 2

School 2 is an 11–16 mixed comprehensive school with approximately 450 pupils on roll. It is located in the middle of a council estate in one of the most socially disadvantaged areas of the city. The atmosphere in this school is very different from that of school 1. A significant part of every observed lesson was devoted to the negotiation of appropriate classroom behaviour on the part of a significant number of the pupils in each class. Many students have poor verbal and literacy skills, a fact noted in the school's OFSTED report which comments upon the pupils' 'limited' skills.

Vocabulary is underdeveloped and pupils lack confidence. Few pupils are able to listen carefully and respond in a logical and sequential way. Standards in reading are also below the national expectation. Most pupils are able to read adequately but many do so without expression and fluency and with only limited understanding. Writing reflects the level of skills in speaking, listening and in reading in terms of vocabulary and the ability to use more complex sentence structures. Few pupils are able to write at length.

However, despite the noted limitations of the pupils' ability in the subject, the relationship between teachers and pupils and the quality of teaching in the school is praised.

Pupils are generally well motivated and most concentrate well . . .
Teaching is well planned and presented and has clear objectives . . .
Teaching rests upon very good relationships in the classroom and teachers
have evident knowledge of and sensitivity to pupils as individuals.

Many pupils in this school experience severe life problems, many coming from one parent families, and some with families in financial difficulties. As pupils progress up the school attendance often becomes more erratic.

The English department in this school consisted, at the time of data collection, of four full time members of staff. The Head of Department had, at the time of the period of data collection, been at the school for eight years. There was a very close relationship between the Head and the Second in Department. The other two staff members were less integrated into the department. One had been a Head of Department in her own right in another school with a much more affluent catchment area. She had found the move to school 2 with its attendant classroom management problems to be very difficult. She confessed to me whilst walking back to the staff room after a lesson (often a most productive time to talk) that she resented having continually to discipline pupils and would much prefer 'to be able to teach them something'. This sense of disappointment, and a sense also of defensiveness about the discipline problems which she was facing, combined to result in this teacher refusing to be interviewed about her practice. The other member of the department had completed a PGCE course with me three years previously. She had been, during the PGCE year, a most independent student and had continued to work largely in isolation in the department. Someone of very strongly held views about society, her ideology of teaching was rooted in her belief that it was the teacher's job to help pupils in personal difficulties. This teacher was viewed, by the other members of the department, as a 'loner' and she made very few, if any, alliances

amongst teaching staff. Her valued relations were with the pupils with whom she spent all of her break and lunchtimes, and significant periods after school and in the holidays.

This was not, therefore, a united department. However, the curriculum was organised on shared units of work which were collaboratively written and which ensured that the requirements of the National Curriculum were covered in each year. I was present at one departmental meeting at which the rota for teaching the units in each year was being worked out. Thus, although the teaching practices of the members of this department were, possibly, more varied than those of school one, the curriculum itself was more uniform.

School 3

School 3 is located in an outer London suburb. It is a mixed 11–16 comprehensive school with approximately 1,000 pupils on roll. This school has a rising reputation within the local area, built upon greatly improved General Certificate of Education (GCSE)* results, and a very positive school ethos. The catchment area comprises of a council estate and a number of private estates, one of which is in a very affluent part of the borough. In addition, an increasing number of Afro-Caribbean parents from a neighbouring borough are choosing to send their children to school 3, although the largest ethnic minority group in the school is of Asian origin. The intake is very multicultural. Sixty-seven community languages, in addition to English, are spoken by the pupils at the school.

The school has a democratic management structure at the centre of which is the management board which contains teacher representatives. All major decisions of the various working parties (at the time of the study these were assessment, equal

opportunities, language, special needs, In Service Education - INSET* - and uniform) are ratified by the management board. This indicates a level of active involvement of staff in the working of the school. Members of the English department were, at the time of the study, represented in all of the working parties, except that of uniform.

There were, at the period of data collection, eight full-time and two part-time members of staff in the English department in school 3. What was immediately noticeable, in contrast to schools 1 and 2, was the unity of practice within the Department. Shared units of work had been created throughout the curriculum from years 7 to 11. These were rotated throughout the year so that each pupil received what was, in the department, termed an 'entitlement' English curriculum, although different teachers were encouraged to teach the units 'in their own way' and to add to them.

The strong sense of departmental unity was immediately notable when analysing the interviews with members of the English department from school 3. Statements such as: 'as a department', 'it's completely against departmental philosophy' were common. Indeed, it was only in school 3 that a sense of the department as a group entity as well as a set of individual teachers was present. It was only in school 3, moreover, that the members of staff commented frequently about curriculum organisation. The Head of Department felt that the advent of the National Curriculum had changed departmental culture.

... it's (the National Curriculum) actually got people working together and it's actually pulled the department together because they've had to develop the curriculum, they've had to work together, they've had to share resources, they've actually looked at how other people teach, the processes that other people use in the classrooms and have taken them into their own classroom, so in that respect I think it has improved teaching, we're learning all the time.
(J.O. school 3)

The Head of Department's view of recent achievements was confirmed by the newest and youngest member who, in response to the question of what was the most important lesson she had learned in the four years she had been teaching, replied

Em . . . the value of a department working together, collaboratively, so that there are . . . for example, resource-wise, there's common schemes of work that you can use, you don't have to use them closely, particularly in the lower school, but they are there, everyone knows the common philosophy, the common way of working in the department and so you do feel very supported, (R.P school 3)

The English department in school 3 pioneered the practice of mixed ability teaching in the school. Its members are heavily represented on the equal opportunities working party (with four departmental representatives).

Members of the department in school 3 were also at the centre of the key stage 3 battle over the tests in 1993. The Head of Department had co-ordinated the Standard Attainment Tasks (SATS)* boycott in the borough, which, controlled as it then was by a Conservative education authority and amongst the top five Local Education Authorities (LEAs)* in the GCSE league tables, proved to be an embarrassing opponent for the Government. Other members of the department had been interviewed on the television and on radio about the boycott. Working in these charged circumstances, with a keen interest in equal opportunities in terms of race and gender, the sense that the department had a shared philosophy was keenly felt.

The department has a comprehensive ethos. (H.P School 3)

In a way it's spoken and unspoken in the department, what you do . . . (C.M. School 3)

The department has a very strong understanding of English as a subject and what students need and how to develop those skills . . . there's also a political awareness which I think is crucial to it . . . (M.A. school 3)

It became clear that in contrast to schools 1 and 2, in school 3 the multicultural and multi-class nature of the working environment, combined with the department's strongly politicised awareness about educational issues generally, and English issues in particular, provided a strong sense of unity amongst departmental members and a confidence in the expression of their opinions of 'what English was about'. It is interesting to note, also, that members of this department were more ready than the teachers in schools 1 and 2 to use subject specific terms such as oracy, code switching, reader response, etc. A confidence in their knowledge of their subject appeared to enable members of school 3 to express their opposition to government policy in a way that did not appear to be open to teachers from schools 1 and 2.

Figure 2, overleaf, summarises some of the most salient aspects of the three schools in which the data were collected.

Figure 2 – Salient features of the three schools in which the data were collected

Schools	School roll	Size of Dept.	Academic Attainment (5 A–C GCSE pass rate 1996)	Catchment area
School 1	950 (approx.)	7 full-time, 2 part-time	50	white, middle class
School 2	450 (approx.)	4 full time	17	white working class
School 3	1,000 (approx.)	8 full time, 2 part time	56	multi-cultural mixed working and middle class

Access to schools 1 and 2

It was not an easy task to gain access to the three schools for the purposes of this study. An initial 'trawl' of four local schools was conducted by telephone conversations with their Heads of English. One of these departments was preparing for an OFSTED inspection. The Head of Department felt that his staff were under great pressure and did not wish to add to this in any way. Another Head of Department

informed me that two of his staff were leaving, consequently he felt that it would not be an appropriate time to have an outsider in the department.

After access was initially agreed through the Head of Department, I offered to go into schools 1 and 2 to attend a department meeting in which the proposed study was an agenda item. At each meeting I talked briefly about the aims of the study and the methods by which it was to be conducted. As much time as was necessary was made available (in line with the constraints of the other agenda items and my awareness of the importance for teachers, after a busy day at school, not to be delayed after the official ending time of the meeting) for any member of the department to ask questions. Two things were emphasised:

- 1 Participation in the study was entirely voluntary.
- 2 Absolute confidentiality would be maintained, not only in respect of the school but also of the individual responses and lesson observations.

In addition, I distributed a one-sided sheet (appendix *b*) at each meeting which summarised the points I had made in my presentation. This sheet provided a brief overview of the context in which the research was taking place; a summary of the research focus, and a fairly detailed account of the research methodology which outlined the different stages of the interview process.

My position as a Lecturer in Education in Schools 1 and 2

I was very aware that my position as a Lecturer in Education and my particular responsibility as leader of the PGCE English course, could create difficulties. The first of

these was that of status. The English staff in schools 1 and 2 were used to seeing me in an assessment role as I observed student teachers carrying out a block teaching placement in their departments. They knew that I taught the majority of the English method sessions on the University-based element of the PGCE English course. The risk of the 'mantle of the expert' falling on my shoulders and skewing the research data appeared to me to be a significant one. Two potential problems were anticipated. The first was that the teachers could assume that my observation notes would contain similar judgements about the quality of their teaching as did the notes I made on the progress of student teachers. They might be constrained, therefore, to teach in a rather stilted, unnatural and unrepresentative way.

To address this problem I made it clear that the purpose of this study was to listen to teachers' views which, I said, had been neglected in the polemical attack by the government on the teaching of English. I asserted that I had chosen the departments in schools 1 and 2 because they appeared to me to be well organised and because the staff who worked in them were committed to their profession and successful at it. Teachers were told that they were welcome to look at my observation notes, or to take copies of them. Interestingly, none did so.

The second potential problem which I anticipated was that the teachers could try to show me what they thought I wanted to see. There was a danger that some teachers would put on 'show' lessons for my benefit, and there is some evidence that, despite my reiteration that I wanted to see normal, everyday lessons, there was an attempt by a minority of the respondents to 'put their best foot forward'. In one case, the Head of Department in school 2 confessed that she had been too tired to put on a show lesson. When I replied that I had not wanted to see a show lesson she said: "Oh good. (named person) said that she thought you'd want to see something active, but I felt too tired to do

anything exciting, so what you got was bog standard". This does imply, however, that the other teacher's lesson was aimed at showing her, in her own eyes, at her best. A similar incident occurred in school 1 when it became clear that the normal progress of lessons had been interrupted in order to accommodate a more 'exciting' topic.

It is true that 'show' lessons would be less likely to reveal any dichotomies between teachers' rhetoric and their practice, which is one focus of the study, as these respondents would be more consciously aware of what they were doing in the observed lesson(s) and more careful to translate their philosophy into practice. Upon reflection, however, I became less concerned about the possibility of 'show' lessons. Another focus of the study is the exploration of teachers' ideologies. If some teachers attempted, in their lessons, to show me what they thought was best practice, and then used an observed lesson as a basis for illustrating their ideology, then one of the aims of the study was being achieved.

Access to school 3

School 3 presented different challenges from schools 1 and 2. I very much wanted to conduct research in a different environment from that in which I had worked for the last four years. School 3, situated in an urban, multi-cultural environment, appeared to provide a worthwhile contrast. I was in touch with the Head of English and with the Second in Department so access was readily agreed through a telephone conversation.

The respondent forms an image of the field worker and uses that image as a basis of response. It does mean that as a researcher we have an obligation to identify and document the nature of the image held by the respondent. (Vidich quoted by Stubbs and Delamont, 1976, p.35)

I had thought, initially, that it would be easier to conduct research in school 3. My principal, professional relationship with the teachers in that school was that I had been Head of English there. I did not anticipate that my role as lecturer would 'cut much ice' with such a well informed and professional team and I looked forward to my week's visit to the department and the chance to meet old friends.

However, I found that my 'special' relationship with my former colleagues did create some difficulties. The first problem was that, although I had worked closely with nearly every member of the department, I had not seen any of my former colleagues teach. My previous role as Head of English had been managerial. I had seen evidence of the work of each member of the department during the moderation of GCSE files, but I had never observed, for any sustained period, their classroom practice. It soon became clear that some members of the department felt uneasy about my observation of their lessons. My status in school was no longer clear. I had gone on to become a University teacher and had, it may have been felt, left the real stresses and strains of classroom teaching behind me.

It may have also been felt that I had 'grown above myself'. One former colleague confirmed my assessment of this situation as she commented: "It's O.K. researching English, Mary, but you should be teaching it".

I attempted to counterbalance any perception that I felt myself in any way to be superior to my former colleagues by becoming as involved as possible in the life of the department. I marked pupils' work in the evenings and during free periods. I took two cover lessons to relieve members of the department. I took the minutes at a departmental meeting (always a hated task). I made sure, also, that I readily acknowledged the progress made since my departure in terms of the curriculum and its organisation. There was, indeed, much to praise. This strategy appeared to have the

desired effect. By the end of the week several members of the department said that it was difficult to believe that I had ever been away and that nothing had changed in my relationship with them. Certainly, I felt that some potential hurdles had been overcome. It is significant however, that although I asked numerous questions about my former colleagues' work, very few questions were asked about my work; this factor had to be ignored by both parties if a productive research relationship was to be established and maintained. One consequence of this policy was realised when I decided not to distribute copies of appendix *b* at the departmental meeting; such a move would, I decided, be open to negative interpretations. Instead, I adopted the more informal process of having quick chats with departmental members, asking them if they could recommend a class that they might like me to see, or any lesson in which I could play a supporting role. This less formal strategy enabled me to get access to lessons on a 'grace and favour' basis, and perhaps went some way to negate any impression that I felt in a superior position to my former colleagues.

Lesson observations

The first stage in the research process after access had been negotiated was that of lesson observation. I felt that it was absolutely necessary to see my respondents teach at least once (though I often observed and participated in two or three lessons). Observation would give me the basis upon which to ask teachers the very concrete and basic questions about their classroom practice upon which a discussion of more theoretical aspects of their work could be built.

Another result of lesson observations, which became clear to me during the process of data analysis, was the significance of the data recorded in the lesson

observations. By this means the convergences and the divergences between teacher rhetoric, expressed in the interviews, and their practice, expressed in the observed lessons, could be analysed. The data obtained through lesson observations acted as a foil against which the interview data could be tested.

Initially, however, I found it very difficult to record what was going on in lessons. My previous experience of this process had been as a PGCE tutor and the first problem I encountered was that of making judgements rather than observations. This difficulty, I discovered, had been encountered by others.

Her background was in training teachers, her experience of watching lessons was from the back of a classroom, judging the performance of student teachers. This was something she had to learn to stop doing. She had to 'wash her mind clean' of this and discover what the research was really looking for. (Measor and Woods, 1991, p.70)

One way that I learned to 'wash my mind clean' was to re-organise my observation notes. I had originally divided up the observation sheet into three columns: a time line, in which the timing of different stages of the lesson was recorded; a lesson activity column, in which the content of the lesson was recorded and a comments line, in which I found myself making evaluative judgements which took valuable writing time away from recording what was actually happening in the lesson. After just one lesson I devised a much simpler system which consisted simply of a time line column on the left hand side of the page, the rest of which was left blank for me to record, as accurately as possible, what was going on.

Analysis of the lesson observation sheets shows that I was soon adopting a system of recording similar events in each lesson. I made as complete notes as possible of teacher speech; the responses of pupils; the ways of working (e.g. whole class question and answer sessions; group work; individual writing, etc.). When pupils were

asked to work in groups I would position myself close to one group and record the pupils' interaction as unobtrusively as possible. In this way a record began to be built up of significant continuities and differences in teachers' approaches to classroom management and their teaching of the English curriculum.

Of course, this system enabled me only to get a very partial record of what had gone on in the lesson. Even with a system of shorthand which enabled me to write very quickly I found that I was often rushing hopelessly to keep up with the very fast interaction between teacher and pupils which characterised many lessons. An alternative which would have given me a fuller record would have been to record each lesson. I did not, however, adopt this strategy, despite its advantages in terms of a more detailed generation of data because I found that it was helpful, in terms of my relationship with teachers, at times to stop taking notes and to circulate in the classroom. This strategy was adopted, in particular, during the moments of heightened tension and stress which occurred when pupils were misbehaving, when I felt that the class teacher was becoming concerned about difficult moments of her lesson being recorded. The practice of writing my lesson observation notes enabled me to have greater flexibility. Although it could be argued that writing was a more visible means of data collection than recording, its very visibility made obvious the times when I stopped this activity. In this way I hoped that I was able to express my support for the teacher.

Interviews

The fundamental principle of qualitative interviewing is to provide a framework within which respondents can express their own understandings in their own terms. (Patton, 1980, p.205)

Teacher interviews were conducted in order to elicit data upon one of the main focuses of the study, teachers' ideologies. The difficulty which immediately became apparent as I started to think about the interview process was that something as complex and as intrinsic to the self as an ideology can be a difficult topic to explain, particularly when the audience is a university lecturer. The key to planning the interview schedule was found in the above extract from Patton – that interviewees 'need to express their own understandings in their own terms'. One strategy which I used to effect this aim was to arrange, whenever possible, for the interview to take place after lesson observations, where the lesson became an important common experience shared between the teacher and myself, although our perspectives were different. Some of the most important and interesting data were collected in the conversations which took place as the teacher and I walked back to the staff room after the lesson. It was here that particular pupils were discussed; complaints against the school management or other members of staff were made and problems were shared. I attempted to hold these conversations in my head until I could record them in my field notes. I attempted, always, to incorporate further discussion of points raised in these conversations in the interview, keeping in mind that some points were strictly 'off the record' and others needed to be raised in an appropriately general way in order to match the more formal requirements of the interview process.

Significant difficulties were encountered over the arrangement of times and places for interviews. Although I attempted to hold the interviews as soon as possible after the observed lessons, other factors such as lunchtime clubs intruded and caused a gap of, in one case, a week between the observation and the interview. Once I realised that there was going to be such a time lapse between the different stages of data collection I went back to the lesson observation notes and added as much extra information as I could

remember in order to retain as much detail as possible about the lessons observed, as this would provide the information on which I would base my questions in the first stage of the interview. However, this did not prove to be one of the more successful interviews and highlighted, for me, the importance of keeping to a tight schedule in which as little time as possible lapsed between observations and interviews. More immediate difficulties occurred on several occasions when it seemed to be almost impossible to find a quiet room in school. Approximately half of the interviews were interrupted by someone coming into the room where they were being conducted, often requesting information, which broke the respondent's train of thought. On one occasion, in desperation after two changes of venue, the interview was held in the recess of the school office. This made transcription very difficult. On another occasion an interview was held in the staff smoking room with another member of staff present. These less than satisfactory conditions seemed to be cheerfully accepted by the respondents. I judged that it was less harmful to conduct the interview in unorthodox circumstances than to try to re-arrange the interview and take up more of the respondent's valuable time.

The interview process

Start off gently – put people at their ease. (Woods, 1986, p.78)

The interview commenced with an explanation of how long it was to last (about 20 minutes). Each stage of the interview was then outlined, a verbal repetition of the information given to respondents in schools one and two in appendix *b*, and the respondents were asked if there was anything that they were unsure of or unhappy about. Complete confidentiality was assured.

The interview was divided into three stages:

Stage 1: Discussion of lesson observations

It is often difficult for people to discuss the most important things in their lives, values and beliefs for example. If we encourage people to present these beliefs in the form of concrete examples, or in a narrative, then we may be able to facilitate their ability to discuss these areas. (Measor and Woods, 1991, p.72)

The first stage of the interview consisted of a discussion of the observed lessons. Respondents would be asked to describe the class or classes that I had seen. Often the respondents would focus on particular children in the class, those who were, in their opinion, particularly bright, or having personal or work-related problems. Discussion would then move on to the teaching and learning activities in the lesson. I would take my cue here from what I had observed in terms of the lesson activity (often a mix of speaking and listening, reading and writing), and the ways of working employed by the teacher (question and answer, individual work, group work, etc.). These very focused questions and the subsequent discussions of particular individuals, classes and lessons, provided a concrete base upon which teachers could begin to talk about their practice. I could, often, almost sense the respondents' relief that they were being asked about a subject upon which they were the experts (their pupils and their lesson). It was from this concrete basis that I aimed to build towards a more general and theoretical discussion of the respondents' beliefs about English teaching.

Stage 2: The respondents' ideology

If in qualitative research we are serious about aiming to get a purchase upon the meanings that individuals construct . . . we need strategies for probing the subject's meanings, and getting the fullest possible picture of their ideas and their words, their way of constructing a world and seeing it. (Measor and Woods, 1991, p.72)

The next stage of the interview was designed to enable the respondents to talk about the underlying reasons for their practice – their ideology. I was, initially, apprehensive that the respondents would find it difficult to move from stage one, talking about their practice in one lesson, to stage 2 – a more open discussion of their practice more generally and the beliefs which underpinned it. This was the certainly the case in the first interview where my stage 2 questions were, I realised in retrospect, very obvious and rather stilted, eg. 'Can you tell me about the ways in which you tried to manage that lesson to make the issue wider than language change?' I realised, upon reading the transcript of the first interview, that in my attempt to move towards an understanding of the general rationale which underpinned the respondent's practice I had asked questions which were rather daunting because they were imprecise and expressed in rather formal, technical language leaving the respondent in the unenviable position of having to 'guess the answer inside my head'.

I made a conscious effort after my first interview, therefore, to adopt a less intimidating stance. One very useful strategy which I found enabled me to effect a more seamless transition between stages one and two was the use of the probing question. This is a strategy advocated by Patton (1980) who identifies two types of probes; the elaboration probe, e.g. 'I think I'm beginning to understand', or 'Would you like to say more about that'; and the clarification probe, eg. 'Can you say what you mean by that?'

I found this strategy to be immensely useful as a mean of enabling the respondents to 'open out' and to move from the particular (the observed lessons and pupils) to the more general issues of whether a practice observed in the lesson was one

that was regularly adopted, and if so, why? Thus, in reading the transcripts of the interviews, I find myself using probing questions to begin to elicit what were the respondents' beliefs which motivate their practice:

So you chose *The Lord of the Flies* for yourself, within the GCSE texts. When you are actually choosing texts to teach to a class, what texts do you tend to choose? (interviewer)

In a mixed ability class, how do you do that then? (interviewer)

And you see it here at parents' evenings. There's always one parent who's going to ask you about grammar. (respondent)

And what do you say? (interviewer)

I found these probing questions to be a very successful strategy. They encouraged the respondent to move beyond the particular (what was done in the observed lessons) to the general (how often do you do this and why do you do it?). It is interesting to note, also, that the respondents would often use more subject specific language in response to a probing question, an indication, perhaps, that they were articulating the rationale which underpinned the practice I had observed and in so doing drawing on the theoretical perspectives which informed it. For example, in answer to a very direct probing question made after the statement that mixed ability teaching was productive:

Why? I'm pinning you down there . . . (laughter) (interviewer)

The respondent replied:

I think, actually, there's probably more opportunity for able students in mixed ability teaching than in setting, particularly in English where you do, you can differentiate by outcome, so you can work together with different abilities, but also support the less able students; it's a valuable learning process to explain things to other people, that's what oracy's about. (R.P. school 3)

Stage 3 Defence of practice and of ideology

The final stage of the interview was designed to challenge the respondents to more fully articulate their ideology. Barnes (1976) argues that it is necessary to put speakers under pressure in order to get them to justify and to fully articulate their views and the rationale which underpins them.

As one of my key justifications to my respondents for doing the research had been that the voice of teachers of English was not being properly heard I did not feel that I could simply put forward opposing arguments to those being made by the respondents. This, I felt, would have indicated that I was not listening to or respecting their views which were often deeply held and which the respondents felt were completely ignored by the powerful external agencies who control the content of the curriculum. Another reason to avoid this strategy was that I did not want the respondents to attribute to myself views which I would have been putting forward for the sake of argument. I was very concerned not to appear in any way to be intimidating.

Again it was Patton (1980) who recommended a strategy to deal with this problem.

It is sometimes helpful to provide the interviewee with a context for responding to a question. This context provides cues about the level at which the response is expected. One way of providing such a context is to rôle play with persons being interviewed, asking them to respond to the interviewer as if he or she were someone else. (Patton, 1980, p.223)

Many questions were being asked about the teaching of English by a variety of groups during the period in which the interviews were being conducted. Teachers of English were being exhorted to go back to basics and to concentrate their efforts upon the teaching of the literary heritage, grammar and standard English. It was not difficult,

therefore, to find a role in which to frame supposition questions which challenged the respondents to explain and justify their practice to a less sympathetic audience than myself.

So how would you answer Chris Woodhead who'd say that we need that list because basically English teachers aren't teaching the classics? Are we neglecting the heritage of English literature?

Can we move on to writing now. If I was a parent at parents' evening and I'd say that well, I see you're making comments on my child's work but where are you teaching grammar, you know, I used to have grammar lessons, how would you respond to me?

Say I was an OFSTED inspector who came along and in my report at the end I was saying, well I've seen this mixed ability but I think that the Department would be able to differentiate better by setting, so I think you should go in for setting, how would you answer that? How would you be able to explain your policy?

I found supposition questions to be an extremely useful strategy which enabled me to put forward difficult questions without appearing to be confrontational. The respondents reacted in different ways to these questions. Some were immediately able to construct an effective defence of their practice; others appeared to struggle. This strategy revealed also those areas of their practice with which the respondents felt secure and confident and those areas in which they felt less so. Their answers, in the latter case, were characterised by hesitation and false starts. These different reactions often proved to be a good indicator of how effectively the respondents had rationalised their practice in the light of the theoretical and the political positions which underpinned their justification for what they did in the classroom.

Written evidence

A range of written evidence was collected. This included official departmental documents, for example, departmental syllabuses and policy documents on language and literature. These documents proved to be a very significant source of evidence as it is in these documents that a department publicly presents its aims, objectives and practice. In writing policy documents teachers draw on their reading of theoretical texts, official reports and research evidence, as a basis for a justification of their practice. These documents provide, therefore, one of the most obvious sources of evidence of the theoretical traditions which teachers draw upon in presenting their practice to a public audience.

Use was also made of internal departmental documents, for example, topic rotas and schemes of work. These documents provided evidence of the translation of the aims of the official documents into classroom practice. They indicated the areas of the curriculum to which the department gives particular attention.

Samples of the pupils' written work were also collected. These included evidence from pupils' English books and GCSE files. Wherever possible, when observing lessons, I attempted to look at several pupils' books. I noted the writing activities which the pupils had been required to do and the comments made by teachers. This proved to be a valuable source of information about the work done throughout the term and set in a wider context the observed lessons. It also provided a useful source of evidence upon which to ask questions of teachers about aspects of their practice which I had not directly observed.

I also made field notes during the periods of data collection in all three schools. These notes were written in a variety of places. Often I would jot down ideas

immediately after lesson observations. These acted as memos for the subsequent interview, raising particular points of interest or clarification. At the end of each day I would write up my impressions of the school, the department, the lessons that I had seen that day, the disruptions to the research schedule and the progress of the interviews. It was this latter record that I found particularly useful as the process of recording in writing my impressions of the interviews gradually focused my attention on the strategies which appeared to be most successful in generating a response from the interviewees.

Data analysis

An enormous amount of data was generated by case study research in three departments of English. Initially I found it almost impossible to make any sense of what I had collected. There was simply too much of it. I was greatly helped in my attempts to make some sense of what I had collected by attendance at two conferences and one research group seminar. The first conference was held after I had conducted research in school 1; the second and the research presentation after I had completed the data collection in all three schools. The requirement to give a paper at both conferences generated the necessity to transcribe the interviews. It was on the basis of the interview evidence alone that two papers were written, the first on the topic of English teachers' ideologies and their reaction to the then current demands made upon them by government agencies, and the second on the theoretical traditions which informed English teachers' ideologies and their practice. The difference in the topics of the two papers reflects the change in the original and the subsequent research focus generated, in part, by the immensely useful influence of the discussion on both papers by conference delegates and the audience at the research seminar, the majority of whom

were professional English educators working in higher education. It was from conference and seminar discussions that I also received recommendations for further reading and ideas which helped me to construct the analytical framework, that of the three models of English explored in chapters 3 - 5, in which the data could be analysed and interrogated.

However, it became clear to me from my reading and from conference discussions that there were strong theoretical traditions which informed the respondents' views of their subject and influenced their practice. The most obvious of these was the concept of personal growth. I was well versed in the London school tradition that had promoted personal growth through English as I had completed a higher degree at the Institute of Education and had been inducted into the London school model. I had myself become interested in the CPS model of English during the key stage 3 battle and had written two papers analysing this model (Bousted, 1992, 1993).

I became aware, however, that I was not sufficiently informed of a third model – that of the Cambridge school – which was identified in a range of literature on curriculum history (Ball, 1995, 1990; Goodson and Medway, 1990). A colleague generously gave me guidance about where to begin reading about the Cambridge tradition and his analysis of the key aspects of the Cambridge model. It was on this basis that I was able to engage in extensive reading of the key texts of the Cambridge school authors and to construct my own analysis of the Cambridge model.

The next stage of the research process was the construction of an analytical framework in which the data could be synthesised and analysed.

Some analysis of the interview data had been achieved and was the basis of the interim papers described above. It was difficult to see, however, what should be done with the written documentation or the lesson observation notes. These sources of data

seemed to be less significant than the interviews, the content of which I was much more familiar, having spent long periods engaged in their transcription.

Help was at hand from an aptly titled book *Getting the most from your data* by Riley (1990). Riley recommends a range of strategies for the researcher to immerse themselves in their data, arguing that the process of familiarisation with data is a gradual one which need not involve huge blocks of time. Consideration of one interview, or a lesson observation; re-reading a departmental syllabus; these limited but regular 'visits' to different sources of data gradually enabled me to identify categories upon which analysis could be based. This process also enabled me to realise that the different sources of data could be used to interrogate each other. In particular, the lesson observation notes were, I came to realise, an important source of evidence from which teachers' ideologies and their realisation (or not) in their classroom practice, could be analysed.

The process of generating categories upon which analysis could be based was, therefore, a prolonged one. In the first cycle, I analysed and generated categories upon the basis of the teacher interviews at school 1. Different researchers recommend different strategies to codify data. Ball (1991) recommends a cut and paste method in which interview transcripts are cut up, placed in category envelopes and then sorted and analysed. I tried this method but found it unsuitable. Firstly because it did not seem to be a suitable method to generate categories from the other range of written evidence, particularly lesson observations which made little sense if they were seen in isolated fragments. Secondly, because with a five year old child in the house it was important that data could be easily and quickly stored away.

Riley's (1990) strategy of highlighting text was the method of category generation which I eventually adopted. I began with the teacher interviews. I took three, one from each school, and made two photocopies of each. I then attempted to generate

categories by highlighting sections of text in different colours. I did three interviews initially, and then gave clean copies of this data to a colleague who kindly agreed to analyse them himself. Subsequent, detailed discussion of our different analyses identified clear agreements on certain categories and some significant differences. We found that some of our different analyses could be united by amalgamating categories which were closely related. Other differences were retained and additional categories were generated to my original list. I then used these categories as a framework for the analysis of all the data, interviews, written documents and lesson observations.

The process of categorisation was aided, also, by the writing of comments in the margin of the interview transcripts and the other sources of evidence. These comments served as memos to myself, and contained notes about similar choices of words; questions which I was asking of the data and highlights of significant points of difference, or 'one off' comments which did not appear to fit into any category.

I had, at the end of this process, pages of multi-coloured data. I had a much clearer idea about the key issues which I intended to raise in my analysis. I did not, however, find the data to be any more manageable. I found myself flicking through pages trying to establish continuities and differences within categories. I needed to collate the data in a more manageable form which would enable me to gain easy access to all the data within a whole category and its different sub-sections. I finally went through every part of the data and codified it according to category, person and/or source (e.g. lesson observation, interview, written documentation). I then noted each codification in an A4 file, and recorded also key words. This process took up a great deal of time but I found, at the end, that I could turn to two or three pages of A4 and find there a summary of all the data in a particular category, divided into sub-sections; where it was

to be found and what I considered to be its key significance. An example of this method is given in figure 3 below.

Figure 3 – Codification of data

* Main category – Literature

* Sub category – Criteria for choosing a book with a class

person	page no	category	index	key words
NT	p.5	2	h	class reader, challenging, mixed ability. tall order
JL	p.2	5	b	pupils own something, enabled, access, valid

This process, I found, enabled me to yield what Straus (1987) in Ball (1990) terms 'conceptually dense data' (p.185), in which linkages between various elements within categories become clear as the analysis of data progresses through different cycles.

This obviousness, the recognition, is a part of the cognitive and emotional engagement with an analytical project, and part of the creative process which integrates a new piece of research into a broader tradition of concepts, theories and substantive findings. (Ball, 1990, p.186)

I felt that I now was able to integrate my research into a broader tradition of concepts, theories and substantive findings through the analysis of the data gathered for this study within the framework of different theoretical models of English teaching.

Figure 4, below, summarises the process of data collection and the time span in which the data were collected for this study.

Figure 4 - Data audit trail

School	Date	Lesson Observations	Interviews	Written Documents
1	March/April 1995	16	7	Syllabus Topic rota Pupils' books GCSE files OfSTED report
2	January/February 1996	10	4	Topic rota Pupils' books GCSE files Schemes of work OfSTED report
3	January 1997	18	8	Syllabus Topic rota Pupils' books GCSE files Schemes of work School and Departmental language Marking policy Borough lang. Survey Headteacher's Report to the Governing Body

One of the central findings of the analysis of the data collected from the process summarised in figure 4 is that the philosophy of personal growth through English has retained its power to provide, for the English educational establishment, an underlying theoretical rationale for the practice of the subject.

Certain aspects of the personal growth model, largely drawn from the work of the London school authors are, it is argued, privileged in the respondents' rhetoric. Other aspects of the personal growth model, largely drawn from the work of the Cambridge school authors, are unarticulated in the respondents' rhetoric whilst, data from the lesson observations reveals, remaining clearly evident in their classroom practice.

Chapters three and four explore the origins and development of the theory of personal growth through English from its early origins in the work of Arnold, Sampson and Newbolt. The work of these early authors of the curriculum prefigures, it is argued, the development of the theory of personal growth by the two schools, Cambridge and London, who were to dominate the development of the English curriculum in the twentieth century. Chapter five explores the opposition to the theory of personal growth articulated in the CPS model.

From this analysis of two competing theoretical rationales for the construction of English as a curriculum subject is constructed an analytical framework in which the empirical data detailed in chapters six to nine is analysed.

Chapter Three

Arnold, Newbolt and Sampson

The first advocate to champion English as a humanising force for the nation and to endow the subject with the aim of personal growth through English was the poet and Chief school inspector, Matthew Arnold. Arnold argued that beauty, truth and light, were the qualities most needed to redeem a society debased through industrialisation. English, he averred, was the subject ideally placed to deliver these qualities.

Arnold wrote prolifically on the subject of education. His ideas were informed, not only by his own experiences working as a school inspector in the latter half of the 19th century, but also by his observation and study of contemporary European educational systems, the French and German in particular.

Arnold argued strongly that the system of education offered to the working classes in the elementary schools, and the middle classes in the endowed schools, needed to be greatly improved and that all classes would benefit from an effective educational system: the lower classes humanised, the middle class refined, and the upper class invigorated.

It seems to me that for the class frequenting Eton, the grand aim of education should be to give them those good things which their birth and rearing are least likely to give them, besides mere book-learning, the notion of a sort of republican fellowship, the practice of a plain life in common, the habit of self-help. To the middle class, the grand aim of education should be to give largeness of soul and personal dignity; to the lower classes, feeling, gentleness, humanity. (Arnold, 1892, in Huxley (Ed.), 1912)

Arnold's educational ideal had a dual purpose. Education was not only a good in itself but a means by which a society which was sharply divided across class lines, and in which different groups received a very unequal share of the wealth it produced, could remain stable. Education was, in Arnold's view, the most effective system to bind a society together if it was recognised that its aim should be to promote a common culture to which all sections of society had access. Thus, a cultural communism was to act as a compensation for the material and economic inequalities promulgated by the capitalist system. Arnold's vision was of the gradual growth of a community of spirit and understanding amongst the different classes – hence the need for the upper classes to acquire the middle class virtue of self-help, the middle classes to acquire the upper class virtue of 'largeness of soul' and the working classes to acquire the essential building block of all civilised virtues – humanity.

The pursuit of culture was conceived by Arnold to be the central vehicle through which this community of spirit could be achieved. The subject, which could most effectively prove to be a vehicle for the dissemination of culture, was literature.

The poor require culture as much as the rich; and at present their education, even when they get education, gives them hardly any of it. Yet hardly less of it, perhaps than the education of the rich gives to the rich. For when we say that culture is: to *know the best that has been thought and said in the world*, we imply that, for culture, a system directly tending to this end is necessary in our reading. (Arnold, 1873, in Huxley (Ed.), 1912, p. 216)

The reading of literature and the recitation of poetry were to found the basis of an education in culture. Poetry was the fundamental purveyor of civilised values and was to replace religion which had lost its power to mould character and behaviour.

The future of poetry is immense, because in poetry, where it is worthy of its high destinies, our race, as time goes on, will find an ever surer and surer stay. There is not a creed which is not shaken, not an accredited dogma which is not shown to be questionable, not a received tradition which does not threaten to dissolve. Our religion has materialised itself in the fact, in the supposed fact; it has attached its emotion to the fact, and now the fact is failing it. But for poetry the idea is everything; the rest is a world of illusion, of divine illusion. Poetry attaches its emotion to the idea; the idea is the fact. The strongest part of our religion today is its unconscious poetry. (Arnold in Mulhearn, 1979, p. 11)

Arnold expounds here a second and related purpose for a literary education which was not only to provide a training in aesthetic appreciation but also in morality. Religion had lost its moral authority because it had neglected its vision of the immaterial which resided only, now, in the language of the service (its unconscious poetry). Poetry was, in Arnold's view, ideally placed to serve as a means by which a vision of the immaterial world could be promoted, not only because the idea, and not the fact, had remained in the domain of poetry, but also because in its teaching, lessons of order and discipline, of the acceptance of authority, could be learned.

In this lesson you have, first of all, the excellent discipline of a lesson which must be learnt right, or it has no value; a lesson of which the subject matter is not *talked about*, as in too many of the lessons of our elementary schools, but *learnt*. Here, as in the case of the grammar lesson, this positive character of the result is a first great advantage. Then, in all but the rudest natures, out of the mass of treasures thus gained (and the mere process of gaining which will have afforded a useful discipline for all natures), a second and more precious fruit will in time grow; they will be insensibly nourished by that which is stored in them, and their taste will be formed by it, as the learning of thousands of lines of Homer and Virgil has insensibly created a good literary taste in so many persons, who would never have got this by studying the rules of taste. (Arnold in Huxley, 1912, p. 52)

There is no premonition here of the contemporary ideology of literature teaching to which many English teachers subscribe, in which individual, personal responses to the

text become the basis of debate within the literature lesson in the course of which the text and its values may be challenged. Arnold's conception of personal growth was based on a didactic methodology (rote learning) in which there was no place for a discussion of the text's meaning, and therefore no opportunity to question the text and the values it promoted. Rather, the influence of the text was deemed to work as a form of cultural osmosis in which the message(s) of the text, embodied in the finest language, would elevate the mind and spirit. The didacticism of the method of teaching betrays a fear of the power of untrained opinion which, if left to itself, might result in the masses starting to question the basis upon which society was ordered. Arnold's purpose was clear: The learning by rote of great poetry was to act not only as a form of cultural enrichment but also as a moral template and one which could not be questioned. It is interesting to note, also, that Arnold equated the teaching of grammar with the development of a 'positive character', an equation which has a powerful resonance, powerfully expressed by contemporary commentators.

The overthrow of grammar coincided with the acceptance of the equivalent of creative writing in social behaviour. As nice points of grammar were mockingly dismissed as pedantic and irrelevant, so was punctiliousness in such matters as honesty, responsibility, property, gratitude, apology and so on (John Rae, *The Observer*, 1982)

Mulhearn (1979) comments that Arnold's project did not come to fruition in his own life mainly because the time was not yet ripe for the establishment of a cultural project of this scale. The sense of national decline was not yet evident enough to the political classes. His legacy was, however, profound as it was Arnold who established the concept of personal growth as an antidote to economic growth; a form of cultural capitalism which would compensate the working classes for the results of a system of

economic capitalism which left them with a unequal and inadequate share of the wealth created by their labours.

Sampson and Newbolt

It was after the First World War that the sense of national decline had become an apparent and alarming reality to the ruling classes. It was realised that religion no longer fulfilled the purpose of civilising the nation's working classes and education was viewed as the effective alternative. Again, the struggle to forge English was pitted against other subjects – notably science and mathematics - both of which laid claim to being the means by which the nation could experience moral and spiritual renewal. In 1921 two reports were written on the teaching of English: the Newbolt report and George Sampson's polemic *English for the English*. Both these texts laid out the lines and drew the boundaries upon which the battles for the definition of the subject of English were fought.

Henry Newbolt, the chairman of the Newbolt committee, was also a member of the English association, the body which championed the position of English as a major subject at secondary school and university level. George Sampson worked as an elementary school inspector in the East End of London. The reports betray the interests and experience of their authors. The Newbolt report provided an overview of the condition of English at school and university level and outlined a programme for the training of English teachers which, the report maintained, was necessary if the subject was to fulfil its purpose as the cultural and moral repository of the nation's values. Sampson's report showed real engagement and familiarity with the work of the

elementary school classroom. His vision of English was based on practical considerations and present realities.

Both reports portray the tension between the vision of cultural equality and the reality of economic and social inequality. Sampson, working with poor children from the East End of London, recorded the State's neglect of elementary education, the poor conditions in which elementary pupils worked and the inadequate resources made available to them. Sampson recognised that this was a world in which the vast majority of children left school at fourteen to go into work that was sometimes dangerous and often demeaning. He expressed anger at this: 'remember that boys leave the elementary school to go to work at just the age when more fortunate boys leave the preparatory schools to go to public schools...Many of them are physically mere children at fourteen....(p.11) Sampson did not, however, use the evidence he had put forward to argue for economic and social change.

However sincerely we desire to reform the world, we must, for immediate purposes, take the world as it is; (Sampson, 1921, p.10)

Having accepted, then, that this was a world where children spent their days putting lids on cans and matches into boxes, both Sampson and Newbolt put forward a powerful vision of a dual purpose for English which was to be the subject which on the one hand, though its development of civilised humanity, was to provide a bulwark against the uncivilised, inhumane, but irresistible forces of capitalism which produced child labour, and on the other was to provide a defence against the forces of socialism which aimed to achieve economic equality and an end to child labour. This essential purpose was clearly stated. Education was 'to prepare mankind, not merely to live, but to live

together in human fellowship and reasonable subordination here and now, in the very world that is the world for all of us' (Sampson, 1921, p.viii).

The phrase 'reasonable subordination' is central to both Sampson's and Newbolt's vision. The primary purpose of education, for these authors, was not that which is so frequently advocated today – a means by which economic and social advancement through the demonstration of individual ability and aptitude can be achieved - indeed, its purpose was almost diametrically opposed to this vision of equality of opportunity; education was to promote in individuals a resistance to the lures of economic advancement.

Education is initiation, not apprenticeship. It has nothing to do with trade, business or livelihood; it has no connection with rate of wages or increase of pay. Its scale is not the material scale of the market. Education is a preparation for life, not merely for a livelihood, for living not for a living. (Sampson, 1921, p.4)

The first thought of education must be fullness of life, not professional success. That is the only universal educational ideal. (Newbolt, 1921, p.62)

How, then, was this transformation to be effected? How were English children going to be taught to resist the forces of commercialism? The answer to this question, the authors argued, lay in the concept of personal growth through English. English was the subject which engaged with 'life'. In defining this purpose for English, Sampson and Newbolt show themselves to be the inheritors of Arnold and the true predecessors of today's teachers of English who, as the data will show, also profess confidently that English is the subject which is about 'life'.

English (rather than any other subject) was, in Sampson's and Newbolt's view central to the achievement, through education, of fulfilled 'life' and 'living' because it had within its domain the responsibility for the one immaterial inheritance shared by all

classes, the English language. An education in the English language had a centralising function: it was to be the means by which a shared sense of Englishness, a sense which would serve to bind the different elements of society together, was to be developed.

Whatever form the later education of girls and boys may take, whatever the special subject or aspect of study they elect to pursue, whatever the nature of the livelihood that actually awaits them at fourteen or sixteen or eighteen or twenty-one, they must all be able to speak, to read, to write, because speaking, reading and writing are the means of human intercourse, of communion between man and his fellows. The inarticulate person is cut off from his kind or fatally limited to a communion of sullen contact with the equally inarticulate. Before the English child can awaken to any creative fullness of life he must become proficient in the use of his native tongue, the universal tool of all callings and of all conditions. (Sampson, 1921, p.14)

Plainly, the first and chief duty of the elementary school is to give its pupils speech – to make them articulate and civilised human beings, able to communicate themselves in speech and writing, and able to receive the communications of others. (Newbolt, 1921, p.60)

Having laid upon English teachers the responsibility for producing civilisation both Sampson and Newbolt then proceeded to expound the qualities which English teachers should portray and, in this important respect, demonstrate a paradox which remains unnoticed by the curriculum commentators ((Baldick,1983; Doyle, 1989) who emphasise the conservatism of their social opinions but neglect the radicalism of these early author's conception of the pedagogy which would need to be adopted by teachers of English if 'life' through English was to be achieved. Contained in the work of both Sampson and Newbolt are strikingly contemporary allusions: both authors articulate practices in the teaching of English which have profoundly influenced the development of the subject and would be strongly supported by teachers at the end of the twentieth century, being recognised by them as the practical application, within the classroom, of a philosophy of personal growth through English.

The first parallel between the early authors and contemporary English teachers is in their conception of the special role of the English teacher who, as someone who is to generate 'life' in pupils, needs to have very particular personal qualities. Newbolt was quite clear that the teacher of English should be special. The charge of developing the soul of the nation should be entrusted only to individuals with particular personal and intellectual qualities.

