EVALUATING AN ENGLISH DEPARTMENT:

THE USE OF ILLUMINATIVE EVALUATION PROCEDURES IN DESCRIPTIVE AND DIAGNOSTIC ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH TEACHING PROGRAMMES IN HIGH SCHOOLS

THESIS

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ABSTRACT

To evaluate what is actually happening within a High School subject curriculum, the annual parade of marks, percentages and symbol distributions is not by itself adequate, especially in assessing progress towards such English syllabus goals as:

> That pupils expand their experience of life, gain empathetic understanding of people and develop moral awareness. (3.1.4 HG)

How too, from examination results alone, can a subject head of English assess the success of his objective "to woo pupils into the reading habit"? (School 1: Goals 1988)

Decisions on English department policy and procedures are frequently based on personal hunches and examination results. Few subject departments engage in proper evaluations of their curricula to support decisions made, or to impart meaning upon the countless daily transactions between child and adult, individual and institution in the learning process.

This study demonstrates the efficacy of 'illuminative evaluation' techniques in opening out an educational innovation (1986 First Language English syllabi of the Cape Education Department) at two High Schools for comment and appraisal. The array of information gathered should be useful in planning and implementing further curricula initiatives.

The inherent flexibility of illuminative evaluation procedures and their freedom from large-scale data base requirements needed for 'scientific' models of evaluation are advantageous in investigating the untidy complexities of English teaching.

Both 'closed' and 'open' response questionnaires, interviews, and perusal of relevant documents informed the researcher of the views of pupils, parents, English teachers, other subject heads, the two school principals and the education authorities on what was and ought to be happening in English classes.

From the considerable array of information generated, the distress of conscientious English teachers facing unreasonable work-loads emerged clearly. Such teachers are likely to occupy key roles in the non-racial state schools of the future and cannot be regarded as expendable.

'Open schools' present new challenges to existing curricula and the position of English may prove to be critical. Thus it is submitted that English subject heads should be concerned with evaluating their departments so that informed decisions can be taken on future directions. Illuminative evaluation is demonstrably useful in such analyses.

CHAPTER ONE

EVALUATING AN ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

1.1 MOTIVATION

"If we do not know where we are, we cannot plan where to go". This slogan was coined for the preamble to Questionnaire 2 (Appendix 8.3.3, p.156), which was forwarded to the English teachers in the survey.

It is submitted that end-of-year examination results cannot alone tell English teachers 'where they are'; that pupils' results are inadequate in evaluating the complexities of English teaching within what Parlett and Hamilton (1972) have termed the "learning milieu".

It is further submitted that the imperfect information apparent from examination symbol distributions is often used to justify hunches, hopes, current fads, pet irritations and individual crusades upon which programmes for the following year in English are all too often based. Few subject departments engage in anything but the most superficial research in evaluating their programmes from year to year, which leads in turn to a parade of circular arguments and little (if any) innovation.

That examination results are part of the total picture is beyond dispute, but, upon the canvas of English teaching, they are no more than individual brush strokes. The motivation of this survey is to illustrate the efficacy of a research mechanism ('illuminative evaluation') in discovering:

1. factors influencing an English programme;
2. the nature of the learning taking place;
3. the attitudes of the teachers presenting the programme;
4. the attitudes of the executive staff at the school, other teachers not involved in the English department, and parents towards the English programme presented.

The aim is to generate information useful in planning the future development of the English programme. Thus, ultimately, the evaluation aims to be diagnostic, 'illuminating' matters of interest for the architects of the English curriculum at the school.

Further, it is felt that programme planners need to be able to test what is actually happening against the Goals of the syllabi and the local objectives that they have set for their English Departments.

It must be stressed that it is the "efficacy of a research mechanism" that is being illustrated in this survey. Though few subject heads would have the time or the resources to undertake a survey of this size and scope, the approach can be used on smaller samples and within narrower parameters to generate useful information. This was shown clearly during the 'pilot study' run at School 1 in 1986.

Furthermore, the potential of this approach for evaluation of any subject department (not merely English) should be noted.

In 1986, the Cape Education Department (CED) implemented two new English First Language syllabi: the Junior Secondary Course and the Senior Secondary Course. Those in Std 8 at the time wrote the first Senior Certificate examinations on the new (Senior) syllabus in 1988. It was felt that the year 1988 was a suitable time to study the syllabi "innovations" (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972) in order to reflect the views of the pioneering Std 10 group. Accordingly, most of the data was collected in September of that year.

1.2 THE HYPOTHESIS

It can be argued that a subject curriculum presented at any CED High School is affected by six typical groups of factors: the Cape Education Department, the school executive, the parents (School Management Council, PTA, and individuals), the pupils, the subject teachers, and other teaching staff. The diagram below attempts to illustrate this and lists some of the influences that each group brings to bear upon the English programme:

CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Syllabi.
Senior Certificate exam.
Prescribed texts.
'Approved' textbooks.
Notices and circulars.
Study Group reports.
Superintendents/Advisors.
'Panel' visits/inspections.
Teachers' Centre activities.
Teacher conditioning.
Educational policy.
Provision of equipment.
Selection of senior staff.