....for the purposes of such an education as we have outlined no teacher can, in his own grade, be too highly gifted or trained (Newbolt, 1921, p.24)

The special relationship between the teacher of English and their pupils advocated by Newbolt and Sampson, is one that has profound contemporary resonances. All the respondents in this survey consider that their relationship with their pupils is different from that of other teachers, and that this difference is built upon their close knowledge of their pupils as individuals.

Both Sampson and Newbolt recognise the power of language to develop thought and prefigure the theory of oracy. In Newbolt's case, this pre-figurement is striking when juxtaposed with relatively contemporary (Barnes, 1976) writing about the relationship between thought and language.

It is a common experience that to find fit language for our impressions not only renders them clear and definite to ourselves and to others but in the process leads to deeper insight and fresh discoveries, at once explaining and extending our knowledge. English is not merely the medium of our thought, it is the very stuff and process of it. (Newbolt, 1921, p.20)

Language is not the same as thought, but it allows us to reflect upon our thoughts. The metaphor contained in reflect is here highly appropriate; what we say mirrors our thought processes and enables us to take

responsibility for them. Thus children and adults alike are not only receiving knowledge but remaking it for themselves. (Barnes, 1976, p.19)

Many English teachers, and certainly those in this survey, would share Sampson's and Newbolt's distrust of decontextualised grammar exercises. Newbolt, again, shows a visionary quality in his prefiguring of a descriptive approach to grammar advocated by contemporary linguists.

It is possible that future text books on English grammar will wear an air very strange to those brought up on 'cases', 'declensions', conjugations' etc. and that we shall hear of new parts of speech and much of 'word order', 'token words' and the like (Newbolt, 1921, p.292)

Sampson considers at some length the writing process as it was then practised in elementary schools, with set topics and timed compositions and, in his recommendation of a different approach to the teaching of writing, becomes the first advocate of practices which contemporary teachers of English would immediately recognise – the concept of writing for a real purpose and a real audience (he recommended the production of a class magazine); the recognition that writing, as the most extended form of human language, and that furthest from speech, is difficult and needs a sympathetic reader if it is to develop: 'the assumption must be that it is splendid and that the teacher will love to read it' (Sampson, 1921, p57); the advocacy of careful correction of writing which concentrates on a limited number of key errors, rather than a correction of every mistake; the recognition of the importance of making a connection between home knowledge and school knowledge – clearly articulated in Sampson's exhortation that the subjects of written composition should be those that reflected the children's experience: 'merely to ask boys and girls to set down in writing how they would

clean a pair of boots or how they would lay a table is to give them really efficient practice in the craft of writing. (Sampson, 1921, p.64)

However, if Sampson and Newbolt share remarkable similarities in their vision of the practices of English teaching which would allow personal growth to be achieved, they also, in their essential difference, lay bare the competing claims made by the two most powerful schools of English, both of whom espoused personal growth as a central aim, which were to follow these early pioneers. The key division between these two schools is centred upon the form of language which was to be the centre of the English curriculum, and the basis upon which personal growth could be founded.

Newbolt, following the tradition established by Arnold, argued that literature was the essential means by which the individual could grow and become immersed in a common cultural inheritance which would carry with it a sense of what it was to be English.

.....if we explore the course of English literature, if we consider from what source its stream has sprung, by what tributaries it has been fed, and with how rich and full a current it has come down to us, we shall see that it has other advantages not to be found elsewhere. There are mingled in it, as only in the greatest of rivers could be mingled, the fertilising influences flowing down from many countries and from many ages of history. Yet all these have been subdued to form a stream native to our own soil. The flood of diverse human experience which it brings down to our own life and time is in no sense or degree foreign to us, but has become the native experience of men of our own race and culture. (Newbolt, 1921, pp 13 - 14)

Literature was to be put at the forefront of the drive to promote moral regeneration and spiritual renewal; literature, Newbolt argued was to be viewed as

.... a possession and a source of delight, a personal intimacy and the gaining of personal experience, an end in itself and, at the same time, an equipment for the understanding of life. (Newbolt, 1921, p.19)

In this essential respect, Newbolt foreshadows the work of Leavis and the Cambridge school (of whom Roger Knight, quoted below, is perhaps the last and most unreconstructed proponent) whose vision of personal growth is centred upon literature as the essential language of English and the creation of a canon of literary texts which will express, in the finest and most powerful language, lessons for living to those who are judged able to benefit from a rigorous training in the correct response to what they read.

Books are not things in themselves, they are merely the instruments through which we hear the voices of those who have known life better than ourselves. (Newbolt, 1921, p.19)

Our understanding of language and history alike is feeble unless we accept that the roots of both are moral and spiritual. We do not need the gospel of St Matthew in order to show this. Any work of literature, whether written for children or adults, will answer. To read, say *Othello*, *Mansfield Park* and *The Rainbow* with discriminating attention is to be introduced to the history of the English language at a depth with which no abstract examination of syntactical or lexical change can possibly compare. Each of these texts is centrally concerned with the relationship between men and women. The language in which these relationships are explored and exhibited, its moral reach and charge, is different in each case. Each, nonetheless, is palpably connected with the others in the unbroken continuity of English and its literature. To read these books is to enter into that history, to know it from the inside. Whilst we are inside that language it is to much more than language that we are attending. (Knight, 1996, p.69)

In putting literature as the essential element of secondary school English Newbolt established, also, a very powerful vocation for the teacher of English who must be the conduit through which great language, redolent with life and lessons for living, is transmitted to the nation's children. The English teacher, if he is to fulfil this great purpose, has to be especially sensitive and gifted.

To convey anything of the feeling and thought which are the life of literature the teacher must have been touched by them himself and be moved afresh by the act of communicating the touch to others. (Newbolt, 1921, p.11)

Sampson was much more circumspect in his advocacy of literature and, indeed, sounded a cautionary note over what he obviously felt were extravagant claims for its purpose and effect.

..let me beg teachers to take a sane view of literature. Let us have no pose or affectation about it. Reading Blake to a class is not going to turn boys into saints. In the other parts of our English course we can be certain of accomplishing something; in literature there is merely a chance that we shall do something for somebody, and in that hope we proceed. The end of great literature is truth; and truth, though sometimes exquisite, is often terrible. We do not want a cant of literature in our schools. (Sampson, 1921, p.94)

Sampson's placing of literature as merely an element of English, not its centre, and his promotion of other forms of language, both spoken and written, to serve a practical, communicative purpose, together with his insistence that children would communicate most effectively when they talked or wrote about real experience, mark him out as the key forerunner of the London school in the much later writing of one of the founders of the London school.

Keep sending them home – to mum, to dad, to the family; at meals, quarrelling, having a laugh, getting up, going out, buying something. Because they know and feel about these things they have language to write about them. The springs of life are being tapped. (Rosen in Medway, 1990, p.12)

Despite the different emphases of their vision for the subject of English it is, however, important to recognise the startlingly ambitious and powerful purpose which both Sampson and Newbolt defined for English. The few years of an elementary education in English were to provide the haven of kindness which would underpin the growth of humanity in working class children.

There can be little doubt that Sampson's experience of children living in poverty in the slums of the East End had induced a real and felt compassion for their suffering.

For these children, the experience of a humane schooling was paramount.

I am thinking of those in whose lives love and affection have no part. It is they who have most need of all the humanising influence we can shed upon them. They can be humanised by the work of the school and by the personal kindness of the teachers. They can live, for those few precious hours of school, in an atmosphere of humane thought and feeling. We cannot expect them to be human if we do not humanise them. (Sampson, 1921, p.111)

And in this endeavour, English had a key role: that of the provider of social cohesion.

An education of this kind is the greatest benefit which could be conferred upon any citizen of a great state, and that the common right to it, the common discipline and enjoyment of it, the common possession of the tasks and association connected with it, would form a new element of national unity, linking together the mental life of all classes by experiences which have hitherto been the privilege of a limited section. (Newbolt, 1921, p.15)

Newbolt recognised, however, that his programme of cultural commonality might not be accepted by those who, in his view, needed it most,

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 as an ornament, a polite accomplishment, a subject to be despised by really virile men'.....we regard the prevalence of such opinions as a serious matter, not merely because it means the alienation of an important section of the population from the 'comfort' and 'mirthe ' of literature, but chiefly because it points to a morbid condition of the body politic which if not taken in hand may be followed by lamentable consequences. (Newbolt, 1921, p.252)

In this extract Newbolt becomes dangerously close to betraying his essential purpose and in so doing establishes a powerful element in the Cambridge school model

of personal growth. The use of anachronisms in the above extract is telling. A vision of England, and Englishness, rooted in the past, and in essential English virtues, was to be the bulwark against demands for economic equality. Newbolt here pre-figures Leavis and Thompson's (1933) desire to return, through literature, to a mythical past in an agrarian economy with small communities in which language remained redolent with 'life'. Such an immersion was to compensate the reader for a very different industrial, urban economy in which there was, for many people, little 'comforte and mirthe'.

Sampson, having also rejected social and economic change, could only look to moral degeneracy as the cause of the condition of the poor and in so doing promulgates a deception.

Slums exist because there are slum-souls, because there are souls that would turn a palace into a rookery of slums. It is the slum souls we must save. (Sampson, 1921, p 111-112)

Sampson here sets English teachers along a well-worn path. Responsible for humanising the nation's children, they must be kind; their classroom must become a haven from the cold rigours of the world outside; their classroom practice must allow the children to connect their experience of life with the work that they are asked to do in English lessons. Most importantly, Sampson and Newbolt envisage a messianic purpose for English (saving souls) and, in so doing, set out for English a purpose which it has striven to achieve ever since, the growth of spirit, personality and criticality, through the development of language abilities. It is from this foundation that the two most important schools of thought on the teaching of English, the Cambridge and London schools, were developed, an account of which is given in the next chapter.

Chapter Four

Cambridge and London

The aim of personal growth through English has united the two schools of thought which have shaped the development of the subject this century. In their different ways the authors of the Cambridge school and the London school have furthered the purpose of the early authors of the curriculum, endowing upon the subject of English a cultural and moral mandate. English, in the final event, for the authors of both schools, justifies its pre-eminent place in the school curriculum because it provides a firm foundation for the development of a mature sensibility which is founded upon the exploration of moral issues framed in language which has the ability to affect emotion and perception and in so doing to harness and develop thought.

The Cambridge school was established by F. R. Leavis and his followers. The London school had three key figures - Douglas Barnes, Harold Rosen and James Britton. Commentators differ as to the extent to which these two schools were in conflict with one another. Ball et al. (1985, 1990) argue that there was a clear division in the conception of English fostered by the two schools; this is reflected in the authors' characterisation of the Cambridge school as 'English as Literature' and the London school as 'English as Language'. Goodson and Medway (1990) argue, however, that there were fundamental links between the theoretical positions taken by the two schools, both of which adopted, as their central aim, the development of personal growth through English. The evidence presented in chapters six to nine supports Medway's position, arguing, further, that the

essential difference between the Cambridge and London schools centred upon the means by which the aim of personal growth was to be achieved.

The Cambridge school, following in the tradition established by Arnold, and further articulated by Newbolt, placed literature at the centre of the English curriculum. This was the form of language which, the Cambridge school writers believed, would enable children to achieve personal growth through the development of cultural and moral discrimination.

The London school, following in the tradition established by Sampson, regarded literature with much more caution and viewed it as merely one of the languages of the English curriculum. The London school writers placed more emphasis on the recognition and development of the ordinary language of pupils. This language was to serve as a vehicle for the articulation and exploration of each individual's experience which was, in turn, to lead to the examination of the ideas and feelings thus communicated, and, through this process, to develop reflective thought. This process, subsequently named oracy, was to be the central means through which each individual was to achieve personal growth through English.

The influence of the London school, as the data chapters of this study will show, remains powerfully present in the ideology of the respondents of this study. The London perspective on personal growth through expression of feeling and thought in language (oracy), and through a rejection of decontextualised grammar, is very powerful in the respondents' understandings of their practice in terms of speaking and listening and in the teaching of writing. However, the data chapters also reveal that the Cambridge school model is still an important influence in the respondents' practice, particularly in the teaching of a response to literature (although this influence is unacknowledged by the respondents in their rhetorical representation of their practice).

This chapter will, therefore, describe the development of the Cambridge and the London schools' versions of the concept of personal growth through English. The main elements of each school's model of this concept will be summarised in order to establish a theoretical framework within which the respondents' rhetoric and practice (and the divergences between them) will be analysed. In this way the continuing influence of both schools will be evaluated, in conjunction with an analysis of the ways in which the respondents have developed new models of English which, whilst being firmly rooted in earlier traditions, are designed to meet the changing circumstances in which they work at the end of the twentieth century.

The Cambridge School model of personal growth through English

Any culture worth having depends, at its best, on words. Everything of importance, from the techniques whereby we exist to our attitudes towards life, is shared and handed on by words. Our feelings about things that matter – birth, love, death – are moulded by words and their associations, words with a charge of meaning, increased and renewed by their use in poetry and song. The richness and vitality and precision of the English language form a kind of capital accumulated by words over centuries of active use. (Thompson in Holbrook, 1965, p. vii)

One of the important continuities between the early progenitors of personal growth, Arnold, Sampson and Newbolt, and the writers of the Cambridge school, Leavis and his followers, was the passionate belief that they were living in an age of cultural degeneration. The debasement, through capitalism, of the emotional and the intellectual life of the nation was the underlying theme which provided the impetus for the work of the Cambridge writers. The tone was urgent. The teacher of English was faced with an insuperable struggle against the forces of darkness disguised in the form of contemporary culture, notably advertising, the cinema and popular fiction. Contemporary

forms of media communication were to be especially feared and resisted as they debased, through their pursuit of material gain, the English language, which was the essential repository in which traditional moral and cultural values had, throughout the centuries, been maintained. A debasement in the use of language would lead to a debasement of the fabric of society.

I believe that the imaginative life of children is distorted today by the meretricious inculcation of fear and hate, through the 'media'. By a constant flow of such material a desperate, self-defensive side of their own nature is aroused, and their sanctitude is menaced. (Holbrook, 1979, p. 181)

One strategy advocated by the Cambridge school writers to counter the pernicious influence of the media was a training in cultural discrimination through an analysis of the way that the media worked in advertising and in popular fiction. One exercise which was advocated was the reading aloud of magazine adverts. The response to such an activity was, however, highly constrained and contained strong echoes of Arnold's didactic purpose for the teaching of literature.

Pupils should be asked whether they can speak such expressions, or read out passages containing them without feeling self-conscious, embarrassed and shame faced. (Leavis and Thompson, 1964, p. 51)

Following Arnold's and Newbolt's lead the writers of the Cambridge school sought to establish a cultural hierarchy based upon a notion of immaterial commodity which would reside in the value assigned to a work of literature. This cultural value system would provide a bulwark against the prevailing forces of economic capitalism in which value is regulated by the monetary worth of a material commodity. The finest literature, the Cambridge authors maintained, contained a repository of the best that had been thought or said in the culture. If readers were able to respond properly to the text,

paying detailed attention to its language and its meaning, they would benefit from the best training in cultural discrimination and would be inoculated against the false values of capitalism. This tenet provided the basis for the Cambridge writers' philosophy of personal growth through English.

We know that, in such a time of disintegration . . . no effort at integration can achieve anything real without a centre of real consensus – such a centre as is presupposed in the possibility of literary criticism and is tested in particular judgements. But "tested" does not say enough; criticism, when it performs its function, not merely expresses and defines the 'contemporary sensibility'; it helps to form it and the function of *Scrutiny* as we conceive it, is (among other things) to help to persuade an effective 'contemporary sensibility' into being – for that rather, is what the critical function looks like when decay has gone so far.

(Leavis in Bantock, 1963, p. 166)

This belief in the power of literature to provide a cultural and moral repository for the nation led to the most lasting achievement of the Cambridge school - the formation of the literary canon. The motive behind the construction of the canon was clear. If the language, and the culture embodied in the language, was in decline, then it was imperative to preserve for the present and for future generations the best that had been thought and said in the past. In this way readers living in a debased present could learn, through the reading of great literature, how to live a moral life. Canonical texts, in the view of the Cambridge authors, were those that contain 'life', in Arnold's words (taken from Plato), to contain 'the best that has been thought or said' in the language. Texts which contained 'life' had to be relevant to the problems and purposes of living – poetry divorced from an intelligent and disciplined engagement with reality was, in Leavis's view, devitalised – lacking in the essential requirement of 'life': 'The constanting, relating and critical mind has its essential part in the work of sensibility.' (Leavis, 1986, p.217). Literature worthy of canonical status had to achieve an objectification of experience:

great writing was defined by the expression of a disciplined consciousness: 'To analyse your experience you must, while keeping it alive and immediately present as experience, treat it in some sense as an object.' (Leavis, 1968, p.220). Readers who were able to appreciate the representation of 'life' in great literary works would, through the affect of their response, be able to grow through English.

The creation of a literary canon was accompanied by the practice which has remained powerfully present in English at school and University level. Critical analysis of literature was advocated as the means by which individual moral growth through English could be achieved. This is an act which, if enacted 'by its proper methods and in pursuit of its proper ends' (Leavis, 1968, p. 219) would culminate in personal creative and moral growth.

Analysis . . . is the process by which we seek to attain a complete reading of the poem – a reading that approaches as nearly as possible to the perfect reading. There is nothing in the nature of 'murdering to dissect', and suggestions that it can be anything in the nature of laboratory-method misrepresent it entirely. We can have the poem only by an inner kind of possession; it is 'there' for analysis only in so far as we are responding appropriately to the words on the page. In pointing to them (and there is nothing else to point to) what we are doing is to bring into sharp focus, in turn, this, that and the other detail, juncture, or relation in our total response

. . . Analysis is not a dissection of something that is already and passively there. What we call analysis is, of course, a constructive or creative process. It is a more deliberate following-through of that process of creation in response to the poet's words which reading is. It is a re-creation in which, by a considering attentiveness, we ensure a more than ordinary faithfulness and completeness'. (Leavis in Bantock, 1963, p. 158)

In these extracts are contained the key tenet of Leavis's theory of critical analysis and of the role of the critic. The first point to be noted is that there was one perfect reading of a text to which the best criticism strove to attain. The act of criticism was a

creative one in which the critic worked to 'possess' the poem, that is, to come as close as possible to the author's intentions and his experience, expressed in words. To achieve this possession, the poem must be read in great detail with minute attention paid to the words on the page. The text was to be studied in isolation from the historical and cultural context in which it was written; such research in Leavis's view, was irrelevant; it devalued the text which, if it contained 'life', would also stand alone in divulging its essential meaning to those with the sensitivity to understand it (there was nothing else to point to than the words on the page). The act of criticism was akin to the act of creation in that it was also a conscious attempt to harness thought and discrimination in the expression of experience and feeling. It was an attempt by the reader to come as close as possible to the writer; to communicate with the writer's refined sensibility and, in so doing, to acquire lessons about life.

Readers who were trained to practice literary criticism would form an intellectual elite - those with the sensibility and the intelligence to recognise the achievement of great writers of the past and to promote the work of great writers of the present and in the future. It was at this audience that the journal of the Cambridge school, *Scrutiny*, was aimed. These readers would become the arbiters of quality and the guardians of the linguistic cultural heritage in an age of decline and degeneration. They would be the guardians of the nation's cultural and moral inheritance

However, although Leavis's work had (and retains) a huge influence over the development of the subject, doubts were expressed, even by his admirers, over the practicality of his programme. Bantock (1963), for example, questioned whether a rigorous training in practical criticism would be suitable for the majority of school pupils: 'the number who benefit from this sort of task seems to me to be more limited than we commonly admit' (p.167).

This questioning led to another version of the Cambridge school's attempt to foster personal, moral and cultural growth through English, an attempt which retained literature at the centre of the English curriculum, but shifted the focus of the pupils response from criticism to creativity.

Perhaps it should be our long-term aim to make criticism creative and to make creativity, at least at the stages of expression, self-critical – which is only to reaffirm what the Romantics since the time of Coleridge and Schiller have demanded, that we should nurture the whole man through the power of aesthetic disciplines. (Abbs, 1969 p.75)

Abbs signals here the key move made by those Cambridge school writers who recognised that an English curriculum which concentrated solely on the close reading of chosen texts from the canon would not be suitable for the majority of pupils in secondary modern schools. Creativity was, for these children, to replace criticism as the means by which personal growth through English, would be achieved.

I do not want us to regard children as lesser poets, as we do when mature writers fail, but as young poets – poets in embryo . . . Instead of there being a great gulf fixed between the mature and immature artist, their worlds lie very close together, their meanings are akin, and the process by which they reach them is the same.' (Hourd in Mathiesson, 1975, p.111)

The focus of English for less academically able pupils was as an aesthetic discipline designed to nurture the creative and the cultural life of the whole school population. In this new focus the creative potential of all children was to be harnessed through the practice of creative writing which would enable children both to articulate and to analyse their lived experience. This objectification would help to heal the mental scars caused by living in a material, industrial society. For the Cambridge school writers (particularly Holbrook and Abbs) creativity, rather than criticism, was the route to personal growth through English.

In all the key 'school teachers' texts' written by the Cambridge school writers the work of children is printed and discussed in addition to the work of established writers. Abbs (1969) devotes a whole section to an analysis of pupils' poetry in which he combines an analysis of the technical achievement of the children in their verse: 'The reader will observe for himself how the lines, particularly at the end, rhythmically enact the movement of the foal . . .' (p.54) with a concern for the therapeutic effects of the act of creativity. '...we are not primarily concerned with technique, but with the liberation of the personality through the imagination' (Abbs, 1969, p.55).

It is in the work of David Holbrook that the practical concern to create an English curriculum for less academic and, often, socially disadvantaged children is most evident. Allen (1980), commenting on Holbrook's work, characterises his approach to English teaching as a 'psychiatric' one in which the importance of creativity in the process of achieving personal, moral and cultural growth, especially for the children in the C and D streams in secondary modern schools, was paramount: 'The use of English for normal practical purposes cannot be developed for most pupils by exercises alone. It can only be developed culturally – that is, from the pleasure of the organised word in imaginative writing.' (Holbrook, 1964, p.22). In his evocatively titled *English for the Rejected*, in which he recounts his experiences and his work as an English teacher for the lower streams of a secondary modern school, the centrality of creative expression is trenchantly argued as a means by which disturbed and alienated children can begin to make some sense of their life's experience and, through the relief of expression of that which is disturbing or puzzling, begin to approach spiritual health.

The freeing of emotion in a child with such an ungainly sensibility, together with the experience of free drama, can eventually yield a remarkable fluency . . . I hope the reader will take in the quality of *life* in the writing – despite the hopeless spelling and the poor punctuation. Ignore these

mere graphic aspects, and look at what Joan is doing – her mind is working quickly and vividly, holding in suspension a complex of human relationships, which she is putting into verbal form . . . This accomplishment is a considerable one, as anyone knows who has tried to write a play or novel. (Holbrook, 1964, p.57-58)

Drama is included as an important aspect of the English curriculum by some of the Cambridge commentators (notably Whitehead, 1966). The importance of coming to an understanding of the contemporary world through self-expression and creative effort was deemed to be the most important contribution to the English curriculum: 'essentially, acting is the child's natural way of enlarging his imaginative understanding of other human beings – and therefore his understanding of the nature and conditions of human life itself.' (Whitehead, 1966, p.123). In these writers' work the conception of English as a school subject became widened to include the creative, as well as the critical, as a means to develop personal health, morality and growth through English.

Good reading, and good writing, the enjoyable study of literature, and the experience of creative writing; reading children's literature; hours and hours discussing the symbolism of children's writing - fairy tales and child's speech, reading poetry and talking about poetry. These are the real disciplines of English (Holbrook, 1979, p.38)

The Cambridge model of personal growth through English is summarised in figure 5 below.

Figure 5 – A summary of the Cambridge model of personal growth through English

Language, Culture and Literature. The inculcation, in certain authors and texts, of important values, needed to maintain the vitality of the language and the culture in a degenerate age.

The canon – the definition of texts which contain and communicate 'life' to readers.

A training in cultural discrimination to instil in pupils a resistance against the forces of commercialisation and the mass media which debase language and sap its vitality through its perversion for material ends.

Practical criticism – an emphasis on the close reading of a literary text in order to establish a correct response which demonstrates that the message of the texts has been understood and the force of its expression in language appreciated.

The cultivation of children's creativity in creative writing and drama as a means of encouraging psychic health.

As a preface to what follows, it must be stated that although the most significant writers of the Cambridge school did lose overt influence and prestige, (none of them were invited to be members of the committee writing the Bullock report (1975), an omission bitterly resented by Holbrook), the influence of Leavis and his followers on English at school and University level is still, as the data in chapter 7 will reveal, powerfully present in current approaches to the teaching of literature. The Cambridge influence can be seen clearly in the choice of texts read in the English classroom, in the high status accorded to the practice of the close reading of a text and in the value placed by the respondents upon their pupils' ability to respond to the text within the highly formal style of the critical essay. As Eagleton (1983) writes: 'The fact remains that English students in England today are 'Leavisites' whether they know it or not, irremediably altered by that historic intervention.' (p.31)

It is clear, however, that despite the lasting achievements of the Cambridge school in forging the discipline of English there was a move towards what was,

essentially, a more democratic ideology of teaching and learning characterised by the pedagogical practices developed by the London school. Several accounts have been written of the move away from the Cambridge (English as literature) to the London (English as language) version of English.

Those written from a sociological perspective such as Ball et al. (1990) and Medway (1990) cite the move from the tripartite system of education to comprehensive schools as a decisive shift. The mix of children from different social backgrounds and of widely different abilities meant that the grammar school curriculum based largely on the reading of literary texts from the canon was no longer an appropriate or a workable basis for an English curriculum. This is a point made, also, by Protherough and King (1995).

In the 1960s and 1970s, the shift away from a selective system towards almost universal comprehensive education, the raising of the school leaving age, the extension of external examinations to cater for the great majority of pupils and the increasing popularity of mixed-ability teaching, all demanded a reappraisal of the texts on offer in schools. The range became more international, widened in theme and genre, and included more 'popular' materials, drawing increasingly on television, films, newspapers and songs. The concept of literature as an unproblematic category, a fixed hierarchy of 'quality' was widely challenged. (p.35)

The shift in attitudes towards the canon and, crucially, to the practice of criticism was also to be felt at University level. New movements in critical theory centred around the cultural studies movement (Doyle, 1982; Widdowson, 1982; Eagleton, 1983; Green, 1987; Baldick, 1987; Hunter, 1988) challenged the claim that the study of English literature was, in itself, a force for the development, in each individual, of a moral code, arguing, through an analysis of the writings of the early authors of the English curriculum - Arnold, Newbolt and Sampson - that English had, throughout its history, been a prime agent used by the establishment to control the mass of the population.

We must revise our view of English as the (true or false) manifestation of a literary culture. Instead, we must look at it as largely the outcome of the autonomous development of a special pedagogical technology which, under certain specifiable conditions, found in literature a device which focussed and supported the functions of moral supervision. (Hunter, 1988, p.36)

The Cultural Studies writers challenged, also, another fundamental tenet of the Cambridge school, namely the belief that the text contained essential qualities and meanings which readers with sensibility would unlock. Such a challenge raised a further question over the role of the literary critic. If the text could contain and generate multiple meanings, where lay the authority of the critic to establish its essential message?

Dependent on the texts it isolates for critical attention, *The Great Tradition* limits the possible readings of those texts, confines their meaning within the conventional, the acceptable, the authoritatively 'obvious'. (Belsey in Widdowson, 1982, p.122)

Interest was growing, also, in research into the historical, political and cultural context in which texts were produced. The new historicism advocated by critics (Dollimore and Sinfield, 1985) challenged the practice of criticism based on the reading of texts in isolation from their cultural and historical contexts. The whole notion of a fixed canon of literature also came under attack, most significantly by feminist academics concerned to validate the work and the achievements of women in literature (Figs, 1982; Showalter, 1978; Spender, 1980). The whole basis of the Cambridge position, and its influence upon school and university English, was openly attacked by Eagleton at the 1985 NATE conference.

Why does it insist so dogmatically on abstracting personal values and qualities from the whole concrete context – political society – in which they are embedded? Why does it continually offer us the cerebral abstraction of something called 'interpersonal relationships' or 'personal growth' or

'immediate experience', when a moment's thought is enough to reveal that such things gain their fully concrete significance only in the whole political and historical context which shapes them? (Eagleton in Ball, 1990, p.83)

Such moves were lamented by Holbrook in a trenchantly titled paper: *'The Real Discipline: English Going On At Cambridge'* (1984) in which the author complains about students 'latching on to half understood ideas from structuralism and reconstructionism' but failing to display 'the essential requirement' – which was the close reading of the text. 'Our response to the words on the page. If we do not 'hear' them, their rhythm and their quality of texture, so that we are moved, there is nothing to discuss.' (Holbrook, 1984, p.4) and in which he complains about a new course entitled 'The literary presentation of women'.

If the certainties promoted by the Cambridge school over the canon and close reading were under attack an answer was not to be found in the Cambridge emphasis on creativity. The attempt made by the Cambridge writers to formulate an English curriculum for lower ability children which in its own way would 'train the sensibility of three quarters of the nation' (Holbrook, 1961) was also becoming a less effective alternative to the study of literature for the more able. There is, perhaps, a complex range of influences in the decline of this model of school English. Certainly, the Cambridge school writers became, in some instances, so extreme in their distaste for modern society as to appear slightly ridiculous. Holbrook (1961) cited the increasing toll of road accidents and the high death rate of American prisoners of war in Korea as some of the signs of 'weakness in our living power' (p.56) and, in an ethically dubious move, quoted passages 'from a collection of letters written by friends of a friend' in which what could be considered quite innocuous passages – written for a private audience and dealing with everyday activities of going to the pictures and the wholly normal adolescent feelings of sexual attraction – were taken as signs of extreme cultural degeneration. This

level of distaste and disgust of contemporary adolescent culture seems today to be unbalanced, and must increasingly have been felt to be so to contemporary readers. Holbrook and others (Inglis, 1969) came dangerously close to displaying contempt rather than concern for young people – their concern to promote a training in sensibility was, in effect, a doomed attempt to teach adolescents to despise their own culture. Ironically Holbrook anticipates Eagleton's (1983) questioning of the power of literature to improve morality.

Some of the young people (who wrote the letters) passed their examinations, some didn't: the literature they studied hardly seemed to offer from its sarcophagus a warm helping hand in their lives. (Holbrook, 1961, p.59)

The 'Cambridge' difficulty with the 'mass' of the school population culminated in Bantock's (1963) assertion that an education for less able children should aim to reproduce the values of the 'folk' culture and sustain, through the use of free poetry, drama, dance, art, weaving, 'a concentration on symbol and image rather than on intellectual processes'. In addition, the education of girls should focus on domestic life and for boys should focus on the machine. What education should not aim for with these children (the four-fifths of the contemporary school population) was an increase in intellectual, abstract knowledge or the study of subjects not intimately related to the child's future personal and vocational prospects. Thus, formal history and geography, a good deal of arithmetic, a second language, 'go out'. Training in commercial subjects did not 'humanise', and as little should be undertaken as possible. The model of education advocated by Bantock would enable these children 'to realise their natures' (p.221) and to serve society happily in the station to which they were born. This was not a

programme to be seriously considered at the beginning of the 1960s where the move to increasing educational opportunity through comprehensive schooling was beginning.

A final difficulty for the Cambridge version of English came, perhaps, from a point made repeatedly by Matthiesson (1975) who argues that English teachers have had to carry a burden of unrealistic expectation and, in particular, to have outstanding personal qualities in order that they might protect children against the whole thrust of contemporary culture. In the work of the Cambridge school writers each lesson became an 'art event' in which the intellect and the emotions of the teacher were fully harnessed in the service of their pupils' creativity.

For when we stand in front of a class of children – we do not know what is going to happen. We sink or swim. Will it be any good? Will the end product make sense when we read them through next morning? Will there be anything there at the end of the hour that wasn't there at the beginning? Will there be something with order and meaning in the pupils' souls at the end rather than mere blots and scrawled paper? Will they beat us? Or refresh us? These are the moments of 'life'. They have to be lived through, and God alone knows what the outcome will be. Every creative act, and every lesson, is a 'surrender to creative fate'. (Holbrook, 1979, p.40)

The London school model of personal growth through English

The London school writers did not view the English lesson as a 'surrender to creative fate' but as a site where particular pedagogical practices could encourage the development of personal growth. The clearest signal for the move from the Cambridge model of English as a site of personal growth through response to literature, or through the use of literary language (what Allen (1980) terms 'art-speech', to the London model of personal growth through the articulation of experience in the ordinary language of the pupils, was made by John Dixon in his aptly titled work *Growth Through English* (1967).

This was Dixon's account of the Dartmouth seminar, an international conference held in 1966 to debate the state of the subject of English and its possible future.

Dixon was concerned to promote a new model of English teaching which would replace what he termed the 'cultural heritage' model promoted by the follower of Leavis in the Cambridge school. The main charge made by Dixon against this model was that it did not take into account the difference of each pupil's individual 'culture'.

In the heritage model the stress was on culture as a *given*. There was a constant temptation to ignore culture as the pupil knows it, a network of attitudes to experience and personal evaluations that he develops in a living response to his family and neighbourhood. (Dixon, 1967, p.3)

The opposition between the development of personal growth through the immersion into an established literary cultural inheritance, or through the exploration and expression of individual experience, lay at the centre of the division between the Cambridge and London schools. For the writers of the London school each individual's experience was worthy of expression through which would develop moral and critical discrimination. The personal growth model put forward by the London school was based upon a theory of practice for English which rested on democratic and inclusive foundations. The London school's main figures, Britton, Barnes, Rosen and Dixon had all worked in schools (Rosen in one of the first comprehensive schools). Crucially, also, their work at University level was in Departments of Education. Their subject was not (as with Leavis) English, but English in education, a different focus which generated a concern with theories of language and learning and a drive to undertake research into the process of language acquisition and learning which would be of practical use to teachers and their pupils. Crucially, English teaching was viewed not as an art form (a key facet of the Cambridge school) which required inspirational teachers but as a

practice which would be improved by particular teaching and learning strategies. James Britton, the central figure of the London school, was director of the first big research project into English teaching funded by the Schools Council, The Development of Writing Abilities 11–18. The culmination of this drive for a theoretical foundation for the practice of English teaching, underpinned by evidence based research, was the Bullock report '*A Language for Life*' (1975) which is recognised 'as one of the century's major documents in English teaching' (Burgess, 1996, p.60), to which Britton was a key contributor. The central figures of the London school were actively involved, also, in the formation of LATE and NATE - thus links with school teachers of English were consolidated.

The London school fostered a wider, more inclusive conception of English as a school subject than that envisaged by the Cambridge school. Personal growth was to be achieved not through an immersion through literature into a high culture, which would invoke forces of resistance to the degraded contemporary world, but through an exploration of the contemporary world as it was experienced by ordinary children. This change of focus was first marked in the work of Percival Gurrey, a lecturer at the London training school, and a teacher of James Britton. Gurrey outlined a new and wider role for the English curriculum.

A teacher of the mother tongue would not go far wrong if he were to regard his main task as 'developing his pupils' skill in using language in various ways and for various purposes' (Gurrey, 1958, p.16).

The author aimed for an holistic approach to the English curriculum in which skills were not taught in isolation and in which the pupils' personal growth 'in mind and spirit' was accompanied by the acquisition of skills in language, with the help of literature and drama. Gurrey reclaimed Sampson's (1921) vision and proposed a greatly

expanded role for the English curriculum in which children were to achieve personal growth through an education which prepared them for life outside school.

We all ought to be on the look-out for ways of bringing the real world into the classroom, for the classroom provides a training for the real world later.'(Gurrey, 1958, p. 97).

The effect of the work of the London group was profound. Both Ball (1985, 1990) and Medway (1990) state that by the mid-1960s it had become the main 'orthodoxy' within the teaching of English with its proponents occupying key positions within NATE. Its influence extended well into the 1980s with the work of the National Oracy Project and, as the data collected for this study will show, the London model retains its power as the theoretical framework by which the respondents conceptualise their practice as teachers of English.

Personal Growth through the London School

Perhaps more than any other member of school staff, the teacher of English has to have his mind intent on his pupils – on their minds, attitudes, personalities – rather than on his subject and the teaching of it. (Gurrey, 1958, p.193)

The central shift from Cambridge to London was in the two schools' understanding of 'life'. Whereas for Leavis the individual had to learn to experience 'life' through reading and responding to the language and the lessons contained in great literature, for the London school 'life' was found in each individual pupil's experience. In the work of Rosen, in particular, but also in Britton, there was a concern to value the experiences of all children, including working class children. This lived experience, Britton and Rosen argued, provided the most powerful basis for personal growth through

English through the development of a reflective awareness, in each individual, of their feelings and beliefs, explored and articulated in language of lived experience.

Another key difference between the London and the Cambridge schools was their respective understanding of the concept of 'life'. For the Cambridge school writers, 'life' was rather a serious business, a constant resistance against the lures of the contemporary world. For the London writers 'life' was, essentially, more optimistic and focused on the enjoyment of the ordinary events experienced by the pupils which were to be represented in the English lesson.

What is known must in fact be brought to life afresh in every knower – by his or her own efforts. (Bullock, 1975, p. 80)

The move to articulate 'life' in English lessons led to an examination of the skills upon which this articulation could be based and an attempt to realise Gurrey's vision of a 'holistic' approach to English in which personal growth could be linked to the acquisition of skills. The re-discovered writings of Vygotsky (1978, 1986) provided a foundation upon which Barnes (1976) was to formulate a new approach to teaching and learning in the classroom, based upon the idea that pupils would learn most effectively if they were enabled to relate existing knowledge (action knowledge) to what they were being taught (school knowledge).

The process of talk was to be the vehicle through which this fusion could be achieved. Pupils were to be given the opportunity to articulate thought through speech. Personal growth through English was rooted in an individual as well as a collective expression of experience which was the basis for the development of critical thought and discrimination. In re-focusing attention upon spoken language, the London group was

recapturing the wider range of aims and purposes of English which an earlier architect of the curriculum, Sampson (1921), had advocated.

Without clearness of expression, clearness of thought is impossible. No one can set down clearly what is not clear to him; and the effort to secure clearness of expression is a great step towards clearness of thought. (Sampson, 1921, p.25)

This element of the London school's work was to be promoted through the work of the National Oracy Project (1987–1993), a large curriculum development initiative which aimed to promote talk as a means of learning across different subject areas.

The London school's advocacy of talk as a key element in the process of learning necessitated a different conception of the process of teaching. If pupils were to be encouraged to talk, the teacher had to be prepared to listen. Barnes (1976) put forward two models of teaching, those of transmission and interpretation. The transmission teacher believed that learning was achieved through the transmission of knowledge from the teacher to the pupil which resulted in little pupil talk and little opportunity for pupils to formulate knowledge for themselves. In contrast an interpretation teacher believed that knowledge existed in the knower's ability to organise thought and action and saw their task as the setting up of a dialogue in which learners could reshape knowledge through verbal interaction with their peers and with their teacher. The interpretation teacher recognised the pupils' life experiences as the basis upon which new learning could be built. Barnes (1976) advocated an interpretative model of teaching as the means by which the communication of ideas and the development of thought could take place through the curriculum.

Such a role had other implications for teachers who must show their pupils that they were interested in their lives and their experiences if the pupils were to feel confident

to bring these into the classroom and use them as a basis for learning. Medway (1990) comments that, for the London school, the basis of the subject of English became the personal experience of the pupils. The aim of the English curriculum became the development of a critical and moral awareness through the expression and evaluation of that experience - individual, personal growth through English.

One of the most fiercely contested differences between the versions of English expounded by the Cambridge and London schools was in the different movements' conceptions of literature and their judgement of its centrality to the English curriculum. In the first quotation, below, Britton put forward the view expressed earlier by Gurrey (1958) that literature was only one of the many forms of language which should be explored in the English lesson and incorporated, within his conception of the term 'literature', the creative, narrative writing done by the pupils themselves. In the second quotation below Britton expounded an understanding of the term 'literature' which was much more inclusive than put forward by Leavis.

I do not see him (the English teacher), then, as a teacher of literature: for this defines his function in extrinsic terms; rather, I believe that the process of structuring personal experience demands the writing and reading of what is essentially literature – language in the role of spectator. (Britton, 1982, p.78)

That a student should read more books with satisfaction may be set down as one objective; as a second, he should read books with more satisfaction. We need to foster, in other words, wide reading side by side with close reading. (Britton, 1977, p.110)

Britton's conception of literature embraced children's writing and popular fiction, as well as poetry and texts from the canon. Although Britton's advocacy of the expression of children's personal experience through creative writing had much in common with the work of some Cambridge writers, notably Holbrook and Abbs, both of

whom argued that creative writing was an essential means by which children could achieve a critical examination of emotion, it also contained an essential difference: The Cambridge school writers did not view children's writing as literature – a term reserved for texts which had fought their way through critical scrutiny into the canon. It was on this different conception of the term 'literature' that the most sharply expressed criticisms, by the Cambridge school writers, against the London school model, were expressed. Allen (1980), for example, averred that Britton's conception of literature was as 'an eccentric, inadequate one' (p. 37) against which he put forward trenchant arguments. Where, asked Allen, in Britton's position, was there space for a consideration of a text's quality? Where lay the authority of the English teacher to choose texts for their pupils to read if considerations of quality were not addressed? Were English teachers, Allen asked, lowering the status of their subject by downgrading what the author considered to be one of its central elements, the teaching of a literary heritage?

Britton's re-conception of the term literature was allied to a rejection of the practice of criticism which he trenchantly dismissed.

To have children take over from their teachers an analysis of a work of literature which their teachers in turn have taken over from the critics or their English professors – this is not a short cut to literary sophistication; it is a short cut that destroys the whole system. (Britton, 1977, p. 109)

Britton promoted a theory of individual, personal response to a text to replace a training in the practice of literary criticism. The personal experience which should be used by pupils to mediate school knowledge should, he argued, also form a basis for their reading and interpretation of literature.

The London group's consideration of the development of writing was anchored to their rejection of a transmissive model of English teaching, and echoed Sampson's

rejection of the learning of decontextualised grammar as a basis for individual expression and communication through written language.

Let me put my view with aggressive brevity and say that *it is impossible to have too little grammar at the elementary stage of education*. Certain grammatical terms – such as sentence, subject, object – are time-saving appliances and naturally must be used in teaching. To use a term, however, does not in the least involve an obligation to explain it. (Sampson, 1921, p. 73)

Grammar . . . can be made useful only if at every point possible it is closely associated with meaning, and only if the grammar is examined and applied to language that arises or might arise in some real situation. (Britton in Pradl, 1982, p. 103)

The various components of the London school's model of English are summarised in figure 6 below.

Figure 6 – a summary of the London model of Personal Growth through English

Personal growth through English is to be achieved through the exploration of the self – the pupils are their own 'subjects of study'.
The promotion of talk as the essential means by which pupils are enabled to learn and to develop critical and moral awareness.
The adoption by the teacher of an interpretative rather than a transmissive role which enables pupils' ideas and voices to be heard in the classroom and to be used as a basis for the content of the lesson.
A wider conception of literature which includes children's creative writing.
The promotion of a personal response to the text.
The rejection of the transmissive teaching of grammar.

The influence of the London model of Personal Growth on Government English education policy

The Bullock report (DES, 1975)

The Bullock report has been recognised by one commentator (Burgess, 1996) as the first report to use research evidence in its lengthy consideration of what English should be and how it should be taught. This report is a significant marker of the declining profile of the Cambridge school and of the increasing profile of the London school. The influence of the London school upon the Bullock report was achieved through the appointment of James Britton onto the Bullock committee. Britton's mark is seen throughout the report's consideration of the central elements of the English curriculum. In its treatment of oracy, literature and grammar the Bullock report endorsed the key tenets of the writers of the London school, supporting the practices by which child-centred learning practices could be used to foster the London model of personal growth through English.

At the outset Bullock committed itself to the most central argument of the London school, that the use of the ordinary language of pupils should be used as the most powerful vehicle to pupil promote thought and learning.

It is enough to state what would generally be agreed: (a) that higher processes of thinking are normally achieved by the interaction of a child's language behaviour with his other mental and perceptual powers; and (b) that language behaviour represents the aspect of his thought processes most accessible to outside influences, including that of the teacher. (Bullock, 1975, p.49)

Bullock adopted the London school's linguistic definition of standard English stating that standard English was a dialect – albeit a powerful one – and a form of

speech that should be added to, rather than replace, the pupil's existing linguistic repertoire. The endorsement of the need to enable pupils to acquire standard English was balanced, therefore, with the injunction that teachers of English must not, in their attempts to widen their pupils' linguistic repertoires, demean or devalue the dialects spoken by their pupils.

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 they are needed. This clearly cannot be achieved overnight, which is why we emphasise that the teacher should start where the child is and should accept the language he brings to school. (Bullock, 1975, p.143)

In the teaching of literature, Bullock was polite about the legacy of the Cambridge school which it recognised to be a 'soundly based tradition' (p.125). However, caution was advocated: 'It may well be that we lack evidence of the 'civilising' power of literature and that some of the claims made for it have seemed over ambitious' (p.125). Teachers were encouraged by the report to reduce the vulnerability of the pupils' response to literature through approaching the teaching of a literary text in an exploratory light in which different responses could be accepted. The move towards an individual, personal response to the text was clearly signalled.

To read intelligently is to read responsively; it is to ask questions of the text and use one's own framework of experience in interpreting it. In working his way through a book the reader imports, projects, anticipates, speculates on alternative outcomes; and nowhere is this process more active than in a work of imaginative literature. (Bullock, 1975, p.130)

The authors of the report were concerned, also, to promote amongst teachers of English a wider conception of the teaching of literature than a concentration on the literary canon. Teachers of English were encouraged to keep a record of their pupils'

reading both in school and outside. The Cambridge tendency to disapprove of children's contemporary culture was discouraged.

Every survey so far carried out into children's reading reveals that much of it is ephemeral or well below what informed adults would consider to be good material. Nevertheless, the skilled teacher will not reject or denigrate it. The willingness to talk about it and take up the child's enthusiasm is essential to the process of encouraging him to widen his range. (Bullock, 1975, p.134)

The influence of Britton as director of the National Writing Project, could clearly be seen in the report's treatment of the teaching of writing. The three language modes defined in the National Writing project - transactional, expressive and poetic - were outlined in Bullock. The creation of an audience for pupil writing and the improvement of writing skills through the drafting process were strongly advocated. The value of decontextualised grammar exercises was questioned. What was advocated, in place of the teaching of formal grammar, was the drafting process.

The best approach is for the teacher to go over the pupil's work with him, discussing persistent errors, suggesting solutions where the writing has run into difficulties, and talking over alternative ways of phrasing something. In much of the writing that takes place in school the pupil's first attempt is expected to be the finished article; there is not enough encouragement of the idea of a first draft to be followed by a second, more refined production. (Bullock, 1975, p.167)

The influence of the London school on the Bullock committee was recognised and bitterly resented by key figures of the Cambridge school. Holbrook dismissed the report's consideration of the processes involved in language learning as 'mechanistic', and this charge leads to his central criticism of Bullock - a criticism founded upon the most profound difference between the Cambridge and London schools' conception of English - the meaning of 'life'.

The title 'A Language For Life' seems to suggest that those who wrote the Bullock Report were aware of this: but their reference to 'life' is not substantiated in the event. They do not really grasp the intentional relationship between mind, symbol, language and reality which Leavis calls 'the living principle'. (Holbrook, 1979, p.25)

The advent of GCSE (1986)

The criteria for GCSE English and English literature promoted the principles and the practice of English teaching advocated by the London school and enshrined in Bullock. The most important factor in the move from GCE to GCSE was the change in the assessment process, from externally set, timed examinations, to coursework assessment. This move enabled the central tenets of the London school model, the promotion of oracy, the widening of the literature curriculum and the advocacy of the drafting process to be implemented in practice.

The process of learning through talk, oracy, was validated in GCSE through the incorporation of speaking and listening as well as reading and writing into the assessment of English. Speaking and listening was graded on the GCSE certificate on a scale from 1 to 5. The criteria for assessment required that candidates be given the opportunity to: present and talk about information; select and evaluate evidence and present a point of view; discuss opinions or points of view; listen to others contributing and responding showing understanding and appreciation of what is said; describe and communicate what has been experienced, felt or imagined; interact with others and respond appropriately in different contexts. (NEA,1991)

There was no direct reference to spoken standard English within the GCSE assessment criteria or within the assessment levels for oral communication. A more

general requirement, that candidates should deploy a range of speech styles appropriate to audience and situation, was included as one of the assessment strands.

One very significant factor in the transfer from the GCE to the GCSE English literature syllabus was the absence of any set texts. The demands of the syllabus were fulfilled by ensuring that responses to literature from different genres were in the GCSE folder. A personal response to literature was required as the criteria for English literature stipulated that pupils must be given the opportunity to communicate a sensitive and informed personal response to texts. Wide reading rather than a concentration on texts from the canon was required, and had to include texts from other cultures. The freedom to teach texts of their own choosing gave English teachers the professional responsibility to develop their own literature curriculum, a change that was widely welcomed.

After years of relative stagnation under CSE/GCE we had been challenged to produce and we challenged our pupils with our own scheme of work. We were able to tailor our courses to the needs of our pupils and we were able to draw upon our own enthusiasms and expertise instead of slavishly following a syllabus handed down from on high. (Letter from a head of English, John Dinham, TES January 29, 1993)

The advent, with GCSE, of assessment by coursework promoted another key practice of the London school – that of the drafting of written work.

Coursework offers realistic conditions for drafting and redrafting with access to resource material. Drafting and redrafting is seen as an essential aspect of the creative process in writing. (NEA, 1991, p.3)

The Cox report (DES, 1989)

The next influential report into the teaching of English was the Cox report (Kingman, 1988, was dismissed by the then education secretary, Kenneth Baker, as an 'interesting report', and subsequently ignored as the establishment turned to Cox, editor of the Black papers and the perceived saviour of the right, to deliver a no frills, back to basics English curriculum). The Cox report (DES, 1989) provided the framework for the first National Curriculum English order (DES,1990). Brian Cox, editor of the Black papers, a series of pamphlets produced in the 1970s and early 1980s which promoted a conservative, back to basics, pro-selection agenda, was put in charge of the subject of English which, for the first time in its history, was to be defined by government agency, in this case a working party of the National Curriculum Council. The appointment of Brian Cox was greeted with suspicion and trepidation by English teachers. It was feared that, as chair of the English committee, he would produce an English curriculum which would deliver the demands of the right wing of the Conservative party articulated in the CPS pamphlets which were being regularly produced at this period. Writing on the political context in which the National Curriculum was conceived and implemented, Jones (1992) refers to the concept of 'unfinished business'.

In this case, the central state is intervening to accomplish the curriculum upheaval which older educational arrangements – teacher autonomy, local control – could not succeed in organising. Its intervention greatly increased the degree of direction planning and monitoring involved in the organisation of learning. By doing so, it can claim to have cut through the knot of problems which reforming traditions were not able to unravel. (p8)

In his commentary on his report, Cox (1991) shows that he was aware of, and sensitive to, teachers' concerns over his appointment and determined to produce a report which would gain general acceptance from the profession.

This concept of *balance* is crucial to an understanding of our Report. A National Curriculum must not enforce one, rigid, prescriptive role on teachers, but must allow them freedom to develop their own initiatives. At the same time they need to give due attention to this kind of balance between different aims and purposes, in this case between the claims of an English tradition and of multi-cultural education. (Cox, 1991, p.71)

It is clear that Cox's concern for balance and his desire not to be regarded as a prejudiced conservative administration stooge led him to accept the key tenets of the London school model of English which was, in this period, strongly in the ascendancy as a theoretical model for English. Indeed, the first paragraph of chapter 15 of Cox (printed, however, at the beginning of the report, in its first paragraph) mentioned the word 'oracy' in a quotation from a paper by Andrew Wilkinson, author of the term.

Where children are given responsibility they are placed in situations where it becomes important for them to communicate – to discuss, to negotiate, to converse – with their fellows, with the staff, with other adults, and of necessity they are likely to develop oral skills. This is basically how oracy grows; it is to be taught by the creation of many and varied circumstances to which both speech and listening are the natural responses. (Wilson in Cox, DES(1989) chapter 15 - introduction)

Speaking and listening was allotted its own profile component, equal with reading and writing, in the 1990 English National Curriculum, although the committee's argument that it should carry an equal assessment rating with reading and writing was not accepted by the then Conservative education secretary, Kenneth Baker.

One strand in the levels of attainment was allotted to the process of oracy, the exploration of feelings and ideas, through discussion with others.

Pupils should be able to: contribute considered opinions or clear statements of personal feelings to group discussions and show an understanding of the contributions of others. (DES, 1990 strand i, level 6, speaking and listening).

Steering a careful line between the necessity of learning spoken standard English in a world in which international communication demanded the acquiring of the international language of business, Cox was careful to reject the notion of any equation of standard with correct English, and in so doing the report aligned itself with linguistic theory and research evidence, as Kingman had done in 1988. In a passage remarkably similar to that in Bullock, Cox insisted that standard English should be regarded as an addition to, not a replacement of, the child's home language.

For pupils who do not have standard English as their native dialect, teaching standard English should draw on their knowledge of other dialects or languages. **The aim is to add Standard English to the repertoire, not to replace other dialects or languages.** It should also be recognised that non-standard forms are systematic and not haphazard. (Cox, DES 1989, paragraph 4.43 – bold type of original reproduced.)

Because of its importance as an international language used for many purposes, all pupils should learn and be explicitly taught, if necessary, standard English. Pupils were not, however, to be assessed for competence in standard English until level 7 (the level the majority of pupils were expected to achieve by the age of 16).

In one key respect, Cox did endorse a central aspect of the work of the Cambridge school – the philosophy of moral and personal growth through the reading of good literature.

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 likely to understand more of themselves. (Cox, DES 1989, paragraph 7.3 –bold type of original reproduced.)

It is interesting to note, however, that fused with the Cambridge ideal is the London perspective of an 'active' engagement with the text (a perspective promoted also by the Cambridge author, Holbrook). Such a response would involve dramatic improvisations based upon the literature read in class; the performance of poetry and the writing of literature by children themselves. This approach, the report argued, was more effective in promoting an understanding of literary genres and techniques than the practice of the teaching of literary criticism. Echoing Britton's (1977) concern that the practice of teaching literature resulted in pupils taking over from the teacher a learned interpretation of a text, the authors of the report stated.

Learning about the construction of an effective text is much better done ...through writing than through critical analysis. It has the further advantage that writing is a skill whose usefulness (pupils) can appreciate, whereas literary criticism is not. (Cox, DES1989, paragraph 7.9)

However, whilst accepting the one aspect of the Cambridge position, Cox rejected the Leavisite practice of prescribing a school literary canon of works from the great tradition.

During the years 11 to 16 pupils will be exposed increasingly to works not written specifically or exclusively for their age group. There is, however, no consensus on which works should be chosen from the vast riches of written English and given a privileged status in the classroom. Formulations of 'literary tradition', our literary heritage, or lists of 'great works', however influential their proponents, may change radically during the course of time. It would be wrong, therefore, for us to prescribe a list of set texts. There is such a variety of good literature available for inclusion in syllabuses that we want teachers to have the freedom to make their own choice of suitable books within the broad guidelines indicated below. (Cox, DES, 1989, paragraph 7.15)

Different categories of genres replaced a list of set texts: pupils should read short stories, novels, plays and poems. They should be introduced to non-fiction; media-related texts and multicultural literature. They should also be introduced to pre-twentieth century fiction. The only author required to be studied by all pupils was Shakespeare. The London emphasis on wide reading was clearly accepted and promoted.

Cox rejected the practice of parsing and grammatical drills: 'They were based on poor models of linguistic structure, which had been abandoned by linguists' (Paragraph 4.24). The rejection of a prescriptive grammar was accompanied by the advocacy of the study of a descriptive grammar which would describe language in use, be relevant to all levels from the syntax of sentences through to the organisation of substantial texts, be able to describe the considerable difference between written and spoken English and be part of a wider syllabus of language study.

The Cox Report (DES, 1989) was greeted with relief by many teachers who felt that their own conception of good practice, heavily influenced by the London school model, was, to a greater extent than they had hoped, embedded in the report's conception of English teaching. This reaction is exemplified by the following statement.

There is much to be thankful for and the removal of hats seems to be in order, not least in acknowledgement of the skill and integrity of the committee members who managed to produce such a clear and cogent report in such a short space of time. (The English Magazine, editorial, no. 21, winter, 1988, p.2)

One of the key elements in this favourable reaction to The Cox Report (DES, 1989) was, argues Jones (1992), its rejection of the radical right's increasingly publicised agenda for the teaching of English and its acceptance of the practices promoted by the London school to promote personal growth through English.

The crucial point is that 'Cox' rejects the definitions of English offered by the radical right and endorsed at one time by the Secretary of State and by the then Prime Minister. Traditional models of grammar are criticised; the canon has lost its centrality; basic skills are a concept with no currency in this report. Instead it validates some themes that have been closely associated with progressive traditions in English teaching: the importance of talking and listening; the centring of classroom reading on 'response' rather than 'comprehension'. (Jones 1992, p.10)

There was, however, one crucial point on which Cox equivocated: the assessment of English.

With the advent of GCSE, English had a system of assessment which validated the practices advocated by the London school. The unease with assessment by examination which had been expressed in Bullock

We must seriously question what is being achieved when pupils are producing chapter summaries in sequence, taking endless notes to prepare model answers and writing stereo-typed commentaries which carry no hint of a felt response' (p.131),

had, in the opinion of many, been resolved as the terminal examination became, for the many teachers choosing the 100% coursework option for GCSE English and English literature, a thing of the past.

However, a wholly coursework based assessment of English and English literature at key stage 4 was not advocated by Cox.

We are aware that the arrangements whereby GCSE is awarded on the basis of 100% coursework in English has been much welcomed by teachers. However, we recognise also that some anxieties have arisen from these arrangements on account of the scope for outside assistance with coursework. We wish to preserve and build on the immense enthusiasm generated by the introduction of GCSE while introducing SATs which are fair to all pupils. We therefore suggest that assessment in English at age 16 should comprise coursework assessed by teachers, some coursework undertaken under controlled conditions (e.g. for a prescribed task, within a given time limit, with certain restrictions on access

to reference materials), and SATS including end-of-course assessment and written examinations. (Cox, DES 1989, paragraph 14.24)

The attempt, here, to steer a middle way between opposing views on assessment left scope for the return to a predominantly examination based assessment of English upon which the CPS model, which was antipathetic to the philosophy of personal growth through English, and is described in the following chapter, was based.

Chapter Five

The CPS model of English

When children leave English schools today, few are able to speak and write English correctly; even fewer have a familiarity with the literary heritage of the language. It is not hard to see why. Among those who theorize about English teaching there has developed a new orthodoxy, which regards it as a conceptual error to speak of 'correct' English and which rejects the idea of a literary heritage. The new orthodoxy has now come to influence every aspect of English in schools – from curricula to teaching in the classroom to public examinations. Her Majesty's Inspectorate is among its staunch proponents. The object of this pamphlet is to describe the new orthodoxy; to examine how its views have been spread; to consider whether its tenets are convincing, and whether English might be taught better. (Marenbon, 1987, p.5)

At the time of its publication the pamphlet from which the above extract was taken was either ignored or ridiculed by the English establishment who felt that the London school model of pedagogic practice had been validated in government reports from Bullock (1975) and was to be further validated by the later publication of Cox (1989). Only four years later, when the English establishment had lost control of the direction and the content of English through the imposition, by central government, of a revised National Curriculum (1995), the implementation of key stage 3 tests (1993) and the massive reduction of coursework assessment at GCSE, Marenbon's pamphlet, rousingly entitled *English, Our English* was, belatedly, recognised as a seminal publication – a harbinger of revolutionary change.

Marenbon was a member of a right wing conservative think tank – the Centre for Policy Studies. In the latter years of the Conservative administrations of Margaret Thatcher,

and the years of the Major administration, during the middle of the 1980s to the early 1990s, the members of this think tank were to wield enormous influence upon government education policy. Appointed to key positions within policy-making quangos. (Griffiths as chair of the Schools Examination and Assessment Council – SEAC*; O'Hear as a member of the SEAC board; Turner as a member of the SEAC maths committee and, most significantly, Marenbon as chair of the SEAC English committee;) CPS members represented a vanguard whose task it was to revolutionise the practice of teaching and learning in state schools. Central to the concerns of the CPS writers was the teaching of English.

The ascendancy of the right in educational policy making during this period was not confined to England. Green (1995a) notes the international move, during the late 1980s and early 1990s, to free-market, deregulation government administrations who demanded that their education systems 'deliver the goods' in a capitalist society. The role of English was to produce pupils with a good command of basic spoken and written communication skills, and literacy skills, which would enable them to operate effectively in the workplace and to promote the productivity of the country.

As the 1980s drew to their close . . . there were various indications that the situation was beginning to turn for English teaching . . . Intense pressure was exerted from outside the profession to shape English curriculum practice in certain ways appropriately described as consistent with 'liberal-conservative' restoration, on the one hand, and with the emergence of a new corporate managerial and economic-rationalist agenda, on the other. Although there was much resistance from within the profession, nonetheless it is a reasonable observation that control over subject definition decisively shifted from the profession – by which I mean the full gamut of those concerned with English teaching, from teachers to researchers – to external agencies and 'interested publics' (Reid, 1983). This occurred as the State moved to intervene in and re-articulate the discourse of English teaching, and to exercise accordingly a significant measure of overt control over educational agendas, to a

degree unprecedented since the nineteenth century consolidation of mass compulsory schooling. (Green 1995,p.2)

A common thread running through CPS leaflets of this period, and one which was fully supported by the then Conservative administration, was the argument that every subject should concentrate upon a basic training, a grounding upon which, at some later stage, a more ambitious programme of learning in a subject might be built. Indeed, one CPS author argued that a basic training was all that pupils in state schools could hope to receive, as such institutions could not provide a real education. In his pamphlet *Aims Of Schooling* (1988) the author, Oliver Letwin, argued that a grounding in basic knowledge was all that most schools could hope to impart. This grounding might consist of being able to 'read and comprehend information of divers sorts' being able to 'make sense of the newspapers and the spoken words of public life' . . . to allow pupils to 'grasp enough mathematics to see the simple effects of their decisions upon their lives' and 'perhaps most importantly of all, people must be able to express themselves with sufficient clarity both on paper and in speech, to make themselves fairly understood'. (p.12)

The English establishment had been able, as the analysis in chapter four of national policy documents on the teaching of English throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s demonstrates, to resist the demand that English should concentrate upon basic skills. The efforts that the then Conservative administrations had made to define the product which the English curriculum should deliver - promoted through the commissioning of the Kingman report (1978), to the appointment of a noted right winger, Brian Cox, as chair of the committee charged with the writing of the original (1990) National Curriculum for English, through to the commissioning and subsequent suppression, in 1993, of the Language in the

National Curriculum (LINC) report, a three year project funded by then Conservative administration to produce training materials which would enable English teachers to increase their own knowledge about language - had been frustrated by the English establishment who had ensured that the aims and the practices of a process-based model of personal growth through English had remained, as Marenbon recognised, the established orthodoxy for the teaching of English.

Despite these successes, however, the lack of a defined and generally understood content for the English curriculum and of an explicit product which could be demonstrably attributed to the successful study of English was a key weakness which was very profitably exploited by the CPS writers when the Conservative administration, buoyed by its unexpected 1992 election victory, turned to education as a key area for reform. The ideology of personal growth through English which had been so successful in shaping government policy was, in the political climate of the early 1990s, no longer able to provide an effective defence against the powerful forces which stated that the subject should not be engaged in a process but should deliver a product.

The weakness of the practitioners' of English defence against the CPS attack is, perhaps, surprising. The English educational establishment had been forewarned, at the inception of the London model, by one of its original authors, that the question of what should be the central core of knowledge and skills which the subject should produce would have to be addressed.

Certainly the swing to process has its own dangers. The first is over-rejection. If the conventions and systems of written English do not come in the centre of the map, where do they come at all? The answer is complicated, so there is a temptation to ignore the question . . . (Dixon, 1967, p.12)

Dixon's warning proved to be prophetic. Twenty years after the inception of the London model of personal growth English teachers found themselves vulnerable to attack when faced with the charge that they had ignored the question of the role of English teaching in transmitting to pupils the standard conventions of spoken and written English.

Personal growth through English, the CPS writers argued, was not an aim which could be realised. English needed to be clearly defined, to have agreed boundaries, and to produce a concrete product. This drive to reject the philosophy of personal growth encompassed, also, all the processes established by the London school to enable personal growth to be achieved in the classroom, through the expression and evaluation of the pupils' ideas, thoughts and feelings. English was no longer to be a subject in which the pupils were to be 'the subjects of study'. The curriculum was to become centred upon a defined content containing

A distinct body of material which teachers should teach and pupils must learn. (Marenbon, 1987, p.33)

Every tenet of the philosophy and the pedagogy of the London model of personal growth through English was rejected. Its concentration on oral language was, Marenbon argued, an attempt to reduce the importance of standard English. The London model's insistence on a descriptive rather than a prescriptive grammar of English was, Marenbon asserted, inappropriate at school level where pupils needed to be taught 'how to speak and write standard English' (Marenbon, 1987, p.5). Marenbon rejected, also, the linguist's arguments that no language was inherently superior to any other, and that different forms of language were appropriate to different communities and situations. Standard English was,

he argued, superior to other dialects because of its historical evolution and its ability to communicate in a wide range of forms. It should, therefore, be explicitly taught in the English lesson.

However, although its demands appeared to be basic, the drive of the CPS to establish its model of the English curriculum contained many paradoxical elements. True to his free-market ideology Marenbon was keen to argue that the state should exercise the minimum control over English, leaving the emergence and survival of different models of the subject to market forces.

What as a whole should be covered by English at school is not . . . the proper concern of government or any branch of central or local officialdom . . . the commission should press government to allow individual parents, schools and pupils the greatest possible freedom to decide what, beyond the generally recognised basic skills of reading and writing, is taught in English lessons. (Marenbon in Bazalgette, 1994, p.143).

Having stated his deregulation, free-market credentials Marenbon then proceeded to become the key figure in the most far-reaching and successful attempt by any government hitherto to direct the content of the English curriculum.

The paradox of a free-market ideology which proved to be the driving force behind the most uniform and centralised curriculum and assessment system in the history of state education is only one of several seemingly contradictory ideological forces behind the promotion of the CPS model. Indeed, it was through these contradictory ideological imperatives that the model generated its power to appeal to the wider interested publics of parents and politicians who proved to have little understanding of, or sympathy for, the London school model of personal growth. For example, the CPS concentration on the basics

was accompanied (and obscured) by a parallel desire to re-establish a shared, collective cultural heritage based upon a vision of England, and of Englishness, rooted in references to a golden past, which, it was argued, had powerful enemies.

There will always be those who seek to sever our links with the past . . . Some say that the glories of British history, the plays and sonnets of Shakespeare, the works of Dickens and Trollope – even poor old Winnie the Pooh – are irrelevant to the modern child . . . Others claim that the figurative tradition in art, and the lessons of classical architecture, have no relevance to the present day. We see the destruction they have wrought has been physical as well as emotional. We have seen the arrogance with which their disciples, up and down the country, have made their names by destroying urban villages. We see academics make their names by destroying our heroes. More recently, the institutions that embodied our nationhood have come under attack – institutions in whose name our countrymen and women have been ready to make the ultimate sacrifice. (Major in Jones, 1994, p.7)

The above extract demonstrates the potency of the mixture of contradictory elements contained within the ideology which underpinned the CPS model, here displayed in its ability to disguise the utilitarianism of its concentration on a basic skills by an appeal to an agrarian age in a society where the effect of the forces of unfettered capitalism, which the CPS writers wished to unleash, were unfelt.

The vision of a kinder past with great symbolic power which enabled it to encompass wide cultural plurality (from Shakespeare to Winnie the Pooh) proved to be vastly seductive and powerful enough to re-shape the school curriculum in those subjects endowed with a cultural mandate. School children were to look forward to a rosy past and in so doing learn what it was to be English. History was to concentrate on Britain – events which occurred after 1960 were not historical; Music was to concentrate on the appreciation of classical composition; English was to concentrate on the literary heritage. The 1993 Key Stage 3

English anthology contained a selection of literary extracts, short stories and poems, selected by the SEAC English committee, to be studied by all fourteen year old pupils in state schools in England and Wales, the majority of which were taken from the literary canon and portrayed a vision of a pastoral, monocultural England in poems such as Browning's *Home thoughts from Abroad* Wordsworth's *The Daffodils*, and Keat's *To Autumn* was, it is now known, chosen by Marenbon. In this respect, the CPS agenda had clear links with the Leavisite purpose – to establish social stability in a world of economic instability and inequity – through a common cultural inheritance.

This powerful mix of economic capitalism and cultural communism was accompanied by a very adept playing on the fears of the middle class of the forces of social unrest which were themselves the result of the economic inequalities produced by Thatcherism. Cameron (1995) makes the important point that the English curriculum provided for the Conservative administration an uncontested space in which larger anxieties about the state of the nation, and the part played by the Conservative administration in producing that state, could be expressed.

....perhaps the threat that conservatives located outside was partly coming from within. Thatcherism was a contested phenomenon within the Conservative party itself, and the shift away from 'one nation' Tory values caused conflict and anxiety. Persistent fears of chaos and fragmentation cannot have been allayed by the social upheavals caused more or less directly by the actions of Conservative governments during the period. Some conservatives responded in ambivalent ways to the very obvious changes in British society – their support for the radical Right was not unmixed with anxiety and nostalgia.

Such feelings demand outlets. But in the new Britain, opportunities to express doubt and criticism were limited. One might argue, then, that anxieties about all kinds of radical change were most conveniently displaced onto symbolic issues to do with language and culture, a relatively peripheral area where old-style Tories and free marketeers could for once

unite. Perhaps panics about falling standards and grandiose calls for cultural unity were affordable luxuries of the Thatcher years. (Cameron, 1995, p.112)

Accepting Sampson's (1921) statement that present economic realities could not be changed, the purpose of education was, in the CPS model, to produce social order. The purpose of English within the larger field of education was to produce linguistic order. The increasing acceptance of non-standard forms of spoken language and the decline in the teaching of the rules of written language were understood by conservative commentators to be key signals of an imminent cultural decline.

. . . we've allowed so many standards to slip . . . teachers weren't bothering to teach kids to spell and to 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. (Norman Tebbit, M.P. Radio 4, 1985)

Grammar, standard English and the literary heritage were to become the bulwark against the decline in standards of social behaviour. A transmissive curriculum based on a defined content was to imbue in its recipients not only knowledge but with a correct attitude of mind. Arnold's vision for the purpose of the subject English had, more than a century after its inception, been redeemed.

Upon one thing the Conservative administration was clear: the English education establishment could not be relied upon to teach its curriculum. This establishment was, indeed, the main cause of the decline in standards of English teaching because it had abandoned a clear purpose and content for the subject, favouring instead, the insubstantial and woolly philosophy of personal growth. This was the root cause of slipping standards and

was a clearly identified target to be demolished in the attempt to introduce rigour and purpose into English.

It is doubtless valuable that children should grow emotionally, that they should learn to tolerate the views of others and to engage in critical thinking. But these – and many of the other ambitious aims often proposed for English – are virtues which are slowly acquired in the course of acquiring particular intellectual skills and areas of knowledge. Time given to a vague and generalised attempt to gain such virtues is time lost to the specific and rigorous studies which alone will foster them. (Marenbon, 1987, p.18)

English was to desist from engaging in 'vague' and 'generalised' aims, but was to produce results through 'specific' and 'rigorous' studies which would concentrate on a defined subject content. The move was on to establish a product for English, and to reject a philosophy.

Marenbon's initial salvo against London school philosophy and practice of personal growth was followed quickly by a raft of publications from the CPS, several of which devoted some part to the framing of the CPS version of an English curriculum (Letwin, 1988; Lawlor, 1988). Underlying all these authors' arguments for a revision of the aims, the practice and the outcomes of teaching English lay the assertion that a return to basics was needed. English had to divest itself of the ambitious aim of personal growth and to concentrate on the transmission of an essential core of knowledge and skills which are summarised below.

The teaching of written standard English through decontextualised grammar exercises

Pupils will need to learn to distinguish between nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, objects and predicates; singulars and plurals; past, present,

future, indicative, conditional and imperative; phrases, clauses and sentences. (Marenbon, 1987, p.35)

The most appropriate way to teach the list of terms above was through decontextualised grammatical exercises which, the author admitted, might well be felt by teachers to be dull. However, a caution was administered.

He would recognise that the process of learning is often laborious and makes considerable demands on children's self discipline. (Marenbon, 1987, p.34)

The teaching of the grammar of spoken standard English

Standard English was defined by Marenbon as 'the language of English culture at its highest levels as it has developed over the last centuries' (p22). Dialects of English reflected 'the much more limited range of functions for which they have traditionally been used: the exchanges of everyday life, mainly amongst those unrefined by education' (p.22). Thus the teacher of English, while allowing pupils to use dialect when talking to friends or family, would teach standard English in lessons and would correct dialect variations.

The teaching of the literary heritage

Marenbon argued that the literary heritage was in danger of being lost. The enemies of the literary heritage were those English teachers who 'emphasise the study of modern works (often of little literary merit) which are presumed to be 'relevant' to their pupils' and in

so doing neglect to teach the 'acknowledged masterpieces' of the literary canon, which was defined thus:

We learn what literature is, and how to read it, by coming to read those works which are recognised as literature, especially those in which the features which are seen as valuable in literature are most evidence – the acknowledged literary masterpieces. (p.26)

(A definition of worth which could only be described as circular and which was even less clear than Leavis's attempt to define 'life' as the essential requirement for textual canonisation.)

Assessment

At the time of the production of the CPS pamphlets assessment in English had moved away from terminal examination. The introduction of GCSE in the mid 1980s had resulted in an assessment system of English language and English literature based either wholly or largely upon coursework. This move was fiercely criticised by members of the CPS who argued that coursework allowed pupils and teachers to cheat. If the English curriculum was to be re-shaped in the light of the above programme, there was, Marenbon argued, no need to have in place elaborate assessment procedures. Externally set and timed tests would establish what pupils knew and what skills they had mastered in the essential core of English.

Tests must only test what is testable under the given circumstances of testing. The National Curriculum tests, which must be marked by

thousands of different teachers according to a single uniform scheme, cannot be very ambitious in what they are trying to measure. (Marenbon, 1993)

The teacher's role

The implementation of the programme outlined above, with its emphasis on establishing a body of knowledge to be taught by English teachers and learned by their pupils posited a very different view of the role of the teacher than that of promoting their pupils' personal growth. The model of the interperative teacher was dismissed, implicated in the most serious charge against 'the new orthodoxy' (by which Marenbon meant the London model of personal growth), that it was 'child centred'. Teachers should no longer consider the centre of English to be their pupils, the objects of 'subjects of study', but should implement the essential core of specific and rigorous studies outlined above.

A better approach to English teaching in schools would reject every tenet of the new orthodoxy. It would recognise English as a subject – no more and no less: the subject in which pupils learn to write standard English correctly and thereby to speak it well, and in which they become acquainted with some of the English literary heritage. As such it would contain a distinct body of material which teachers must teach and pupils must learn. (Marenbon, 1987, p.3)

Figure six, overleaf, contains a summary of the CPS model of English.

Figure six - A summary of The Centre For Policy Studies model of English

The teaching of written standard English through decontextualised grammar exercises
The teaching of the grammar of spoken standard English
The teaching of the literary heritage
Assessment through timed external examinations
The teacher as transmitter of knowledge

The abandonment of consensus – the implementation of the CPS agenda

Having written their manifestos, and having secured places in key government policy-making bodies, members of the CPS moved swiftly to establish a new direction for English. Their strategy, initially, was to concentrate on the assessment of the subject - a strategy adopted because CPS writers recognised that attempts to control English through the development of the National Curriculum had failed. Even with the appointment of a recognised right wing figure to the chair of the English NCC committee, a personal growth model of English had been maintained.

For those of us to whom Brian Cox was a hero, the report was a shock and reinforced all those absurdities we were trying to change. (Michael Fallon, Junior Education Minister – Independent on Sunday, 7th February 1993)

Unable to trust former black paper writers, more recent critics and loyal supporters were enlisted in the battle to get English back to basics, clearly and trenchantly defined by Anthony O'Hear, a member of the CPS and on the SEAC council.

The present English curriculum reflects current practice in education, as in its mealy-mouthed assertion that attitudes to standard and non-standard English can be based on "stereotypes and prescriptive judgements". Connoisseurs of ed-speak will understand that this means we must not stigmatise incorrect or lazy speech . . . We need a curriculum which focuses on phonics and grammar in the early stages, to give children the grounding they need in reading and comprehension. In the later stages we need a curriculum which systematically introduces children to their literary and linguistic heritage, one which spells out a canon of books and authors with which literate people ought to be familiar. (O'Hear *In My View* The Times, 1992).

The crusade to return to a previous golden age of "Knowledge. Discipline. Tables. Sums. Dates. Shakespeare. British history. Standard English. Grammar. Spelling. Marks. Tests." (Major 1992 address to the Conservative Women's Conference) began in earnest for English with the speech made by the then Prime Minister, John Major, suitably, at a dinner organised by the CPS in July 1991 in which he stated that "It is clear that there is too much coursework, project work and teacher assessment at GCSE". In January of 1992 the National Criteria for assessment was re-written for English and English literature GCSE with a much greater emphasis on assessment by examination. This was the first move by the government in its agenda to roll back the frontiers of 'progressivism' within the teaching of English.

The English establishment recognised that a fundamental change in the assessment of the English curriculum would lead to a change in its content and its pedagogy. The battle lines between the English educational establishment on the one hand, and the government administration, the CPS and the popular press on the other, were drawn with the publication of a press release (DFE News, 30 June 1992) which announced fundamental changes to the national key stage 3 assessment policy. The press release heralding a move to summative testing at key stage 3 rang with an 'assured certainty, the bold head-line announcing: 'SHAKESPEARE AND GRAMMAR TESTS FOR ALL 14 YEAR OLDS.' The influence of the CPS can be clearly seen in this publication; hence the proposed changes to the tests were termed by the Secretary of State as 'real education' which would be 'academically rigorous'.

The move to radically alter National Curriculum assessment at key stage 3 was to be achieved by scrapping the work already done on key stage 3 assessment, which had resulted in coursework tasks that could be assessed over a period of time and had been trialled in schools, to move to timed external examinations which would test the essential knowledge and skills which the CPS advocated should be at the core of the curriculum. The English literary heritage was to be tested by an examination based on pupils' knowledge of an anthology of extracts of prose and poetry distributed to every school in the country; Shakespeare was to be tested by a timed examination on scenes from set plays. Grammatical knowledge was to be tested by exercises involving word omission and substitution.

This move provoked a sustained campaign of resistance by teachers of English, spearheaded by LATE (the London Association for the Teaching of English), supported by NATE, (the National Association for the Teaching of English), which resulted in a decision

made by a large majority of English departments to refuse to administer the key stage 3 tests and which resulted, in June 1992, in a nation-wide boycott of the English, science and mathematics key stage 3 tests.

Jones (1994) notes that the teachers' boycott of the key stage 3 tests 'brought to a halt an especially triumphalist phase of government education policy' (p.84). However, it is clear that success of teachers in the battle against key stage 3 testing did not lead on to winning the war against the imposition of key aspects of the CPS model upon the English curriculum. Cox (1995), whilst sympathetic to the teachers' cause over the key stage 3 tests, argues that the dispute served mainly to distract attention away this larger purpose. Coles (1994) asserts, moreover, that the strength and the success of the boycott of the key stage 3 tests was founded on English teachers' reaction against a view of the purpose and the practice of teaching English which was being promoted by the government. This, she argues, was 'a resounding success' which came about 'through people collectively not doing something. Being clear about what you don't want tends to rely on reacting against someone else's agenda' (p17).

However, as the CPS drive on assessment had been defeated for the time being, moves were made by government agencies to continue the reform programme on a second front and attention was now turned to the reform of the content of the English curriculum.

It was clear from the first moves to rewrite the English orders that the CPS drive to define English was to be a central element in the revision process. Lord Griffiths, the then Chair of the CPS, was made Chair of SEAC in 1991. He established, as one of his first priorities, the revision of the Cox English curriculum. It is significant that a key criticism made by Griffiths of Cox (DES, 1989) was the document's lack of clarity – a theme taken up by the

then Chairman of the NCC, David Pascall, in his letter to John Patten introducing the NCC document *The Case For Revising The Order*, (NCC, 1992) -in which he firmly endorsed the CPS demand for a defined content upon which the English curriculum should be based: 'The knowledge and skills involved in speaking, listening, reading and writing need to be defined more explicitly and rigorously'. (Introductory letter from NCC Chairman, David Pascall, to John Patten).

With such an introduction it was unsurprising that the subsequent document should strongly promote the central aspects of the CPS model as the basis for the revision of the 1990 National curriculum for English. Standard English was to be 'clearly defined' (NCC, 1992, p.11). In the teaching of literature the balance between the reading of texts from the literary canon and other literature was to be reconsidered. In writing it was recommended that the revised order should 'define the essential knowledge and understanding of grammar needed at key stages 1 and 2' (NCC, 1992, p.12).

The revision (DFEE, 1995) of the original (DES, 1990) English order resulted in a breakdown of the consensus between government agencies and English teachers that the Cox report (DES,1989) had achieved. It was evident that there was no longer a desire to balance different views of what should constitute the subject of English. Three key elements of the CPS model of English were established in the revised (DFEE, 1995) National Curriculum order for English: the teaching of spoken standard English; the teaching of a defined literary canon; and the teaching of a prescriptive grammar.

Standard English in the revised (DFEE,1995) English order underpins all the communication, oral and written, which should take place in the English lesson: 'To develop effective speaking and listening pupils should be taught to use the vocabulary and grammar

of standard English'. (DFEE 1995, p.2) In its programme of study for the teaching of literature the 1995 English orders contains, for the first time in the history of the subject, a list of prescribed pre-20th century authors. All pupils must read a complete text by one of these authors at key stage 3 and at key stage 4. The list is heavily dominated by authors from the literary canon. In its consideration of the teaching of writing the revised order promotes a prescriptive model of grammar teaching in which pupils are to be taught grammatical terms: 'including stem, prefix, suffix, inflection; grammatical functions of nouns, verbs, adjectives adverbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, and demonstratives.' (DFEE, 1995, p.24)

A change, in 1997, from a Conservative to a Labour administration, has not resulted in a return to a process-based curriculum; rather, the demand for a traditional curriculum content, to be delivered by the educational establishment, has intensified. The DfEE press release of 9th September 1999 outlines a revised (2,000 – 2,005) National Curriculum which, 'celebrates and safeguards every child's entitlement to a broad and balanced education founded on knowledge and appreciation of key features of our cultural heritage' adding 'as well as that of other countries'. (DFEE, 1999). In the English curriculum there is an increased prescription of content with the advent, in key stages 3 and 4, of lists of recommended authors in the categories of recent and contemporary writers of fiction; non-fiction writers, and writers from different cultures and traditions. These lists are compiled in addition to the already prescribed (but extended) list of pre and post 1914 authors.

The parallels in policy directives extend beyond the teaching of English. Hence, in its first year of office (1997 – 98), the Labour administration drove forward new initiatives which greatly decreased the autonomy and professional independence of schools and individual teachers. These initiatives have focused on what the government considers to be the central

areas of the curriculum. Standards of literacy are, it is asserted, (DFEE,1988) to be raised with the advent, in 1998, of the literacy hour, now implemented. Numeracy will have its turn with the advent in 1999 of the numeracy hour. Standards in initial teacher training (ITT) have, it is asserted, been raised by the imposition of an ITT national curriculum *Teaching, High Standards, High Status* (DFEE 1998) which, in the core subjects of English, Maths and Science, parallels the National Curriculum for schools in imposing, for the first time, a defined subject content which must be covered in every ITT programme.

The previous Conservative administration's refusal to countenance the possibility that socio-economic status has a marked effect on education performance, is, under New Labour, a continued doctrine: 'When I look at some of the inner city schools, it is no wonder parents feel they have to move their children out, and some feel they have to make other arrangements for their children. It's just not acceptable. (Blair, in Carvel, 1999). Increased outcomes, measured in standards of performance, have been rapidly imposed upon all key areas of educational provision: hence standards in inner cities are to be raised by education action zones and through OfSTED inspection of inner city local education authorities. The green paper *teachers meeting the challenge of change* (DfEE, 1999) takes the drive for outcomes to the heart of the education establishment in proposing performance-related pay for individual teachers whose results will be analysed for their effect in raising the whole school's achievement to reach the targets imposed upon them by their local education authority. Indeed, such are the continuities between the previous Conservative and the present Labour administration's education policy that they have been publicly recognised, and applauded, by an influential right wing think tank.

A seismic shift in policy by the Labour government has made education an ideology-free zone, according to the free-market Adam Smith Institute. Dr Madsen Pirie, president of the institute named after the founding father of laissez-faire economics, says he believes in the Labour government policies for improved standards and praised Tony Blair for taking the politics out of education...'There has been a convergence in ideas (across the Conservative and Labour administrations) and the great change that has made this position possible is a move by the Labour party away from its instinctive bias, away from public sector unions to the consumer's interests.' (Rafferty, 1999)

There is no doubt that the educational establishment has been disappointed by the policies of the present Labour administration, a fact admitted by the present Secretary of State: 'They had expected soft words and what I have given them is hard action' (Blunkett in Hackett, 1998.) However, the present Labour administration appears to recognise the continuing power and influence, amongst the general public, of the central tenets of the CPS model which, in respect of the English curriculum, retains its ability to articulate clearly and with apparent simplicity, the outcomes which have significance for external publics, not only of government and its agencies, but also of the 'interested publics' of parents who believe that their children will need to read and write well to get a good job. Thus the formal teaching of literacy, grammar and spoken standard English are central elements in drive to 'raise standards' and to meet the aspirations of parents, and the business community, who believe that basic skills are not being delivered through the teaching of English.

...the education system exists to serve society and not the other way about. Parents will not sign up for a crusade based on values to which they do not subscribe, and the economy is not some abstract irrelevance that need not interfere with the process of personal growth. A person who is not literate is either unemployable or has very restricted options, and that is not something educationists can change. (Bald, 1998)

The data in the following chapters will show that English teachers resent the

constrictions placed upon their practice by the revision of the National Curriculum and the imposition of assessment by timed external exams. They recognise that they have lost control over key aspects of their pedagogy and that they have little influence over the future direction of their subject. The brief period of influence and power enjoyed by the English establishment in the 1980s has been re-appropriated by the 'external agencies' of politicians, business people, and parents who insist that English fulfil the dual purpose of a conservative social agenda with a radical economic purpose. At a very late stage the English education establishment has been forced to recognise what is, to it, a very unfortunate truth. In the end any external funding agency will demand to see a product.

The previous chapters of this study, chapters 3 to 5, have outlined two different, and opposing, ideological drives behind the formation of the content of the English curriculum. On one side is the personal growth model incepted by the early authors of the curriculum, Arnold, Sampson and Newbolt and developed this century by the Cambridge and London schools. On the other side is the CPS model which advocates the teaching of English as a means of achieving a cultural continuity based on the retention of what the CPS writers deem to be fixed forms of language (spoken and written standard English) and established forms of literature contained within the literary canon. In chapters 6 to 9 will be examined the extent to which the respondents, teachers of English in secondary schools, are influenced by the personal growth model. To what extent does this model underpin their rhetoric when they talk about English teaching and to what extent does the personal growth model underpin their practice as they work in English classrooms?

Chapter Six

The Content of the English Curriculum

Transmission or interpretation – the respondents' rhetoric

Good teachers have always recognised that effective instruction requires the active participation of the pupil: unless his attention and efforts are engaged, he will learn nothing. But the pupil's interest is merely a necessary condition for his learning: there is no good reason why it should determine *what* he learns. Few would contest this view with regard, for instance, to mathematics. The good mathematics teacher may well gain his pupils' interest by showing how numbers and their relations are relevant to their everyday concerns; but he will base his teaching not on the pupils' view of their needs, but on his own, informed, view of what they need to know in order gradually to achieve a mastery of mathematical techniques. So long as English, too, is recognised as a subject, with definite aims, the same principles should guide its teachers. The grammar of English, its range of vocabulary and styles and its literary heritage exist independently of the child who is learning to use them. (Marenbon, 1987, p.19)

The interpretation teacher

Believes knowledge to exist in the knower's ability to organise thought and action, values the learner's commitment to interpreting reality, so that the criteria arise as much from the learner as from the teacher, and who perceives the teacher's task to be the setting up of a dialogue in which the learner can reshape his knowledge through interaction with others. (Barnes, 1976, p.145)

Encapsulated in the two preceding extracts is the essence of the battle over the English curriculum. Marenbon, in the first extract, outlines the product which English should, he argues, deliver. This product must be taught to all pupils, irrespective of their backgrounds and experiences. Whilst it is undoubtedly preferable for the teacher to engage their pupils' interest in the topic being taught, it must be recognised that there is a

distinct body of knowledge which teachers must teach and pupils must learn. The transmission of a correct core of English which exists 'independently' of the time and circumstances in which it is taught, is the central responsibility of the English teacher.

Barnes promotes a very different view of the correct core of English. Knowledge, argues Barnes, does not exist 'independently' of the learner, indeed it cannot, for each learner's present experience and knowledge provides the basis upon which new knowledge can be built. Taking Vygotsky's maxim that the transmissive teaching of concepts is 'impossible and fruitless' (Vygotsky, 1986, p.250), Barnes argues that established forms of knowledge need to be reinterpreted by each pupil within their present resources of knowledge and experience. In so doing Barnes promotes the key theoretical tenet of the London emphasis on personal growth through English, that each individual pupil's life is the foundation upon which they build their understanding of, and knowledge about, the world. From this basis Barnes rejects the concept that knowledge can be transmitted and develops a model of learning based upon the recognition of individual difference, negotiation and consensus, encapsulated in his model of the interpretation teacher, outlined in chapter 4 of this study.

All the respondents in this study, without exception, reject Marenbon's assertion that English should deliver a product through the transmissive teaching of a defined subject content. In countering this demand they align their practice with Barnes's model of an interpretation teacher. The respondents perceive their relationship with their pupils to be different to that of teachers of other subjects who do, in their view, use transmissive methods. English, they assert, is particularly suited to a more consensual, interpretative, model as it has a more flexible subject content. This flexibility allows teachers of English more freedom to adapt the content of the lesson to the needs and the interests of their pupils and thus to encourage them to express their views and opinions. Pupils are not

seen as 'empty vessels' to be filled with knowledge. It is these respondents' belief that it is the pupils' views and opinions which shape the structure and the content of the English lesson.

You assume that English teachers take into association the actual people, the children, and that their views are valid and that they should have expression for those views.....(J.S. school 2)

I think also my experience of English teaching and of English teachers is that they tend to have a good deal of respect and open mindedness when it comes to their own pupils and I think that's essential. I think that unless in the classroom there is respect for and attention to what children are saying then you're not going to get very far in educating them beyond merely stuffing them with knowledge, and I think that's an essential part of English teaching where often there is not quite the same substantial content to be imparted. You can get away from the notion of the sort of, you know the empty vessels waiting to be filled. (G.S. school 1)

As English teachers we're about encouraging what's there and building upon that in a productive way. (M.A. school 3)

The flexibility which the respondents believe is offered by the English teacher in order to give pupils the opportunity to explore serious issues in a supportive environment is made possible by the respondents' construction of their subject as one which is built upon the pupils themselves. The respondents claim for themselves, as English teachers, a special relationship with their pupils. They believe that they construct their lessons in such a way as to promote an exchange of ideas between the teacher and the pupil, in which the teacher's open-mindedness promotes the pupils' expression of their views. In the respondents' account of their classrooms the aim expressed by Sampson (1921), that children could live 'for those few precious hours of school, in an atmosphere of humane thought and feeling' (p.111), would appear to be realised. In so doing, the respondents set their face against powerful political pressures (Pollard, 1999) to adopt more transmissive teaching practices.