PUPILS

Cultural background.
Peer group pressure.
Previous experiences.
Response to 'learning milieu'.
Ambitions, attitudes, priorities.
Extra-mural interests.
Literacy level.
Talents.

ENGLISH STAFF

Motivation and interest.
Work load.
Response to course guides.
Implementation of aims/policy.
Response to pupils.
Team co-operation.
Ambition and morale.
Response to leadership.

T H E

E N G L I S H

P R O G R A M M E

SCHOOL EXECUTIVE

Staff appointments.
Timetabling.
Allocation/loading of staff.
Extra-mural duties of staff.
Size and mix of classes.
Assessment policies/procedures.
School priorities.
Policy, e.g. sport, cultural.
Facilities and resources.
Budget allocations.
Library.
Staff evaluation/recognition.
Hidden agendas/curricula.
Leadership styles.
General morale.

PARENTS

Cultural background.
Value systems.
Ambitions for child.
Home environment.
Involvement/caring.
Priorities and anxieties.

OTHER TEACHERS

Attitudes to English.
Support in own classes.
Co-operation.
Cross-curricula initiatives.
Knowledge of English.

All six groups of factors form a freely flowing continuum of influences on the 'learning milieu'. For instance, it is obvious that 'motivation and interest' of the English staff is directly influenced by the leadership, practices and decisions of the school executive, parent bodies, other teaching departments in the school, and, most particularly, the policies of the CED.

Within this context, the hypothesis is that the technique of curriculum evaluation known as 'illuminative evaluation' provides an effective instrument with which to probe into the 'learning milieu' of a High School English department, uncovering, in the process, information of interest and use to the school concerned. The survey illustrates procedures of evaluation that, it is submitted, are flexible, sympathetic and non-disruptive, whilst providing useful data on a broad range of topics including that of goal-achievement.

1.3 ILLUMINATIVE EVALUATION

The concept of 'curriculum evaluation'

Educational debate this century has moved, it might be said, on two basic fronts: whether education can be construed as a science (the 'objectivist' perspective), or whether its nature is more phenomenological (the 'subjectivist' perspective). Which philosophical position the researcher adopts will govern his methodology. Within the general dichotomy, the 'nomothetic' procedure attempts to discover general laws to explain educational situations ('scientific'), whereas the 'idiographic' approach focuses on the particular and the individual in trying to make sense of human behaviour. From this in turn come analyses which tend to be 'quantitative' in the first case, or 'qualitative' in the second. The researcher is then categorised as having erected a 'product' model or a 'process' model.

Clearly then educational definitions vary according to which cause is being supported and defining the 'curriculum', in particular, has led to heated debate. Within all this there is much room for hybrids and compromises - and for some common sense.

On the topic of 'curriculum', the camps have been divided into definitions of "intention" or "reality":

> On the one hand, the curriculum is seen as an intention, plan, or prescription ... On the other it is seen as the existing state of affairs in schools, what does in fact happen.
>
> (Stenhouse, 1975, p.2)

The compromise which Stenhouse suggests seems adequate for this discussion:

> A curriculum is an attempt to communicate the essential principles and features of an educational proposal in such a form that it is open to critical scrutiny and capable of effective translation into practice. (1975, p.4)

Thus, the written syllabus of the CED is not purely the curriculum. The 'translation' of this through the English department work scheme and into the actual episodes of each day in each classroom is just as much part of the curriculum.

In similar vein, defining 'evaluation' is traditionally influenced by the polarities of the objectivist/subjectivist debate. Bloom (1970) sees evaluation as a question of measurement:

> Evaluation is concerned with securing evidence on the attainment of specific objectives of instruction.
>
> (quoted by Stenhouse, 1975, p.100)

This tidy definition has been disputed by those evaluators who see their task

primarily as gathering information upon which programme designers can make decisions. Barry MacDonald (1973), evaluator of the Humanities Curriculum Project of the 1970s in Britain, defined his purpose in terms more sympathetic to the concerns of this survey:

> Evaluation is the process of conceiving, obtaining and communicating information for the guidance of educational decision-making with regard to a specified programme.

He goes on to comment:

> It is not implied that this concept of evaluation, or the activities referred to within it, are value-free. This cannot be. But what is implied is that the evaluator aspires to be a reliable and credible source, accessible to the judgement of all those who seek information about the programme.
>
> (both quoted by Stenhouse, 1975, p.112)

Evaluation and the scientific model

The essence of the modern scientific method has its origins in the 'inductive reasoning' process described by Francis Bacon in the seventeenth century: the study of a quantity of individual cases leads to a hypothesis and ultimately to a generalisation. Implicit in this are the requirements of systematic and objective observation, a quantitative appraisal of the phenomena, the generation of a theory (hypothesis) that can be tested on other similar phenomena, and, eventually, a new and generalisable hypothesis which can be stated as having been proven and thus can assume the status of a law.

As this concept evolved, it became accepted that the entire process of scientific research should be open to public scrutiny and, to attain full respectability, the research should be capable of replication in defined but different situations. Science is concerned with explanation, hence the insistence upon hypotheses, theories, laws and the cardinal condition of generalisable results from observation and measurement of individual situations. Throughout, the concept of 'objectivity' is paramount. The researcher is essentially an 'outside' observer who measures the situation, isolates variables, measures those and then develops experiments to test his hypothesis in similar situations. An example of this would be the ideal of a 'pre-test' and 'post-test' sampling, or the establishment of an 'experimental' and a 'control' group.