The respondents' adherence to an interpretative model of teaching is accompanied by a pedagogy which, they believe, will foster and encourage the expression of individual experience. A transmissive teaching model, it is argued, will result in the dehumanisation of the process of teaching and learning.

If you just see yourself as some kind of machine manufacturing lots of information that you are feeding to the class as input which they will process through their brains and spew out onto paper, then that might be your priority, but it's not my priority, I want to get more out of them . . . I mean I always go back to this ancient Chinese proverb: I hear, I forget; I see, I remember; I do, I understand, and you've got to say, is it just brain knowledge that we're on about, or is it understanding?, 'cause I think that's much more effective. I think what it should be about is a real understanding of something. . . I mean, that brings into question the whole educational process. Why are we teaching children? Is it because we're going to go back to things...everybody learning things parrot-fashion, just learning facts and regurgitating them, or do we want them to have a real understanding and appreciation of our subject, and that's my priority every time. (H.M. school 1)

The respondent emphasises the necessity for active pupil involvement in the learning process. She puts forward an opposition between transmission of knowledge which, she asserts, results in pupils merely 'parroting' the teacher, learning facts and regurgitating them, and the active involvement of the pupils in the development of 'real understanding and appreciation' of the subject. The terms this respondent uses parallel those used by Vygotsky in his condemnation of transmissive teaching.

A teacher who tries to do this usually accomplishes nothing but an empty verbalism, a parrot-like repetition of words by the child, simulating a knowledge of the corresponding concepts but actually covering up a vacuum. (Vygotsky, 1986, p.150)

Oracy – the respondents' rhetoric

Barnes (1976) advocacy of the model of an interpretation teacher was accompanied by the development, by the London school writers, of a new mode of spoken interaction between teachers and pupils, later named oracy, which was, the London authors asserted, fundamental to the achievement of an interpretative model of teaching and learning.

A widely reported research study conducted in the USA (Flanders, 1970) was influential in the development of the London model of oracy. This study produced findings which showed that classroom discourse was overwhelmingly dominated by teacher talk which, it was argued, resulted in transmissive teaching practices which gave pupils little or no opportunity to use their own language as a vehicle for learning. This empirical evidence was further strengthened by the theoretical perspective provided by the re-discovered, (and later published), work of Vygotsky on the relationship between thought and language (1978, 1986) which provided the basis for the London writers' advocacy, (Britton, 1970; Barnes and Britton, 1971; Barnes, 1976; Martin et. al., 1976), of oracy. This term is first used by Wilkinson (1965) to define a process by which pupil talk is used as the main vehicle for the promotion of pupil understanding and the subsequent development of their knowledge of new concepts.

The data in this study reveals that all the respondents adhere strongly to the theory of oracy and promote, in their rhetoric, the practice of speaking and listening as a means to achieve an interpretative curriculum. Oracy is regarded by the respondents as a particular preserve of the English curriculum. Despite the work of the National Oracy project, and of the publication of text books which promote oracy across the curriculum,

(Norman, 1992; Howe, 1988; Reid et. al. 1989), it is English teachers who regard oracy as an area of special expertise, one which is not shared by teachers of other subjects.

The inspection here said that other areas are not picking up on the usefulness of speaking and listening, particularly here where you have lots of articulate children . . . teachers were spending too much time wasting energy when they could have handed it over. (N.T. school 1)

The Head of English in school 2 had been given a period of non-contact time to investigate how language was used in learning across the school curriculum. She had observed lessons in every subject area and had attended different subject department meetings to raise the profile of speaking and listening across the curriculum. Talking about this project and her findings, she confessed

I was appalled, especially as our school is committed to PSE we've always tried to get people to use different teaching styles, learning, styles to . . . or whatever end it might be, and then when I went round the rooms I saw a lot of just straight didactic lessons and, em, . . . in a subject like technology . . . no paired discussion of what they were going to make, what they were going to do – they did that themselves, individual planning, which seemed to me like the loss of an opportunity. I think it would have been better for the children to discuss their ideas anyway, because, you know, you do get better ideas of what you think if you've sounded it out on someone and it's a shame that the children aren't using that as a valid means of improving their plans and ambitions in something like technology . . . you assume certain things because they are so innate in what we do . . . and they aren't correct assumptions. (J.S school 2)

One respondent articulates the London tenet that the articulation of thought enables its development.

. . . because they're having to vocalise their implicit feelings aren't they? It's very easy to look at things and think 'I've got a feeling that that's there, or that's this idea, but it's much harder to make that feeling explicit I think, and it's that sort of . . . your understanding of things has to be vocalised in order for you to fully understand it yourself. (N.T. school 1)

It is interesting, when replaying the tape of this interview, to note that the respondent appears to be going through the process of clarifying 'implicit feelings' about the importance of talk through the pressure of defending practice in this area. Her final sentence 'your understanding . . .' came after a long pause where she appears to be marshalling her thoughts into a coherent statement.

Another respondent articulates a different strand of the theoretical rationale for the practice of oracy, stating that talk enables knowledge to be made explicit and to be developed through the interaction of different perspectives and ideas.

All the stuff that I have read, and I might be selective in my reading, shows that if you only hear something you remember 30% of it but if you hear it and you talk about it then you remember 80% of it. . . one thing is negotiation with each other . . . I think just in terms of the dynamics of working as a group – in terms of sharing information as well . . . I mean, it's like anything – three heads are better than one. If I sit down and think about something I'll get so far . . . if I talk to Nicola and Mary about it then I'll get even further with it. (H.M school 1)

The above respondent defends the practice of small group work, in addition to its role in the expression of thought and the development of ideas, in terms of the social skills which she believes are developed through its use.

But I think that other skills, like developing their oral skills, the relationship between some quite difficult concepts that they're coming up with, and actually managing to voice that, I think, and to find the terms in which to voice it is important – so that component of oral work, and managing to actually structure an argument – because they will argue with each other – again that's moving everything forward, so that it opens up all the issues – lots of them, in a way that it wouldn't if they were just working individually. (H.M. school 1)

This response highlights the verbal skills, particularly the recognition by students of accepted forms of argument (find the terms in which to voice it), which are developed

through small group work. The next response focuses more on the skills of personal motivation and organisation.

But even before the National Curriculum the department was working through talk being the first thing in order to both assist learning but also in terms of communication – we talk our ideas through and then move into written forms. (H.P school 3)

Both of the above respondents believe that pupils attempt more ambitious uses of language and more ambitious exploration of issues when the teacher is not the main director of the discussion.

One respondent's perspective appears to echo another strand in the London group's advocacy of pupil talk. James Britton's theoretical stance, whilst closely related to Barnes's work on the development of concepts through talk, has, nevertheless, a more individual emphasis. Talk, Britton argued, is the most significant means by which individuals construct a narrative of their lives – a 'prospect and a retrospect' (1982) in which raw experience is mediated through language.

We, as we live, must learn from experience, our own first, and other people's second. But we do not learn from experience left in the raw, unsifted, uninterpreted. Expression, in any form whatsoever, is an interpretation of experience.' (Britton, 1953 in Praedl, Ed. 1982, p. 22)

So what you saw yesterday, in the different approaches, in the talking about things, was part of my belief in getting as much talk in there because so much of our talking, like now, is done in real life, in making sense of the world and who we are, so that's why I will try to bring those approaches in. (M.A. school 3)

It is clear from the above data that the respondents identify themselves as interpretation teachers. They strongly support the theory of oracy as a practical means of encouraging pupils to use their own experience to interpret the English curriculum and

argue that their classroom practice, through the use of small group work, is designed to support independent pupil talk which, they assert, leads to the generation of thought and its development through the process of articulation. Their identification with oracy and interpretation is so strong, in one case, that a respondent is able to defend these processes even when, in practice, it is clear that they have not enabled thought to be articulated and developed. (In the observed lesson pupils were clearly 'off task' and used the relative freedom of small group work to talk about the television soap opera *East Enders* rather than to consider the texts supplied by the teacher to illustrate language change.) In her view, even when the practice produces unsatisfactory results, it can be justified in terms of the self-discipline it is designed to instil in the pupils.

Well I think that they have to be able to structure work themselves and in the sixth form it's demanded that they work much more independently. I mean that group's notorious, terrible at working when you're not there, the worst group I've got probably, you know they don't stay on task . . . as soon as you move away that's it they're back to chatting . . . but it is important and it's important that you're not . . . that they're free in a way... (N.T. school 1)

The practice of oracy and interpretation

A summary of the findings from the lesson observations reveals some significant convergences between the respondents' rhetoric and their classroom practice. The most significant finding is that oral work occurs in every observed lesson and takes place in a variety of forms. In no lesson are the pupils entirely silent whilst the teacher talks at them, nor, in any lesson, do the pupils spend the entire lesson doing written work. In every lesson pupils engage in more than one activity and work in different groupings. Even when oral work is not explicitly organised by the teacher, pupils are observed to be

discussing their work (and other topics), usually with the person sitting next to them. A level of background 'chat' appears to be accepted by teachers.

Another significant finding is that oral work does not exist in isolation but is used to support other elements of the English curriculum. In the majority of observed lessons pupils engage in oral work which is aimed at developing their understanding of literature: pupils look at a Tony Harrison poem in small groups; they prepare a rôle play on a scene in a book; they attempt to place literary texts in chronological order; they discuss, in detail, a scene from a Shakespeare play being studied for 'A level'; in two classes, in two separate schools, pupils are asked to identify and discuss what aspects of language are considered to be poetic. Oral work is also used as a means of enabling pupils to improve their writing. Pupils draft a descriptive piece based on William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and then discuss their work with each other and with their teacher; in three lessons pupils draft pieces of written coursework for their GCSE folders and discuss their work with each other and with the teacher; in one lesson pupils begin planning and writing their first literary critical essay.

The evidence from the general outline of the observed lessons would indicate, therefore, that the respondents' rhetorical allegiance to the interpretation model of English teaching, and to the practice of oracy, is realised in their teaching practice.

Closer scrutiny of the processes in which teachers and pupils are engaged in the observed lessons reveals, however, a more complex situation in which the respondents do not, to the extent they claim, realise their conviction that English is a subject 'with less content to impart' and in which, therefore, there is more space for their pupils to contribute to the criteria by which the subject matter of the lesson will be considered. Indeed, the data from the lesson observations suggests that the respondents adopt practices which, whilst they are advocated as a means to enable teachers to adopt an

interpretation approach, actually allow the respondents to retain a high level of control of the content of the lesson and, most significantly, to set clear boundaries which define the sorts of experience which it is possible to express in the English classroom. In effect the rhetoric of the respondents is only partially realised in their classroom practice which is much more transmissive than they appear to recognise.

Setting the agenda – the introduction to the lesson

The respondents' determination to define the content and the processes of the lesson is clearly established at the outset by their purposeful articulation of the agenda for the lesson. At this point it is a frequent occurrence for the respondents to make reference to previous lessons and to establish how the work done in the present lesson will be necessary for the successful completion of future work.

Can you turn in your books to the stuff we were doing on Thursday afternoon . . . What we're going to do is we're going to try to re-draft this – you're not going to need all of that information . . . we've been relating it back to William Golding and what he does with description. Now we're going to do it in the form of a poem (general groan from pupils) . . . I knew you were going to do that ... (H.M. school 1)

Yesterday we were in the library doing research on capital punishment. Today you are going to work in groups preparing your presentation. Today we'll be working on getting the sugar paper piece together. Now . . . I'm going to need to talk to you for five minutes. (R.P school 3)

In some cases the respondents use these introductions to signal the variety and multiplicity of tasks which have to be covered in the lesson, and in so doing emphasise

the rapid pace at which tasks have to be completed if the prescribed content is to be covered.

I'm giving back your second exam paper. Have a look over it. I want to have a few words with you about this paper . . .Your profiles have to be completed for Wednesday. I want you to think about the things to concentrate on and attend to in order to improve your grades. I'm going to give you back paper 1 and then you'll have all your exam work in your folder . . .You all wrote your introduction to *An Inspector Calls*. For your homework take all the information and transfer it into your essay. There will be some time today to continue with that section of your essay. Complete the middle part of the essay for tomorrow's lesson. In tomorrow's lesson write your conclusion so that your essay will be finished in first draft. (S. H. school 3)

Clear messages are conveyed through these opening statements. The tone, in every case, is authoritative and purposeful – there is a lot to do, and every moment of the lesson is to be used productively if the content is to be covered and the pupils prepared for the next stage of the work. There is no opportunity, here, for the pupils to use their own criteria to define the shape or the content of the lesson or to contribute to the ways of working which will be adopted. The opening statements signal a highly pre-determined activity in which a large amount of pre-determined content will be covered.

In every observed lesson the short period of teacher exposition is followed by a whole class question and answer session, the aim of which appears to be either to enable the teacher to check if the pupils understand the work they have been set to do, or to check if the pupils remember and understand the work they have done in previous lessons. This practice retains the teacher's control of the lesson in that it is highly effective in constraining the pupils' ability to contribute in any other than a highly formal and public way (by answering in front of the whole class) to the content or the process of the lesson.

Extended group work

After the highly transmissive practices adopted in the opening of every observed lesson the respondents do, in approximately one third of the observed lessons, engage in what they would recognise as the interpretative practice of extended group work (defined by the researcher as a time where pupils are divided into small groups and given a period of ten minutes or longer to explore an issue). Some indication of the nature of the extended group work tasks set is given below:

- Pupils are asked to read twelve texts from different centuries, to put them in chronological order, and to identify the features of the texts upon which they had made their decisions.
- In two lessons, pupils are given a period of over twenty minutes to read each other's essays and to make comments on them.
- Groups of pupils work together for a period of thirty-five minutes preparing a presentation on capital punishment, recording their ideas on a piece of sugar paper.
- In one year 8 lesson, pairs of pupils work together for a period of twenty-five minutes preparing a role play on their class reader.

The respondents' justification for the practice of extended group work rests upon two main premises: one, that pupils need time to develop their ideas independently,

using their personal experience as a basis for the exploration of new knowledge; and two, that pupils develop social skills through their conversations with each other. Hence, there is an acceptance that although the pupils may go 'off task', they need to be 'free in a way' to do this, and that in a subject with 'less content to impart' a concentration on process which might not lead to the required 'product' (in terms of learning outcomes) can be justified.

However it is clear from the evidence of the observational data collected for this study that the practice of extended group work is, in fact, highly constrained as the respondents adopt measures to ensure that the pupils remain 'on task'.

The respondents display an active concern to closely monitor and actively manage extended group discussion, taking a close involvement in the pupils' responses. Routinely, they move about the class when extended group work is taking place, talking to groups of pupils and individuals. The characteristics of their involvement are detailed overleaf.

All of the respondents show a concern to ensure that the pupils are 'on task'. Once the general instructions to the whole class have been given they quickly move around the separate groups checking that all pupils have understood the work. Their interactions with pupils as the period of extended group work proceeds are characterised by a concern to ensure that the pupils are 'on the right lines'.

What have you got? Right . . . right . . . what's the problem then?
(H. M. School 1)

The best thing to do is to go and get a list from Mrs. . . . and they can tell you something about the author. (J.L. school 1)

One device observed in use by half of the respondents is that of targeted questioning – a strategy which appears to be used to extend the pupils' contributions to the discussion. The phrase 'how do you know' is used routinely by one respondent and often by one other, and appears to be aimed at getting the pupils to articulate the evidence upon which they had base their ideas and decisions.

How do you know? Some of the questions are structured aren't they?
(H.M school 1)

Why? How do you know these are more modern?
(N.T. school 1)

How do you know it's a good book? (J.L school 1)

The respondents' questions are not, upon the available evidence of transcripts of pupil talk in groups, those which the pupils would ask each other. Group work amongst adolescent pupils is characterised by a desire for consensus (Webster, 1995). The respondents' contribution is more rigorous – only the teacher would have the power to push pupils to defend their ideas in this way – and in so doing the respondents impose a discourse which is alien to the exploratory talk in which adolescents would engage were they discussing issues outside the classroom context.

All of the respondents extend their control not only to the content of the extended group work but also to the pace and the processes in which the pupils are engaged. They indicate clearly not only what the pupils should be discussing but also how they wanted the work to be undertaken. In effect, even in extended group work, the opportunity for independent action on the part of the pupils is highly constrained.

It's the ones in the middle which will be the most difficult. (N.T. school 1)

Read the passage out loud. You have to read them. (D.B. school 1)

. . . yes, it is hard Nikki, but you can do it. In a minute I will go over it. If you look at the book blurb it tells you what it's all about. That's always helpful in an introduction. (M.A. school 3)

You've got the foregrounding - but you've also got two infinitives. Is there anything else about syntax? Nearly all the adjectives that we use are French in origin, the later words, as opposed to Anglo Saxon. You need to look for features which can apply to every text. One of the characters is speaking in accent, and do you remember when we looked at accent and dialect? (N.T. school 1)

At times some of the respondents (four in the observed lessons) draw the attention of the whole class to a point made by a group or an individual. Often, in this case, the teacher is using the individual point either as an example, or as a warning to the other pupils, in effect using the preferred model as an example to define for the other pupils what the 'correct' answer should be.

Teacher	Listen, please. Julia asked can she change the poem?
Pupil	No.
Teacher	No – why?
Pupil	Because it will change the whole poem, change the advert. (J.L. school 1)

On several occasions the respondents' instructions are used to communicate to pupils the expectation that effective use will be made of the time spent in group work and that the finished product should be of a sufficiently good standard.

When you answer, I want detailed examples from the text, not just a list.
(C.P. school 3)

You need to give much more detail. You need to look at the syntax. When you get them in order, you'll need to go back and be much more thorough. (N.T. school 1)

Pupils do not, on the basis of the evidence from the observed lessons, have a free hand in extended group discussion. They are not, in any of the observed lessons, left on their own for long periods of time. Although extended group work does allow pupils more independence and more opportunity to talk to one another, the directing hand of the teacher's presence is clearly felt. The pressure to get on with the work in hand and to work hard is clearly communicated – sometimes (as above) by forceful questioning.

Close monitoring of pupil discussion appears to be a very effective strategy for imposing control over the content of the lesson. This control minimises the opportunity for pupils to go 'off task' and imposes upon them a discourse which they would not, in all probability, adopt outside the classroom.

What counts as 'experience' in English lessons

The data from the lesson observations reveals, however, that this is not the only strategy adopted by the respondents to extend their control over the lesson. The interview data examined at the beginning of this chapter demonstrates that the respondents perceive the English lesson to be an area, perhaps unique within the school curriculum, where lived experience can be explored and articulated. Conversely, the data from the lesson observations would suggest that, in practice, there are tight constraints upon the types of experience which it is possible for pupils to articulate in the English lesson.

Medway (1990) notes that, despite his advocacy of the English classroom as a site where all aspects of experience could be explored, Britton's conception of English is 'essentially literary' – focused on a concern to explore individual, rather than collective

experience. The tendency of English to evade important areas of collective experience, most notably experience of the industrial and commercial world, and of collective political action, has been noted, significantly, by Barnes who, of the writers who founded the London school model, has provided the most radical critique of its development. Drawing upon data from his own observations of English lessons Barnes notes that the range of experience which it is possible for pupils to articulate is, in fact, highly constrained.

Experience centres on personal relationships with family and friends; high value is placed upon self-knowledge and sensitivity to others' perspectives in these relationships. The typical mode of writing derives from late nineteenth and early twentieth century novels and autobiographies with their introspective concern with protagonists' mental states – how they suffer the world's blows. Experience tends to be decontextualized, or at most, located in the family or peer group: when public issues are addressed they are dealt with in terms of the texture of individual experience. It is as if our sole moral responsibility is to those whom we meet face-to-face. The liberal teachers' dilemma of how to cope with controversial and political issues in school is avoided by a concern for private areas of experience. (Barnes, 1983, p.40).

More recently Porthus and Towle (1992) have argued that English teachers adopt an essentially 'Leavisite' view of the world of work, being prepared to engage in a metaphorical representation of work as 'craft' but resisting consideration of the actual working environment which will be experienced by pupils when they leave school, and of the economic and political forces which shape work in the late twentieth century.

A browse through old English stock-cupboards will turn up anthology after anthology containing sections on 'work', contrasting images of sturdy independent labourers with the enfeebled monotonous lives of their urban counterparts...Course-books and manuals training students in examination techniques, where they attend to working lives at all, also tend to reflect this perspective...it is pretty clear that the scrutiny of work on Leavisite grounds is anything but revolutionary: the celebration of good old rural England, non-conformity and heightened individual experience is effectively redundant as a political critique...it is hard to

escape the conclusion that the Leavisite 'revolutionary' drive must have presented countless children unlikely to end up as thatchers, ploughmen or exotic crowd-pleasers with a stunningly depressing vision of what their working lives – and those of their parents might involve: and particularly so for urban working-class children. (Portheus and Towle, 1992, pp 31 - 33)

Evidence from one lesson observation would seem to provide some support for Barnes and Portheus and Towle's stance. In this lesson pupils are asked to explore a hypothetical situation which would involve consideration of economic, political and social issues. A scenario is put forward in which the pupils are asked to consider a proposal to build an airport near a village. The teacher sets the scene for the proposal:

Teacher I'd like you to think of where you live and the worst thing that could possibly happen to where you live . . . I live on the outskirts of the city overlooking some green fields, and, in the morning, in the summer, I like looking over the fields before I come to work. It puts me in a peaceful frame of mind before I have to face you lot... (laughter),...and the worst thing that I could imagine happening is that these fields were built on. Now, what about where you live?

Pupil I live in (name of village). It's really quiet – there's lots of old people. They're building on the field now and a rare flower is being destroyed.

(teacher response)

Pupil I live in (name of village). It's really quiet... they're building on the church ground where the bodies are – they're building granny flats
...

(teacher response)

Pupil I live on a farm and they're proposing to build a main road round it.

(teacher response)

Teacher How do you feel about peace and tranquillity being ruined?

(D.B. school 1)

In the next section of this lesson the teacher introduces a scenario of the proposed building of an airport near a village (the worst scenario?). The pupils are asked to read the case for and against the proposal and to take on the roles of interested persons either for or against the airport. It is clear, however, that the whole class question and answer introduction, whilst appearing to enable the pupils to relate their own experience to the topic of the lesson, is, in fact, highly controlling, very effectively determining the kinds of response that the pupils are able to make. The teacher sets the scene for the sort of answer he wants by giving his example (the destruction of green fields) which guides the pupils into replies in the same vein. The teacher introduces, also, the key words 'peace and tranquillity' which later become focal points in the development of the pupils' opposition (in role as members of the village community) to the proposed airport. It would be a brave (or foolish) pupil who would argue for the economic benefits which the airport might bring. This discussion, which could have raised important political, employment and financial issues is framed by the teacher wholly in terms of personal experience, with a heavy emphasis on the despoliation of the countryside (an emphasis drawn from a pastoral vision which has so influenced English literature). Thus, the teacher's careful (and often very skilled) direction of the discussion and the topic of the discussion, enables him to mark out for the pupils the type of 'home' knowledge that they are expected to share in the lesson and confirms the judgement made by Matthiesson on the enduring influence of Leavis (following Sampson and Newbolt) upon the practice of English teaching.

At every level, Leavis's view of technological progress as a transition entailing profound loss has had a powerful influence upon the emergent ideology of the redemptive power of English. (Matthiesson, 1975, p.96)

If a controlling framework which privileges particular responses is constructed to deal with controversial political and economic issues it is clear that there are other issues which teachers are not prepared to consider at all in the English lesson. The record of lesson observations reveals that there are limits to the type of home knowledge that pupils are expected to share in the classroom. These limits become apparent when the teacher judges that they are being transgressed.

Pupil My mum said that the geography teacher died walking off a cliff.
(Laughter)

Teacher Why are you laughing? (M.F. school 1)

Here the respondent quickly signals that she does not find the laughter at the death of the teacher an appropriate response. Interestingly, it is in this lesson, also, that a pupil, in the respondent's eyes, completely oversteps the mark in terms of his personal response to the topic. This pupil, having listened to a tape of an interview, suggests, in a response to the teacher's invitation to contribute what interpretation the pupils had made of a character, that he is gay. The teacher's response is very forceful. The pupil is told that gay is not a term of abuse; that it is not appropriate to the work being done in the lesson and that his remark is not relevant. (I stop making verbatim notes at this point because I am concerned not to embarrass the respondent). The pupil is then moved to sit at the teacher's desk.

Further evidence from the lesson observations reinforces the perception that there are boundaries to the sorts of home knowledge that pupils are able to share, and the sorts of responses they are able to make, in the English lesson. Personal growth through the expression of ideas, experience and feelings, has limits which, in nearly all cases, are imposed by teachers and recognised by pupils. These boundaries are imposed by the subject of the lesson – pupils know that they have to keep to the point

and are routinely reprimanded if the teacher feels that they are indulging in private conversations unconcerned with the topic of the lesson.

Linda, are you still on report? . . . Keep quiet then . . .
(L.M School 2)

(and more humorously)

I'm watching you, I just can't take my eyes off you Gareth – and I'm wondering if your animated conversation can possibly be about your written work – or could it be about football? (H.M. school 1)

As the evidence detailed above indicates, teachers impose boundaries on the sorts of personal experience and views which they consider to be appropriate contributions to the lesson. These boundaries are rarely openly articulated, although this did occur on the occasion when the boundaries were defiantly transgressed, but are signalled, rather, through the teacher's introduction to a topic which creates a framework for the pupils' subsequent 'open' discussion. Personal growth through English is not a means whereby all aspects of personal experience are equally privileged. The personal, in terms of private and intimate, experience is favoured.

Some pupils, however, may be less willing than others to disclose aspects of their personal experience in the public arena of the classroom. This is a point raised by

Barnes

One remembers Bernstein's suggestion that one implication of what he called 'invisible pedagogy' is to make more of *the pupils'* private lives open to evaluation and influence, which makes it threatening to some young people. (Barnes, 1983, p.43)

This threat is recognised by one respondent who, significantly, works in school 2, with pupils who might very well be very reticent about sharing aspects of their home lives in school. In her invitation to pupils to share memories of close relatives or friends she carefully inserts a 'let out' clause.

English is a great subject because you can lie. If you can't get something that you're happy with, you can make it up. So, if you want to remember your mum who was really happy . . . then make up a pretty flowery pattern or something. So that's fine. (J.S. school 2)

The gap between the rhetoric and the reality of oracy

This study is not concerned with the relative effectiveness of transmissive or interpretative models of teaching English. There are sound pedagogical reasons for teachers keeping pupils 'on task' during oral work and for the teacher's refusal to engage with a discourse predicated on prejudice. Rather, the question which must be asked is one that contrasts a professed ideology with the evidence of actual practice. How are the respondents able to hold a perception of themselves as interpretative facilitators, providing their pupils with the means and the support to generate knowledge for themselves, and providing the context in which children are enabled to interpret school knowledge in the light of their own experience, when so much of their lessons is so clearly teacher directed and dominated?

Keddie, (1971) explores the possible reasons for a disjunction between teacher's expressed ideology and their actual classroom practice. She notes, firstly, that teachers operate in different discourses which she terms 'educationist' and 'teacher' contexts. In

an 'educationalist' context teachers are required to articulate a philosophy of their practice which is based on recognised, theoretical models of ideal practice. She notes, moreover that teachers operate within the educationalist context in the public spheres where their actions require justification.

The educationist context may be called into being by the presence of an outsider to whom explanations of the department's activities must be given or by a forthcoming school meeting which necessitates discussion of policy of how things *ought* to be in school. (Keddie, 1971, p.135)

However, Keddie notes, also, that teachers operate in what she terms the 'teacher' context, in which they are subject to forces and constraints which they may not recognise. The author notes

...teachers who will advance the educationist view in the discussion of school and educational policy will speak and act in ways that are discrepant with this view when the context is that of the *teacher*. While, therefore, some educational aims may be formulated by teachers as *educationists*, it will not be surprising if 'doctrine' is contradicted by 'commitments' which arise in the situation in which they must act as *teachers*. (Keddie, 1971, p.136)

Hence, whilst the respondents in this study are able to articulate, within the educationalist context, to an outsider who is also a teacher trainer, their adherence to what is recognised as 'best practice', in the real world of the classroom their practice is based on a multitude of considerations (not the least being the pressure to get through a syllabus) which can lead to a divergence between an articulated ideology and an actual classroom practice.

The evidence detailed above is not used to suggest, however, that the respondents in this study were intentionally deceiving the interviewer. A more recent

study (Bousted,1992) demonstrates that a complete disjunction between ideology and practice can remain unrecognised by the teacher until the advent of 'hard' evidence of classroom practice. At the time of the above study the author had made herself aware of the evidence surrounding unequal allocation of talk time to boys and girls in classrooms. Despite the overwhelming evidence of repeated patterns of boys' dominance of classroom discourse (Arnot and Weiner,1987; Clarricoates, 1978; Lees, 1987; Spender, 1980, 1982; Stanworth, 1983; Swann and Graddol, 1988) the author believed that her classroom was a place in which girls and boys had equal opportunities to express their experience and to develop thought through speech. It was only with the advent of hard evidence, in the form of a series of tape recordings of her lessons, that the author had to confront the fact that the patterns of gendered interaction in her classroom conformed to those found in other research studies. The respondent's perception of herself as a feminist, and her knowledge of the theory of male dominance of public discourse, were only two factors in a complex equation, neither of which was strong enough to mediate the effects of a gendered upbringing in which she had been trained to 'service' male talk. As an educationist, the respondent could profess to an ideology of equal opportunities; as a teacher, operating within the competing forces of the public place of the classroom, in which there was a need to keep order by keeping boys 'on task' by giving them the priority they felt was their due, the author had 'filtered out' the evidence of the girls' silence. In effect, her knowledge of the theory had blinded her to the reality of her practice.

The concept of mediating practices

The findings of this study support the substance of Keddie (1971) and Bousted's (1992) work, but adds to these findings a further layer of complexity. They confirm that teachers are subject to internal pressures to adopt pedagogies which are based on the theories which they espouse whilst simultaneously being subject to external pressures which shape their classroom practice in sharply divergent ways from that presented by them in their rhetorical representation of their teaching. However, this study also presents evidence which suggests that allegiance to theories of 'best practice' may enable teachers to *adapt* their teaching to meet the pressures of external demands in ways which preserve some elements of the theoretical perspective which provides a rationale for their work. In this respect the findings of this study concur with those of other researchers (Bowe et. al. 1982; Vulliamy and Webb 1993).

...our research shows, in translating new initiatives into practice, teachers tend to interpret these wherever possible according to their own ideological stance. They then implement them based on a combination of what past experience has shown works and what they perceive will be of benefit to their pupils...(Vulliamy and Webb, 1993, p.39)

The empirical data collected for this study during the lesson observations reveals, in some detail, a variety of strategies used by the observed English teachers to adapt their practice to meet external requirements. In this study the adapting strategies are termed *mediating practices*. The concept of mediating practices provides a theoretical framework in which to explore the often very creative tension between the internal demands which teachers place upon themselves to teach in ways which they advocate

as best practice, whilst also meeting the demands placed upon them by external agencies.

In the management of classroom talk the respondents' use of mediating practices enables them to engage in an overt discourse of consensus, in which the pupils' views and opinions are given equal consideration, and in which pupils are encouraged to respond in a public discourse of openness and enquiry to the questions asked by the class teacher. However, underpinning this 'open' exchange is a highly controlling discourse in which clear signals are given, by the teacher to the pupils, about the areas of experience upon which they may base their answers, and the forms that these answers must take.

In all of the observed lessons there appears to be a desire, upon the part of the respondents, to encourage as many pupils as possible to answer. The pace of the lesson during whole class question and answer periods is fast, and the atmosphere positive and the respondents overtly praise pupils for their contributions.

That's fine . . . good'. (A.V. school 3).

Well, what can I say? Absolutely right. Spot on. (M.A. school 3).

Well done Sharon . . . so, you were right! (J.S. school 2).

It should be noted, however, that despite their encouraging responses to their pupils' answers the respondents retain the right to define the correctness, or otherwise, of the pupils' responses. The English lesson is not, despite the respondents' assertions, a place where all forms of experience are equally valid and accepted. The respondents

retain the authority to define what is correct, whilst also acting to mediate the incipient embarrassment and demoralisation which could be caused by their openly and directly stating the pupil's answer to be 'wrong'. There are, in fact, no recorded instances of the respondents telling the pupils that they are wrong – one respondent's reluctance to do this is clearly displayed in her response: 'You're onto something there. That's not actually the case' (H.M. school 1), indicating that what the pupil 'is onto' is worthy of notice, if not exactly what is required at present. The discourse acts to promote a variety of responses, signalling that these, within the limits of what is acceptable, will be carefully considered, whilst retaining the teacher's control of what is, ultimately, 'correct'. Care is taken to preserve the pupils' self-esteem by the respondents' very careful phrasing of their response to a 'wrong' answer. Thus, the pressure upon the respondents to get through a weighty syllabus is mediated by their very careful treatment of their pupils' responses, in which the desire to preserve the pupils' self-esteem is clearly demonstrated.

The concept of mediating practices provides a theoretical framework in which to explore not only the strategies used by the respondents to control the range of experience which they allow to be articulated in the English lesson, but also to what appear to be evolving forms of pedagogy which are based upon those advocated by the London model, but which are adapted to meet the changing circumstances in which the respondents work in which there is pressure to cover a pre-determined and clearly defined amount of subject content.

Concentrated oral work

This pressure appears to have generated a form of oral work which, whilst allowing independent pupil talk, imposes very clear and immediate boundaries over what it is possible for the pupils to say. For the purposes of this study this method of organising teacher and pupil talk is termed concentrated group work. The main characteristic of this form of group work is that the respondents give their pupils short and strictly observed periods of time to engage in 'independent' talk. The size of the groups is usually smaller than those used in more extended group work – often concentrated group work takes place in pairs or threes. There is a rapid movement between small group or pair work and whole class oral work, in the form of plenaries.

example 1

Teacher Now, that section is called the main body of the essay. In pairs, you have 30 seconds to discuss why you think it is called the main body of the essay. (short pause). Right, what answers did you come up with?

Pupil It's like the facts of the essay (teacher – 'good')

Pupil Everything's built round it (teacher – 'yes')

Pupil The main points of the story (teacher – 'good')

Teacher So, it's the main points of the essay

Pupil From the neck downwards

Teacher Well done, what a good image (M.A. school 3)

example 2

Teacher You've got one minute on your tables to talk about the work I'm going to give you. You've got to come up with as many different types of rhymes as you can. You have to think about where do you find and hear and learn about rhymes

(group work lasts for three minutes)

Teacher	Right, have you finished? Shaun, can you tell us of a place where you heard of or learned rhymes?
Pupil	A football match
Teacher	Excellent, Amanda?
Pupil	I learned rhymes at nursery

Concentrated group work appears to serve two main purposes. It gives the pupils highly specific and limited opportunities to talk to one another and to generate ideas; it gives the teacher the opportunity to 'keep tabs' on the pupils' conversations. The pace of the process of oracy is, in concentrated group work, greatly quickened, giving the pupils a pressurised time limit in which they have to produce an answer, to be reported back in the more formal situation of the whole class plenary. Lessons which contain concentrated group work move along rapidly and contain a wide variety of different forms of oral work – teacher exposition; small group work; whole class plenaries; reading and writing. In these lessons the respondents make it clear that there is a great deal of work to be done, and that this work is important.

Have you all got your NEAB anthologies with you? Right, today we're going to look at one of the poems in the anthology which you could be tested on in the exam – so we all need to concentrate hard. Could you get yourselves into groups of three or four?....Right, we're going to look at a poem in an anthology but not at the whole poem. I've typed bits of it out. I want you to discuss it in a minute. (Teacher gives out the materials.) O.K. What I'd like you to do...listen....there are three things that I'd like you to do, that I want you to think about. One, construct the story behind the poem – it is actually about a father and son meeting for the last time. Two, what is the setting and why is it important? And three, what kind of poem is it going to be? Obviously it's all guess work at the moment, but you will see later how this informs your view of the poem.

(Group work task is started and lasts for four minutes, before moving on to a whole class question and answer session. (H.M. school 1)

The pressure to 'get through' an amount of pre-determined material is signalled, in the above extract, through the respondent's immediate reference to the forthcoming exam, in which the pupils' knowledge of the defined syllabus content will be tested. Such is the tension between the need to 'get through' this content, mediated by the desire to work in an 'interperative' context, that an exercise which is planned to be open and exploratory, in which the pupils are asked to make predictions about the content of the poem based upon their interpretation of an extract, is modified to incorporate transmissive elements – achieved, in this case, by the teacher giving the pupils the answer to the central question of what the poem is about (it is actually about a father and son meeting for the first time).

The respondents' adoption of mediating practices enables them to maintain a public discourse which corresponds with their allegiance to Barnes' model of an interpretation teacher. In their lessons, the respondents believe, their pupils' personal experience is taken fully into account. In their lessons, they assert, time is made available for pupils to use their own language to explore their own experience, using this as a basis for their interpretation of the formal curriculum.

In actual fact the respondents' use of mediating practices enables them to operate a within a highly controlled environment in which they convey to their pupils clear requirements about the content to be covered in the lesson and the work rate to be employed.

It is here that we come to another central argument of this study: The respondents' practice is, in many respects, closely aligned to that advocated by Marenbon (1987) and by the powerful external voices which demand that the subject of English transmit a defined cultural product rather than develop personal growth. It is important to note, however, that the respondents' use of mediating practices enables them to fulfil external demands which they view to be overly restrictive and oppressive in ways which enable

them to retain, in an altered form, some central tenets of the London model of personal growth which they believe form the basis of 'good practice' in the English lesson. In so doing the respondents are, very effectively, developing the aspect of English which the London model foregrounded, its pedagogy.

The following chapters on Standard English and Literature will further consider the two themes explored in this chapter: the possible divergence between the respondents' rhetoric and their actual practice and their use of mediating practices as a means to enable them to preserve some of the theoretical tenets which they espouse.

Chapter Seven

Spoken Standard English

The data explored in the previous chapter suggest that teachers of English have developed practices which enable them to deliver a defined subject content in ways which enable them to retain some tenets of the pedagogical theory which provides a rationale for their conception of their practice. One of the key areas of defined subject content which external agencies demand that English deliver is spoken standard English.

The context in which the data on standard English were collected

In the confident mood following the Conservative election victory of 1992, with members of the CPS in positions of influence regarding government education policy, the time was judged right to pursue this goal of the delivery, through English, of spoken standard English. David Pascall, a prominent right winger appointed as chair of the NCC, was well placed to promote this drive and in so doing set in train one of the most fiercely contested issues in the revision of the 1990 National Curriculum for English. Pascall, promoting his case in newspaper articles, argued that the teaching of standard English had been given insufficient attention in the Cox report. Enquiring, rhetorically: 'Does anyone really dispute that we need to raise the standards of spoken English in this country?' (Pascall,1993) he argued that spoken standard English should become the sole dialect to be spoken on every occasion, in the playground, and even at football matches. Pascall's influence can be seen

in the first version of the revision to the Cox curriculum (DFE 1993) which, to the outrage of linguists and the English education establishment, defined standard English as being 'characterised by the correct use of vocabulary and grammar.' – a definition which was, in the subsequent revisions, as a result of pressure placed upon the NCC by the English education establishment, withdrawn.

Although the arguments put forward by linguists - that spoken standard English is not stable but varies considerably from the written version and that constructions which would be considered incorrect in written standard English are routinely practised in the spoken version; that the language is changing and developing at an unprecedented rate, not only in its vocabulary, but also in its written forms, particularly with the advent of electronic forms of communication – proved to have some effect upon the revisers of the National Curriculum, they were recognised, by some linguists, to be unpopular at a time where the public are looking to education to provide cultural icons of stability and continuity within a fast changing and uncertain. This point was powerfully made by one linguist when she gave a talk to a 'Tory grassroots audience' on the topic of 'Teaching English and Teaching Morals.'

The view of language I gave them should not have been contentious. Linguists would agree that its forms are customary and constantly change with time: that it is, as a medium of communication, almost infinitely supple and diverse. Again, our knowledge of how children learn is not all partisan or theoretical. They, on the other hand, were sometimes plain wrong. One man insisted that it was only in Britain, and largely since the Sixties, that speakers in, say Yorkshire, had become barely comprehensible in Dorset. We were not talking about fact but about perceptions. My facts supported my view that with language it is proficiency that really matters; correctness does matter, but it is an aspect of proficiency. They cared only for correctness, which they understood symbolically as law. What I was hearing had nothing essentially to do with teaching a modern discipline in a modern classroom. They voiced deep anxieties about society, fear of those sections they thought of as lawless, and an angry demand that their government assert control. (Butler in *The Times Educational Supplement* July 2nd, 1993)

The government did take the opportunity, in the revision to the Cox (DFE, 1989) curriculum, to assert control over the teaching of standard English. As outlined in chapter 5, the careful balance between the claims of spoken standard English and non-standard forms achieved by Bullock (DES, 1975) and Cox (DFE, 1989) was, in the revised (DFEE, 1995) English curriculum, abandoned in favour of an almost exclusive concentration on standard English, in which the role of dialect and community languages was conceptualised merely as a 'service' language form which should be used to provide illustrative contrasts which would serve to illuminate, further, the essential features of the standard form.

In order to participate confidently in public, cultural and working life, pupils need to be able to speak, write and read standard English fluently and accurately. All pupils are therefore entitled to the full range of opportunities necessary to enable them to develop competence in standard English. The richness of dialects and other languages can make an important contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of standard English. (DFEE, 1995, p.2)

The respondents' rhetoric on the teaching of spoken standard English

Since 1944 and (especially) since the early 1970s, non-standard forms of English have established a much stronger, *recognised* place in the classroom; standard English has lost some of its normative force, and issues of 'correctness' have (to some extent) been problematised. These developments are part of a more general shift, in which the relationship between the experiences of learners and the formal, organised knowledge of the school has become more central to educational thinking. This shift, in turn, relates to wider developments: the erosion of authoritative linguistic norms, the forceful presence of subordinate dialects – related to class and ethnicity – within the public arena.
(Jones, 1994, p.9)

Jones's observations on the acceptance of non-standard forms of speech within the English classroom are supported by the respondents' interview responses on this issue. The

highly charged and politicised nature of the public debate about the definition of standard English and its role in the English curriculum is also reflected in the views of the respondents - this is an issue about which they are prepared to talk at length - and they are keen to illustrate their opinions with references to their classroom teaching. The respondents' strong sense of professional subject knowledge is, they argue, superior to what they perceive to be misguided and ill-informed interference by government into the proper concerns and academic knowledge of English specialists. The announcements of the then chairman of the NCC, David Paskall are signalled out for particular criticism.

Well, again, it's a complete misunderstanding of how children learn. It's based on a fallacy. How students acquire language, how they can switch between codes and how you couldn't, even if you felt it was a good thing, force children to speak standard English in the playground, which I believe was one of the suggestions wasn't it? . . . Obviously we have to, in the world as it is, teach them to be able to swop into standard English as well, as another code that they can use. The problem is the valuing of that code over all the others including, often, their own which is often every bit as rich and diverse. (M.A. School 3)

There is, in the above response, an interesting reference to codes used not to refer to Bernstein's (1960) theory of inclusion, through a particular dialect, into the language of education, but to the Hymes (1971) argument that all speakers inhabit different language environments in which different expectations operate regarding the form of language which is considered appropriate. 'Data from the first years of acquisition of English grammar show children to develop rules for the use of different forms in different situations and an awareness of different acts of speech'. (p279). The respondent above advocates the view that children are able to 'switch' between standard and non-standard dialects when they

recognise what the different linguistic demands of different situations are. This view is reinforced by another respondent.

Students actually have greater understanding of language than the National Curriculum seems to suggest. They're able to recognise correctness and appropriateness and that's what they need to be aiming to do, to continue to build on that . . . when it is appropriate to use this, and to become the users of the different dialects . . . I mean, that's what they're good at, that's what they come to understand . . . they're good at discourse analysis, although they wouldn't recognise the term discourse analysis. (J.O. school 3)

This respondent goes on to expound the concept of code switching.

Why did you say . . . that they've got the emphasis wrong with standard English and language study? (researcher)

Well it's suggesting that standard English is the more important dialect and for our students, they don't start speaking in standard English, they learn standard English as a form of the English language, and they learn when it's appropriate and they learn about it as an instrument of power but I don't want them to say that standard English is the only form to use and I certainly don't agree with the idea that they should be using standard English all the time. I mean, it's appropriate with your friends to chat with your friends using your own accent and dialect and that's where your actual identity lies, and to be able to be bi-dialectal gives them much more empowerment as well as continuing the sense of identity which I think is all important. (J.O. school 3)

From what they feel to be their superior knowledge of the issues, two respondents explicitly criticise what they perceive to be misguided and ill-informed educational policy making by the then conservative administration.

I think it's very difficult to divorce the kind of dialect you speak from the social environment, to suggest that people speak standard English at a football match demonstrates just ignorance, it seems to me.
(G.S. school 1)

I don't think that it is wrong to promulgate standard English, what I think is outrageous is some of the suggestions which have come from the Tories like we should correct children in the playground. . . . we all know that Shaw's words still hold true, you know, that it only takes one Englishman to open his mouth for three other Englishmen to despise him, and I think that's still true with standard English. (C.P. school 3)

The above responses are notable for the teachers' assured defence of their position on standard English. Drawing on their knowledge of socio-linguistic theory and its vocabulary (codes, code switching, discourse analysis), the respondents confidently relate theoretical research to their classroom experience. This is an area in which teachers' professional subject knowledge provides a strong defence against a perceived shift in power relations away from teaching professionals to government agencies.