When psychology split from philosophy in the nineteenth century, the concept of the 'social sciences' rapidly came into being. The emerging disciplines of psychology and sociology sought respectability for their explanations of human behaviour in associating themselves with the 'scientific method'. Cohen and Manion (1985) quote the

basic suppositions of the social scientist as enumerated by the sociologist, Giddens, in 1975:

> 1. that the methodological procedures of natural science may be directly applied to the social sciences.
>
> 2. that the end-product of investigations by the social scientist can be formulated in terms parallel to those of natural science. This means that his analysis must be expressed in 'laws' or 'law-like' generalisations of the same kind that have been established in relation to natural phenomena. (p.12)

The issue is whether educational situations can be studied scientifically, whether in fact education belongs to the 'social sciences'. This is the hub of the debate mentioned on page 4. Before considering reactions against the 'scientific method' and the 'objectives model' of education (page 4), a brief description of the 'agricultural-botanical' paradigm may serve to summarise the starting point of the 'illuminative evaluators'.

David Hamilton (1976) points out that psychometric testing of individuals gained impetus during the First World War, when the US army was selecting recruits. These tests developed into IQ (intelligence) tests of potential ability and achievement tests "to measure scholastic performance" (p.12).

This type of mental testing provided but one tool for the curriculum evaluator, who, in terms of the 'scientific method', also needed to conduct experiments in the field. In this area, during the 1930s, attention was given to the methods used by agricultural botanists to examine the productivity of various seed strains. A horticultural bed was divided into small plots, into each of which a varietal strain of seed was introduced. As with the controlled laboratory conditions of a chemist, the botanist could manipulate variables (fertilisers, irrigation) over the whole bed to find which seed was the most productive. Assessment was easy as the resultant crop yield could simply be weighed. If students could be equated with crops and their 'yield' in a given experimental situation be measured by tests, then the 'scientific method' could be applied to curriculum evaluation.

Malcolm Parlett and David Hamilton (1972) summarise this approach:

> Students - rather like plant crops - are given pre-tests (the seedlings are weighed or measured) and then submitted to different experiences (treatment conditions). Subsequently, after a period of time, their attainment (growth or yield) is measured to indicate the relative efficiency of the methods (fertilisers) used.

Thus, this type of evaluation judges the effectiveness of a programme by comparing its results to pre-specified goals:

> Studies of this kind are designed to yield data of one particular type, i.e. 'objective' numerical data that permit statistical analyses. Isolated variables like IQ, social class, test scores, personality profiles and attitude ratings are codified and processed to indicate the efficiency of new curricula, media or methods.
>
> (both quoted by Parlett and Dearden, 1977, p.11)

The focus of this type of evaluation is upon educational 'products', usually seen in the manifestation of pre-determined and specific behaviour. The reaction to this is to be found in what are called 'process' models, or 'new wave' models of evaluation (Stenhouse, 1975).

Evaluation and the 'new wave'

The 'scientific method' of investigating human behaviour is lodged within the philosophical tradition of 'logical positivism', a position scathingly attacked by the Danish existentialist, Søren Kierkegaard, and several others who felt that the scientific perspective of man "denigrates life and mind":

> The precise target ... has been science's mechanistic and reductionist view of nature which, by definition, excludes notions of choice, freedom, individuality, and moral responsibility.
>
> (Cohen and Manion, 1985, p.24)

Another strong critic of the notion of 'social sciences' is Ions (1977), who sees great dangers "when we quantify the process and interpret the human act." The result of statistical quantification and computation is "depersonalization" (Cohen and Manion, p.25).

Three further criticisms of the perspective of the 'social sciences' on man are summarised by Cohen and Manion (pp.26-7):

1. It presents man as conservative and restricted, because only that which is predictable, repetitive, invariant and visible to the outside observer is taken into account.

2. It does not recognise man's unique ability to interpret his experiences and to represent these to himself. Man is not a passive object to be studied. He constructs theories about himself and the world - and acts upon them.

3. The findings of "positivistic social science are often ... so banal and trivial that they are of little consequence to those for whom they are intended, namely, teachers, social workers, counsellors, personnel managers, and the like." In the words of Shipman (1972), the more the researcher puts into restricting, simplifying and controlling variables, the more likely he is to end up with a 'pruned, synthetic version of the whole, a constructed play of puppets in a restricted environment.'

In the same book, the authors describe the scientific paradigm as 'normative' and its polar opposite as 'interpretive' (pp.38-41). The normative approach begins with the

study of the collectivity of man, which is society and the social system. Through the use of complex research methodologies, a universal theory of human and social behaviour is devised. The interpretive researcher starts with the individual and takes seriously the individual's interpretations of the world around him. Interpreting the specific and trying to understand actions is his province.

'Interpretive' researchers in education argue that essentially education is not a scientific enterprise but a social and human one, that the aims of education are not merely to produce results ('products') but more so to produce what R S Peters (1967) would call an "educated person", one whose perceptions of reality and his ability to use his knowledge have transformed him. The attention of the evaluator must move from mere outcomes to careful consideration of 'process'.