Standard English and the promotion of cultural imperialism

Other respondents equate the revised requirements concerning standard English not only with an ignorance of linguistic theory on the part of government agencies but with informed and sinister political ideologies, namely, the use of state education to promote a form of cultural imperialism.

I think it's this whole thing, if only we could whip in the working class and make them more middle class . . . it's the old Thatcherite idea isn't it, reclaiming the working class as some sort of middle class community and then everybody will move forward together into this bright conservative future, and I think that this is hung on here.
(C.P. school 3)

And of course there's the feel of street language isn't there?, because it's a code, it's a secret code that those type of people aren't allowed into, so basically instead what you've got to do is you've got to force people into their code. And then you have control, it's a control mechanism. (M.P. School 3)

I am a firm believer, certainly, in oral work and I'm worried, at the moment, about the way oracy's going . . . I don't know if you remember back in October the Gillian Sheppard supposed working party with Charles Brandon and Trevor McDonald talking about oracy and stuff, . . . and it's clear to me that what that means is middle class values for the kids, . . . I don't believe that . . . I don't believe that's what oracy's about . . . English has been attacked on all fronts. Reading has had its turn; writing's had its turn, it's now the turn of speaking and listening and they guise it as oracy and they guise it as empowerment, and they guise it as students having power to do well, and it isn't about that at all. It's narrowing and it is restrictive . . . What is that all about? It's middle class values, it's middle class ways of speaking, . . . and it's therefore, it's an indoctrination . . . of students as individuals . . . (M.A. school 3)

It is interesting that the respondents identify the imperative behind the drive, at the end of the twentieth century, to promote standard English, with the cultural anxieties which underlay its advocacy by Sampson and Newbolt at the beginning of the century.

It is also notable that all the respondents who equate the moves on standard English with an attempt on the government's part to practise social engineering are from school 3 in which a working party had produced a document outlining the whole school language and literacy policy. Included in this document is a consideration of the various issues surrounding standard English, including accent and dialect, and a definition of standard English, taken from Cox, (1989). Over sixty community languages are spoken in the school. The multicultural, multilingual environment in which the teachers in school 3 work appears to have greatly raised the their awareness of the issues and debates surrounding language variety and change.

The concern not to promote a form of cultural imperialism through the promotion of standard English is allied to a recurring theme in the respondents' answers, the need to foster personal growth through English. For many respondents the promotion, by government agencies, of standard English, is to be resisted - not only because they perceive that a wider and more sinister agenda than raising standards of spoken English lies behind the promotion of this dialect - but also because they feel that there is a danger that personal growth through the expression of the self can be achieved only in the language closest to an individual, the pupils' own dialect.

Standard English and Oracy

It is very clear from the responses of every teacher interviewed that there is a strong belief in a link between an individual's language and identity. The language of the community which the speaker chooses to use with friends and family is, as one speaker argues, 'where your identity lies' (J.O. school 3). Overt criticism of an individual's speech, it is believed, would be understood by the speaker to be a criticism of their self. Such a practice should not take place in a lesson which should be a site for personal growth in which an individual's identity is expressed through language. In their responses the teachers echo the concerns of the London group. If oracy, the expression of thought through language, is to be a vehicle for learning in the classroom, then pupils must feel confident to express themselves in the language which is closest to the self, the dialect used at home and in the community. It is from this basis that pupils can build knowledge through 'ambitious uses of language' in which challenging and difficult concepts are explored and debated.

The quality of words in the head, inner speech, must be closely tied to our experience of talking with others which gives us resources for thinking and learning, for self prompting and intellectual adventure. School could be a place where pupils enriched their resources, because it would be there that they encountered new verbal strategies and were inspired to more ambitious uses of language than those provided outside. (Rosen, 1971, p.126)

One respondent, who spoke at length and with great conviction, relates the concept of language with individual identity and learning in a statement which is closely allied to the London school's perspective. Effective learning, she argues, starts with the individual's knowledge and experience, 'As teachers we're about encouraging what's there and building upon that in a productive way' (M.A. School 3). Constant correction of children's speech would, in her view, be counter productive and would militate against the process of oracy – a process which, as the previous chapter has shown, is central to the respondents' ideology and their perception of their classroom practice.

Take the class that you saw with four bilingual students. Could you imagine? The confidence that they've got, the progression that they've made, and then you're saying to them, no that's not how you say, this is how you say, at every point. You know how frustrating it is when you're stopped. You know how frustrating it is as a child when you say something and someone corrects you, the sense of anger that you feel, and inadequacy, you know, the put down. That's not our place in schools, that's not what we're about as teachers. As teachers we're about encouraging what's there and building upon that in a productive way, and I don't believe that, that just is a form of chastisement really, a constant correction, a constant criticism about something which, as I've said, is very personal, your identity, the way you speak, the way I speak is my identity . . . and it's not on . . . oracy and identity is important, and I think when we start saying how you speak we're saying, well, it's very much who you are, it's very much part of you. Your voice is a very personal thing, it's a very individual integral thing and what I would like to see us doing, and if you're thinking about a holistic approach to oral work the confidence, the expression, all those sort of things are so important to an individual and all those things to do with identity, who you are . . . and we're in danger, I think, of losing that at the moment in English so I do try to, in any work that I'm doing, to build in those aspects. (M.A. school 3)

Standard English and individual empowerment

Other respondents take a slightly different view. Although these respondents do, in their rhetorical representation of their practice, firmly support the process of oracy, they also support the teaching of spoken standard English. For these respondents the teaching of standard English is a necessary source of empowerment giving pupils the opportunity to communicate effectively in more formal situations. However, following the traditional treatment of standard English in the reports on the teaching of English published this century until 1990, these respondents argue that spoken standard English should be taught with sensitivity.

If, for example, somebody is giving a talk to the class you might say well, a formal talk is likely to be best delivered in standard English, that would be the normal dialect to give it in. If, however, that isn't the child's . . . the dialect the child is most at home with . . . then there will be circumstances which will push that child towards using another dialect, for example, interest and enthusiasm, getting excited moves into dialect, now clearly it is not the teacher's function at that point to intervene and to correct that . . . correct in inverted commas . . . to change it, to modify it, because in so doing you actually modify also the enthusiasm, the interest and the excitement that generated that dialect shift, and clearly, you know, you have to balance your roles as a professional and you would recognise, most teachers would recognise in that circumstance that the interest and enthusiasm and excitement was to be fostered, em . . . and was actually at that point much more important than the wish to make children aware that formal talks are given in standard English. (G.S. school 1)

The delicate balance between a recognition of the importance of standard English as a powerful language which children will need to acquire if they are to be able to operate effectively in the wider community and in the world of employment, and a respect for the dialect, (and in school 3 the language), of each pupils' home and community, is recognised by these respondents. They are prepared to accept that a pupil who is unable to switch into

standard English would in all probability face discrimination. These respondents' notion of empowerment is, therefore, different from those whose arguments were reported earlier who hold the view that the promotion of standard English is inimical to the development of personal expression.

Well, coming from a linguistics background, the value attachment goes very much against my grain because that was the first thing that was demolished when we went to university. How can you say that a Birmingham accent is less valid than R.P. or whatever and it was a very sort of scientific approach just to look at what makes a dialect a dialect. But, having said that, I am aware that it is a handicap, looking at the work of various people. I think the . . . conclusion is that it's just as valid to have a non-standard dialect but, actually, in practical terms, it's useful to have a standard dialect because it gets you places and it opens doors...J.L. school 1)

I take the argument about empowerment and entitlement, I take the argument that if you, em . . . encourage children to believe that they can speak a dialect version of English other than standard English in any situation and that will not have any effect on either themselves or how they are perceived by their audience is to tell them a lie. On the other hand there is no point in making people deny the speech of home, for example, and to say that is incorrect and I think you've got to be very careful because the way you speak, your language is very very strongly tied up with your own sense of identity, both socially and personally, and I think you just, I mean it's not being namby pamby liberal to say that you've got to tread carefully on that, I think you have to respect it, and I think that's a very positive thing to do. (G.S. school 1)

In the above responses (all it should be noted from school 1) the notion of empowerment through language is realised in the extension of a child's language beyond their original dialect to encompass standard English. However, the need to extend their pupils' language repertoire is balanced with a corresponding need, on the part of the respondents, to demonstrate a respect for each individual's language in which their self is expressed. In this regard the respondents maintain the careful balance between acquisition of a powerful, formal dialect which endows authority upon the speaker, and a recognition of

the force of the language of the speaker's community which endows upon the speaker an identity within a locality. This balance has been advocated throughout the history of the subject and was, until the 1995 revision of the National Curriculum, adopted as the recommended policy in government reports on the teaching of English.

We do not, however, suggest that the suppression of dialect should be aimed at, but that children who speak a dialect, should, as often happens, become bilingual, speaking standard English too. Every dialect has, for those who have been brought up to speak it, intimate associations of its own, and, side by side with standard English, dialect will probably persist and be used in the playground and in the street. In many cases, indeed, it will deserve to persist, on account of its historic interest. (Newbolt, 1921, p.67)

The question which is now raised is that of how the respondents resolve the tension between teaching standard English and demonstrating a respect for their pupils' dialect.

The respondents' practice – spoken standard English in the classroom

In the responses detailed above one respondent (G.S.) argues that it is important for the teacher to judge when the appropriate time would be to introduce the notion of standard English and that this should not be done at times when the pupils, through interest and excitement, slip into non standard forms. The content of the speech is, at this point, more important than its form of expression.

The record of lesson observations provides an alternative model of the ways in which the respondents attempt to teach standard English. Here, the concept of mediating practices provides a useful framework in which to demonstrate how the respondents balance the need

to show respect for each pupils' language with the need to add to their pupils' linguistic repertoire the powerful dialect of standard English.

In the last chapter it is revealed that none of the respondents are ever observed telling any pupil that they had got an answer wrong. Rather, the right answer is signalled through the teacher's approving response to what they judge to be the correct answer, and their subsequent elaboration of the content of the right response. This mediating practice enables the respondents to signal their desire to treat their pupils with courtesy and sensitivity whilst maintaining their control over the content of the lesson.

The mediating practice adopted in the teaching of standard English operates in a very similar way. At no point do the respondents directly correct their pupils when they use non standard forms. The practice adopted by the respondents is an initial acceptance of the pupils' answers (thus indicating that they are worthy of consideration) and then their re-phrasing of these answers into standard English, often, also, using the correct technical language of the subject in place of their pupils' more colloquial phrases.

The first example is taken from a year 7 mixed ability group. The teacher commented after the lesson that this was a rather weak group. In the previous lesson the class had compiled a list of language features which 'made poetry'. The class was asked, in the observed lesson, to refer to this list which was divided into different sections. Each section was headed by a formal term: 'Content, Mood, Form, Language, Poetic Devices'. At the beginning of the lesson the teacher invited the pupils to explain what each term meant. The pupils' answers were expressed in very colloquial language. The term 'content' was explained by one as 'What's in the poem, miss', and by another as 'What it's about'; the term 'Mood' was interpreted by one pupil as 'how it makes you feel'; the term 'Form' as 'how it

looks on the page'. Each of these answers was accepted by the teacher who then went on to elaborate, in more formal language, what the term meant: 'Yes, Jack, form is how the poem looks on the page, but do you remember, it's also about the devices the author uses, for example, does it rhyme? Is it written in verses? (M.P. school 3) Thus the respondent balances her desire to generate a positive and enthusiastic response from the pupils with a parallel need to impart to them the language of the subject, expressed in formal standard English, which includes the technical terms (devices, rhyme, verse) which the pupils have explored, initially, in their own words. The next example, again from school 3, echoes, in its form and in its mode of instruction, the first example.

- Teacher Can anyone tell me what the plot of a story is?
- Pupil It's what the story's about
- Pupil What happens to the...to the people in it....
- Pupil Like, Miss, like, what they do...the people... the author writes it down
- Pupil The exciting bits... in 'Waiting for the Rain'... when something good happens and it makes you want to read on...
- Teacher Very good, those are all very good answers and they all say something important about what a 'plot' is. A plot is the structure the author imposes on the story. This structure, this plot is designed, usually, to keep the reader interested in the story. The plot dictates what the characters do, what happens to them, how they interact with one another, how they get on together. Often, the most exciting parts of the book are at the end of chapters, where the author tries to provide a bait to get you to read on to the next chapter. Can you think of a bait in 'Waiting for the Rain'? (M.A. school 3)

The respondents have, from the evidence of the data, developed practices which enable them to mediate the apparently divergent imperatives to respect their pupils' colloquial

speech, and to enable them to add formal spoken standard English to their speech repertoire. At no point did the researcher observe a direct correction of a pupil's colloquial speech. What did happen, often, was that a pupil's answer was routinely re-modelled by the teacher into a more formal mode of expression. In the example above the teacher carefully elaborates upon a standard, formal term (interact), by using an explanatory, colloquial phrase which she can be sure that all the pupils will understand (get on), thus modelling for her pupils the use of a formal term and its informal colloquial.

In the next example the respondent tackles the issue of the appropriate use of colloquial and more formal language directly.

Teacher	How would you describe Buddy?
Pupil	Rude
Pupil	Bad
Teacher	One word teachers might use is disaffected (C.M. School 3)

This re-modelling occurs, also, when the pupils do answer in standard English and appears to be a means by which the teacher conveys to the pupils the technical language of the subject.

Teacher	This is how I want you to work today. I'm going to give you twelve texts taken from different centuries and I want you to put them in order, in chronological order, that is, from the one written earliest to the latest. Now to do this you will need to look at the texts carefully. The language of the texts contains certain clues, certain markers which you can use to tell you when they might have been written...What sorts of things should you be looking at?
Pupil	Spelling
Pupil	Sentence structure

Teacher Good. What else do you know about language change?...Well you will need to look at the inflexions in the extracts, the lexis and the punctuation as well. (N.T. school 1)

The teacher's introduction progresses from a simple explanation (put the texts 'in order') which is then repeated using the more formal term 'chronological'. Subsequently, the pupils offer two possible 'markers' of the age of a text. Both of these are accepted 'good'. The teacher then extends the pupils' response and signals clearly the other 'markers' the pupils should be looking for, in language which is highly technical 'inflexions, lexis and punctuation'.

The evidence from the data suggests that the respondents do give their pupils indirect instruction into the form of language which they will need to be able to use to gain higher grades in the subject. This mediating practice enables the respondents to unite the internal demand they impose upon themselves to respect each pupil's language with the external demands for a defined content (in this case the ability to use subject-specific vocabulary and standard English).

However, although evidence from the lesson observations suggests that all respondents adopt this mediating practice, only those in school 1 are prepared to acknowledge that the teaching of spoken standard English is a necessary part of their work as English teachers, to be combined with a respect for their pupils' normal language. In school 3, in particular, the department's opposition to the inflammatory rhetoric of the right wing has led them to adopt a position (standard English should not be enforced upon pupils) which does not reflect the reality of their practice (that they have found much more subtle ways of modelling spoken standard English forms for their pupils). The irony of this situation

is further compounded by evidence taken from the pupils' folders which indicates that it is in school 3 that the most direct and focused teaching of standard English takes place. An extended unit of work, taught over half a term, entitled 'language variety and change', is taught to all pupils in year 7 as the first topic on the English curriculum; in effect, this is the pupils' introduction to the English curriculum in school 3. The teaching materials used in this unit of work are reproduced in appendix a. The unit is structured to enable the pupils to move, initially, from their own understanding of the term 'talking properly', based upon their 'reading' of a character, Billy, from Janni Howker's (1986) *The Nature of the Beast*, to an examination of their own judgements upon Billy's character and the sources from which they make these judgements. This initial exercise is then developed by a further exercise in which the pupils are asked to 'translate' Billy's dialect into 'proper' English. In this way a progression is carefully structured between the existing 'action' knowledge of the pupils (expressed in the term 'proper English'), to the 'school' knowledge which the teachers wish to impart, in this case an understanding of the terms standard English and dialect. This progression is further reinforced by an activity in which the pupils are asked to examine their own experience of their parents' frequent correction of 'incorrect' speech, and to use this experience as a basis to acquire a more 'academic' understanding of the formal term 'standard English'. Further activities give the pupils the opportunity to record the different language varieties which they use in a day (the 'talk' diary), and to record why they chose to use a particular speech register (thus raising issues of appropriateness within different contexts); the pupils are also given the opportunity to perform role plays in which different registers of language, explicitly structured from very informal to very formal, are explored, an activity which is extended by the requirement that the pupils write, in role, as Headteacher, to the

parents of pupils who have been fighting, explaining the school's policy on this issue and the punishment which will be meted out to the erring pupils. The unit is completed by a debate in which statements about language variety, some of which explicitly pit arguments for and against the use of standard English, are listed, and pupils are given the opportunity to express their views on these and on other issues of language use.

Thus it is in school 3 that pupils are given the most explicit introduction to the topic of standard English in both spoken and written forms, an introduction in which the pupils' intrinsic understanding of language issues is extended by the careful development of knowledge and understanding of more formal linguistic terms (standard English, dialect, accent), and of issues of appropriateness of language use.

When this unit of work was discovered by the researcher the opportunity was taken to go back to some of the respondents who had spoken most vehemently against the standard English requirements in the revised (1995) National Curriculum. When asked what was the purpose of this unit and how successful did they think it was in achieving this purpose the respondents reacted enthusiastically.

It's an excellent introduction to English work at (name of school 3). For a start...it gets the students talking, so that they see that English isn't just about reading and writing, so it raises the profile of oracy, and they learn that they need to use language, spoken language, to learn. And then you get drama work, and debates, and it raises issues of language use, and the students see that it's perfectly O.K. to use different registers of language in different situations. When they're with their friends they'll use words which they don't want us to hear, or to use in the classroom, where the speech is much more formal, even from them. So it introduces complex issues like dialect and slang and standard English in an accessible and fun way. And they get to know each other. They're all from different schools and it gets them talking to one another. (M.A. school 3)

Actually, we want to revise that unit, but not because it's not working, but because we want to add new materials. Actually, we want to make it a bit more ambitious and to go into the structures of standard English, and how these change from speech to writing, and the purposes that standard English serves, and dialect and slang serves...not to make it dry and dull, but just to give it a bit more rigour, so that the students get a better grasp of the concepts behind language variety. (J.O. school 3)

There is no doubt, however, that these responses would not have been given if the researcher had not explicitly re-addressed with these respondents the issue of their treatment of standard English based on the evidence provided by the pupils' files. Locked in rhetorical opposition to what the respondents in school 3 perceive to be the external imposition of flawed curriculum content, they fail, completely, to represent the reality of their practice. Paradoxically, it appears that the respondents in school 3 are, very successfully, meeting the revised requirements concerning standard English in the 1995 National Curriculum. They had, moreover, been doing so before they needed to do so (the unit on language variety was developed in 1990). However, the failure on the part of the respondents to recognise the effectiveness of their practice in mediating the demands of external agencies, and their own internally imposed imperatives, has led to an inaccurate portrayal of their classroom practice, which, from an already strong base, they are seeking to make more 'rigorous' (by the introduction of a greater degree of subject specific content and language specific terms). The conclusion of the previous chapter is reinforced by the conclusion of the present chapter, namely that it is the respondents' rhetoric which leaves the subject of English weakly defended in that it fails to accurately represent their practice which, very effectively, mediates between their pupils' intrinsic knowledge and the more explicit defined subject content which wider agencies demand that English deliver.

This issue of the divergence between the respondents' rhetoric and their practice will be further explored in the next chapter on the teaching of literature, where it will be argued that their opposition to the National Curriculum list of authors at key stages 3 and 4 does not reflect the reality either of their practice, or of their actual values in terms of the content of the English curriculum.

Chapter Eight

Literature

It is argued in the previous chapter that the rhetoric of the respondents does not serve to reflect their practice which, in several important respects, through the forging of innovative pedagogies by the respondents, fulfils the external demands posed upon the subject by powerful contemporary political forces.

This chapter on the teaching of literature will develop this argument further and will present evidence to suggest that, as with the teaching of standard English, it is perhaps the respondents' rhetoric, and not their practice, which leaves the subject vulnerable to the charge that it is not delivering a key cultural product, in this case the renewal, in today's generation, of knowledge of key texts from the literary canon.

The context in which the data on the teaching of literature were collected

It is important to note that the data for this study were being collected at a time when government agencies took the power to define, in very detailed and absolute terms, the product which should be delivered through the teaching of English literature in state schools. The drive to define the English curriculum was fuelled by the concerns expressed at the beginning of the century by Sampson (1921) and Newbolt (1921): a sense of cultural collapse, brought about by a perceived dislocation of society, set in train a search for a medium which would promote cultural continuity and cohesion.

For if literature be, as we believe, an embodiment of the best thoughts of the best minds, the most direct and lasting communication of experience by men to men, a fellowship which binds together by passion and knowledge the vast empire of human society, as it is spread over the whole earth, and over all time' then the nation of which a considerable proportion rejects this means of grace and despises this great spiritual influence, must assuredly be heading to disaster. (Newbolt, 1921, p. 253)

The sense of impending loss of the countries 'powerful and splendid' (Kingman, 1988, p.11) literary cultural capital re-emerged as an increasingly pervasive concern of the early 1990s echoed in a spate of newspaper reports lamenting the lapse of the teaching of texts from the literary canon. The news, in 1991, of the inclusion of Frederick Forsyth's novel *The Day of The Jackal* on the 'A' level literature syllabus generated many column inches in the popular and the broadsheet press, and the following response from Professor Martin Dodsworth, chairman of the English Association: 'It is a sign that the last days are coming fast upon us. This is a sop to those who think the study of literature is elitist.' (Dodsworth, 1991)

The drive to promote, through the state education system, a knowledge of the literary canon, was strongly driven by the CPS agenda, with representatives from the CPS occupying key roles, during the early to mid 1990s, in educational quangos founded by the then Conservative administration. Lord Griffiths, during this period occupying the positions of chair of SEAC and, simultaneously, chairman of the CPS, drew upon the fears of impending cultural collapse to justify the very early revision of the 1990 National Curriculum for English. Consequently, in the NCC document *National Curriculum English: The Case For Revising The Order* (1992) the issue of 'whether the Order needs to provide a more explicit definition of the literature pupils should read in order to further the objective of encouraging wide reading and developing an appreciation of great literature' (p.6), was raised. The response to the consultation report (almost wholly

composed of members of the English educational establishment) strongly rejected such an approach.

57% of secondary schools deemed the approach (to the teaching of literature) to be inappropriate. There was support (21%) for greater emphasis on non-fiction and non-literary texts. Only 3% of respondents wished to see a re-designing of the programmes of study to ensure a more detailed study of the "great tradition of the novel". (NCC,1993 p.7)

The political impetus to define a product of literature rather than a process of reading was, however, too strong a force for the results of the consultation to be heeded. Despite a warning by OFSTED (Hofkins,1994) which stated: 'By their nature, lists are somewhat arbitrary, exclude as well as include, and if unchanged for five years could appear excessively rigid.', in 1995, contained within the revised National Curriculum is a prescribed list of pre-twentieth century authors, a selection of which must be studied by all pupils in England and Wales at key stages 3 and 4.

The central definition of the literature curriculum was accompanied by a radical change in the national assessment system for literature. Immediately prior to the data collection for this study the assessment of literature at GCSE level changed from a system largely, or wholly, based on coursework to one largely based on a terminal exam. Despite vigorous opposition from the English teaching profession, spearheaded by NATE, in 1992, on the advice of SEAC and under the decree of the then Secretary of State for Education (Kenneth Clarke), coursework assessment at GCSE was cut back in all subjects, to 40% in English and 30% in English literature. The moves on GCSE assessment were paralleled by the changes made to the national assessment system at key stage 3 which moved from coursework tasks to externally set and timed tests. These

were boycotted by English teachers in state schools in 1993 but subsequently administered by English teachers and undertaken by pupils in state schools 1994.

The respondents' rhetoric upon the teaching of literature

An attempt, by government, to impose a form of cultural imperialism through the vehicle of the teaching of literature

The respondents in this study equate the move to establish a compulsory pre-twentieth century list of prescribed authors as a re-working of Newbolt's vision and purpose. This list contained in the 1995 English order is perceived to be a drive, by right wing forces, to impose an elite and inappropriate cultural heritage upon pupils. In essence, respondents view the authorised list as a form of 'cultural imperialism' – an attempt to recreate a revisionist, culturally exclusive view of England and of Englishness which does not reflect the experience of their pupils. They react strongly against their perception that the government wishes to use them as conduits through which a unifying vision of Englishness, is promoted.

Well, I mean, you cannot legislate the validity of a culture, it's veering very close to a type of intellectual facism, you cannot by legislation, or by pressuring the agents of state education, force students to relate to that culture. You can make them read a book that they'll find damn boring... I think the idea of a canon is very much like a citizen's charter.
(C.P. school 3)

The strong terms used by the above respondent indicate the amount of resentment generated by the prescribed list. The term 'intellectual facism' demonstrates most vividly the respondent's view that the prescribed list is an attempt by government to impose, through a statutory reading curriculum, a particular view of society, one which the

respondent feels to be to be inappropriate to the pupils' interests, unrepresentative of their needs as readers, and subject to the process of manipulation for party political ends (the canon as citizen's charter). The view that the list is an attempt to impose a cultural monopoly in the face of increasing cultural plurality is argued by another respondent who also argues that the teaching of Englishness and the teaching of the subject English have been insufficiently separated in the minds of those in power.

...it's the English teachers again, we seem to be the repository of the culture of the nation and we as English teachers have to disseminate that amongst all the cultures that there are in the classroom and ensure that they're all creating one single culture, one national heritage and em it seems to be upon us this onus lies...and if we're not doing it then, the nation will fall apart at the seams.(J.O. school 3)

The respondents argue, below, that the authors included on the list have been chosen to promote a particular, and inappropriate, view of the world, one which is conservative, exclusive and unrepresentative of many pupils' reality – a view closely linked in the respondents' minds with the then prime minister's (John Major) view of England.

They're very reactionary,....nobody's going to read them. It's about antique values, you know, often racist, sometimes sexist. It's all there, it's about nostalgia isn't it? It's about a gentleman's education. It's about nostalgia for the middle class...reminiscent of that awful speech of Major's about warm beer and cold cricket greens, whatever it was actually, that sort of thing, it's not related to reality, in fact, that's the whole point. It doesn't live in the real world. It's the British inability to come to terms with the twentieth century. (C.P school 3)

It just infuriates me because I think these are people who don't have any real, or don't seem to me to have any real knowledge or appreciation of literature, I mean, its not like the best stuff I've ever read on that list, well,

there's a lot of stuff I haven't read...It just seems that there's this other agenda which isn't an educational one, but a political one, (H.M school 1)

It's political as well. It's this idea of tradition, conservatism with a small 'c', and you know, it's at the expense of real learning and knowledge, it's totally crap. (C.M. school 3)

There's all this harking back to the past is always, I mean I firmly believe it's completely a political view, it's about a sort of moral and social code. It's about a particular life style that we should all try and get back to....It's a view of how certain people, a narrow band of people would want England to be. (M.P. School 3)

The respondents' rejection of the pre-twentieth century reading list focuses upon its exclusivity. The respondents argue that they do not want to portray, through literature, a vision of England which is 'not related to reality', or to appeal to a 'narrow band of people'.

An exclusive, unbalanced and uninteresting literature curriculum

In addition to the ideological objections to the prescribed list outlined above the respondents also put forward practical objections. They argue, firstly, that the pre-twentieth century prescribed list has created an imbalance in the literature curriculum and has resulted in a lessening of the time available to teach a broad range of literature, including pre-twentieth century texts. This imbalance, they argue, is compounded by the requirements of the key stage 3 exams and the externally assessed GCSE literature exams which, they assert, have a distorting effect upon the English curriculum. The main charge against the forms of national external assessment of pupils' response to literature

is that pupils have to study the same text for too long. Teachers feel that the external exams stultify the curriculum, generating boredom and disaffection amongst pupils.

One respondent, commenting on the programme of study for literature at key stages 3 and 4, comments

...but the fact that there's all that, massive amount of stuff devoted to that (pre-twentieth century literature) and then there's just one sentence about children's literature which we've all been using to good effect, and it's overbalanced it really.. (N.T.school 1)

The respondents put forward two main examples of what they feel to be the imbalance in the literature curriculum created by the 'massive amount of stuff' devoted to pre-twentieth century literature. They argue, firstly, that the pre-twentieth century literature requirements result in a narrowing of the literature curriculum as there is insufficient time left available, once the requirements of the order regarding pre-twentieth century literature have been met, to read literature from contrasting sources.

...and the poetry that you get as well.....black women, pre-twentieth century poetry...em...all that's just not there. (M.A. school 3)

Secondly, the respondents assert that this narrowing of the literature curriculum limits the range of responses which the pupils are able to make and adversely affects their interest in, and enjoyment of, literature.

But then having it at the expense of other forms of literature which are....you know, it's this sort of idea that we need all things.... we need to have a varied and broad curriculum experience for all children to experience. It's at the expense of modern literature and other cultures and black literature, I mean, that's under-represented, black writers, so that's denying the experience of our students. If they've had positive experiences of literature, literature that they can relate to, which is about, perhaps about experiences that they understand, about cultures they understand or have

interested them, they when you come to it, so its is, actually such a narrow minded, stupid attitude. (C.M. school 3)

Reader response theory strongly underpins the above respondent's argument against the prescribed list. Her understanding of a varied and broad literature curriculum is one in which texts by authors which represent the cultures of the pupils in multi-ethnic classrooms, and modern texts, are given equal place to literature from the canon. These texts, in her view, enable pupils to 'relate' to literature as they deal with experiences and concerns which affect the pupils' lives.

Up to a point, it must be true that we make sense of what we read partly through a comparison between what the text is proposing to us and what we know directly from our own living...The relating of our own world to the world of the text partly accounts for some texts being easier and some more difficult for us to read. (Evans, 1987, pp28–29)

A similar point is made in respect of contemporary literature and of media by another respondent.

...the material we're expected to teach them; it seemed more appropriate to...it seemed out of touch with the makeup of a mixed ability school in a multi-ethnic area... some of the material we're expected to teach seemed inappropriate to me...so I think also it's the prescribed nature...also, it takes time. If you're going to do all of those things you then don't have time for media, you don't have time for other valuable schemes of work. (R.P. school 3)

The second charge of imbalance is related to the respondents' perception that the emphasis on pre-twentieth century literature has led to a narrowing of the strategies which teachers use to teach literature. One teacher, on being asked how he felt about

the pre-twentieth century literature requirements at key stages 3 and 4, responded strongly.

Horror...Horror...em..because for the very reason that I've just been talking about...balance, I mean, it seems to me a huge irony that they suggest all this and say there's an entitlement to a balanced, rich curriculum and what in fact, the practice of that is not so, the practice is that so much of your time is taken up by covering the difficult, challenging set work, that too little of your time is spent on the other range of activities, and it is false, I believe, to assume that good teachers will always be able to construct an infinite range of meaningful activities out of, you know, very cumbersome texts. It isn't true, you know, because if you construct the activities, you cannot sustain the motivation, because the child is getting bored with the actual material on which the activity is based, and even if the activity is fine, there is an increasing sense of dullness...(G.S. school 1)

The constraints upon generating, in the pupils, a personal response to a work of literature

The pressure to 'get through' the 'cumbersome' text will, it is feared, also affect the nature of the teacher's relationship with his or her pupils. The valuing of the pupils' experience as a basis for the interpretation of texts is illustrated in the following response given when the respondent was challenged to explain why she had not simply told the pupils the meaning of the poem.

....people bring to it different things and take from it different things, and I think that's why it's important that we all discussed it as a class because, I can't just transmit what I think about it. (J.L school 1)

This respect for each pupil's individual response is, in the view of the following respondent, in danger of being lost as teachers come under pressure, through the increasing dislocation between the experience of life contained in the text and the pupils' experience, the increased level of language difficulty, and the increased length of the work, to transmit their interpretation of the text to their pupils.

But I think it is, the danger is that you start to look upon your students as empty vessels rather than people who are involved in the practical, dynamic day to day of reading and experiencing literature and incorporating what literature is into their own lives. (G.S.school 1)

This respondent fears a return to a more traditional model of literature teaching, one criticised by Britton as he argued thirty years earlier for the emphasis in the teaching of literature to be changed from a critical to a personal interpretation of the text.

To have children take over from their teachers an analysis of a work of literature which their teachers in turn have taken over from the critics or their English professors – this is not a short cut to literary sophistication; it is a short circuit that destroys the whole system. (Britton, 1977, p.109)

The pressures of assessment by terminal exam at key stages 3 and 4

The respondents' disapproval of the narrowing of the range of texts available for study, and the narrowing of the range of responses which pupils are allowed to make to these texts, is further compounded by their criticism of the imposition of assessment by terminal exam at key stages 3 and 4.

I think there's a great danger of having no literature candidates at 'A' level because they get very switched off...because when you're doing 100% coursework, yes, you read *To Kill A Mockingbird*, you did some fun stuff on it, you might have done an essay and then you moved on. But you have to keep going back to the ruddy thing and I think teachers and children get bored stiff of the text...it's actually a ridiculous way to approach literature...nobody else would ever do that...you would never read a book, write about it and then write about it four more times and then sit the exam and write about it again, you know, what model is this based on? (N.T. school 1)

...with the Shakespeare (at key stage 3), as you know, for my MA I studied those papers. It was admittedly the draft papers that I studied and I tried to find a philosophy of literature teaching that underpinned because, even if I didn't agree with it, I would have felt happier if I could have found some sort of philosophy, teaching philosophy, learning philosophy, that underpinned what was being presented. I couldn't find anything. I couldn't match it to any philosophy, even one that I didn't agree with, it was a complete mish-mash. And, although we'd been promised, we took part in the review – that was part of the reason that supposedly the SATS boycott came to an end, because it would be reviewed – the changes have actually been marginal. (M.P. School 1)

This criticism of external, terminal, assessment, echoes that made three decades earlier.

We must seriously question what is being achieved when pupils are producing chapter summaries in sequence, taking endless notes to prepare model answers and writing stereotyped commentaries which carry no hint of a felt response. Yet this is the standard experience of very large numbers of fourth and fifth formers who spend a term or more on a modest novel which makes no claim to merit such long drawn out attention. (Bullock, 1975, p.131)

Both of the respondents quoted above display a very confident sense that they have a professional knowledge about the teaching of literature which is based on a theoretical perspective (although this perspective is not made explicit and can only be inferred from the respondents' negative reaction to the key stage 3 and GCSE literature examinations). They both question the 'model' of literature teaching which they argue has been imposed by an exam system.

The first respondent (N.T. school 1) charges the GCSE literature examination with the imposition of a false and unproductive process of reading, one which results in a repetitive examination of aspects of the text and the resultant loss, by the pupils, of enthusiasm and interest in literature. A similar point is made by other respondents in answer to the question of what has been the biggest change in practice as a result of the move from coursework to exam.

What we found was we had to spend far longer on the Shakespeare text so their literature was again restricted because Year 9 covered far less literature because they spent so long on *Romeo and Juliet*. Well, why? To what purpose? They were doing it anyway, it's just that then they had to spend far longer on it and get completely and thoroughly bored with it. (M.P school 3)

No it restricts what you can do. I mean, the students really enjoy *Romeo and Juliet*... and there were certain things that I would have liked to have done, perhaps develop some drama activities, some speaking and listening activities, but when it came down to it, there was just not the time, unless we'd spent the whole year on *Romeo and Juliet*...but there's other things to do, so in that way.... and also it puts pressure on us, it puts pressure on the students as well...so, I mean, fine to do *Romeo and Juliet* for enjoyment but...the restrictions of the SATS, I think if you take them away a lot of that enjoyment (S.H. School 3)

...thinking of key stage 3, thinking of year 9, em... that's a huge difference, actually, for example, having to take a Shakespeare play and...prepare that for examination, now we taught Shakespeare, but not with that kind of examination in mind. One of the things that's doing to my curriculum is distorting the curriculum, is distorting the balance of activities that I'm giving my year 9 ... indeed I've just finished the, sort of, first run through the play and I've actually stopped at that point and decided that I'll come back to it next term simply because it seems to me that they weren't getting the range of activities that they ought to get. Now, clearly, you can approach that text in a whole range of different ways, but there's actually a limit to how far you can actually sustain that and sustain the engagement and the involvement of the class, because you have to spend some time lingering on material as you go through it, and we've watched the video and we've done work on scenes in drama, we've actually looked at parallels. we've looked at writing that's come out of it, a number of different kinds of writing, but none the less you come against this, that we're still doing *Romeo and Juliet* and we're getting fed up with it. (G.S. School 2)

Allied to the charge that the exam text takes up too much curriculum time and imposes inappropriate demands upon the pupils' ability to sustain an engagement with it is the concern that teachers lack the ability to generate infinitely varied and interesting ways of reading and responding to the text. An over-concentration on the set text reduces, the respondents argue, the time available for other activities which they view as

necessary parts of a balanced English curriculum. One of the key issues for the respondents is their argument that their pupils are experiencing an inappropriately narrow diet of literature.

We're now delivering the opposite of what, you know all the reports you read, all the scare stories in the newspapers are saying that this is a lot of what's happening with the National Curriculum and with GCSEs to enforce teachers to teach "good literature". What we've found is that we're teaching far less of a range now because of how much we actually have to get through and then plus all the exam preparation that you have to take out of the time you have. (M.P. School 3)

Well coursework meant that children read a huge variety of things and could follow their own individual likes and dislikes if they wished, but mainly what they were interested in they could follow through, so you would look at lots and lots of texts, so you might look at bits of *To Kill A Mockingbird*, but you might also look at, or you might be looking at *To Kill A Mockingbird* and three of the kids might go for *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry*, you know, so I think it narrows everything. (N.T. School 1)

When asked why not reading *Roll of Thunder* in conjunction with *To Kill a Mockingbird* might be a narrowing of the curriculum, the respondent replied

Well, because one's basically pretty racist and one isn't (N.T. school 1)

This respondent goes further than those in the previous section who put forward the argument that multi-cultural texts reflect the reality of pupils' experience in a way that texts from the prescribed list cannot, in making a case for the exploration of a moral issue, racism, through the contrasting perspective of two texts, a point made strongly by Naidoo (1994).

To read with one's students Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and not to read Ngugi's *The River Between* or Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is to deny

students access to the voices of people on the banks of the river up which Conrad's colonial steamer sailed. Conrad's vision was limited to what he could view from its deck. Profoundly horrified by the contrast between the imperial idea and its actuality, he nevertheless *could* only hear a savage babble of sounds coming from the African river banks, thereby confirming Kurtz's vision. It is surely only after reading for themselves some original African fiction that students can begin to be aware of the range of voices which Conrad could not supply. (p. 42)

The respondent goes on to argue that the contemporary texts which have been chosen for the GCSE syllabus are, in any case, second-rate.

...it's very limiting because there's this stupid argument that they daren't put things on the book list that school haven't got in cupboards, so everybody's doing *Kes* still, you know, and yet why was *Kes* there in the first place? Because it was put on a book list, you know. It depresses standards and it's limiting and limited for teachers and children. (N.T. school 1)

In conclusion, the overarching criticism made by the respondents against the combined influences of the prescribed list and exam assessment is that they combine to narrow the range of literature studied in the English classroom and to limit the ways of reading literature which should be at the teacher's disposal in the English classroom.

Valuing of professional expertise

It is important to note that the teaching of literature is a topic upon which the respondents spoke upon at most length and with the greatest conviction. It is clear from their responses that this is an area of the curriculum for which they feel their education, both at school and at University level, has fully prepared them. This is the area of the curriculum in which they feel they are experts. Consequently, the move by government

agency to define a central core of literary material is greatly resented, not only for the restrictions that the respondents feel that this imposes upon their practice, but also because they perceive the prescriptions as a slight upon their professional status and knowledge.

I would like to think that there was enough trust in teachers so that we could select what we thought was suitable for our classes.
(M.F. school 1)

But the emphasis given to naming authors for the pre-twentieth century texts ...we're coming back to a prescriptive curriculum. This is what you must teach and it challenges the professionalism of teachers, that we can't follow a National Curriculum, we can't introduce pre-twentieth century texts when appropriate (J.O school 3)

The canon. It's ridiculous; it's absolutely ridiculous. I mean, first of all it's patronising to teachers to suggest that we need to be told what we have to teach and that we need to be told what to do. It also, it suggests that we don't teach traditional literature, or that we don't look at Shakespeare, because they tend to be more traditional authors - that's highly patronising because it is and always has been (part of the curriculum) and no one's ever denied in English teaching the importance of that. (C.M. school 3)

Furthermore, the respondents argue that the expertise to construct a literature curriculum lies with themselves, English teaching professionals, who, through their classroom experience, have an informed awareness of the literary works which will appeal to their pupils. It is, they argue, with the English professionals that the responsibility of constructing a literature curriculum should lie and not the officers of SEAC and SCAA who do not have a personal relationship with pupils or the 'recent and relevant' professional knowledge of children's literature.

Well, first off it's quite insulting because it almost assumes that you haven't done a degree specialising in English and aren't aware of a range of literature... they know more about it than we do? We probably have a greater knowledge of the range and variety of texts that are appropriate to use with students. It also seems we don't know what is suitable to teach to teenagers and so ... so first off, it's completely insulting of our own professionalism and our own academic understanding of our subject
(R.P. school 3)

The very fact of prescription might, it is argued, lessen teachers' confidence to teach literature using the full range of strategies developed throughout their training and professional experience.

...as soon as things become set, people become scared about being daring with it... (N.T. school 1)

In addition the officers of SCAA are charged with a lack of the professional knowledge to construct an appropriate pre-twentieth century literature curriculum. English teachers, in the respondents' view, could have made a much better choice, one guided, argues the first respondent, by educational rather than political choices, and one, in the opinion of both respondents, informed by an awareness of the wide range of pre-twentieth century literature and by a professional knowledge of the types of text which would appeal to their pupils.

I mean it's just (laughs exasperatedly) it infuriates me because I think these are people who don't have any real, or don't seem to me to have any real knowledge or appreciation a) of literature, I mean, it's not like the best stuff I've ever read on that list, well, there's a lot of stuff I haven't read, full stop, and b) much appreciation of children and what things they are capable of reading and what kind of things they would want to read and what they would be enthused by. It just seems that there's this other agenda which isn't an educational one, but a political one, which is basically like, these are worthy, these are classic texts, somebody's told them; I mean, that's it. I think it comes from, dare I say it, quite an ignorant position. It seems like well these are the things we've heard of

and we did when we were at public school, and so... that makes them good, and so let's put those down, because I can't understand, I would like to know their criteria for choosing those particular texts because, O.K. it might be the great and the good, but there are other great and good writers from the pre 20 century, yes, but a lot of their stuff isn't there.(H.M school 1)

Well, it's interesting, the pre-twentieth century that they've chosen, you know, you look at that list and it inspires no enthusiasm whatsoever. I wouldn't want to pick up half those books and read them, they're just not relevant; they're outmoded, outdated. Some of the things that you could get pre-twentieth century, you know, some real interesting stuff, some stuff that could be relevant to the issues that are going on today, to their world about them today, none of that's there...So it isn't that they're not reading enough about what's gone on in the past, it's not that at all, it's...they're not reading the things we agree with, they're not reading the things we like, they're not reading the things that agree with our political perspective, that's frequently...often what the case is...(M.A. school 3)

Both the above respondents question the criteria on which the list of pre-twentieth century authors is constructed. The first respondent ascribes the choice made by the compilers of the list to ignorance of the range of authors available and of the types of texts which would be attractive to pupils. The second respondent assigns a more sinister motive to the construction of the NCC prescribed list and hints that the texts in it are chosen because they present a particular 'world view' which is unchallenging to the established social and economic order. Her view is paralleled by Raymond Williams who argues that the practice, in each generation, of the selection of texts for inclusion into the literary canon, is not based solely on the criteria of an author's literary worth but encompasses, also, a desire to validate existing economic and political realities in order to preserve social stability.

...there are fundamental and necessary relations between this selective version and the existing dominant social relations (Williams, 1958, p.186)

The strength of the respondents' opposition to the prescribed pre-twentieth century list of authors centres upon the charge that the list has been constructed using inappropriate cultural and educational criteria which have resulted in the literature curriculum becoming limited in the range of texts being read; the English curriculum becoming limited in the range of activities which it is possible to employ, and the range of cultural experience reflected in the texts becoming limited to an inappropriately narrow and elitist cultural view. In the light of this negative reaction respondents were asked to outline the criteria which they felt should govern the choice of literature read in schools.

The concept of the relevant text

I do things which are accessible and challenging. Accessible is the key word. (S.W. school 2)

I think in a way I'm very sympathetic to the notion of the challenging text but I think that's got to be in the context of its...accessibility and relevance (G.S. school 1)

The ideal of an accessible but challenging text is the central criterion against which texts are chosen by the respondents to be included in the literature curriculum. Initially the two elements of accessibility and challenge appear to have the potential to be contradictory. Most readers (Flynn, 1983) perceive accessible texts to be ones which present little challenge either in terms of their conformity to generic conventions or their level of language difficulty. For the respondents, the gap between these two elements is linked by the concept of the relevant text.

The teachers in school 2, working with pupils who have poor literacy skills, view a relevant text as one which presents little difficulty in terms of language, and is, therefore,

accessible to pupils with reading difficulties. The challenge comes from the concepts and ideas which the text raises for each reader's consideration, for class discussion and, ultimately, for the use of different faculties 'critical, analytical and imaginative' in the formation of a response.

Authors like Plath, for instance, that are written in this century, so you haven't got barriers of class or time, so you've got the language, which is accessible, the ideas are challenging and I'm not then giving my children a disadvantage against any children which may already have that grasp of culture which would allow them to talk about say something like Shakespeare. I'm not doing that so they start off on an even keel. And then it's down to their critical faculties, their powers of analysis and their imagination and the rest of it doesn't come into it. (S. W. school 3)

We have a selection of texts that we know very well and which you can extend. In year 7 we have *The 18th Emergency*, *Going Home*, which is out of print but it's brilliant. *The Rats of Nimh* we've just brought. In year 8 *Penelope Lively* *The Ghost of Thomas Kempe*, *The Machine Gunners...The Nature of the Beast*, so we have modern accessible texts with differentiated work available. But that doesn't seem to be a problem, and sometimes even the less able are able to be quite astute in picking out and discussing the text. (L.M. school 2)

The concept of relevance is defined, also, in terms of the contemporary issues raised by the texts which generate interest and discussion 'give them something to say'.

Well, when I was at school, I didn't really realise until I was 18 that there were authors who were still alive! It was all pre-twentieth century literature. And, of course, some of that is important for students and we've always done that. But what's been happening in the last few years is we've been choosing challenging texts which respond to the pupils' interests - not easy readers, but texts which interest pupils and give them something to say...(E.N. School 2)

I think in a way, it's spoken and unspoken in the English department, what you do. That's gone on before...certainly the equal opportunities aspects have to be there...it has to be something that stretches all of them, meaty issues that you can look at, em...things that, also, you can make it fun. Our aim is to...build in all sorts of drama activities that go

with it and the novel has to be compatible with that. So, I suppose those sorts of things...you'd look at the vocabulary and the language that they're doing, how it is relevant to them today. (M.A. school 3)

For the second respondent the criteria for choosing a text encompasses a strong moral and political perspective. Texts should address equal opportunities issues, and 'meaty' issues, and should also provide an impetus for other activities. This respondent, as with those from school 2, is concerned to match the language difficulty presented by the text with the pupils' abilities as readers.

Two respondents in school 3 view an accessible text as one which contains elements of popular culture, in this case the media and the genre of the thriller with which the pupils would voluntarily engage with outside school. The respondent below talks about the text read in the observed lesson – James Watson's *Talking in Whispers*– which is set in the 1970s at the time of the overthrow of President Allende's government in Chile and contains detailed descriptions of the arrest and torture of characters in the book, including the narrator.

....so we started out right at the beginning, and I referred to it, by telling everybody in the class about a film or book that they'd read that was a thriller, and that way it was easier to come up with the type of conventions and the way it actually works, and of course the good thing is that the thriller can play a part in all sorts of other genres...it's just very, very popular so...that's another good reason for doing the book, it's that it's easy to relate to texts, and I use the idea of film as well as text ...that they've read...culturally speaking most of the texts that students would encounter would probably be media texts, although some of them are voracious readers, particularly with a very tightly defined genre like the thriller....it's such a popular sort of film, stroke novel, the best sellers you know, from Steven King and down to the most popular films are usually some type of thriller, you know, it's one of those archetypal stories, those texts which people just love to read...(C.P. school 3)

The challenge comes, as with the respondents from school 2, from the issues raised by the text for the readers' consideration and response.

...it's quite crudely written in some ways, but that does have its advantages in that the structure of the book is easy to analyse, it's a text to teach conventions and genre and it's got a good human rights and political angle which is educational in itself, so although I don't, I'm not mad about the characterisation and the depth of characters it does an awful lot in a short space of time, you know, it has a bit of an epic sweep but at the same time it doesn't make unreasonable demands of a reader of that age, so in that way it's a good sort of text to study. I don't know about being a good read but then you have to bear in mind that I've read it four or five times. (C.P. school 3)

For another teacher in school 3 the very accessibility and the powerful influence exerted on pupils by the media presents a more worthwhile challenge than the teaching of a pre-twentieth century text. Some elements of the Cambridge school model, its mission to enable pupils to become critical analysts of media language, prevail, but the Cambridge insistence upon the contemporary relevance of texts which portray a past culture, is rejected.

... because it's relevant to their life now; media is a text which they are constantly in contact with and I'd much rather have them read a media text effectively, have them know what's going on there, the persuasive devices, etc. than...get through *Silas Marner*. (R.P. school 1)

In their assertion that their choice of text responds to the personal interests of their pupils through a concentration on contemporary issues the respondents employ three key tenets of the London School model. Firstly, that the pupils contribute to establish the criteria upon which the subject of the lesson is based; secondly that the representation of life in the English lesson should correspond to the pupils' experience and concerns and thirdly that literature is one of the many languages of the English lesson, on a par with popular culture and with media.

The respondents develop the notion of relevance further and assert that they tailor their choice of text to the interests and the character of the class.

... again, it's to do with like what we said about priorities. I like when I choose texts to tailor it more to the individual class ... They're quite sort of, a philosophical kind of class. We've done some stuff on football hooliganism, but they were very much into: 'Well, why do people react like this in society?' Because we've done that I thought it was a good foundation for work on *Lord of the Flies*, because we're actually talking about why do people behave as they do and we've been talking a bit, and will go on to do what kind of society is the ideal society? So, again, that fits in well with that class, because they, that's the thing they'd like to talk about really...(H.M. School 1)

And that class, you know, for instance, at the moment I've chosen to do *Buddy* with one class, but *Waiting For The Rain* with another class, and they're two very different texts. One's about serious political issues in South Africa, quite a lot to take in, and another is about possibly single parenting, class, economics, and those sorts of things, and teenage life, and they're very very different books but I believe I chose them for the right reasons for those classes, and what they would get out of them and what the make up of the class was like ... (M.A. school 3)

Yes, personal, it has to be. They have to think that I've consulted, I've thought about their character and their likes. (S.W. School 2)

The Cambridge influence

The teachers in school 1, working in an environment where pupils come from more professional and academic backgrounds, appear, however, to have a different understanding than those in schools 2 and 3, of the factors which combine to enable a text to present a challenge to pupils. These respondents argue that the language of a text should be seen as a legitimate challenge. It is, in their view, perfectly proper for a text to be written in language which is removed from the pupils' experience and usage.

...in terms of range of ability and stretching people at different levels, some people will find just the business of reading it and as I say, the complex language actually will stretch them. Some people will really get to grips with the symbolism and characterisation and the relationship between character and environment...but also, as well, it's also in terms of getting the basics of how to read a text and looking at character, and looking at environment, landscape, description, use of language, I mean I want to get all those basic skills now and then next year I can build on that... (H.M. school 1)

In addition to the demands of complex language, this respondent aims to induct her pupils into what are the features which define high culture literary texts: symbolism, characterisation, character, description and language use. The work of the writers of the Cambridge school appears to be influential in this respondents' practice, particularly the work of Holbrook and Abbs.

I think, particularly, I want to feel that they can own something and that they feel enabled now that this isn't up on a pedestal, they have access to it and that they are worthy and valid writers...the choice of poem was one that lots of people know, half of the children even in Year 8 didn't know who it was by, didn't know where they'd heard it but they were aware of it and they said, oh, it's one of those things you just hear people say, you know 'I wandered lonely as a cloud' it's often quoted. And, in a sense, I wanted to remove it from this handed down, this is literature, it's good for you, learning the meaning of this poem. You can learn the meaning of this poem and you did do that and we looked at it a line each and had a sort of group decoding it, explaining it talking about it, and then we went on to do something else with it...we are looking at his creative processes, we're looking and wondering why he chose that word and where it all comes from and doing that is learning a skill that you can apply to everything else you read. And unless you go through that process, I think, and walk in their footsteps and look at the choices, the different paths they could have taken, you can't see how people do it. (J.L. school 1)

Significantly, it is the teachers in school 1 who openly advocate the central tenet of the Cambridge writers, that the reading and engagement with good literature (by

implication the literature the respondents choose to read with their classes) is in itself a moral act.

I've realised recently the tremendous moral power of literature – its force in exploring issues (E.N. School 2)

... civilisation is, it seems to me, in terms of civilised values and while the inculcation and the encouragement of civilised values is an intimate part of literature and the teaching of literature and the experience of literature,(G.S. school 1)

However it is clear that a belief in the moral force of good literature is central to the ideology of the teachers in all three schools, although this is openly acknowledged only by two respondents (both with over 20 years teaching experience) in school 1. In school 3, in particular, the moral power of literature is located in the political and social concerns raised by texts. Equal opportunities issues are seen by one respondent as an essential criterion for the choice of a class text. For another, a text which is based in a popular genre, the thriller, is also concerned with human rights and political issues.

The merging of two models is evident in the teachers' responses. The Cambridge advocacy of the moral power of literature is strongly maintained but is translated, particularly in those schools where pupils are drawn from a less advantaged social backgrounds, as in schools 2 and 3, into the London school's advocacy of the engagement, in English lessons, with contemporary social and political issues. The exploration of morality through literature has moved from the Cambridge concentration on the individual using literature as a moral template to resist the degradations of contemporary society to the London model's advocacy of the use of literature as a means to engage with and explore the morality of the inequalities raised by the political and social structures in contemporary society.

It would appear, therefore, that very complex criteria govern the choice of texts to be read in class. Texts are chosen because they contain challenging issues which are accessible and relevant to the pupils. Teachers believe that their knowledge of a class's character enables them to 'fine tune' their choice of texts to the interests and needs of and to particular classes of pupils. Texts which explore contemporary political and social issues are judged by teachers to be the ones which can generate the most committed and informed response from their pupils. These texts are seen by the teachers to be 'relevant' to the pupils and, therefore, more accessible.

Pupils' choice of fiction

Questions can, however, be asked of the teachers' construction of the texts they choose to read with their pupils. Is it the case that pupils will find these texts accessible and relevant? The evidence of a recent study (Benton, 1996) might suggest otherwise.

Teachers, particularly those who feel they have gained significant insights from their study of literature, sometimes tend to assume a shared set of values exists between them and their students with regard to literary texts; it is not uncommon to discover that this assumption may be misplaced. What ...is 'the common culture'...is perhaps represented not so much by Dickens or Shakespeare but much more by *Neighbours* and *Eastenders*, by *The Sun* and *Just 17*, Judy Blume and R.T. Cusik. Whether we like it or not, these are the words students choose to read, these are the images students choose to see...(Benton, 1996, p.77)

In a survey of adolescent reading habits Benton found that the twenty four of the forty five most popular titles read by pupils in year 8 were from the 'point horror series', a

genre which retained its popularity with year 10 students. Other popular reads were film-tie ins. Not one of the most popular authors identified by the year 8 pupils in Benton's survey (Judy Blume, Sue Townsend, Roald Dahl, Terry Pratchett) or in year 10 (Grant and Naylor, Douglas Adams) form part of the texts that the respondents have chosen to study with their classes. More recent evidence confirms the fact that older children and adolescents prefer books which produce 'a frisson of fear' (Brennon, 1999). Information from the Public Lending Right children's fiction chart reveals that the horror series 'Goosebumps' (a junior version of 'point horror'), account for fifteen of the most popular twenty library books from 1997 to 1998.

This evidence would suggest, therefore, that the criteria used by teachers when they deem a text to be 'relevant' to their pupils are not those used by the pupils themselves. The teachers in this study use the term 'relevant' to denote texts by contemporary authors which highlight political and social issues. Adolescents, from the evidence of Benton's (1996) survey, deem those texts to be 'relevant' (and perhaps more importantly 'enjoyable') which consider the challenges of becoming a young adult in today's society. Commenting on the popularity of the point horror series, Benton notes

The stories are frequently developments of those which have for many years circulated among school students and which have a wide, international currency; indeed some, like the babysitter tales, have provided the story lines of full-length horror films. To a certain extent, they appeal at this age because they are dealing at one remove and vicariously with some of the deepest fears of the child on the verge of adulthood – awakening sexuality, fear for one's personal safety in this context, personal identity, jealousy, family, crisis and death. (Benton, 1996, p.87)

Benton observes, however, that some school librarians will not purchase point horror titles. Evidence that they are perceived by teachers to be, at best, of dubious merit, was provided in the observation of a year 8 library lesson – a lesson in which pupils

were nominally able to make their own choice of book from the school library. The teacher, circulating round the class, keeping an eye on two disruptive boys, and talking to individual pupils about their private reading, looked at one pupil's reading diary containing a list of books he'd read that year, and exclaimed

All the way down Lee it's horror, Point Horror...(J.L. school 1)

It would appear, therefore, that although the concept of an accessible and relevant text is very important in the respondents' rhetoric, in practice, the books chosen by them on the grounds of accessibility and relevance are likely not to be understood in those terms by their pupils. The school literature canon is differently constituted and used for different purposes than the texts and the reading practices undertaken by pupils of their own accord. This fact is clearly illustrated by the record of the texts which had either been or were being taught by the teachers in this study.

Years 7 and 8	Goodnight Mr Tom	(Marjorian, 1983)
	The Granny Project	(Fine, 1983)
	Conrad's War	(Davies, 1978)
	Waiting For The Rain	(Gordon, 1991)
Year 9	Romeo and Juliet	(Shakespeare, KS 3 text)
	Julius Caesar	(Shakespeare, KS 3 text)
	The Nature of the Beast	(Howker, 1989)
	Buddy	(Hinton, 1982)
	Badger On The Barge	(Paterson, 1984)
	The Friends	(Guy, 1974)
	Flying into the Wind	(Leland, 1985)
CCSE	Lord of the Flies	(Golding, 1958)

An Inspector Calls	(Priestly, 1948)
To Kill A Mockingbird	(Lee, 1960)
Kes	(Hines, 1969)
War Poetry	
First World War Poetry	
Macbeth	(Shakespeare)

Not one of the above authors is on Benton's list of pupils' independent choice, either at year 8 or at year 10. The themes of the chosen contemporary school texts are serious, even rather grim: (unemployment in *The Nature of the Beast*; old age in *The Granny Project* and *Badger on the Barge*; apartheid in *Waiting for the Rain*; family tensions in *Buddy*; slavery in *Underground to Canada*; moral disintegration in *Lord of the Flies*; child abuse in *Goodnight Mr Tom*). This choice of texts corresponds to the purpose for English advocated by the Cambridge writers, particularly Holbrook and Abbs who viewed the exploration of 'life' as a central purpose of the English lesson. Holbrook's very serious view of 'life' is maintained in the texts chosen by the respondents characterised, as they are, by their concern with the moral choices which the characters within them face. In these texts the Cambridge emphasis on the examination of sensibility through finely crafted prose is united with the London emphasis on the examination of sensibility through the exploration of powerful contemporary issues which pose, to many people, the most powerful challenges. Moreover, despite their rejection of what they consider to be inappropriate and damaging central government control of the literature curriculum, it is clear that the canon of literature chosen by the respondents fulfils the criteria used by the DFE to characterise the texts which should be presented to pupils in the literature curriculum - texts which 'extend pupils' ideas and their moral and emotional

understanding, and offer perspective on society and community and their impact on the lives of individuals;' (DFE, 1995, p.19).

The reality of the gap between the 'relevant and accessible' school text and the pupils' own notions of those two terms is explicitly acknowledged by only one respondent.

I think the class reader, it's very important that they're being read stuff that they wouldn't normally read on their own. You know I almost, I think I believe that what is read to them should be very hard for every single child in that class, you know, that you shouldn't just hit the middle, you know, that it should be difficult for the brightest child....I mean I don't see the point of taking a text in that they might have read two years ago and that they could quite happily go away and read on their own....You know, I think the reason for doing a class reader has to be partly, that you're giving them a demanding diet and that they all need each other in order to understand that (N.T. school 1)

and by another implicitly:

...it has to be something that stretches all of them (M.A. school 3)

Another respondent argues that the role of the teacher in the literature lesson is to mediate between the text and the pupil, thus implicitly acknowledging that the demands of a contemporary text read in the English lesson are likely to be different from those chosen by the pupils themselves.

I think, I mean, partly it's up to the teacher to make it accessible and relevant and partly it's up to the pupil to be ambitious enough to reach out for it, and to be encouraged to be ambitious (G. S. school 1)

Evidence from Benton's (1996) survey would suggest, also, that pupils, particularly boys, would regard media to be more relevant than print texts. In the month in which the surveyed group were asked to record their reading the year 8 boys had, on average, read just over one and a half books, whilst just under half had watched between 1 – 3 hours

television on the night before the survey. The growing division between the print culture of the school, and the criteria which govern the choice of 'good' school texts for the English lesson against the media culture of the home, is recognised by one other respondent.

But I think that you've got to place literary texts, printed literary texts firmly in their position in the position of a whole range of media that they're going to encounter, you know, generally, and lets face it nobody at that age's going to do...unless they're very exceptional, three hours of reading a night. We know that one hour T.V is pretty conservative at that age and exposure to texts has been substituted by super computer games, this is amongst males. I think women remain the more detailed, systematic reader, even if it's not very good material they will read more, which is interesting. (C.P school 3)

The latter responses would appear to represent more accurately the position which the respondents hold in respect to the teaching of literature than their rhetoric which was reported earlier. Despite the respondents' belief in the 'relevance' of their choice, the reality might well be that their criteria for the texts to be included in the school literature curriculum are much more closely aligned to the government agency whose influence they so vehemently resent than to the pupils, who may well find both sets of choices (the teachers' and the DFE's), equally divorced from what they consider to be important aspects of their lives.

The respondents' advocacy of the process of a personal response to literature

Although it is argued in the previous section that the respondents' notion of 'relevance' can be questioned there is no doubt that this notion strongly underpins their ideological position upon the teaching of literature. Closely related to the notion of a

relevant text is the respondents' advocacy of reader response theory. This theory is developed from the work of Wolfgang Iser and has been developed by authors such as Evans (1987) to promote an alternative response to a literary text than that of the critical essay. Underpinning the theory of reader response is the notion of a personally constructed and individual response to a text. Each reader, argues Iser, will respond to the text differently, interpreting it in the light not only of their previous lived experience, but also in the light of their previous experience of texts. Hence, there can be no objective, correct response to a literary text, (the notion underpinning Richard's (1929) theory of practical criticism upon which Leavis constructed the mission of the Cambridge school).

There are clear links between the London school's theory of oracy and that of reader response in that both approaches seek to use the individual's existing experience as a framework in which new experience can be encountered and examined. Both oracy and reader response theory are valued by the respondents because they form a tangible method of enacting the aim of personal growth within the English classroom.

The respondents' practice in the teaching of literature

From the evidence of lesson observations and the pupils' files and notebooks it is clear that reader response theory has influenced the kinds of activities planned by teachers. Many of the pupils' responses are, what Protherough (1987) calls 'response centred', generated from Iser's (1976) concept of 'blanks' in the text. 'Blanks' are Iser's term to refer to the unanswered questions in texts. In a novel these are situated most obviously at the end of a chapter; in a play between the acts; more subtly, 'blanks' are

present also in the language of the text itself. Commenting on Iser's work, Evans explains this term.

In each segment while we are actually reading it, lies the theme of our reading. For each theme we try to predict the future course of the narrative and to build up horizons for our view. Then we move on to the next segment, and the one we have just read becomes part of the reading background. We correct our reading as we move on, and so gradually build up the whole imaginative experience which comes from the meeting between our lives, including our lives as readers, and the text in front of us. (Evans, 1987, p.33)

Response centred activities predominate, on the evidence of this study, mainly in the lower school English curriculum. Pupils are asked to 'fill in the gaps' left in the text by creating incidents based upon the characters and the plot of the text, but not contained within it. Pupils are asked to create diary entries for characters; to write letters from one character to another and to write newspaper reports on incidents from the texts (e.g. a front page scoop of Romeo's killing of Tybalt). In two of the observed lessons pupils are asked to participate in a role play in which the personality and motivation of the text's characters are explored and in which the pupils are expected to display their interpretation of the characters in the text through their adoption of a particular role and their participation in an imaginary event, not contained in the text, which provides an opportunity for questions of motive and consequence to be further explored.

A hierarchy of response – from reader response to practical criticism

The respondents advocate, in their rhetoric, the notion of a personally felt, individual response to a 'relevant' text. The respondents' conception of their practice is

questioned, however, when consideration is given to the evidence from the lesson observations and the pupils' written work. This evidence indicates that a form of response which is highly formulaic and which provides limited opportunities for an individualistic response remains a key element in the practice of response to literature within the subject of English as it is taught at secondary school level. The training in the writing of the critical literary essay remains a central practice within the English literature curriculum, and one, moreover, which is invested with particular status and importance, regarded by teachers as a key marker of progression and achievement in the subject. The training in the form of the literary critical essay, a central practice of the Cambridge school, is, moreover, structured in a highly transmissive way in which there is little opportunity for the pupils to express a genuinely independent, personal response.

The evidence from lesson observations shows that the respondents are constantly modelling for their pupils the structure and the terms which are used in the generic form of the lit. crit. essay. Much of the evidence of this modelling comes from school 3 in which teachers argue most strongly for a personal response to the text. The most obvious and extended tuition in the form and the language of the critical essay is taken from a year 8 lesson, a small part of which is reproduced below.

Teacher If you remember I said I was going to teach you how to do a critical essay on characters. You are going to choose two characters from 'Waiting For The Rain' and discuss what they are like. Remember you chose three quotes. I explained a way to put your notes into prose with an introduction, a quote and a conclusion. Now, that section – putting your ideas into a full sentence – is called the main body of the essay. In your groups you've got 30 seconds to answer 'why do you think its called the main body'

Pupil it's like the facts of the essay

Pupil everything's built around it

Pupil the main points of the story

Pupil the characters

Teacher so it's the main points of the essay. In your books
write down (dictates)'the main body is where you answer
the actual question which has been set you...'

Pupils are then asked to consider what the purpose an introduction to a literature essay should serve, to brainstorm ideas in groups and then to consider what content should be included in the body of the essay, and in its conclusion. The teacher draws a body on the board to indicate the three parts of the essay (the head, the introduction, the body, the main part and the feet, the conclusion).

Having explained the structure of the lit. crit, essay, the teacher then models, for the pupils, the more formal, stylised language used in the critical essay. The teacher writes the three italicised statements on the board, reads them out and asks the pupils to complete them. (The teachers' written prompts are in italics.)

Waiting for the rain is a book about....

pupil	Two boys separated by society
pupil	racism
pupil	growing up in South Africa in a racist society

It traces the story of two young boys who....

The focus of this essay is to discuss... (M.A. school 1)

Hence, not only the format of the response, but the language in which the response has to be couched, is clearly transmitted by the teacher to the pupils.

The most extended, detailed and rigorous training in the shaping of the critical response is, significantly, seen during an 'A' level literature lesson on *The Winter's Tale*. Over a period of one hour and the minutes one scene from the play is the focus of extremely detailed discussion between the teacher and ten 'A' level literature students. The training in critical response is rigorous, detailed and didactic. The teacher speaks at great length, (often for four or five minute periods). The students' answers are, by contrast, short (the longest lasting twenty seconds) and are heavily controlled by the teacher in one of two ways: either by 'sandwiching' the students' response – asking the question, getting the students' answer, then giving the correct answer

Teacher What are they going to bring?
Pupil Hope
Teacher Regeneration. Leontes is ageing and full of repentance. Now we're going to see some new hope and new life.

Or by signalling that a given answer is not what she has been looking for:

Teacher Why isn't he telling his father?
Pupil He's scared
Teacher Is he scared? Do you get that impression of him?

The oral work in this lesson, in a small group of ten students, is conducted in a wholly transmissive way. Not only does the teacher completely dominate the talk time, she also communicates clearly to her students, at every point, the subject-specific terminology in which she wants them to express their answers.

Teacher What is important that we've grasped in terms of Leontes' character?
Pupil He's pure and strong willed.
Teacher We've noticed, haven't we, the breakdown in the relationship and the attributes of Perdita's character, she's pure, good and lovely etcetera...It's all tremendously life-enhancing and joyful. It gets us involved in the quality that Perdita and Florizel embody?
(E.N school 1)

Contained within this training in the correct expression of a response is also a clear indication of correct content within the response. The scene is, in the teacher's words, 'life-enhancing and joyful'; Perdita is 'pure, good and lovely'; Leontes has 'a strength and resilience we have to admire'; Autollicus 'is quite an interesting character; he' a good man isn't he?'

It could be argued that the didactic and transmissive practices observed in the two lessons outlined above are a result of the imposition of external forms of summative assessment which forces the respondents to teach in ways which do not correspond with their expressed philosophy. This argument is weakened, however, by the circumstances of each. The sixth form lesson contained only ten students, a number which would lend itself readily to an open interaction of views in which the students' individual interpretations could be privileged. What appears to take place, however, is a higher level induction into the practice of literary criticism. The teacher is concerned not to promote individual expression, but to train the students, who have already shown (because they are in the A level group) particular ability in English, in a higher, more formalised level of response to literature, a training which the teacher would herself have received at school and at university. In this training, there is a strong emphasis on the 'correct' interpretation of the text, which is confidently promoted by the teacher

The year 8 lesson in which the teacher inducts the class into the writing of their first critical essay is taken by the respondent (M.A. in school 3) who has, amongst all the respondents, argued most consistently for a personal response to literature, dealing with issues which engage pupils. Yet the lesson on a text full of contemporary political resonances is mediated to the pupils in a most didactic way. After the pupils had worked in groups to complete the opening paragraph statements there is a whole class plenary.

Teacher	The focus of this essay is to discuss
Pupil	Racism
Teacher	No, what were you asked to discuss?
Pupil	Characters
Teacher	If you remember I said I was going to teach you how to do a critical essay on characters...so this is for you to keep, to stick in your book – never forget this at (named school) or at College or in your later life, so put your hand on your hearts and swear allegiance to this critical plan for the rest of your life. (M.A. school 3)

Notwithstanding the 'tongue in cheek' nature of the introduction the pupils are here given clear signals that they are about to embark on the acquisition of a crucial skill. The respondent, in a later interview, comments upon the lesson in a direct response to the question: 'Do you believe they need to learn these critical skills earlier?'

Yes, I do think they need to learn critical skills earlier... I do think, you know, between years 8 and 9 we do need to think about maybe pushing them in areas like that...(M.A. school 3)

The question which remains unanswered is would this respondent have stated the need to learn critical skills if I had not observed this particular lesson and asked this direct question? Throughout the rest of the interview this respondent emphasises the importance of a personal response to a relevant text. The year 8 lesson demonstrates, however, a reality which diverges from the rhetoric. The drive to induct their pupils into what they perceive to be a high status activity is present in the respondents' practice, but not acknowledged in their rhetoric, where the emphasis is on the development, in pupils, of a personal, individual response.

One factor which may explain the respondents' failure to recognise the reality of their practice may be that the very traditional content of much of the observed teaching of literature, centred around a Cambridge school model of a close reading and response to

a text, is balanced by an emphasis, brought out of the London school model, on the development of processes to generate an involved and committed response to literature. In effect, different elements of the Cambridge and the London approaches to the teaching of literature are mediated in the respondents' practice. Hence, in the majority of the observed lessons, the training in the language and structure of a critical response to a text is taught in ways which use the processes advocated by the London school to encourage an individual, personal response, through the use of the pupils' own experience, and the provision of opportunities for small group discussion, to produce a product advocated by the Cambridge school – a formal, critical response to a literary text.

In a lesson on poetry with a year 7 class one respondent begins by asking the pupils to tell the rest of the class about the poetry that their parents remembered from school. This activity draws upon the pupils' home knowledge and their response is immediate and enthusiastic.

Teacher	What were the results of your enquiries
Pupil	My mum remembered one line from one poem, one from another, 'Give me the isle of Sri Lanka with the vigorous spice'
Teacher	Could we guess what that poem was about? (Pupils answer – response too rapid to record)
Pupil	My mum remembered a poem about Daffodils (Pupil reads out the first verse of the poem)
Teacher	Did any other parents remember that poem? (four pupils put their hands up)
Teacher	So obviously a lot of schools taught that poem by William Wordsworth

The initial stage of the lesson which draws on the pupils' home knowledge provides a mediation towards the second stage in which the formal terminology used to describe poetry is explicitly taught.

Pupils are then asked to classify the lines of poetry using the subject-specific terms of

Content Mood Form Language Poetic Devices:
(M.P school 3)

Another example of the move from a response centred activity – the use of prediction to create a framework for the reading of a text – to a more formal, critical activity occurs in school 1 in a year 10 top set GCSE class. The pupils are given a verse of a poem by Tony Harrison and are asked to predict, from the clues in the verse, what they thought the poem is going to be about.

Teacher What I want you to think about....What I want you to do is, firstly construct the story behind the poem. Second, consider what is the setting and why is it important, and third, what kind of poem is it going to be? Obviously it's all guess work at the moment....

A short period (approximately three minutes) is allowed for group work after which the following pupil responses are given:

Pupil The boy's taking his father out for a meal before he dies.
Teacher Yeah, O.K. Anything else happening there?
Pupil The father feels he's being outclassed by his son....
Teacher Right, we're beginning to understand the relationship between the father and the son. Anything else that's happening there? (H.M. school 1)

The initial response to the verse is used by the teacher to generate the pupils' interest in the poem's narrative. When the whole poem is read out the focus moves on to the more technical matter of verse form, rhythmic structure and rhyme scheme.

Teacher The poem's got a regular rhyme scheme. On average it's about ten beats per line. (H.M school 1)

Even within M.A's year 8 lesson, in which a very tightly controlled response to a text is demanded, the respondent uses a whole variety of process activities to mediate the transition towards the writing of the lit. crit. essay. Here the metaphor of a body, a form concretely understood and experienced by all the pupils, is used to illustrate the shape of the essay form, the head being the introduction, the body being the main points, and the feet the conclusion. In addition, the respondent uses a whole range of 'process' based activities to enable the pupils to come to terms with a challenging new writing form. Pupils are given concentrated talk time to generate ideas in response to key questions.

Teacher In your groups, 30 seconds, why do you think it's called the main body?

(Pupils work in pairs for approximately 20 seconds)

Pupil Everything's built around it

Pupil The main points of the story

Teacher So it's the main points of the essay -

Pupil From the neck downwards

Teacher In your books, write down 'the main body is where you answer the actual question which has been set you

The move, in the above extract, between the pupils' existing knowledge and new knowledge, is expertly mediated by the respondent who uses process-based activity to mediate between a known form (the shape of the body) and the unknown form (the shape of the critical essay). She enables the pupils to generate ideas through peer talk whilst demanding that the defined product remains firmly in their minds through the requirement to produce a response within a very controlled time limit. The pupils answer using some very informal language 'from the neck downwards; story', some of which is immediately extended by the respondent ('story' into 'essay'). This process then provides the basis for the transmission of a very didactic definition of one segment of a formalised

critical response to the text. Commenting later on this lesson, the respondent shows that she is very aware of the processes she has used to generate the required product.

I try to build in the oracy and the oral work, and the talking particularly. There's different ways of doing it, sometimes in pairs and about different things, because I believe it's important to look at oracy and develop the holistic, related to the reading and writing activities you do, as opposed to taking it out...(M.A. school 3)

The level of detail and the length of these extracts is justified because they record related activities – the training in the writing of the generic form of the critical essay, and the concentration on the close reading of the text – which are clearly two fundamental practices in the teaching of English literature but which are almost entirely unrepresented in the respondents' rhetoric. Only one respondent (H.M. school 1) referred, in the interview, to one of the functions of literature being a training in the recognition and response to the literary language of a text. When talking about literature the respondents' justify their practice in terms of reader response, personal choice, relevance and accessibility. The evidence from lesson observations, and from the record of the pupils' written work, displays clearly the fact that one of the central practices of the Cambridge school, the close reading of the literary text, and the training in the development of criticism, remains a central element in the respondents' practice of the teaching of literature, but one which remains unacknowledged by them when they talk about their practice.

One explanation for this dichotomy may lie in the relation, by the respondents, of the training in literary criticism with the canon of literature, the imposition of which they reject on the grounds of elitism. The fact remains, however, that the mastery of writing a critical essay retains its value as a marker of achievement in the subject, and that the respondents, as successful students themselves, take great pains to pass this knowledge

and expertise on to their pupils. This is a clear example of the influence of a model which is unacknowledged by the respondents but is clearly evident in their practice. It is a finding which would not have been revealed if the research design for the study had not encompassed a range of data collection techniques.

This finding also raises the question of how much more strongly the subject could be defended, and how much more in control teachers might feel of their professional area of expertise, if their rhetoric enabled them to acknowledge the reality of their practice. The respondents do, through the evidence of their practice, value the ability to read a text closely and respond to it in the traditional form of the lit. crit. essay. Reader response theory, whilst central to the respondents' rhetoric, often provides a means by which the respondents guide their pupils towards the more serious, and more highly valued, formal critical response. Thus, in their practice, the respondents do promote a content and a practice in the teaching of literature which amply meets the strident demands placed upon the profession, not only by powerful press commentators who lament the decline in the teaching of texts from the literary canon, but also by external agencies with statutory force to control the content (and, increasingly the process) of the curriculum. As in the teaching of standard English and the management of oral work, the respondents adopt highly effective mediating practices to manage the transmission between the pupils' initial responses to literature and a more formal, critical response. Classroom practice based on reader response theory promotes an initial individually shaped, creative response to the text, which is then moulded into a more formal, critical response, based upon the practice of the Cambridge school. This point is made by Burgess (1984) who argues that teachers of English whilst not denying the place of pre-twentieth century literature in the curriculum, have adopted teaching practices, most notably the valuing of the pupils'

responses, which aim to enable pupils to relate to texts which are more distant from their lived and their learned experience.

The argument has not been about Shakespeare. It has been about the ways in which Shakespeare was read. It also sought to focus what such ways of reading may serve to exclude in people's sense of what counts as literature or of how it may figure along with other forms of making in their lives. (Burgess, 1984, p.6)

The evidence of this study might suggest, however, that English teachers have contributed to a misrepresentation of their practice. The respondents' presentation of their practice in the teaching of literature is predicated upon a wholesale rejection of the DFE pre-twentieth century list. Data from the lesson observations suggests, however, that in their actual classroom practice the respondents do satisfy the demands made upon them by external agencies to teach texts from the literary canon. They do, moreover, attach great importance to a high status genre which is also greatly prized by powerful external agencies, that of the lit. crit. essay. As in the teaching of standard English, the respondents' practice could be more effectively represented to the powerful external agencies who determine the content of the curriculum, if it was more accurately represented in their rhetoric.

Chapter Nine

Grammar

The previous chapters have explored the powerful opposition between the content based English curriculum desired and promoted by external agencies and the process based English curriculum, based on the tenets of the London model of personal growth, desired by the English establishment. This conflict over a product versus a process based approach has been played out in debates over particular issues which are imbued with enormous cultural significance: it has been characterised by oppositional approaches to the teaching of spoken English in the debates about standard English versus dialect and in the teaching of literature in the debates about the maintenance of the literary heritage versus the reading of modern 'relevant' literary texts.

The teaching of grammar assumes, however, an even higher public profile than that given to the issues of standard English and the literary heritage. This is the most contested issue upon which the opposing views of the profession of English teachers, and the wider interested public of parents, media commentators, right wing academics and government agencies, have clashed most fiercely. It is also the area of the English curriculum which is imbued with most significance for external agencies. This point was noted by a linguist who, in addressing 'a lunchtime meeting of a hundred women members of a local (Tory) grassroots audience on the topic of 'Teaching English, and teaching morals' reports

They disliked my claim that learning is intimately linked to pleasure (though Adam Smith wrote a brilliant essay to that effect) or self-directed and lifelong. The schools they wanted would remedy social anarchy on the housing estates, joy-riders on the streets, and child

murderers at shopping centres. Mr Clarke might not have got far with his recent assault on crime, but they had not lost faith in his subliminal alternative, classroom discipline for an unruly remedial group. No one seemed at all concerned whether or not the young knew 'Daffodils' by heart. They wanted them to learn grammar and spelling, and correct spoken English from the time of entry. They wanted them taught rules. (Butler, 1993)

The term 'grammar' attains its key significance in the debate over the English curriculum because the term has been imbued with a much larger sense than its literal meaning: grammar is not simply a question of linguistic coding of the language, it is also a metaphorical referent for ideas about political and cultural order. Cameron (1995) makes this point when she argues that 'grammar' acts as a site upon which much more fundamental fears than the ability to write correctly can be played out.

The otherwise baffling observations of pro-grammar conservatives become intelligible if we hypothesise a systematic analogy between the structure of language and the structure of society. More specifically ... conservatives use 'grammar' as the metaphorical correlate for a cluster of related political and moral terms: order, tradition, authority, hierarchy and rules. In the ideological world that conservatives inhabit, these terms are not only positive, they define the conditions for any civil society, while their opposites – disorder, change, fragmentation, anarchy and lawlessness – signify the breakdown of social relations. A panic about grammar is therefore interpretable as the metaphorical expression of persistent conservative fears that we are losing the values that underpin civilisation and sliding into chaos. (Cameron, 1995, p.95)

The metaphorical force of the term 'grammar' is not lost on the CPS writers who argue that the transmissive teaching of grammar should be a central element of the English curriculum. The most appropriate way to teach grammar, Marenbon (1987) asserts, is through the practice of decontextualised grammatical exercises which, the author concedes, might well be felt by pupils to be uncongenial. However, the discipline of learning grammar accrues wider benefits of the improvement of character which the

teacher should recognise and support.

If the old-fashioned text-books and work-sheets struck him as dull, he would ask himself whether their dullness was merely an unnecessary obstacle to engaging is pupils' interest or whether it was inevitable in what they sought to teach. He would recognise that the process of learning is often laborious and makes considerable demands on children's self discipline. (Marenbon, 1987, p.34)

The metaphorical elision of grammar and discipline is cleverly achieved in the above extract. The teaching of grammar has, here, inherited the purpose Matthew Arnold envisaged for the teaching of literature, which, as a lesson which had to be learnt right ... not talked about' (Arnold in Huxley, 1912, p.52) would provide a 'useful discipline for all natures'. Grammar provides, for the conservative commentators in the late 20th century, an identical purpose. Here is a lesson in which there is no place for a debate (and, therefore, the emergence of divergent and challenging views), and from which children develop moral attributes (e.g. self-discipline) which will safeguard the status quo. The alternative, for conservative commentators, is chaos.

The overthrow of grammar coincided with the acceptance of the equivalent of creative writing in social behaviour. As nice points of grammar were mockingly dismissed as pedantic and irrelevant, so was punctiliousness in such matters as honesty, responsibility, property, gratitude, apology and so on. (Rae in *The Observer*, 7th February, 1982)

A more subtle argument for the teaching of grammar is put forward by one right wing commentator (and member of the CPS) who asserts that an explicit knowledge of the structure of the language is needed to form the foundation of critical thought.

The second reason for teaching English is to give some kind of theoretical grasp of grammar; not simply to teach it as a practice, which I think is the first duty of the English teacher, but to teach it also as an incipient theory of human thought. This is something which I am particularly interested in as a philosopher, since I have to teach my subject to students who are often ignorant of the fundamental distinctions in language which make it possible to understand philosophical ideas. Not to be aware of the distinction between subject and predicate is to be deprived of a vital piece of metaphysical knowledge. To be ignorant of verbs, objects, adverbial phrases and subordinate clauses is, I think, to have a deficient grasp of reality, for our language is our primary way of receiving and storing information about the world. The world is not merely a collection of objects. It contains facts, events, possibilities, probabilities, qualities, relations, aspects, laws, rights, duties, excuses. All these have their counterparts in grammar, and the grammar must be mastered if you are to think about them cogently. (Scruton, 1994, p.52)

It is interesting to note that Scruton, who has been careful to construct an academic rationale for the teaching of grammar, cannot avoid the implicit linking of the teaching of grammatical rules of language and moral rules of behaviour – the final four worldly qualities which have, he argues, their counterpart in grammar 'laws, rights, duties, excuses' refer firstly to the legal framework, and secondly to the moral framework upon which discussions about society are conducted. The symbolic connection between the rules of language and the rules of a civilised society is never far from the CPS agenda.

Grammar versus Drafting

Carrying, as the term does, the force of moral order and social propriety, it is imperative that English teachers have a firm position which can be widely understood by external agencies, upon the teaching of grammar. There is evidence which suggests that the respondents in this study are well aware of the metaphorical force of the term, several echoing the equation made by linguists (Carter, 1993; Butler, 1993; Cameron 1995)

between the demand for a return to traditional grammar teaching, amongst the wider public, with a desire to impose a moral order upon the youth of today's society.

I think it's one of these things like the pre 20 century literature that it can very easily be seen as some sort of panacea, em, that people say ... yeah ... people ought to know grammar, em, and they look no further, you know, here is this magic word called grammar, if people knew grammar they would somehow be better people (G.S. school 1)

Well, it's like, what is it that Deborah Cameron said?, it's this moral panic thing. It's lumping everything together isn't it? English teachers don't teach grammar, they don't teach you how to speak properly, there's more violence on the street, you just go on and in the end that's basically what all the problems in society boil down to the fact that kids can't speak standard English. It's ridiculous when you put it like that, but there's a hint of that in it. (M.P. school 3)

It's a lot of nonsense and certainly is a view that is not embedded in real educational philosophy or thought. It is a political perspective that is being conveyed. (M.A. school 3)

Whilst the respondents recognise that the term 'grammar' has a wide and powerful cultural currency amongst the wider public, often represented to them in the form of queries by parents about the teaching of grammar, they profess to feel rather weary at the stubborn ignorance of parents who will insist on raising the issue in conversation about their children's progress. Several of the respondents commented ruefully on the 'inevitable' grammar question.

Oh I mean a lot of it is in the media isn't it? Students leave school not being able to spell properly, not being able to string a sentence together. You see it here at parents' evenings, there is always, you can guarantee, there's always one parent who's going to ask 'do you teach grammar?' (S.H. school 3)

And what do you say? (Researcher)

And then we explain that it is taught through the drafting process on

an individual basis with each student and every student has their own targets. At key stage 3, you might have seen, inside the drafting books students have got their target page which relates to our marking policy and the notices we've got in the English room,...and every student and some of the responsibility is put onto the student em....to concentrate on improving one particular aspect of their work in one piece of work. It could be...the use of commas, the use of the apostrophe, the structure of sentences, paragraphs ... and that is far, far more effective than ...as we know, that if they're given a lesson on grammar where students will switch off, whereas if it's personal to them and you give them some responsibility for their own learning, it's far, far more effective. (S.H. school 3)

.... for a teacher it's 'oh no, it's not this question again, but for the parent it's probably, you know, it's a very important question for them and I think that it does need to be answered. I would explain that we do still teach grammar but perhaps not in the way that they, was their personal experience at school, em ... I will talk about the drafting process and how each different child is at a different stage in their ... em ... educational grammar, let's say, and so it's within our mixed ability classrooms it's more appropriate to guide children individually through the drafting process and to help them on particular areas where their weaknesses are. (C. M. School 3)

The respondents counter the term 'grammar' with 'drafting'. These two terms represent, for the protagonists over the English curriculum, two opposing positions on the teaching of language. The term grammar, represents for the respondents, a transmissively taught, content based and depersonalised approach to language development which they do not wish to adopt. Conversely the term drafting represents, for CPS writers, an abdication of the English teacher's responsibility to teach pupils the correct written forms of the language, substituting, instead, 'creative writing' which, Rae (1982) asserts, has its moral counterpart in degenerate and anti-social behaviour and forms of impoliteness. The debate over grammar carries with it, therefore, much more than an exploration over different approaches to the teaching of writing skills. It is a key area of contention upon which English teachers have to mount a strong defence of any practice which they

adopt. The question which is then raised is whether the term 'drafting' enables this strong defence to be made?

The respondents' advocacy of drafting rests upon two decades of research evidence which asserts that the explicit teaching of grammar is unprofitable. Referring to research studies conducted in the 1960s, the argument is put forward (Wilkinson, 1971; Welch et al. 1979) that the explicit teaching of grammar does not enable writers to achieve greater accuracy or fluency in their writing, as the points of grammar learned through these exercises do not translate into the pupils' free writing.

It is from this evidence that, as outlined in chapter 4, Bullock (1974) and Cox (1989) were able to argue that although some explicit knowledge of grammatical terminology may be useful it should be left to the teacher to determine the level at which this knowledge is made available to individual pupils. The approach advocated in Bullock and Cox is that of drafting in which the teacher discusses a pupil's work with them on an individual basis, revising the text within the context of the needs of the intended audience. In this approach, one strongly advocated by Britton, founder of the National Writing Project, and firmly associated with the London model of personal growth, here centred upon the individual development of a writer's abilities within a context which has a communicative purpose and context, there will often be little or no reference to grammatical terminology.

The use of drafting as the means to enable pupils to improve their writing was consolidated through the advent of GCSE and 100% coursework which created the conditions in which written work could be constantly re-drafted. For one respondent the period of 100% coursework was viewed as the most satisfying and

successful time in her career mainly because it created the conditions in which drafting could be practised most effectively.

What would you say, in terms of actually the teaching of English, was the most productive time in your career to be a teacher of English. What was the time when you felt the circumstances were allowing you to teach most in the way that you wanted to? (Researcher)

Well, it was in the period where we'd really got au fait with the 100% course work syllabuses and we began to hone the work and the methods of delivery. That was the most productive time. (M.P)

And can you explain to me why that was? What was it about the 100% coursework time that you felt was so productive? (Researcher)

Well, the first thing that I would say was good was that we all started to look at how students draft their written work. So we went through a number of processes whereby we thought about how students draft, how we can intervene in that process, how they can help each other in that process. So there was a whole debate and there was whole honing of our skills on the drafting which became then the mainstay of how we worked in all years. Whereas before that, going back to when I taught not at (name of school 3) but previously when I was teaching O level and CSE, the emphasis was far more in the Upper School on exam preparation and even in the Lower School there was set exams so there was much more to do. It was much more boring work really, I would say, for students and teachers. (M.P school 3)

All the respondents in this study show a strong allegiance to the drafting process as the best means of improving their pupils' writing abilities. An analysis of the responses reveals that the respondents' advocacy of the drafting process is grounded in the philosophy which has been so influential in all the other aspects of their practice which have been considered in the preceding chapters of this study. Personal growth through English which has been shown to underpin the respondents' conceptualisation of their pupils and their relationship with them (pupils as subjects of study), the respondents'

promotion of oracy and their defence of dialect, their approach to the teaching of literature in which they emphasise the importance of the relevance of the text to the pupils' lives and their individual response (based on their lives) to the text, also underpins the respondents' advocacy of drafting as a means of improving their pupils' ability to communicate effectively in written English.