So, at the beginning of the 1970s, what Stenhouse has called a 'new wave' of evaluators began itemising their objections to the scientific research tradition. Hamilton (1976) has tried to codify these:

1. The results obtained from 'objective' tests were not "unambiguous", nor "comprehensive". In fact, the research was often peripheral as it had to ignore the "idiosyncratic" so as to focus on what was more measurable.

2. Laboratory conditions ruled out any alterations within the programme during the period of study. The programme developer could not innovate, or adapt the programme, however urgently this was needed.

3. Much of the research was irrelevant to the needs of the practising teacher, who often wanted answers to questions considered mundane by the evaluator - questions which his hypothesis-based research usually could not answer.

4. The obsession with intended 'outcomes' meant that no heed was paid to unexpected consequences which arose and might influence the impact of the innovation.

5. The attempt to reach consensus among programme developers, sponsors, evaluators and teachers on aims, intended outcomes and criteria of evaluation was very difficult to achieve. The result often was a banal compromise, limiting aims, and disputed afterwards.

6. It became clear that the traditional model was not always suitable for evaluating such wide-ranging innovations as the Humanities Curriculum Project. What worked well with a science evaluation was not necessarily appropriate in a less specific subject.

(adapted from pp.35-7)

At the time, the seminal paper co-edited by Malcolm Parlett and David Hamilton 'Evaluation as Illumination: A New Approach to the Study of Innovatory Programmes' (1972) was published in Edinburgh and added a few further complaints to the list:

1. There is often a need for evaluation of a programme before it is introduced on a large scale. The traditional approach needs large-scale data-gathering and is therefore not much use in evaluating a programme before

it is developed fully.

2. The structures of scientific method impose artificial constraints on an educational situation: "... there is a tendency for the investigator to think in terms of 'parameters' and 'factors' rather than 'individuals' and 'institutions'. Again, this divorces the study from the real world."

3. An educational programme is dynamic and rarely does it exhibit no change during a period of study. This is contrary to the design of a traditional evaluation, which must, in a sense, 'freeze' its material in order to study it.

4. The scope of a traditional study is severely restricted by its methodology: "...the concentration on seeking quantitative information by objective means can lead to neglect of other data, perhaps more salient to the innovation, but which is disregarded as being 'subjective', 'anecdotal', or 'impressionistic'." That which is not typical is discarded from the data base, irrespective of its relevance to the individuals and institutions concerned.

(adapted from Parlett and Dearden, 1977, pp.12-13)

Reflecting ruefully that "An ounce of data, it seems, has been worth a pound of insight", a group of evaluators strove to move "beyond the numbers game" (Eisner, quoted by Taylor and Richards, 1985, p.136). Perhaps the first in this new field was the American evaluator, Robert Stake, who described evaluation as "portrayal" and essentially "responsive" in nature:

> An educational evaluation is a 'responsive evaluation' if it orients more directly to programme activities than to programme intents, if it responds to audience requirements for information, and if the different value-perspectives present are referred to in reporting the success of the programme.
>
> (Stake, 1972, quoted by Stenhouse, 1975, p.114)

His model, though still heavily reliant upon measurement data, drew attention to the many facets of evaluation, which he listed under two headings: "Intents" and "Observations". Data could then be gathered on "Antecedent Intents" and "Observed Antecedents"; "Intended Transactions" and "Observed Transactions"; and "Intended Outcomes" and "Observed Outcomes". The final act of the evaluator was to judge whether the programme was achieving its intents. The final report was to be guided by the need for "telling it as it is" in a form and style accessible to decision-makers rather than in the formal (and sometimes impregnable) jargon of traditional research reports.

In the meantime, across the Atlantic, Barry MacDonald (from 1970) was appointed Schools' Study Officer with the brief of evaluating the Humanities Curriculum Project (see page 5). He aspired to a 'holistic' style of evaluation, also aimed at decision-makers:

> His adoption of a holistic approach implied that the evaluation would not start from the assumption that certain data (such as pupil outcomes) were its area of

> concern, but would accept as potentially relevant all data concerning the project and its contexts.
>
> (Stenhouse, 1976, p.110)

MacDonald made use of both measurement techniques and case studies. The attempt to open out the 'whole' educational situation to examination, rather than to focus on outcomes or hypotheses, was motivated by his observation that:

> The impact of an innovation is not a set of discrete effects, but an organically related pattern of acts and consequences. To understand fully a single act one must locate it functionally within that pattern. It follows from this proposition that curriculum interventions have many more unanticipated consequences than is normally assumed in development and evaluation designs.
>
> (quoted by Stenhouse, p.110)

Both Stake and MacDonald were among the fourteen researchers who met at Churchill College, Cambridge, in December 1972 to clarify the position of the 'new wave' of curriculum evaluators. From this conference, MacDonald and Parlett drew up a statement of agreement, three clauses of which are quoted below:

1. That past efforts to evaluate (educational) practices have, on the whole, not adequately served the needs of those who require evidence of the effects of such practices, because of:

1.1 an under-attention to educational processes including those of the learning milieu;

1.2 an over-attention to psychometrically measurable changes in student behaviour (that to an extent represent the outcomes of the practice, but which are a misleading oversimplification of the complex changes that occur in students); and

1.3 the existence of an educational research climate that rewards accuracy of measurement and generality of theory but overlooks both mismatch between school problems and research issues, and tolerates ineffective communication between researchers and those outside the research community.

2. They also agreed that future efforts to evaluate these practices be designed so as to be:

2.1 responsive to the needs and perspectives of differing audiences;

2.2 illuminative of the complex organisational, teaching and learning processes at issue;

2.3 relevant to public and professional decisions forthcoming; and

2.4 reported in language which is accessible to their audiences.

3. More specifically they recommended that, increasingly,

3.1 observational data, carefully validated, be used (sometimes in substitute for data from questioning and testing);

3.2 the evaluation be designed so as to be flexible enough to allow for response to unanticipated events (progressive focusing rather than preordinate design); and that

3.3 the value positions of the evaluator, whether highlighted or constrained by the design, be made evident to the sponsors and audiences of the evaluation.

(quoted by Stenhouse, 1975, p.115)

Illuminative evaluation: towards a definition

The paper by Parlett and Hamilton (1972) 'Evaluation as Illumination: A New Approach to the Study of Innovatory Programmes', probably remains the best short account of illuminative evaluation yet written, though it was never intended to be a final statement. It was, in a sense, an interim report and has undergone some modification by various authors over the years. Only one such revision, that of Helen Simons (1981), will be discussed in this section.

Parlett and Hamilton briefly summarise their starting point as follows:

> Characteristically, conventional approaches have followed the experimental and psychometric traditions dominant in educational research. Their aim (unfulfilled) of achieving fully 'objective methods' has led to studies that are artificial and restricted in scope. We argue that such evaluations are inadequate for elucidating the complex problem areas they confront and as a result provide little effective input to the decision-making process.
>
> (Parlett and Dearden, 1977, p.10)

In the next paragraph, the concept of 'illumination' is described:

> Illuminative evaluation is introduced as belonging to a contrasting 'anthropological' research paradigm. Attempted measurement of 'educational products' is abandoned for intensive study of the programme as a whole: its rationale and evolution, its operations, achievements, and difficulties. The innovation is not examined in isolation but in the school context or 'learning milieu'. The methodological strategies of illuminative evaluation are then described. Observation, interviews with participants (students, instructors, administrators and others), questionnaires, and analysis of documents and background information are all combined to help 'illuminate' problems, issues, and significant programme features.

The mention of the "'anthropological' research paradigm" indicates that the psychometric perspective of the behavioural psychologist has been rejected for one "that owes far more to the participant observation tradition in sociology, as well as to anthropology, history and psychiatry". (Hamilton, 1976, p.39)

In tracing the pedigree of illuminative research, Hamilton sums it up as follows:

> Responsive evaluation responds to the wide range of questions asked about an innovation and is not trapped inside the intentions of the programme-builders. Holistic evaluation seeks to portray an education programme in its entirety. Illuminative evaluation ... seeks to open out an educational situation to intelligent criticism and appraisal. (p.39)

Noting that the main concern of illuminative evaluation is with "description and in-

terpretation rather than measurement and prediction", Parlett and Hamilton formulate the aims of their approach as follows:

> ... to study the innovative programme: how it operates; how it is influenced by the various school situations in which it is applied; what those directly concerned regard as its advantages and disadvantages; and how students' intellectual tasks and academic experiences are most affected. It attempts to discover and document what it is like to be participating in the scheme, whether as teacher or pupil; and, in addition, to discern and discuss the innovation's most significant features, recurring concomitants, and critical processes.
>
> (1977, p.13)

Central to their views are two concepts which require elucidation. The 'instructional system' can be loosely defined as the written or stated curriculum blueprint, the equivalent of which in CED schools might be the syllabus and its elucidations. The term would include the design or specifications for any particular innovation, such as team-teaching, and would also encompass prospectuses, or any formalised plans for teaching arrangements.

The point about the 'instructional system' is that, contrary to the assumptions of the traditional evaluator, it is essentially dynamic, because it has to be applied by the teacher in the actual 'learning milieu':

> ... an instructional system, when adopted, undergoes modifications that are rarely trivial. The instructional system may remain as a shared idea, abstract model, slogan, or shorthand, but it assumes a different form in every situation. Its constituent elements are emphasised or de-emphasised, expanded or truncated, as teachers, administrators, technicians and students interpret and re-interpret the instructional system for their particular setting. In practice, objectives are commonly re-ordered, re-defined, abandoned or forgotten. The original 'ideal' formulation ceases to be accurate, or indeed of much relevance. (1977, p.14)

The second concept, the 'learning milieu', is "the social-psychological and material environment in which students and teachers work together" (p.14). For some illustration of what is meant by the 'learning milieu', the reader is asked to consult the table of factors influencing an English programme on page 3. Under this heading come considerations of school organisation, funding, staffing and even architecture. Influences brought to bear stem from parents, staff and the children themselves. As the authors point out:

> ... there are pervasive operating assumptions (about the arrangement of subjects, curricula, teaching methods, and student evaluation) held by faculty; there are the individual teacher's characteristics (teaching style, experience, professional orientation, and private goals); and there are student perspectives and preoccupations. (p.15)