Drafting is understood by the respondents to be a practical means by which the London emphasis on process through which self-expression is encouraged, can be achieved. In the drafting process time is spent re-writing different aspects of a text in order to improve it. Thus, the emphasis is not solely on the finished product (as is the case in timed exams where there is little or no opportunity to draft), but on the improvement of the piece of writing through a series of refining stages. Through this process, the respondents assert, another important aspect of the London model of personal growth, the emphasis on the individual within the group of the class, is facilitated. The drafting process is perceived by the respondents to be a means by which to support each pupil in the expression of their own individuality through writing. Drafting, it is argued, enables the teacher to address the needs of individuals, each of whom is set targets which, it is argued, enable them to achieve progress in their writing skills.

And then we explain that it is taught through the drafting process on an individual basis with each student and every student has their own targets. At key stage 3, you might have seen, inside the drafting books students have got their target page which relates to our marking policy and the notices we've got in the English room em ...and every student and some of the responsibility is put onto the student ... to concentrate on improving one particular aspect of their work in one piece of work. It could be ... the use of commas, the use of the apostrophe, the structure of sentences, paragraphs ... and that is far, far more effective than ... as we know, than if they're given a lesson on grammar where students will switch off whereas if its personal to them and you give them some responsibility for their own learning its far, far more effective. (S.H. School 3)

I would explain that we do still teach grammar but perhaps not in the way that they, was their personal experience at school, ...I will talk about the drafting process and how each different child is at a different stage in their em...educational grammar, let's say, and so it's within our mixed ability classrooms it's more appropriate to guide children individually through the drafting process and to help them on particular areas where their weaknesses are. (R.P. School 3)

... that it's done on an individual level and that very much it's done through the texts again, rather than you come in and you go vumph paragraphs, you know, you might give them ... if you've got a class and there's a lot of them not paragraphing properly and some are paragraphing properly its no good standing at the front going through paragraphs 'cause the ones who know it don't need it and the other ones aren't listening or taking any notice, or don't carry it on. 'cause somebody's stood there before and done it, (N.T. school 1)

One respondent draws upon another strand of the London model in her advocacy of the drafting process: Drafting, she argues, enables Britton's conception of children as writers producing real literature, to be accomplished within the English lesson, uniting an emphasis on process with a shared experience of the challenge of defining experience in writing.

Well yes, because it's real writing, that's how people write, and it's also why I write with the class, because, I never, for one thing, it's a bit selfish because I might get something decent written...but for the other thing as well, I think it's important for them to see teachers as writers – it's just this fallacy of those who can do, and those who can't teach, it's, well it's just a load of rubbish and the fact that I want to write with them, they're not going to see literature as the preserve of some great elite, that's why I talk to them deliberately, like, the writers might want to go off to the supermarket, or feed their children, or whatever, because that's it ... they're real people, they're not like some great person on a pedestal and they understand that, they understand that they could be writers as well, so I think that's very important – that they see you as a writer, you know ... and also I think its good in terms of process as well if the teacher writes because there are times when I say I'll give you 10 minutes and that, and I'm terrible, you know, I often don't give them enough time but if I'm doing it as well I'm thinking 'ooh heck, I'm never going to get this done in 10 minutes, so I say 'I think we need a bit more time', and they'll say 'yes we do' and then, you know, it's giving me an idea of where we're going and also highlighting

problems 'cause then I was able to say 'well you know I've written this bit, well I don't think it sounds very good, do you?, you know, so it helps me to understand the pitfalls, the process of writing. (H.P. school 1)

The respondents' strong defence of drafting is accompanied by an equally strong rejection of the explicit teaching of grammar which is viewed by them to be inimical to the philosophy and practice of drafting because it would not, they argue, meet the needs of individual pupils within the class, all of whom would be at a different stage of their writing development.

We very rarely would have whole class grammar lessons because they're not all at the same stage of development and you wouldn't expect that anywhere else really, you know that you wouldn't expect a whole load of people to be talked to about volcanoes when some had done volcanoes three times and some had never done them, so why would you expect that in English? (N.T. school 1)

I don't see the point, at a any point, in teaching something without sensitivity to the point of development at which the person you're teaching it to is at. (G.S. school 1)

Some respondents reject the argument that an explicit knowledge of grammatical terms is needed by their pupils, arguing, instead, that all pupils have an implicit knowledge of grammar which enables them to communicate appropriately and effectively.

If you're talking about illuminating for a kid what a sentence is by recognising the constituent parts, what about the kids who aren't even at the stage where they could write a sentence? You can't teach them to write a sentence by saying right here's a sentence that's got to have a noun, verb and all of that because that's gobbeldy gook then, and the analogy is wrong anyway because you talk in forms of sentences and you learn to talk naturally. (M.P. school 3)

It's a matter of bringing it to the surface from subconscious storage (J.L. school 1)

Many students do implicitly know what grammar is; how to express

it, they just haven't got the tags to term it, and I'm not sure, particularly, how we help them, especially lower down, in giving them those tags. What do they gain from it?
(M.A. school 3)

How do the respondents reconcile their belief that the explicit teaching of grammatical terms is unproductive with the demands of the revised (DFE, 1995) National Curriculum for English which imposes upon them the requirement to teach their pupils explicit grammatical structures (including the structure of phrases, main and subordinate clauses) and grammatical terminology (including the grammatical functions of nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and demonstratives)?

The evidence from this study would suggest that the external imposition of explicit grammar teaching has had little effect upon the rhetoric of the respondents. When they are asked how they would teach the grammatical terms stipulated in the programme of study for writing in the 1995 English order the respondents state

I think that I'm just going to ignore it, because it seemed alright in the past...you know, there's that bit saying subordinate clauses, but I don't think, when you look at it, I don't think the spirit of it is necessarily meant that that is what the children should be saying. (N.T. school 1)

I think I can continue my present practice, I don't see that as a ... I mean, the thing is, obviously, I know that there's a lot more emphasis on knowledge about language and on grammatical terms and that sort of thing, but I still don't think I need change what I do too much (H.M. school 1)

The weakness of this position is apparent when set in context of the present reality of the re-imposition of the teaching of formal grammar within the English curriculum. It is a move which has proved to be popular across the political divide and has been further supplemented by the advent, in 1999, of separate grammar papers at key stage 3 and, in the same year, by the imposition of the Initial Teacher Training

National Curriculum (DFEE circular 4/98) which contains a strong emphasis on the acquisition, by beginning teachers of English, of a comprehensive knowledge of grammatical terminology which, it is asserted, will underpin their ability to teach the grammar requirements of the 1995 order to their pupils. This weakness is further compounded by the resurgence of an academic debate about the place of formal grammar teaching in the development of pupils' writing abilities which questions the findings of the research studies which state that the teaching of an explicit grammar is unproductive. Tomlinson (1994), criticises the methodological framework in which the research upon which the contention that the explicit teaching of grammar is unprofitable was conducted. Tomlinson argues that the studies upon which, most notably Wilkinson (1971) and others base the case against grammar teaching are too small to be of generalised value, that their methodological framework is wrongly constructed and not able to produce the findings claimed.

So far I have not seen a study that is not so flawed in design as to make its conclusions worthless. Researchers and supervisors alike, they are usually so convinced in their own minds that grammar teaching is pointless that, as long as the research findings are consonant with their opinions, they do not look closely at how those findings are obtained. (Tomlinson, 1994, p.20)

This refutation of the research which is critical of formal grammar teaching is accompanied by a resurgence of interest in, and advocacy of, an explicit teaching of grammar, by linguists. The genre school of linguists, originating in Australia, but gaining increasing prominence in England (Kress and Knapp, 1992; Cope and Kalantzis, 1993; Kress, 1995) argues that without a knowledge of how texts are constructed (their grammar), individuals are disempowered in a society in which the quantity and the variety of written information requires individuals to have the tools to deconstruct the motive

behind the message. Taking a lead from media studies which focuses upon the means of production and the deconstruction of the visual image, genre theorists aim to enable readers to analyse texts using a framework predicated on the following questions: who produced it?, for whom was it produced?, in what context and under what constraints was it produced? (Kress and Knapp, 1992)

The essential difference between the positions of the radical right, represented by CPS members, (Marenbon, Scruton, Lawlor etc.), and the genre theorists, is centred upon the type of grammar which should be taught. The proponents of the CPS model advocate the return to traditional grammar teaching focused on the construction of the sentence. The genre theorists advocate what they term (Kress,1992) a 'new' grammar focused on the text as a whole, including its presentation (for example, the paper size, the font used ect.) and upon the textual devices used to create particular meanings by the writers. One key textual device commented upon by Kress and Knapp 1992, Kress, 1995 and Carter, 1993, a linguist who is not in the genre school, but does advocate the teaching of grammar based upon whole text (discourse) analysis, is that of the transitive and intransitive verb. For both Kress and Carter, knowledge of this grammatical point would enable the reader to determine the writer's motives when indicating where agency lies in the text: Commenting upon a passage from a woman's magazine in which the heroine is kissed for the first time by the hero, Carter (1993) comments

In the passage from *My Weekly* it is interesting to note that the transitive verbs are associated with male actions (he kissed her, he (had) taken her out onto the balcony; he let her go); the intransitive verbs are associated with female actions. Stefan De Vaux takes actions and takes initiatives; Claire just stood there and blushed. The most frequent intransitive verbs are blush, smile, stare, sigh and moan. (In such fiction sentences such as 'she kissed him' are almost impossible to find. 'He' always kisses 'her'.) She has things done to her and is cast in a passive and helpless role ('passed from guest to guest'). The syntactic choices here encode a

conventional gender positioning of men and women, one frequently patterned in romances and stories in similar genres. (Carter, 1993, p.9)

Carter and the genre theorists argue that a knowledge of grammar, based on the patterns of grammatical constructs within a whole text, the mode of presentation of the text which, in turn leads to consideration of its mode of production, is necessary if individuals are to be able to question the motives behind the producer(s) of the text. In summary, the aim of the proponents of the 'new' whole text grammar is to explore how powerful messages are encoded in ways which are likely to leave them uncontested by the reader.

How then, do the respondents, all of whom were trained in a period where it was believed that research evidence had apparently been conclusively proved that explicit grammar teaching was unproductive in terms of the pupils' language development, react to the changed situation in which the teaching of grammar is advocated not only by a right wing faction of the conservative party, but also by the present labour administration, and by linguists.

Despite their strong and articulate defence of the drafting process, and a confident delivery of the argument, rooted in the London model of personal growth through English, that their pupils' existing knowledge (in this case, their intrinsic knowledge of the grammatical structures of the language) is sufficient to enable them to communicate effectively, it is evident that the issues surrounding the teaching of grammar appear to present far more difficulties to the respondents than do the other two areas of contention between external agencies and the profession – those of standard English and the teaching of the English literary heritage. In these other areas a strong sense of professional expertise enables the respondents to interrogate the requirements placed upon them by government agencies and to question the motives of those behind the

imposition of these requirements. This does not appear to be the case when the issue of grammar teaching is raised.

The respondents' difficulties with the term 'grammar' appear to lie, mainly, in their inability to re-define the term in line with their stated philosophy. Grammar appears to be interpreted by them in a rather confused and contradictory way. One states, confidently, at the start of their response to the question 'Do you teach grammar?', that grammar should not be interpreted to mean punctuation.

Well, it's a very narrow interpretation of grammar that's actually meant there it means do you teach spellings and do you teach them to write in sentences ... and I mean grammar is much more than just where words go in sentences and describing the words in sentences. It's not about fitting names to words. (J.O school 3)

This respondent implies by her response that she has a wider, professional understanding of the term grammar, an understanding which the researcher attempts to probe. If grammar is 'not about fitting names to words', what is it about?

Well I'll tell you. I can't deconstruct a sentence. I couldn't tell you what's a pronoun and ... I can do an adjective, and I can do an adverb and I mean, I get stuck after that, so what is grammar? Grammar's the way that language is formed into sentences for effective communication. How about that? (J.O. school 3)

This respondent's answer indicates a level of confusion and contradiction which is unusual (she is a respondent with a generally very firm sense of her own professional knowledge and expertise). Having stated that grammar is about more than 'fitting names to words, and describing the words in sentences', the respondent then constructs her own definition of grammar which fits, exactly, what she has just said 'grammar' is not. In her list of grammatical terms she puts names to words, and then, in an attempt to

construct a wider definition, locates grammar within the traditional study of word order at sentence level.

The term 'grammar teaching' is generally characterised by the respondents as the transmissive teaching of a point of punctuation to the whole class, a practice which is rejected because the respondents argue it divorces language from its context, thus severely limiting the ability of the pupils to transfer what has been taught into their free writing.

If you taught the whole class how to use a semi colon they may be able to do it by the end of the lesson, in two weeks, in two to three week's time in a piece of course work it will only be forgotten ... they need to use it in context ... and also not everyone's going to be able to understand it or remember it in rote learning fashion, not everyone learns that way (R.P. school 3)

Well it doesn't work. It's a waste of time, because you can stand there until you go blue doing speech marks and you can see in three week's time that it's had no effect (N.T. school 1)

Such an interpretation presents, however, an incomplete reading of the requirements of the 1995 English order which requires that pupils be given opportunities not only to learn about punctuation, but also about sentence structure, including phrases and clauses and, in a move which meets the demands of the genre school, requires that pupils should be given opportunities to learn about discourse structure, including the structure of whole texts. Paradoxically, despite characterising the wider public's interpretation of grammar as punctuation, the respondents themselves make exactly the same equation. In this respect this study corresponds with the findings of a larger survey (QCA, 1998) which aimed to investigate teachers' confidence, knowledge and practice in the teaching of grammar at key stages 2 and 3. In their observations of teachers discussing examples of pupils' written work the researchers noted that comments on

sentence structure tend to show judgements made on the use of punctuation, rather than on sentence structure.

The levels of confidence which teachers recorded for their knowledge of, and ability to teach, sentence structure were considerably lower than for any other aspect of the survey (QCA, 1998, p.27)

It might, perhaps, be concluded that the respondents' equation of grammar with punctuation is made because this is the one aspect of grammar about which they feel that they have a sound professional subject knowledge. Thus, the resistance to the grammatical requirements of the revised (1995) order may lie not only in a defence of drafting as an aspect of sound professional practice, but also in an absence of the knowledge which would enable the respondents to discuss and explore, as they do with standard English and English literature, the external requirements imposed upon them by the revised (1995) English order.

I dislike grammar intensely, I had a very bad time at school with it ...
(LM. School 2)

This position, if it describes the reality of the situation for these respondents, and for English teachers more generally, is problematic. Not only do the respondents appear not to have a sound knowledge of the different academic interpretations of the term grammar, they also suffer from the weakness of the alternative they posit to the term 'grammar'. The weakness of the term 'drafting' is exposed at parents' evenings. As the respondents readily admit, the grammar question is frequently asked, and as this is a question which recurs constantly it suggests that the questioner has not been satisfied with the answer. The problem that the respondents face using the term 'drafting' to counter the parents' queries about grammar is that the term does not enjoy a wide

level of public understanding, and consequently, cultural currency. The term carries little weight with the powerful agencies which finance the practice of the subject and does little to counter the worry that parents feel when they see their child's messy 'drafting' book full of spelling errors and grammatical mistakes. To put the point most starkly, drafting carries no force when pitched against the powerful metaphor which has become grammar. Using such terms the subject is left vulnerable and open to the charge that it upholds no standards of linguistic (and consequently of cultural and moral) behaviour.

A further factor which compounds the difficulty the respondents appear to have with the term 'grammar' is that the majority of the respondents, whilst condemning parents and the wider public for having a limited understanding of this term appear to share this limited understanding themselves. Thus, they do not display the professional knowledge and expertise upon which to construct a powerful case (as they do when they discuss the issues of standard English and the teaching of the literary canon) against the external imposition of the explicit teaching of grammar. Nor are they able (as in the case of the teaching of the literary canon and of spoken standard English,) to accommodate the grammatical demands of the revised (1995) English order into their own practice, by utilising processes based upon the personal growth model which serve, very effectively, to achieve learning by using what is already familiar in their pupils' experience to mediate unfamiliar new knowledge.

The responses of three teachers in school 1 (N.T. J.L. and H.M) provide some exception, however, to the above argument. It is significant that the respondents in this school teach 'A' level English language. They argue that the requirements imposed by the 'A' level language syllabus, whilst initially being a great challenge, have provided the impetus to change the practice of language teaching both in the sixth form, and lower down the school. These respondents argue that the teaching of an explicit grammar has

to occur within the context of writing done for real communicative purposes.

I think 'A' level language has had quite a big effect on grammar lower down in the school because they have to know lots of grammatical stuff for 'A' level language and we've found ways of teaching it so it's not dry, it's not dull and so that they understand it, and that's filtering down, so I think generally, people are much more, people like me are much more daring about it...I think there's more explicit treatment of grammar...(N.T. school 1)

These respondents advocate a practice in the teaching of an explicit grammar which utilises the key principle of the pedagogy of the drafting process – the use of a real purpose and context for writing.

I was doing *Jaberwocky* with a year 7 class and I got them to do a dictionary. Not only did they have a definition for the nonsense words but they had to put the parts of speech in, and it was just supposed to be 'let's all look at the nouns, verbs and adjectives and possibly the odd adverb', but the most incredible things came out of it. (J.L. school 1)

I always work from texts. I think that's a good way of doing it ... almost, in a way, like 'A' level language analysis of texts which is more helpful and productive, rather than going through and writing out what is a verb ... because it doesn't transfer ... working from the context is important because you've got to give things a meaning and a purpose. (H.M. school 1)

The approach these respondents advocate as the basis for their practice supports that promoted by Clarke (1995) whose research is based in observation of classroom practice of the teaching of language.

There is little point in teaching pupils about a system if such teaching is not contextualised in any way as the grammar debate of the 50's and 60's emphasised most forcibly. Rather, any study of language should be located within a textual context which creates the context for the language points to be taught, rather than by way of any decontextualised exercises or drills. It is clear from the experience of the last twenty years or so that use of language alone does not teach pupils about language: it may some, but not all. Rather than looking back to discredited and out-dated methods for guidance which have informed so much of the new orthodoxy, we must draw upon current practice and theory which clearly points towards adopting a textual, contextual approach to language study. (Clarke, 1995)

It should be noted, however, that the initial reaction of the three respondents from school 1 (N.T. J.L. and H.M) to the question 'Do you teach grammar?' (interpreted by them as an explicit grammar) is to deny that they engage in such an activity. 'I think that I'm just going to ignore it' (N.T.); 'I think, I think I can continue my present practice' (H.M). Thus, even those respondents who have considered and, reportedly practised, innovative ways of teaching grammar which mediate very effectively between their pupils' present knowledge and new knowledge, deny, when directly questioned (in a way which it is very probable that they would be questioned at parents' evenings) that they do so. It is only through more detailed questioning by the researcher about the teaching of 'A' level language that the practice of teaching grammar through a 'textual, contextual approach' is acknowledged by these respondents.

Although it would appear that the respondents in school 1 are fulfilling the requirement in the National Curriculum to teach an explicit grammar their allegiance to the principles of the London school model of personal growth, manifested in this case in

their advocacy of the drafting process, leads them to appear that they are neglecting an area which is regarded as centrally important by the wider public and strongly advocated by powerful external voices. The weakness of this position is recognised by Clarke (1995).

Failure to draw attention to the textual level of language patterning within which words and sentences make their meaning as speech and writing has helped the rhetoric of the right to make the teaching of literacy a battleground for 'traditional' – and therefore good – versus 'progressive' and therefore bad – teaching methods.

As in the case of standard English and the teaching of literature, the rhetoric (in this case of some) of the respondents does not represent their practice which has been adapted to meet the powerful external demands for the delivery of key cultural products. There is, however, a crucial difference between the respondents' rhetorical treatment of these three areas of the curriculum. In the case of standard English and the teaching of literature the respondents are on firm ground; confident of their professional expertise they are able to question, very effectively, what they consider to be the ill-informed restrictions placed upon them by external agencies. In the teaching of grammar the respondents, with the exception of those in school 1, are much less confident. In this case this study replicates the findings of Clarke (1995)

The degree to which text structure or patterning is made explicit varies greatly from teacher to teacher and depends largely on their own linguistic abilities.

This weakness leaves the English educational establishment vulnerable to attack in the most highly charged and hotly debated area of the English curriculum and open to

the charge, levelled by politicians and the wider general public that English teachers are failing in their duty to establish, in their pupils, an understanding of, and ability to use, language correctly.

Of course language is a living force, but our central concern must be the business of teaching children how to use their language *correctly*. ... Language is, as a matter of observable fact, plainly governed by a series of conventions related to the varying audiences, contexts and purposes of its use. Successful communication depends upon a recognition and accurate use of the rules and conventions. (Eggar, *The Times Educational Supplement*, 28th June, 1991)

Against the charge of failing to teach correct forms of the language (a charge which carries a much wider significance) teachers of English are, as the data in this chapter has revealed, weakly defended.

Chapter Ten

Conclusion

The central finding of the analysis of the data collected for the study is that the concept of personal growth through English provides, for the respondents, an underpinning rationale for their work as teachers of English. Thus the development of the concept of personal growth, from its early inception in the work of Arnold, Sampson and Newbolt, through to its later development in the work of the authors of the Cambridge and London schools, is examined in chapters two and three where it is argued that whilst the two schools shared the unifying aim of personal growth they differed in their conception of what this growth should lead to, the London school espousing a more democratic concept of growth in which lived experience was celebrated rather than, as in the Cambridge model, resisted. A further argument is also made that the London school became, in the late 1960s through to the late 1980s, the dominant model in government education policy, and retains its ability to provide the dominant rationale for contemporary teachers' rhetorical representation for their practice, because it articulates both a democratic rationale and a pedagogical practice for the teaching of English.

The analysis of the data in chapters six to nine demonstrates that the London school model is the version of personal growth most strongly supported in the respondents' rhetoric. The central tenet of this model, it is argued, is the development of individual identity through the exploration of lived experience, effected in the classroom through the adoption of pedagogical practices in which personal experience is foregrounded, examined, and used as the basis upon which new learning is built. This

concept provides a theoretical focus for the respondents' rhetorical representation of their practice as English teachers in the three major areas of the English curriculum.

In speaking and listening the London school's concept of oracy underpins the respondents' rhetorical presentation of their approach to pupil talk which, they assert, is used to support and encourage, within the classroom environment, the expression of feelings, ideas and experience, and as a result of this expression, to aid the development of thought. The concept of oracy underpins, also, the respondents' rhetorical rejection of the status, in the revised (1995) English National Curriculum, of standard English which, they argue, is inimical to the promotion of oracy.

In reading, the London school's concept of literature underpins the respondents' rejection of a set canon of authors which, they fear, will exclude particular groups of pupils who, because they do not see their lived experience reflected in the texts read in English classrooms, will fail to engage with the literature read there. The London school's advocacy of a personally felt response to literature underpins, also, the respondents' dislike of an assessment system which, through its use of timed examinations, is felt to limit the opportunities for pupils to formulate a personal response to a literary text.

In writing, the London school writers' advocacy of drafting is strongly supported by the respondents who advocate a process-based approach to writing development, in which each individual pupil is aided to shape their writing for their own communicative purposes, bearing in mind the needs of an intended audience. This personal approach, in which grammatical and punctuation errors are addressed individually through refining each draft, is contrasted with the respondents' critical view of the teaching of an explicit grammar which is understood by them to be the working through of decontextualised grammar exercises and rejected because the respondents argue that such an approach

fails to take into account the needs, the interests, or the communicative intent of the individual.

A recurring tenet of the philosophy of personal growth through English, advocated by the early authors of the English curriculum and both the Cambridge and London schools, affects English teachers' expectations of their relationship with their pupils which, they argue, must be based upon a special knowledge of the pupils as individuals and an awareness of their lives outside the classroom. This 'special knowledge', it is claimed, enables English teachers, uniquely amongst the teachers of all the subjects in the secondary school curriculum, to influence their pupils in very powerful and far reaching ways. One respondent states, in this study, that English is about 'teaching kids how to live their lives' (L.M school 2). In this statement the respondent follows a tradition established by Arnold and articulated by Sampson, Newbolt, and Leavis, all of whom claim, for English, the status of a national repository in which moral values can reside.

The extent to which the claims made by English teachers about the value of their subject in respect of its ability to enable pupils to achieve personal growth is questioned through an analysis of the continuing popular support for a product-based approach to the teaching of English, in this study articulated through the summary, in chapter five, of the CPS model. The central tenets of the CPS model - the demand for English to furnish the nation with the cultural products of spoken and written standard English and a knowledge of the literary heritage - are shown to have retained their popular appeal with different government administrations, and with the wider public, throughout the past century. The powerful demand for English to produce shared cultural understandings amongst different groups in society has not, it is argued, diminished throughout the history of the subject. As society approaches the 21st

century its fears of cultural fragmentation and degeneration are as powerful as they were at the beginning of the 20th century. English retains, in the eyes of the public, its cultural mission to bind together a divided society. Where teachers of English appear to oppose this purpose by persisting in presenting their aims for their subject, and their practice, using the language of the personal growth, process based model, they are open to savage attack.

The situation for English as the subject approaches the millennium becomes, indeed, even more complex and extends beyond the maintenance of key icons of cultural commonality. It is argued in chapter five that the CPS writers manage to combine a vision of a past which never existed with a powerful vision of an economic future which, they assert, will be blighted unless English delivers the basic literacy skills which will be needed if the country is to compete on an international basis. English must not only show due respect to the past through the teaching of texts from the literary heritage but it must also prepare pupils for their immediate future through the teaching of public communication skills in spoken standard English and in written standard English.

Added to this complex set of demands is a new focus on ICT, a focus which is recognised and promoted not only by the present government administration (through the New Opportunities for Learning fund which seeks to connect all schools to the internet and to train all teachers to use ICT in the curriculum) but also by the curriculum commentators on the subject who argue that today's pupils will be disempowered unless they are familiar with, and able to confidently use, the communicative technologies of the future. Many curriculum commentators (Jones, 1996; Peel 1995; Green, 1995; Stannard, 1996; Goodwyn, 1996; Andrews, 1996) argue that the notion of text needs to be expanded from traditional print-bound forms of communication, and from a concentration on literature, to a focus on the wide range of texts which have

cultural and social standing in peoples' daily lives. Of key significance in this shift will be an increasing emphasis on visual rather than written imagery.

Texts now have a different code. The loss of complexity in language and the shift towards complex visual images, with images now conveying as much information as words, has meant a change in the function of language. Language has now become more of a semiotic solvent. Information is no longer object based but patterned. We can begin to talk of information design, design being the skills needed to use resources to shape experiences. (Stannard, 1996,p.13)

In this move, underpinned by post-modern theory (which Green (1995) encapsulates as a term to cover all those strategies which set out to dismantle the power of the white, male author as the privileged source of meaning and value), a productive knowledge of new modes of communication, particularly those powered by electronic communication – the internet, email and television - will need to become the focus for a subject which, in the view of the commentators (Kress 1995; Peel, 1995; Green, 1995; Stannard, 1996), has grown out of English but which, in the future, should be renamed 'cultural studies'. Such a move would encapsulate the global, multi-media and multi cultural nature of the communicative medium through which today's students will communicate and receive the communications of others and would, it is argued, (Peel, 1995; Stannard, 1996; Green, 1995; Jones, 1996,) enable a more critical pedagogy to be developed in which the term 'experience' which has been so powerful in the personal growth model, would become problematised, becoming understood within a concept of historical and cultural discourse in which it is recognised that particular representations of the world are privileged and others downgraded or excluded.

It becomes apparent, therefore, that as the subject of English has developed it has accrued to itself an ever longer and more complex range of demands and expectations, a point well made by one commentator

Gradually, the story seems to go, the curriculum space which became known as English accreted habits, traditions and practices, often contradictory and fulfilling many functions. It has played a central role in turning the industrial workforce literate; it has defined and contested definitions of culture and value; it has played a central role in developing young people's sense of themselves, their subjectivities; it has cemented a national literary canon; it has operated as forms of class based inclusion and exclusion...English, thus describes a series of aims and a range of practices, but above all a truly impossible burden of expectation. (Sefton-Green, 1996, p.8)

Thus, English teachers are caught between the need to develop the communication and interpretation skills which will be required in the next century, and the need to establish a cultural continuity with what are deemed to be the important aspects of knowledge from the past. These apparently contradictory demands will not go away. One of the key continuities between the previous Conservative administration and the present new Labour administration, it is argued in chapter 5, is the demand for education to produce a defined product (in New Labour's terms, to achieve standards). Another key continuum between the present and previous government administrations is an intolerance of pedagogical theory. What counts as proofs of educational success are outcomes which can be measured, in terms of the secondary school English curriculum, by pupils' ability to speak and write standard English, to gain an explicit knowledge of some grammatical terms and be able to demonstrate their correct use, and by the ability to demonstrate a correct response, written in a traditional critical form, to works of literature. And to do all of the above demonstrating their ability to use information and communications technology.

As it is evident that there is a continuing demand from influential external agencies for English to deliver the products detailed in the previous paragraph then the brave new world envisaged by some of the more ambitious curriculum commentators needs to be seriously examined. Whilst there is compelling evidence that there is a world-wide move to a visual culture it is also evident that the external agencies of parents and politicians who partake enthusiastically of this culture also hold deeply conservative and strongly held views about what should constitute the school curriculum and are very uneasy about what might be lost in the move away from print-based forms of communication. The importance that politicians place on the traditional elements of the English curriculum can be seen most recently in the refusal, by the present secretary of state for Education, and against the advice of the QAA, to remove from the 2,000 – 2,005 English national curriculum the prescribed pre-twentieth century list of authors (Cassidy, in *The Times Educational Supplement*, 10th September, 1999). The school curriculum in this uneasy equation assumes the place of the repository of those elements of the culture which external publics want to be preserved, but not, necessarily, to partake.

The demand for the provision of cultural continuity cannot, in this conservative climate, be replaced by a post-modern, relativist, content-free curriculum which focuses mainly on the ethereal, visual image rather than the tangible, printed word. Were it to go down this route English (or cultural studies) would again open itself up to the question which has enabled external forces to dominate the subject in the present. What does it produce? Practitioners of English must not replace one philosophy which has been misunderstood and devalued by public opinion (personal growth) with another (cultural studies) which would undoubtedly lead the practitioners of the subject, again, to their present unhappy conclusion. Any future for the subject must be heedful of the warning made by Reid (1984, p.68).

These interested publics which pay for and support education hand over its work to the professionals in only a limited and unexpected sense. For a while it may appear that the professionals have power to determine what is taught (at school, district or national level, depending on the country in question) their scope is limited by the fact that only the forms and activities which have significance for external publics can, in the long run, survive.

Reid's argument raises the question which has been considered repeatedly throughout this study: How are English teachers to be enabled to better represent their practice in ways which have significance for external agencies whilst retaining aspects of the London school model which, this study has shown, are important not only to their rhetoric but also to their practice?

Burgess (1996) argues that English teachers need, now, to examine in a critical and rigorous way the reality of the complex meanings which past traditions hold for their present practice, to identify where past traditions are being adapted to meet contemporary demands, and to publicise their success and expertise in this endeavour. English, amongst all the subjects of the curriculum, has always been the first subject to examine and adapt its pedagogy in the light of new demands. A more honest and rigorous examination of practice will enable English teachers to represent, effectively, what they do well, and to articulate a more reasoned opposition to influences which they view to be detrimental.

An important conclusion of this study is that the basis for a more critically focused, explicit and pragmatic future for English may lie in the recognition and development of the mediating practices analysed in chapters six to nine. These practices serve to provide some balance between the apparently opposing forces of a content-based National Curriculum and the process-based ideals of the respondents whose allegiance to the London model of personal growth through English results in their retention of its

advocated classroom practises through their organisation of small group work, their use of the pupils' personal experience as a bridge towards an unfamiliar topic, and their use of the drafting process.

The data also demonstrates, however, that the processes adopted in the respondents' classrooms have changed from those advocated by their original authors to meet the need to cover the range of content outlined in the revised and externally assessed National Curriculum for English. This adaptation of classroom processes, based upon the London model, but revised in the light of new requirements, can be seen in many examples cited by this study.

It has been demonstrated, for example, that the respondents' articulate a rhetorical allegiance to a process of oracy which is closely aligned to the work of the London authors, Barnes, Britton and Rosen. The record of classroom observation reveals, however, that the respondents' rhetoric is only partly realised in their classroom practice. The forms of group work adopted in the respondents' classrooms, whilst understood by the respondents to be an opportunity to allow their pupils the space to discuss ideas openly, are, in fact, subject to a high degree of teacher control operated through close supervision of each group and through a form of questioning which is alien to independent adolescent discourse. Even in extended group work there is little opportunity for the pupils to have the freedom to explore topics which their teachers would deem to be irrelevant. Moreover, new forms of organisation of pupil talk are emerging, in this study termed concentrated group work, which, whilst enabling the pupils to explore their ideas in their own words, do so in highly constrained and controlled circumstances, the most effective of which is a clear time limit in which to produce an answer. In effect a new model of oral work, much more teacher-directed, but leaving some opportunity for independent discourse, is being developed.

The adaptation of established pedagogical practices to meet new external demands is being realised across other central areas of the English curriculum. When considering the teaching of spoken English the respondents criticise the status given to standard English in the revised National Curriculum and argue, in close alignment with the London authors, that the pupils' language and dialect should be respected. In their classrooms, however, the respondents routinely model for the pupils, through the repetition of their answers, the correct subject vocabulary and the standard English forms which the pupils will need to use to achieve success in the subject and, in school 3, provide a very structured framework in which pupils are enabled to come to an explicit understanding of the issues surrounding language diversity and change, including standard English.

In the teaching of literature the respondents strongly advocate, in their rhetoric, in keeping with the tenets of the London authors, a personal response to a text. In practice, however, it is clear that the respondents view their pupils' personal responses to texts not as ends in themselves but as bridges to the more highly valued genre of the lit. crit. essay, a genre in which personal opinions about a text are framed in a highly formulaic, impersonal style. An analysis of the data from lesson observations also reveals that the respondents, whilst nominally accepting any pupils' personal response to a text, routinely signal the 'correct' answer to their pupils, usually by highlighting, repeating and elaborating upon a particular response from a pupil.

In discussing their relationship with their pupils the respondents express their belief in the central tenet of the London school - that the English lesson is the place where personal experience can be explored and used as a bridge to more unfamiliar 'school' knowledge. It is clear the respondents feel that, as English teachers, they have a special relationship with their pupils, a relationship based upon a more intimate

knowledge of their lives than it would be possible for teachers of other subjects to gain. This study demonstrates, however, that the range of experience which it is possible for pupils to articulate within the English classroom is highly constrained and that topics are not only 'framed' by the teacher to signal the sorts of experience which will be accepted, but that any pupil transgressing this unwritten code will be silenced.

Within these clearly demarcated, but publicly unacknowledged boundaries, however, it is clear that pupils are given space to relate aspects of their personal experience to the forms of knowledge which society deems it is important for them to acquire. Some of the most effective teaching observed in this study (for instance the form of the lit.crit. essay in M.A's class) used process-based activities in altered forms (oracy through concentrated group work) to build a bridge between the pupils' knowledge and the development, in them of the ability to frame their response to a text in the highly formulaic genre of the lit. crit. essay.

It is evident, therefore, that the respondents as English teachers have, in many respects, become highly competent in teaching a CPS model of English, a model in which certain areas of knowledge, in particular spoken and written standard English and the teaching of the literary heritage, are effectively and efficiently 'delivered'. The respondents are expert in mediating the demand to deliver a curriculum which could, very easily, be perceived by the pupils as alien and dull by using process based activities, often in forms which have developed from those envisaged by their originators, thus transforming a potentially alienating curriculum into subject matter with which the pupils are prepared to engage.

It is in the gap between the respondents' rhetoric, based on an unreconstructed version of the London school version of personal growth through English, and their actual classroom work, based on practice which remains rooted in London model but is

transformed to meet new demands made upon the subject, that an important paradox is revealed. The respondents do not recognise their own expertise. Their rhetoric presents a version of their practice which is only partially realised in the reality of their classroom work. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the respondents' skill in the delivery of the forms of knowledge which have high cultural significance is not appreciated by the agencies of external imposition who are becoming increasingly frustrated as they feel that their goals are not being achieved.

If English teachers were able to clearly articulate how their practice meets the demands of 'democratically determined education policy' (Woodhead in Passmore, 1999) they would be in a far stronger position to put forward their criticism of the current situation for English and their agenda for change. Instead, however, the respondents lament rather than publicise their expertise in mediating unfamiliar, adult forms of knowledge to pupils.

I think the thing is that we've become experts at making bad things good rather than just dealing with good practice and sharing that. (N.T. school 1)

Neither side in this debate, it seems, is getting what it wants, to the mounting frustration and anger of all concerned.

English teachers need, therefore, to publicise the reality of their practice more effectively; to do so they will need to become more critically conscious of the difference between their rhetorical representation of their classroom practice and its actual reality. At the centre of any new description of English by its practitioners needs to be a recognition that the notion of experience, central to the London personal growth model, is not by any means a simple concept. Value judgements are made by English teachers about the sorts of experience which pupils may discuss in English lessons. Similarly, value judgements are made about the texts to be read, the language in which they are to

be discussed and the form in which they are to be written about. These value judgements are illustrated most clearly in the respondents' understanding of the concept of a relevant text, a concept which is built upon their perception of their 'special' knowledge of their pupils and, consequently, of their perception of their likes and dislikes. The respondents' belief in the 'mediating' qualities of the 'relevant' text should, however, be questioned when faced with the reality of the reading matter which the pupils, unconstrained by their teachers, deem to be relevant. In the pupils' minds there may be far less difference between the texts chosen by the QCAA and those chosen by their teachers. A more realistic appraisal of these similarities may enable teachers of English to state more accurately the ways in which they are delivering the product demanded by external agencies. In the lessons observed for this study the respondents, experts in language, strove to pass on to their pupils enculturalised forms of knowledge which they themselves strove hard to acquire. If English teachers are able to recognise the reality of the value judgements which underpin the English curriculum as it is formulated in their classrooms they will be able, more readily, to understand and acknowledge the social and political demand that other groups make of the subject, key to which is that English transmit key elements of cultural heritage to new generations of children. The recognition of this skill, in this study realised in the documentation of mediating practices, might go some way to stifle the frustration expressed by powerful external agencies that English is not producing its required product

However, a further argument of this study asserts that if English teachers need to be more aware of their pedagogical expertise in the management of oracy, the teaching of standard English and the teaching of the literary heritage, in order to defend their practice in these areas, they also need to rigorously examine their practice in the teaching of grammar. It is this area which poses the greatest challenge to the

respondents in this study. English teachers can no longer rely solely upon the theoretical rationale provided by the drafting process. If the arguments of the New Right in support of explicit grammar teaching can be ignored (although the strong connection in the public mind between grammar teaching and the teaching of morality would suggest that there are grave dangers in this stance), the arguments of the linguists cannot.

Failure to draw attention to the textual level of language patterning within which words and sentences make their meaning as speech and writing has helped the rhetoric of the right to make the teaching of literacy a battleground for 'traditional' - and therefore good - versus 'progressive' and therefore bad - teaching methods (Clarke, 1995, p.10)

Grammar teaching is a central, and very public, area of weakness for practitioners of English who need to gain an understanding of grammar, both at sentence level and beyond, in order to be able to judge what elements of grammar it is important for them to teach to their pupils, and to devise an effective pedagogy, which would incorporate the drafting process, to enable pupils to improve their knowledge of written standard English.

In addition to the arguments detailed above which promote a sustainable future for the subject this study reaches one further, and final conclusion. The London model of personal growth through English provides the basis not only for the respondents' rhetoric but also for the most productive aspects of their practice, particularly where this is mediated to meet new curriculum demands. The London model of personal growth provides, for English teachers, an inspirational, moral, purpose for their work. The respondents' vision, finally, their purpose for English, is to empower the individual.

In this powerful instance English teachers put forward a different and important perspective which is not articulated by the curriculum commentators - Andrews, (1997) being a notable exception - whose work is outlined in a previous section of this chapter.

They envisage a future for English focused on the individual's ability to deconstruct the different images, written or visual, which s/he will encounter. However, the views of Eagleton (1983) add another important perspective. The practice of deconstruction is not always, and of itself, empowering to the individual: indeed, an over-emphasis on deconstruction can serve to reify language and seal it away from its purpose in the world. If meaning is always indeterminate, experience (our reality) merely a product of the discourse we inhabit at a particular moment, then it becomes difficult to view language as a means by which important concepts like truth, justice and equality can be advanced. You can deconstruct other peoples' arguments but it becomes difficult to believe in the importance of making your own.

However, the conception of language as a sign system which can empower the individual and enable them to achieve concrete effects in the world – language as a material force – is powerfully present in the arguments of the respondents in this study. This is an essential aspect of teachers' understanding of the word 'empowerment'. This point is made eloquently by Burgess:

...not all strands within the critical and cultural consensus have been equally interested in the agency of children or in an adequate version of their development. However critical or deconstructive our objectives, children still need to be encouraged into learning. (Burgess, 1994, p.49)

The following responses show that the respondents understand and clearly advocate the importance of the material force of language in the world and of children's agency – the desire, particularly powerful in adolescents - to change the world. Language is seen by the respondents as a force for personal growth as it links empowerment with social and political action. In the first response literature (the most

consciously crafted form of language) opens up for discussion questions of social and political action.

We're about making proper use of words and expressing ourselves and using it for purposes. Those sorts of purposes...the sociological purposes, the expression of the world around you, the political expression of what's going on. These things, I believe, are important in English.
(M.A. school 3)

A theoretical perspective which accommodates this idea of language in society, used to empower both the individual and different social, cultural and political groups, is provided by the work of Volosinov (1929). Volosinov took from Saussure (1967) the concept of the word as a sign but rejected the notion that it was fixed by a collective agreement in society and therefore static. Volosinov argued that the word, as sign, is being constantly made and remade in society and history. The word as an ideological sign is characterised by its multi-accentuality. The meaning given to it will differ according to the varying emphasis put upon it by different groups in society and the word, as a sign, will develop because of this intersecting of accents. Words which have been withdrawn from the pressures of social struggle, and which are not interpreted differently by different sections of society, become fossilised and lose their force not only to reflect, but also to refract, experience.

This view of language used for collective purposes also has an individual and personal dimension, for word meanings evolve, not only through the dynamic of their use by different groups in society, but they grow, personally, also, in the individual. Vygotsky (1986) argues that words are 'dynamic rather than static formations' and although most people would agree with the dictionary definition of a word, this is 'no more than a stone in the edifice of sense. Each individual's sense of a word is formed by 'all the sum of

psychological events aroused in (their) consciousness by the word and the context in which it appears.' (p. 244).

Thus, language is shaped by the individual and by different groups in society intent on doing things in the world, on achieving purposes and ends. Language is central to this endeavour. Human beings are not prisoners of the discourse they inhabit in language because they can also shape this discourse through the struggle to establish meaning.

English, in the view of the respondents, finally, should give children agency to learn how to exercise a degree of control over their lives through their use of language to reflect their understanding of their present experience and to provide them with some means of control over their future experience.

To empower students. To teach them to deconstruct to the best of their ability. To make them question the world around them...not just sponges (M.A. school 3)

It's developing the students as readers, as writers, as effective communicators and as people who are able to...be challenged and bring their own ideas to reading, to writing, to recognise assumptions, explicit meanings, implicit meanings, and to grow and to develop these particular skills as they become members of our community. (J.O school 3)

... it's about communicating and the thing that these children need here, is they need to learn how to communicate successfully in order to get what they want out of life. And I don't just mean the material things. I mean in order to, again it's woolly, to enrich their lives. And I think that's possibly the most important thing. (L.M. school 2)

English teachers will start to successfully defend their present practice, and to have more control in defining their future, if they can start to demonstrate how they unite their aim to empower their pupils through the development of their abilities to communicate and to receive and interpret the communications of others, with the external

demand that English furnish, for the nation, an understanding in each new generation of key cultural continuities. The final respondent, in the view of the author of this study, demonstrates her understanding of the tension between the internal imperatives which drive English teachers' conception of their work and the external demands which are placed upon them. In her response she recognises the powerful influence, for each individual, of the cultural environment in which they grow up which provides the basis for each individual to learn about, and to achieve competence in, the cultural products upon which the wider society places such a high value. This study has shown that this is an area of expertise for English teachers. They now need to recognise their skills in this endeavour, to value them, and to communicate the reality of their practice to the powerful external agencies who finance the practice of the subject:

I think that teaching English is...about empowering children with language and I think they need that sense of empowerment because well, at the end of the day they're going to want to get a job so they're going to need to read and write but also in order to express themselves...and I think they need standard English for that, absolutely, because they need to work in the real world. But at the same time, there's something else that needs to go along with that which is a sense of their own self, you know, all that stuff we were talking about with the Harrison today, it's a sense of their own self-worth and a sense of where they come from...that is very important in terms of their identity and their development as individuals and nobody should take that away from them. (H.M. school 1)

Appendix a1 – Teachers' Notes

LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND CHANGE

Key Concepts: STANDARD ENGLISH : DIALECT : SLANG : TONE : REGISTER :
LANGUAGE OF POWER

Theme: GOOD VERSUS BAD ENGLISH or TALKING PROPER!

Introduction - Lesson 1

Materials

- (1) Passages from 'The Nature of The Beast'.
- (2) Questions on the passage.
- (3) 'Talking Proper' sheet.

Activities

- (1) Read one passage to the students. Then, let them read the second passage themselves (silently), then in small groups (each reading in turn), or taking a part. Don't, at this point, introduce the idea of looking at language diversity. The questions on the passage should then be discussed by students in small groups. Give them confidence by emphasizing that all their guesses about Billy could be correct, as long as they can justify their opinions with evidence from the passage.