No one can 'freeze' such a situation for 'objective' assessment, nor assume that the content of the 'instructional system' is in fact upheld within such a field of inter-

actions. Studying those interactions is precisely what the illuminative evaluator sets out to do. Drawing on one illustration from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Parlett and Hamilton point out that to introduce one new (innovation) into the 'learning milieu' causes a chain of repercussions:

> In turn these unintended consequences are likely to affect the innovation itself, changing its form and moderating its impact. (p.15)

Traditional approaches of evaluation have erred in trying to impose a tidy order upon untidy reality. The complexities of the 'learning milieu' have to be faced if anything sensible is to be said about the nature of the learning taking place, the progress of students, and the effectiveness of organisational strategies. The authors point out that students "adapt to and work within the learning milieu taken as an interrelated whole" (p.16); they are not isolated and freed from its effects:

> To take an example: teaching and learning in a particular setting are profoundly influenced by the type of assessment procedures in use; by constraints of scheduling; by the size and diversity of classes; by the availability of teaching assistants, library, computing and copying facilities. These, in turn, are dependent on departmental priorities; on policies of faculty promotion; on institutional myths and traditions; and on local and national pressures. (p.16)

Simply stated, the methods employed in illuminative evaluation are eclectic and situational: whatever technique is appropriate is employed. There is no standard methodological package or doctrine; the problem defines the methods used:

> According to this view, it is permissable, indeed desirable, to draw on the whole range of data sources from standardised tests, through 'systematic' observation schedules, inventories and pre-coded questionnaires, to unstructured interviews and participant observation. The principal criterion for their selection should be their capacity to inform judgements about a particular activity.
>
> (McCormick and James, 1983, p.165)

The point is that no single method is used exclusively or in isolation. Quantitative research is not eschewed, but neither is it given any special status.

The authors of the report on 'The Physical Science Evaluation, Western Australia, 1978-9' see illuminative evaluation as a "process" rather than a "package":

> In general terms, an illuminative evaluator sets out first to identify major emerging issues as perceived by the various participants in the innovation; second, to focus progressively on these selected issues by a combination of methods; and third, to induce and report on general principles and patterns within the operation of the programme. (Tamir, 1985, p.86)

There are five stages in the procedure of illuminative evaluation:

1. The contract stage: With due reference to the value positions of all concerned, the evaluator seeks to clarify the type of study and report required, whilst negotiating a general strategy that does not prescribe which variables will be omitted or included.
2. Familiarisation: Using whichever techniques of observation that are suitable, the evaluator strives to become knowledgeable about the realities of the programme in action.
3. Progressive focusing: Particular areas of interest are identified for more intensive enquiry and the full array of evaluation techniques is employed to provide 'triangulation' ("the use of two or more methods of data collection" in order to verify an observation: Cohen and Manion, 1985, p.254). Interviews are particularly useful at this stage and recourse is often made to questionnaires, test data and documentary and background information.
4. Coherence: What has been observed must now be organised and ordered into explanatory descriptions that in turn highlight the areas of major concern.
5. The report: This must be sensitive to the requirements of the study, faithful in its portrayal of reality, and, above all, readable and accessible to its audience.

(adapted from Dachs, 1981, p.37)

Particularly in qualitative research, the question of validity must be addressed. A related question is that of reliability:

> Basically reliability is concerned with consistency in the production of results and refers to the requirement that, at least in principle, another researcher, or the same researcher on another occasion, should be able to replicate the original piece of research and achieve comparable evidence or results.

Various types of validity have been defined to describe "systematic errors (i.e. biases), rather than random errors". In its simplest form, the concept of validity is that:

> ... researchers are expected to demonstrate that the observations they actually record and analyse, match what they purport to be recording and analysing.

(McCormick and James, 1983, p.173)

The traditional scientific research methodology of the social sciences may appear impressively objective with its parade of correlations, deviations from the mean and sampling techniques, yet, in the view of Parlett and Hamilton:

> Any research study requires skilled human judgements and is thus vulnerable. Even in evaluation studies that handle automatically-processed numerical data, judgement is necessary at every stage: in the choice of samples; in the construction or selection of tests; in deciding conditions of administration; in selecting the mode of statistical treatment; in the relative weight given to different results; and, particularly, in the selection and presentation of

findings in reports.

(1977, p.21)

However, when an evaluator is making considerable use of open-ended responses, qualitative data and progressive focusing, he lays himself open to charges of gross partiality. The authors suggest triangulation to cross-check important findings, the use of outsiders to code and check open-ended material and continual consultation with other members of the team in assessing results. Beyond that, it is felt, common sense must prevail. The evaluator is a specialist in the tradition of psychiatrists, anthropologists and historians and, like these, his approach must be professional, thorough and accountable.

Triangulation itself does not guarantee that the various data sources used to cross-check a point do in fact provide evidence on the same point. McCormick and James (1983) suggest that "validation is achieved when others, particularly the subjects of the research, recognise its authenticity" (p.176). This is called 'respondent validation'.

A great difficulty for traditional evaluators is described as 'reactivity', by which is meant that the intrusion of the evaluator into the learning milieu is apt to change it and thus to distort the natural situation. Illuminative evaluators readily acknowledge this problem, but their less formal and more consultative approach makes their impact less obtrusive. They feel that the problem must be faced and a "reflexive stance" adopted:

> Reflexivity demands that researchers constantly monitor, not only their own interactions with the groups being investigated, but also their own roles and reactions to what they observe. In other words, they make a conscious effort to make explicit anything that could bias their interpretations of events.
>
> (McCormick and James, p.176)

Ultimately, the credibility of any type of research depends upon public scrutiny.

By way of one illustration of the impact that the work of Parlett and Hamilton has had on educational evaluation, reference can be made to the 'insider' evaluation proposal of Helen Simons (1981). In arguing that evaluations should ideally be made by practising teachers of their own situations, she argues that evaluation in schools should possess the following characteristics:

1. It should aspire to reflect the processes of teaching, learning and schooling in order to educate judgements about the adequacy of educational provision and the quality of experience pupils have.

2. It should draw on a wide spectrum of information sources ... a broad data base.

3. It should examine the attitudes, values and assumptions that underlie the

kind of information that comes from various sources.

4. It should encourage the flow of information in all directions ...

5. It should develop the kind of informal evaluation that teachers normally engage in in order to gain some feedback on their practice.

6. It should focus on internal needs defined by the school ...

7. It should be particularistic ... and concerned with the immediate problems of a given institutional context. It is likely to be less interested in universals ...

8. It should be concerned ... with evaluating educational situations in ways that provide information relevant to decision-making and the analysis of policy options.

9. It should precede curriculum development rather than following after it ...

(quoted by McCormick and James, p.100)

In a sense, the evaluation project undertaken in this survey is of this type and owes its form to that of Parlett and Hamilton, whose summing up below provides an appropriate final word:

> Illuminative evaluation thus concentrates on the information-gathering rather than the decision-making component of evaluation. The task is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex reality ... surrounding the programme: in short, to 'illuminate'. In his report, therefore, the evaluator aims to sharpen discussion, disentangle complexities, isolate the significant from the trivial, and to raise the level of sophistication of debate.
>
> (1977, p.24)

1.4 THIS SURVEY: GENESIS AND METHODOLOGY

The pilot study: 1986

The immediate problem with the pilot study was the position of the evaluator himself. In July 1985, he had taken over as Head of Department: English at School 1. Coinciding with the introduction of new syllabi in January 1986, he had taken the opportunity to reorganise the whole approach to English in the school, introducing such innovations as team-teaching and the creation of ability groups in Stds 9 and 10, and the reading programme in Stds 6 and 7 (see pages 63-4). As prime architect, executive director and chief practitioner of the English programme, he was ideally placed to describe the course, enumerate its aims and to clarify historically the reasons for its innovations. Yet, as evaluator, he risked being regarded as a partial witness, whose testimony was open to accusations of bias, selectivity and self-justification.

On the other hand, he wanted very much to know how his English staff and the pupils were responding to the new syllabi and directions, so that the programme could be improved. Moreover, he wished to test the design of proposed questionnaires and the general procedure of illuminative evaluation.

The pilot study was commissioned for September 1986 and was restricted to only two of the factors influencing an English programme (see page 3), namely, how the pupils reacted and how the English staff reacted. In the event, 123 pupils took part, providing a sample size exactly half that of the present survey.

In order to keep his own face out of the picture, the evaluator chose not to conduct any interviews and avoided administering the questionnaires. The questionnaire for the teachers insisted on anonymity to the extent of asking for responses to be typed (or hand-written by someone else) and given to the school secretary.

The sample of classes was selected by another English teacher, who was simply asked to see that it contained a spread of ability levels, that each standard was represented and that there was a class from each of the mainstream (full-time) English teachers. Thus the evaluator could not be accused of selectivity in the choice of sampling, beyond what was needed to supply reasonable representation of the 31 classes.

No English teacher was permitted to be present during the administration of the pupil questionnaire. Thus the 'mental set' created by a pupil aware of the presence of his English teacher as he wrote his responses was avoided. In this way, it was hoped to reduce 'approved' responses.

The procedure above has been enumerated in some detail as precisely the same precautions were taken in the 1988 survey, with the notable exception that interviewing did take place. At School 2, the subject head selected the sample on exactly the same basis as above and the teachers again submitted their responses to the school secretary, from whom the evaluator collected them.

One of the great advantages of the pilot study for setting up this survey was that the responses to Section B of the pupil questionnaire (open-ended) could be used as a framework for pre-coding the anticipated responses to that section of the 1988 questionnaire. This will be explained later.

All the data was processed manually, without the aid of computers, and thus no statistical cross-tabulations could be made. The design of both questionnaires proved to be effective and only a few modifications were made for the 1988 survey.

A gratifying pointer to the validity and reliability of this survey is that the findings of the 1986 pilot study (restricted to pupils and staff) are uncannily similar to the data which emerged in 1988, when the research was replicated at the same school. As has been noted, the questionnaires were very similar, but there had been several important staff changes in the two years and the sample of pupils asked to respond was entirely different.