Lesson 2

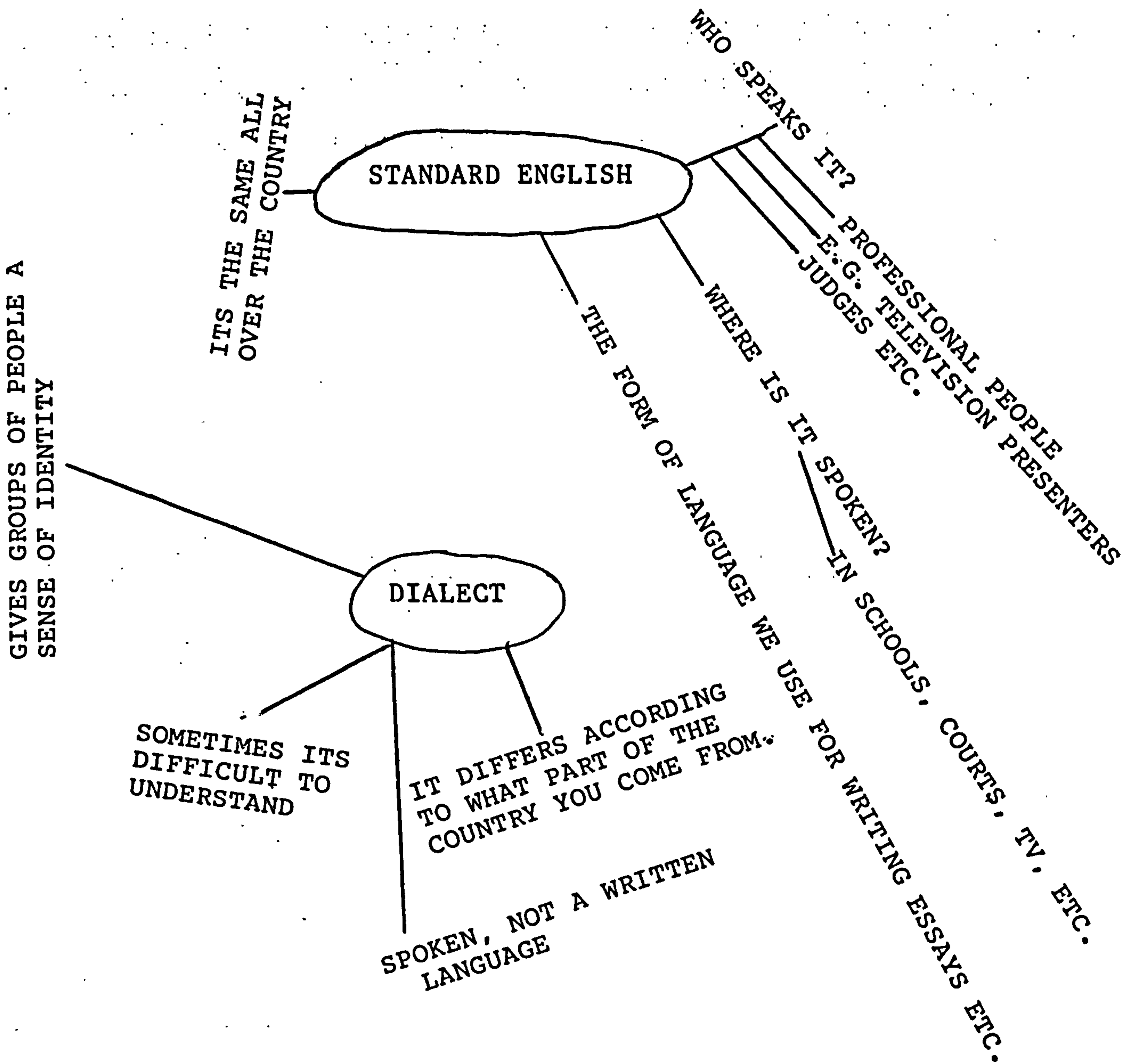
Activities

- (1) Discuss their answers on the passages as a class. The last question "How do you know" is very important - what 'clues' are we given about Billy's character? Hopefully, one clue they will mention is the way the characters speak. When this point is (hopefully by the students themselves) the issues of language and power are beginning to be raised - because both Billy and Chunder speak in a Lancashire dialect.
- (2) A general discussion may begin here about how we judge people by the way they speak (though this may not happen at this stage).
- (3) Students should then complete the 'Talking Proper' sheet (individually or in pairs).

Lesson 3

Activities

- (1) The 'Talking Proper' sheet (which asks students to translate dialect forms in to standard English) should be discussed as a class.
- (2) From this, students could be asked to state what differences there are between 'talking properly' and the speech Billy and Chunder use.
At this point the terms STANDARD ENGLISH and
- (3) DIALECT could be introduced. Spidergrams could be drawn on the board to help to identify the different features of these two forms of language, e.g.



- (4) Students could then be asked to name as many dialects as they can think of and to say any words or phrases that they know in that dialect. This exercise should raise their awareness of the diversity of dialect forms although many of their phrases will be clichéd. (This does not matter at this stage.)

Lesson 4 and 5

The focus can now be extended to what the different dialect forms add to the language.

Activities

- (1) Questions:

WHY DO PEOPLE SPEAK WITH DIFFERENT DIALECTS?
WOULDN'T IT BE EASIER IF EVERYONE SPOKE THE SAME?

- (2) Materials:

The 'Macbeth' speech, translated into different dialects. Students could try to read the different forms of the speech out loud. One key question is, do different pictures of Macbeth emerge through the different dialect descriptions?

- (3) Students should work in pairs to 'translate' the extract from the play in to standard English, and then in to a dialect that they are familiar with. This exercise, though challenging, will introduce students, in a very active way, to the richness of language diversity and the idea of saying the same thing in different ways, for different purposes and effects. Their 'speeches' should be performed for their groups or the rest of the class. (Oral assessment.)

Lesson 6 - Language Change - SLANG

Activities

- (1) Whole class Q and A. How many of your parents tell you to talk properly?
- (2) What words/phrases do they object to, (e.g. they consider that you are not talking properly). These words/phrases can be 'collected' on the board.

Appendix a2 – Student Materials

JOBS BLOW FOR HAVERSTON

Hope for Stone Cross

DOUBLE TRAGEDY FOR LOCAL FARMER

THE HAVERSTON BEAST STRIKES AGAIN!

REWARD OFFERED FOR

HAVERSTON BEAST

Beast's Last Victim

Oh, I remember the headlines, but they don't tell the whole story – newspapers never do. They don't know the half of it. Not one half! And even if they did, I reckon they wouldn't care – not about Dad or Chunder, or the trouble I'm in.

I'll give them headlines! I'll hammer them with headlines until I make this town squint! But I bet you a pound to a pinch of salt that they still won't see the thread. No, they'll not see that all these things are connected up, just like knots in a length of thread . . .

And here's me, Bill Coward, Ned Coward's son and Chunder's grandson – nobody. Nowt. And I'm the only

one who really knows about the beast. But they'll never listen. Maybe you'll not listen either, but I'm telling you it started on that cold January evening when Dad came home from work.

He wasn't walking properly. He held onto the edge of the door, and then onto the sideboard, and he walked very very slowly to his chair, as if he was drunk. I thought he was drunk. He had a letter in his hand. That was about six o'clock. Then Chunder came round about an hour later, and Dad had never moved from his chair, and he hadn't touched the mug of tea I'd made for him.

Chunder *was* drunk. He went out into the backyard to pee in the drain – he was that far gone he didn't fancy climbing the stairs to the bathroom. He sat opposite my dad, but not before pulling a screwed-up letter from his pocket and chucking it into the grate. He put his head in his hands and propped his elbows on his bony knees and watched the letter burn. Then he just sat watching the coals burning into red caves and sparks and black soot, and his face was red in the firelight, like a red skull with black eyes. He's very thin in the face is Chunder.

I thought there was some funeral on or something, but I didn't know what I was seeing – just my old man come home from work and Chunder round visiting. Chunder often comes round to watch the telly, especially in winter when there's not much doing on the allotment. Nowt strange in that, except they said nothing, at least not while I was there.

I must have gone out. I can't quite remember what I'd been up to. Something and nothing . . . Wait on . . . I do remember. Me and Mick Dalton were pelting the phone

box with snowballs, well, slushballs. The snow was melted except for lumps by walls and yellow gritty bits. And Mick and me were lobbing handfuls at Angie Thomson in the phone box just to make her mad.

But the thing was – no one made us come in. We could have stayed out all night, we almost did, with our fingers freezing. Nobody yelled for us to come in, nor for any of the other kids. And there's usually a lot of yelling goes on in Long Moor Lane after seven. (You know, "Bob Eccles, you get inside this minute or I'll break both yer legs!" She's a good line in yelling has Bob Eccles's mam!)

Most folks in our street worked at Stone Cross Mill, men and women. And most houses had a letter in them, but we didn't know that then. We just kept messing about under the street lamps, waiting for someone to yell. But no one did! It was like everyone had died in their houses and, in the end, it was the silence that took us home. That and the cold.

Chunder was in at Number 17 but Dad wasn't. As soon as I walked in the door the silky feeling came back, and

he laughing went away. I asked so many whys and that many hows about the Mill closing that in the end Chunder lost his rag.

"It's just the nature of the bloody beast, Billy! It's just the nature of the bloody beast!" he yelled.

And the silken balloon in my gut swelled up and pressed on my lungs. I lay in bed that night. It was still raining. Dad didn't come home. Half the men and women on Long Moor Lane didn't come home - except Mick's dad. But no one would have recognised him because he came home looking and walking like Mick's grandad, and he never went out again for a week.

The rest of Long Moor Lane was occupying Stone Cross. For all the good it did.

That was the night Chunder came to live with us. Nothing official. He just moved in. He never moved out again. He brought no luggage, but over the next few weeks his bits and pieces found space in our house. As Number 3 emptied, Number 17 filled. If nothing else, it made Number 17 look more homely, and it made the house smell different.

It was pretty daft when you think about it - Chunder and Dad both paying rent and living next to each other.

All Chunder said was, "Looks like tha dad won't be in this night. Best I stay wi' thee, lad."

"Aye. Best you stay, Chunder," I said, because I could tell that he didn't want to be by himself. I made him a bacon butty and he went round the off-licence for a couple of cans, and then we watched the news.

Seven hundred jobs to go in the textile industry.

Picture of Stone Cross chimney, red and towering like a cathedral against a blue sky.

That's too much for Chunder. "They've known all along!" he yells. "That picture were never taken this month! That's summer, that is! Some blighter's known since last flaming summer!"

Last summer, when Fred Dibnah climbed his ladders to the top and scared the kestrels off their nest, making them scream, "Kree-kree". It's there on the screen, and Chunder's yelling in this chopped up voice like someone's hitting him in the throat.

"Grandad! Chunder!" I yell back, though he's sitting right beside me. "Don't be daft. That's the picture they took when Fred Dibnah was doing the repointing job. It must have been the only picture they had."

Chunder settles down a bit then. "Oh," he said. "Oh aye. Bloody good job he made of it an' all. Grand job. Champion job. Watched him put linseed in the mortar . . . Champion job . . . It'll last another hundred years that mortar int' chimney."

If I said Chunder was crying then I'd be lying to you. But he was crying in a way. Not with tears in his eyes, but just like splinters of bone were stuck in his throat.

"Best flaming steeplejack this side of the Pennines, is Fred," said Chunder.

I switched off the telly.

On the news it wasn't real. But when the screen went grey and blank, then it was real. Stone Cross Mill was closing. Dad and Chunder were being made redundant. There's no more jobs in Haverston to go to. First they closed down Hallingfords, then the biscuit factory, then the brewery, then Haverston Rubber Company and Langley's . . .

I don't know why, but Chunder and me went and sat on the stairs in the dark and the cold. Perhaps it was to get away from the telly. We sat very silent, with the smell of the beer and the house and the coal smoke blowing back down the chimney, and the patter of rain against the front door. And that feeling, like a silky blue flame, burning very slowly, was still there.

BILLY

Can you guess??

1. How old are Mick and Billy?
2. How old is Chunder?
3. List three things that Billy would enjoy doing and be good at
 - (a)
 - (b)
 - (c)
4. List three things that Billy would not enjoy doing and be bad at.
 - (a)
 - (b)
 - (c)
5. What does Chunder think of Billy?
6. What would Billy's teachers at school think of him?
7. What are Billy's ambitions?
8. How do you know all these things about Billy?

TALKING PROPERLY

Read through the passages again, carefully. In the first column, make a list of 10 expressions or words that Billy Chunder and Mick use which you might call not 'proper' English.

In the second column, translate these words or expressions into 'proper' English.

BILLY, CHUNDER AND MICK'S DIALECT	PROPER ENGLISH

FOUR VERSIONS

Look at an example from the early part of the play. A messenger has come on stage to tell the King about a battle against some rebels. He wants to tell him how brave and valiant Macbeth has been in killing the rebel leader, MacDonald.

Here is a clear and simple version of what the messenger said:

1

Macbeth deserves to be called brave. He ignored all danger and went right across the battle field using his sword to kill anyone who got in his way. When he faced MacDonald he immediately killed him by cutting him in half with a single stroke, and cut off his head to put up on the castle wall.

Now, that tells the story. Most people who can read English would understand what happened. But there is a lot missing. You do not have to be an Elizabethan poet to improve the way that story has been told.

Here is how a West Indian living in Britain might tell a similar story:

2

*Bredderin, lemme tell you
Macbeth him dread.
Him a real stiksman. Terrifyin dem Babylon rebels
He gotta a blade an' 'im use it.
Stabbin an slashin' all aroun im,
No one can deflec de man, him mek a way tru de
rebel skank
He give dis MacDonald heavy liks
Lik 'im an lash im
an stab im
an kill im
Slash im belly from side to side
Carve off im head and stick in an him wall.
Dread warrior, righteous sticksman.*

And here is the way a Cockney Londoner might tell the story:

3

*Don't talk to me abaht MacBeth.
Wot a punter. Wot a performer.
He's yer akshul Ghengis Kahn on wheels.
I mean, this MacDonald, right sheister and no
mistake.
Never stood a prayer, did he?
Macbeth's well tooled up. Lovely blade an' 'andy
wiv it.
Seen the guts of more rebel oppos than you've 'ad
hot dinners. Straight over there. No messin. Pins
this MacDonald, no bouver.
Slits 'im from ear to ear an' back again.
Then, you can see he's got style, then he off's wiv
his head and ups it on to the bleedin' parapet.
Well, I mean,
You gotta hand it to 'im.
A stylish punter wouln't you say guvnor?*

What makes these versions different to the straight-forward description? You could call it the difference between poetry and plain writing.

If you aren't familiar with the Jamaican or Cockney dialect you might find it difficult to understand at first, but both versions have added a lot to the original. They make it *sound* better and *say* more.

Now look at how Shakespeare has dealt with the same scene:

4

For brave Macbeth - well he deserves that name -
Disdaining Fortune, with his brandish'd steel
Which smok'd with bloody execution,
Like valour's minion, carv'd out his passage
Till he fac'd the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him,
Till he unseam'd him from the nave to th' chaps,
And fix'd his head upon our battlements.

1.2.16

Remember that Shakespeare wrote that to be spoken out loud. Try reading it out loud. You should see what it means to *sound better*, especially if you then read version A. again. Which version leaves you with the most vivid picture in your mind?

It might help you to feel more familiar with Shakespeare's language if you did a similar exercise.

Here is a piece of Shakespeare's writing from later on in Macbeth. Lennox is describing the strange things that happened the night a murder was committed:

Lennox

The night has been unruly. Where we lay,
Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' th' air, strange screams of death
And prophesying, with accents terrible,
Of dire combustion and confus'd events
New hatch'd to th' woeful time; the obscure bird
Clamour'd the livelong night. Some say the earth
Was feverous and did shake.

2.3.56

First: try to write a plain version of this speech. Just include the facts and nothing else.

Now try to write a version in a modern dialect you are familiar with.



HOW & WHAT

Language does a lot of different jobs: what you say and how you say it can depend very much on *who* you're talking to (and *when* and *where* you're doing the talking). Just think of all the different ways you speak to different people in one day: even the way you say hello changes depending on who you're saying it to.

Here's an account of an incident at school - these are just the bare bones of what happened:



Trouble in the playground during morning break on Thursday. Three first years playing about with a tennis ball. The ball hit a fourth year on the back of the neck. There was some shouting and pushing. The first year ended up on the floor. Older brother, fifth year, came along. More shouting and pushing. Caretaker saw this from window. Deputy head broke up. Discussion in her office. Fourth year sent home after this discussion.

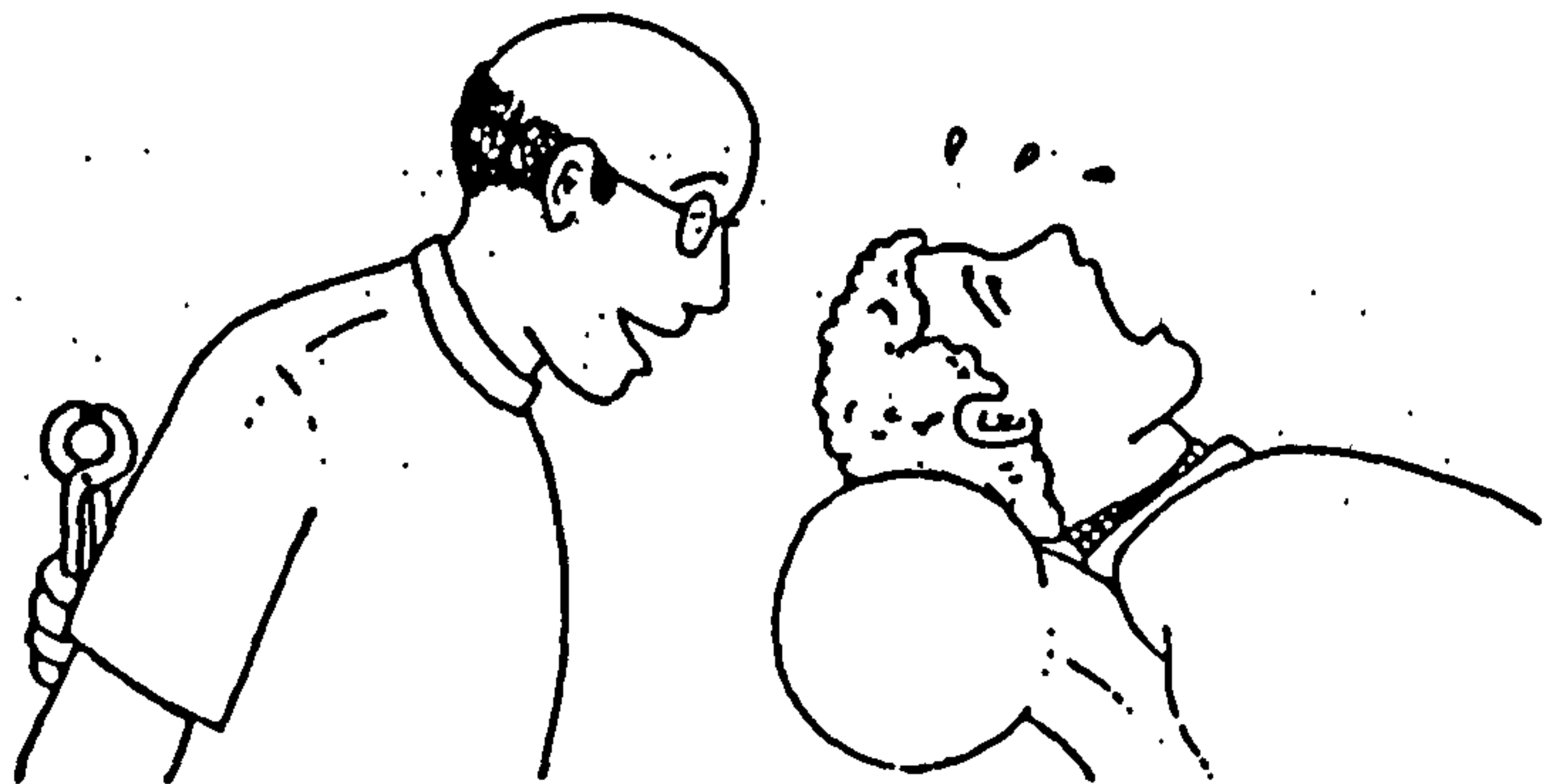
Working with someone else, make up the conversations about the incident that might take place between the following pairs of people. How would they speak to each other and what would they say about the incident?

- the deputy head and the 4th year in her office;
- the 4th year and mother at home;
- the 1st year and someone in the same class (they are not friends);
- the deputy head to the 4th year's tutor;
- the caretaker to his wife (who doesn't like children);
- the 1st year's older brother to his girlfriend;
- the fathers of the two pupils (they work together);
- the 4th year's father to the deputy head the next day;
- local newspaper reporter (who's heard about it) to the deputy head (on the phone).

Say What You Think

NOW try one of these conversations. Write down what the people would say, but also put down in brackets what they are *thinking but not saying*.

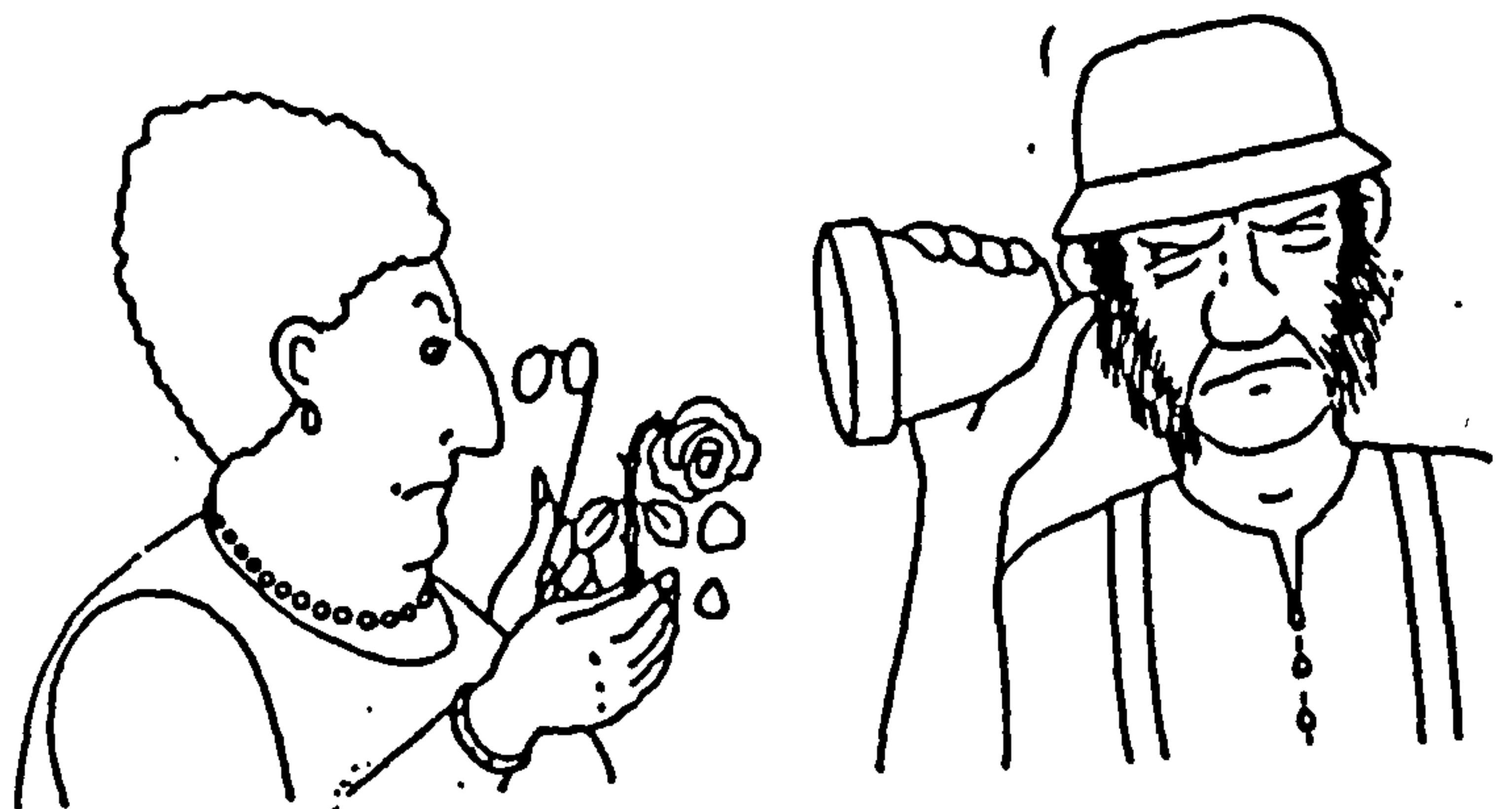
- a dentist and a nervous patient: the dentist is going to remove a tooth but the patient doesn't know it yet.



- a man climbing out of a kitchen window and a policeman: it's his first night out on the beat alone and his radio has gone dead.



- a rich lady and her slightly deaf gardener: he has sprayed the roses with weedkiller.



IN YOUR OWN WORDS

This form can be used as a way of recording who you speak to on one day, and what language you choose to speak in. You can fill it in at the end of the day, or as you go along. The results will be used in your English lesson.

NAME/POSITION OF THE PERSON YOU SPOKE TO	TOPIC(S) OF YOUR CONVERSATION	THE LANGUAGE YOU CHOSE TO USE e.g. STANDARD ENGLISH/DIALECT/SLANG, AND WHY YOU CHOSE THIS FORM OR LANGUAGE

SHOULD WE ALTER THE WAY WE SPEAK?

	TRUE	NOT TRUE	MAYBE
<p>(1) STANDARD ENGLISH IS THE BEST WAY TO SPEAK</p> <p>What do you think?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>(2) THE WAY YOU CHOOSE TO SPEAK IS BEST FOR YOU. IT DIFFERS ACCORDING TO THE PEOPLE YOU ARE TALKING TO.</p> <p>What do you think?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>(3) EVERYONE SHOULD SPEAK STANDARD ENGLISH THAN THEIR OWN DIALECT SO THAT EVERYONE WILL BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER.</p> <p>What do you think?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>(4) YOU CAN OFTEN SAY WHAT YOU MEAN MORE CLEARLY AND FULLY WHEN SPEAKING IN YOUR OWN DIALECT. OTHER PEOPLE WILL SOON 'TUNE IN' AND UNDERSTAND YOU.</p> <p>What do you think?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>(5) PEOPLE WILL MAKE JUDGEMENTS ABOUT YOUR CHARACTER, INTELLIGENCE AND PERSONALITY BY TYHE WAY YOU SPEAK. IF YOU SPEAK STANDARD ENGLISH YOU WILL IMPRESS THEM.</p> <p>What do you think?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>(6) YOUR OWN DIALECT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU. YOU INHERIT IT FROM YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS. IF EVERYONE SPOKE THE SAME WAY IT WOULD BE VERY BORING.</p> <p>What do you think?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix b

Dear.....

May I thank you in advance for allowing me to conduct some research in your classroom. This will involve my observation of one of your lessons and a short interview. I would also be very grateful if you would allow me to look at some pupils' books so that I can get a wider picture of the work that they are doing with you.

As you know, the subject of English seems to be constantly at the centre of fierce debate. One voice which is heard only rarely in all the discussion in the newspapers etc. is that of the practicing classroom teacher, and it is your views and ideas which I am interested in hearing.

The interview, which will take place after I have observed your lesson, will seek to explore what you hold to be important in the teaching of English. Starting from a discussion of the lesson which I have seen we will then move on to the question of what you believe to be important in your work as a teacher of English and how you explain your practice to 'interested others' (e.g. parents). Finally I am interested in exploring what have been significant influences upon you as a teacher of English. The interview will last about twenty minutes.

I will be in school on Wednesday 15th March to answer any questions that you might have about the project.

May I thank you in advance for your willingness to let me work with you in your lessons and for your generous allowance of time for the interview.

With best wishes

Bibliography

- Abbs, P. (1976) Root and Blossom , Heinmann, London
- Allen, D. (1980) English Teaching Since 1980. How Much Growth?, Heinmann, London
- Anderson, G. (1990) Fundamentals of Educational Research, Falmer, Basingstoke
- Andrews, A. (1997) 'Electronic English' in English in Education Vol. 31, No.2, pp.1 – 3
- Arnold, R. (1983) Timely Voices: English Teaching in The 1980s, Oxford University Press, Melbourne
- Arnot, M. and Weiner, G.(1987) Gender and the Politics of Schooling, Hutchinson, London
- Bald, C. (1998) 'The 'L' hour is power in The Times Educational Supplement, May 15th
- Baldick, C. (1983) The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848 - 1932 , Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Ball, S. et al. (1985) 'English for the English Since 1906' in Goodson, I. and Medway, P., Social Histories Of The Secondary Curriculum, The Falmer Press, London
- Ball, S. et al (1990) 'Literacy, Politics and the Teaching of English' in Goodson, I. and Medway,P., Bringing English To Order, The Falmer Press, London
- Ball, S. (1991) 'Power, Conflict, Micropolitics And All That!' in Walford, G., Doing Educational Research, Routledge, London

- Bantock, G.H. (1963) Education in an Industrial Society, Faber and Faber, London
- Barnes, D. and Britton, J. (1971) Language, the Learner and the School, Penguin, Harmondsworth
- Barnes, D. (1976) From Communication To Curriculum, Penguin, London
- Barnes, D. and Todd, F. (1977) Communication and Learning in Small Groups, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London
- Barnes, D and D. (1983) 'Cherishing Private Souls? Writing in fifth year classes' in Arnold, R., Timely Voices: English Teaching in the 1980s, Oxford University Press, Melbourne
- Bazalgette, C. (1994) Report of the Commission of Inquiry into English, BFI publishing, London
- Belsey, C. (1982) 'Re-reading the great tradition' in Widdowson, P., Re-Reading English, Methuen, London
- Bell, J. (1987) Doing Your Research Project, Open University Press, Milton Keynes
- Benton, P. (1996) 'Children's reading and viewing in the nineties' in Davies, C. (1996), What Is English Teaching, Open University Press, Buckingham
- Bernstein, B. (1960) 'Language and Social Class' in British Journal of Sociology, Vol.11, pp. 271-276
- Brennon, G. (1999) 'Goosebumps books scare off all rivals' in The Times Educational Supplement, January 15th, 1999
- Boustead, M. (1989) 'Who Talks? (The Role of Girls in Mixed Sex Classrooms)' in English in Education, Vol.23, No.3, pp.41 - 52

- Bousted, M. (1992) 'Praising what is Lost: The Demise of Course-work in GCSE Literature' in The Use of English, Vol.44, No. 1, pp. 15 – 24
- Bousted, M. (1993) 'When Will They Ever Learn? The influence of the Centre for Policy Studies upon Government Education Policy' in English In Education , Vol 27, No. 3, pp. 33 – 41
- Bowe et.al. (1982) Reforming Education and Changing Schools:case studies in policy sociology, Routledge, London
- Britton, J. (1970) Language and Learning, Penguin, London
- Britton, J. (1977) 'The Nature of the Reader's Satisfaction' in The Meek et. al., The Cool Web, The Bodley Head, London
- Britton, J. (1982) Selected Essays of James Britton, (Ed. Gordon Pradl), Heinemann, London
- Britton, J. (1987) 'Vygotsky's contribution to pedagogical theory' in English in Education, Vol. 21, No.3, pp. 22 - 26
- Burgess, T. (1993) 'Literature, Literacy and History' in Changing English, Vol.1, No.1, pp.54 - 66
- Burgess, T. (1994) 'Towards and New Curriculum' in Changing English, Vol. 2, No. 1. pp. 44 - 54
- Burgess, T. (1996) 'A Different Angle, English teaching and its narratives' in Changing English, Vol. 3, No. 1 pp. 57 – 77
- Butler, M. (1993) 'Undermined from above' in The Times Educational Supplement, July 2nd 1993

- Cameron, D. (1995) Verbal Hygiene, Routledge, London
- Carter, R. (1993) 'Proper English: Language, Culture and Curriculum' in English in Education, Vol.27, No.3, pp.3 – 14
- Carvel, (1999) 'Blair relives school dilemma' in The Guardian, 20th January, 1999
- Cassidy, S. (1999) 'Secondary literacy hour to be introduced' in The Times Educational Supplement, 16th April
- Clarricoates, K. (1978) 'Dinosaurs in the Classroom' in Arnot, M and Weiner, G., Gender and The Politics of Schooling Hutchinson, London
- Clarke, U. (1994) 'Bringing English to Order: a personal account of the NCC English Evaluation Project' in English in Education, Vol. 28, No. 1, pp. 33 – 38
- Clarke, U. (1995) A Question Of Grammar: Reconstructing A Framework For Learning About Language In The English Curriculum (Unpublished paper given at the IFTE conference, New York, 1995)
- Cohen, L. and Manion, L. (1989) Research Methods in Education, Routledge, London
- Coles, J. (1994) 'Enough was Enough: The teachers' Boycott of National Curriculum Testing', in Changing English, Vol.1, no.2, pp.16 - 31
- Cope and Kalantzis (1993) The Powers of Literacy: a genre approach to teaching writing, Falmer, London
- Corcoran, B. and Evans, E.(1987) Readers, Texts, Teachers, The Open University Press, Buckingham

- Cox et al. (1992) 'Made Tongue Tied By Authority' New Orders for English? NATE, Sheffield, 1992
- Cox, B. (1995) Cox on The Battle For The English Curriculum
Hodder and Stoughton, London
- Davies, C. (1995) What is English Teaching?, Open University Press, Buckingham
- DES (1975) A Language for Life, HMSO, London
- DES (1988) Report Of The Committee Of Enquiry Into The Teaching Of The English Language, HMSO, London
- DES (1989) English for ages 5 to 16 (The Cox Report), HMSO, London
- DES (1990) English for ages 5 to 16, HMSO, London
- DFE (1993) Key Stage 3 English Anthology, HMSO, London
- DFE (1993) English for Ages 5 to 16, HMSO, London
- DFE (1993) National Curriculum Council Consultation Report, NCC, York
- DFEE (1998) The National Literacy Strategy, DFEE, London
- DFEE (1988) Teaching: High Status, High Standards, DFEE, London
- DFEE (1995) English in the National Curriculum, HMSO, London
- DFEE (1999) Teachers meeting the challenge of change, DFEE, London

- DFEE (1999) 'Blunkett Details New Curriculum Focused On Raising Educational Achievement For The Next Century' DFEE Press Release, London
- Dixon, J. (1967) Growth Through English, NATE, Reading
- Dixon, J. (1991) A Schooling in 'English', Open University Press, Buckingham
- Dollimore, T. and Sinfield, A. Political Shakespeare, Manchester University (1985) Press, Manchester
- Doughty, P. (1974) Language, 'English' And The Curriculum, Edward Arnold, London
- Doyle, B. (1982) 'The Hidden History of English Studies' in Widdowson, P., Re-Reading English, Methuen, London
- Eagleton, T. (1983) Literary Theory, Blackwell, Oxford
- Eggar, T. (1991) 'Correct Use of English is essential' in The Times Educational Supplement, 28th June
- Evans, E. (1987) 'Readers Recreating Texts' in Corcoran, B and Evans, E., Readers, Texts, Teachers, Open University Press, Milton Keynes
- Fidges, E. (1982) Sex and Subterfuge, Macmillan, London
- Flanders, N.A. (1970) Analysing Teacher Behavior, Addison Wesley, Reading, Massachusetts
- Flynn, E. (1983) 'Gender and Reading' in College English, Vol. 45, No.3, pp.

- Green, B. (1994) Post Curriculum Possibilities: English Teaching, Cultural Politics and the Post-Modern Turn unpublished paper prepared for the combined International Conference of The National Council for Teachers of English and the International Federation for the Teaching of English, New York, USA, July 7 – 14
- Green, B. (1995a) After the New English? Change and (Dis)continuity in English Teaching, unpublished paper prepared for the combined International Conference of The National Council for Teachers of English and the International Federation for the Teaching of English, New York, USA, July 7 – 14
- Green, B. (1995b) After the New English? Metaphors and Monsters, unpublished paper prepared for the International Conference of the National Council for Teachers of English and the International Federation for the Teaching of English, New York, USA, July 7 - 14
- Green, M. (1987) Broadening the Context, English and Cultural Studies, The English Association, John Murray, London
- Goodson, I. and Medway, P. (1990) Bringing English To Order, The Falmer Press, London
- Goodwyn, A. (1992) 'English Teachers and the Cox Models' in English in Education, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp. 4 – 10
- Gurrey, P. (1958) Teaching the Mother Tongue in Secondary Schools, Longman, London
- Hackett, G. (1998) 'Blunkett regrets teachers' gloom' in The Times Educational Supplement, May 1st
- Hardman, F. and Williamson, J. (1993) 'Student Teachers and Models of English' in Journal of Education for Teaching, Vol. 19, No. 3, 1993, pp. 279 – 292

- Hofkins, D. (1994) 'Inspectors pick holes in reading lists' in The Times Educational Supplement, August 12, p.5
- Holbrook, D. (1961) English for Maturity, Cambridge University Press, London
- Holbrook, D. (1964) English for the Rejected, Cambridge University Press, London
- Holbrook, D. (1979) English for Meaning , NFER, Berkshire
- Holbrook, D. (1984) 'The Real Discipline' English Going On At Cambridge' in The Use of English, Spring 1984, pp. 3 – 10
- Howe, A. (1988) Expanding Horizons, NATE, Sheffield
- Howker, J. (1976) The Nature of the Beast, Lions Teentracks, London
- Hull, R. (1985) The Language Gap. How Classroom Dialogue Fails, Methuen, London
- Hunter, I. (1988) Culture and Government, Macmillan, London
- Huxley, L. (1912) Thoughts on Education, Smith, Elder and Co, London
- Hymes, D. (1971) On Communicative Competence, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia
- Inglis, F. (1969) Englishness of English Teaching, Longmans, Green and Co., London
- Jones, K. (ed) (1992) English and the National Curriculum, Kogan Page, London

- Jones, K. (1994) 'Cultural Problems of Conservatism' in Changing English, Vol.1, No. 2, pp. 2 - 15
- Jones, K. (1996) 'Rhetorical Hope and Little Faith' in The English and Media Magazine, No. 34, pp. 7 - 8
- Keddie, N. (1971) 'Classroom Knowledge' in Young, M.D. Knowledge and Control. New Directions for the Sociology of Education, Collier Macmillan, London
- Knight, R. (1985) 'Cosmopolitan English' in The Use of English, Autumn, 1985, pp. 7 - 13
- Knight, R. (1996) Valuing English, Reflections on the National Curriculum, David Fulton Publishers, London
- Kress (1992) Writing the Future, NATE, Sheffield
- Kress, G. and Knapp, P. (1993) 'Genre in a social theory of language' in English in Education, Vol. 26, No. 2, pp.4 - 15
- Kress, G. (1995) Writing the Future English and the making of a culture of innovation, NATE, Sheffield
- Lawlor, S. (1988) Correct Core: Simple Curricula for English, Maths and Science Centre for Policy Studies, London
- Leavis, F.R. (1962) The Great Tradition, Penguin, London
- Leavis, F.R. (1968) 'Judgement and Analysis' in A Selection From Scrutiny, Cambridge University Press, London, Vol. 1
- Leavis, F.R. and Thompson, D. (1933) Culture and Environment, Chatto & Windus, London

- Lees, S. (1987) 'The structure of sexual relations in school' in Arnot, M. and Weiner, G. Gender and the Politics of Schooling, Hutchinson, London
- Letwin, O. (1988) Aims of Schooling, Centre for Policy Studies, London
- McArthur, T. (1993) 'Language used as a loaded gun' in The Guardian Education, 20 April, p.3
- Mackillop, I. (1995) F.R.Leavis – A Life in Criticism, Allen Lane, London
- Marenbon, J. (1987) English Our English, Centre for Policy Studies, London
- Marenbon, J. (1993) 'Much Ado About Nothing' in Education Guardian, 19 January, 1993
- Martin, N. et al. (1976) Understanding Children Talking, Penguin, Harmondsworth
- Matthiesson, M. (1975) The Preachers of Culture, Unwin, London
- Measor, L. and Woods, P. (1991) 'Breakthroughs and Blockages in Ethno-graphic Research' in Walford, G., Doing Educational Research, Routledge, London
- Medway, P. (1990) 'Into the Sixties: English and English Society at a Time of Change' in Goodson, I. and Medway, P., Bringing English To Order, The Falmer Press, London
- Meek, M. et al. (1977) The Cool Web, The Bodley Head, London
- Mulhearn, F. (1979) The Moment of Scrutiny, New Left Books, London

- Naidoo, B. (1994) 'The Territory of Literature: Defining the Coastline' in English in Education, Vol.28, No.1, pp39-44.
- NCC, (1992) National Curriculum English: The Case For Revising The Order, NCC, York
- NEA, (1991) English/English Literature (Dual Certification)
- Newbolt, H. (1921) The Teaching of English in England, HMSO, London
- Norman, K. et. al. (1992) Thinking Voices, Hodder and Stoughton, London
- Pascall, D. (1993) 'English with standards', in The Times, 8th March
- Patton, M.Q. (1980) Qualitative Evaluation Methods, Sage, California
- Peel, R. and Hargreaves, S. (1995) 'Beliefs about English: Trends in Australia, England and the United States' in English in Education, Vol. 29, No.3, pp.38 – 49
- Pollard, S. (1999) 'Blunkett is not the PM's Creature' in The Times Educational Supplement, 8th January, 1999
- Portheus, J. and Towle, N. (1992) 'English at Work' in English in Education, Vol.26, No.3, pp.31 – 35
- Praedl, G. (1982) Selected Essays of James Britton, Boynton Cook Publishers, New Jersey
- Protherough, R. and King, P. (1995) The Challenge of English in the National Curriculum, Routledge, London
- QCA. (1998) The Grammar Papers, QCA Publications, Hayes, Middlesex

- Rae, J. (1982) The Observer, 7th June
- Rafferty, F. (1997) 'Right Heaps Praise on Labour', in The Times Educational Supplement, 31st October
- Reid, W.A. (1984) 'Curriculum topics as institutional categories: implications for theory and research in the history and sociology of school subjects' in Goodson, I.F and Ball, S.J.(1984) Defining the Curriculum: History and Ethnography, Falmer Press, Lewes
- Reid, J.A. et al. (1989) Small Group Learning In The Classroom, Chalkface Press, Australia
- Richards, I.A. (1929) Practical Criticism, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London
- Riley, J. (1990) Getting the most from your data, Technical and Educational Services Ltd., Bristol
- Rosen, H. (1971) 'Towards a Language Policy Across the Curriculum' in Britton, J. et.al. Language, the Learner and the School, Penguin, London
- Sampson, G. (1921) English for the English, Cambridge, London
- Sassure, F. (1967) Cours de linguistique Generale Payot, Paris
- SCAA (1994) English in the National Curriculum – Draft Proposals, HMSO, London
- Scruton, R. (1994) Evidence presented to the Commission of Inquiry into English in Report of the Commission of Enquiry into English, Bazalgette, C. (Ed.), 1994, BFI publishing, London

- Sefton-Green, J. (1996) 'English and the Futures Market' in The English and Media Magazine, No. 34
- Self, D. (1976) Talk: a practical guide to oral work in the secondary school, Ward Lock Educational, London
- Showalter, E. (1978) A Literature Of Their Own, Virago, London
- Spender, D. (1980) Man Made Language, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London
- Spender, D. (1982) Invisible Women, The Schooling Scandal, Writers and Readers Publishing Co-operative Society Ltd.
- Stannard, R. (1996) 'Texts, Language, Literacy and Digital Technologies' in The English and Media Magazine, No. 34
- Stanworth, M. (1983) Gender and Schooling, Hutchinson
- Straker, A. (1999) in Thornton, K. Maths sets are bad for infants says adviser, The Times Educational Supplement, April 16th 1999
- Sukhnandan, L. (1998) Streaming, setting and grouping by ability, NFER, Slough
- Swann, J. and Graddol, D. (1988) 'Gender Inequalities in Classroom Talk' in English in Education, Vol. 22, No. 1, pp.48 - 65
- Swann, J. (1992) Girls, Boys and Language, Blackwell, Oxford
- Tomlinson, D. (1994) 'Errors in the Research into the Effectiveness of Grammar Teaching' in English in Education, Vol.28, No.1, pp.20 – 26

- Volosinov (1929, translated 1973) Marxism and the Philosophy of Language, Seminar Press
- Vulliamy, G. and Webb, R. (1992) Teacher Research and Special Educational Needs, David Fulton Publishers, London
- Vulliamy, G. and Webb, R. (1993) 'Progressive Education and the National Curriculum: findings from a global education research project' in Educational Review, Vol. 45, No. 1, pp. 21 - 41
- Vulliamy, G. and Webb, R. (1994) Education in Communist and Post-communist Poland: A Comparative Research Study, Qualitative Research Papers in Education 94/03, Department of Educational Studies, University of York
- Vygotsky, L. (1978) Mind In Society, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachussets
- Vygotsky, L. (1986) Thought and Language, The M.I.T. Press
- Walford, G. (1991) 'Researching The City Technology College, Kingshurst' in Walford, G. Doing Educational Research, Routledge
- Walford, G. (1991) Doing Educational Research, Routledge
- Webster, L. (1995) The Relationship Between Talking and Writing, unpublished paper
- Whitehead, F. (1966) The Disappearing Dais, Chatto and Windus, London
- Widdowson, P (1982) Re-Reading English, Methuen, London
- Wilkinson, A. (1965) 'Spoken English' in The Education Review, Vol.17, No.2

- Wilkinson, A. (1971) The Foundations of Language, Oxford University Press
- Williams, R. (1958) Culture and Society, Penguin
- Williamson, J. and Hardman, F. (1994) 'Abridged Too Far: evidence from teachers against the case for revising the Cox curriculum' in Educational Review Vol. 46, No 3, pp. 1 – 18
- Woodhead, C. (1995) 'Teach our teachers a lesson' in The Times, 26th January
- Young, M.D. (1971) Knowledge and Control. New Directions for the Sociology of Education, Collier Macmillan, London