To illustrate very briefly, the English staff in 1986 also complained about lack of team cohesion, too few meetings, pressures of time and marking and the concept of 'marking across the standard'. Division existed as to whether the Goals of the syllabi were being met; and, as in 1988, praise was given to the 'standardisation' of approach inherent in the work schemes, to team-teaching and to the leadership of the subject head.

The pupils also voted oral and reading as the most popular activities in English, with the Std 10s again showing that the value of studying literature is appreciated by that stage. Comprehension was stoutly defended and grammar was seen to be boring and repetitive. The writing programme assisted the senior pupils with their essay work in other subjects, whilst the OG classes enthused about reading (which suggested that the reading campaign was being well-received).

The two surveys were exactly two years apart, the sample size (School 1) was almost identical (124) and the findings were strikingly similar.

Parameters: 1988

Given that the evaluator had a fairly intimate knowledge of the English programme at School 1, he was sufficiently impressed by the results of the pilot study to research further into the efficacy of illuminative evaluation. It was felt that the validity of this approach would be enhanced if the procedures developed yielded comparable results in a school about whose English programme he was not familiar. In that sense, School 2 can be seen as a control group.

With two schools, the sample base was doubled and it was further decided to address all six groups of factors influencing an English programme that are tabled on page 3, namely the CED, the pupils, the English staff, the school executive, the parents and other teachers.

The restrictive nature of a 'half-thesis' automatically imposes restraints on what can be reported. This is particularly obvious with regard to 'progressive focusing' in the survey, where, in several instances, it was felt that space precluded the

evaluator from focusing any closer. In such cases, the direction has been pointed with a note that future researchers may be interested to follow it up. Correspondingly, vast amounts of data were collected and processed that had to be edited out of the report. This too is a type of progressive focusing and the evaluator lays no claim to reporting upon the whole picture in either school. It was hoped to reflect this unused data in appendices but, again, considerations of space have prevented it. Should any future researchers wish to scrutinise what is available, enquiries should be made through the university.

It must be appreciated that similar parameters of selection had to be applied to the six groups of factors mentioned above. For example, the sample of parents used was extremely small; the 'other staff' consulted were representative of only four subjects (eight teachers in all); and interviews with the 'school executive' were restricted to the two school principals. Again, it is submitted that the purpose of this survey was to illustrate an approach to curriculum evaluation rather than to undertake a full-scale holistic investigation.

Finally, it must be pointed out that it is a pre-condition of the CED that research done in schools under its control may not result in the schools, or any person associated with them, being identified. Strict conditions of anonymity must prevail and this too has had an influence on what was selected for reporting.

Procedure

As is to be expected, a spread of techniques was used to gather information.

The position of the CED was established specifically by a study of such documents as syllabi, Senior Certificate papers, examiners' reports, various Departmental study guides and circulars, teacher evaluation documents, notices in the Education Gazette, lists of prescribed texts and statements of Departmental policy with regard to the organisation and structuring of schools. Fifteen years of personal experience of teaching English in CED schools was brought to bear on assessing what was pertinent. Elucidation and clarification was also obtained from conversations with other teachers and, more specifically, during the interviews conducted with the two principals. The evaluator's experience of Teachers' Centre activities and in-service courses held there was also useful.

Structured interviews were conducted with the principals of both schools (Appendix 8.3.5, p.161) to ascertain the impact of the school executive upon the English programme, and again recourse was made to the evaluator's own experience in observing the practical implications of policy, structuring and organisation in each school.

At School 2, an interview with the subject head was used to cross-check the validity of these observations.

Pupils were asked to complete a questionnaire (Appendix 8.3.1, p.148) which allowed for both 'closed' and 'open' responses. The administration of this is described on page 17 and it took about 40 minutes to complete the 80 responses. From the 247 pupils who responded, a data base of at least 19760 items was generated.

The parents' survey was also undertaken by means of a questionnaire (Appendix 8.3.4, p.159), which posed ten open-ended questions. The executive body of each PTA was approached. The reasons for this selection and the disappointing response are discussed on page 110. Again the parents were asked not to consult with each other and to return the completed questionnaires to the school secretary for collection.

Likewise, the English staff completed eleven open-ended questions listed on a questionnaire (Appendix 8.3.3, p.156). It must be pointed out that both this and the Parent Questionnaire did not require respondents to answer every question. They were at liberty to combine questions, to omit some, and to stress those that particularly interested them. Comment was requested rather than 'yes/no' responses. It was hoped that these measures would encourage a better quality of response, though it was also pointed out that the more ground they covered, the clearer the total picture would become. In practice, the quality of responses from the English teachers was excellent.

The policies, procedures and objectives of both English departments were available in written form (Appendices 8.2.1, 8.2.2, p.141). In School 1, each English teacher is given a work plan which also doubles as a record book. Each section of this contains a preamble, there is a general introduction reflecting yearly objectives, and examining procedures are clearly set out. The document at School 2 is far less detailed, but an extensive interview with the subject head clarified what was not written down. Access to teachers' mark books and records of work was easy at School 1, but was not requested at School 2 as the timing of the survey would have rendered this very disruptive.

The survey of the attitudes of other staff not teaching English was restricted to the subject heads of history, geography, biology and science. At School 1, interviews took place, but, at School 2, this could not be arranged at the time, so the interview constructs used at School 1 functioned as a questionnaire of the open-ended response type which the teachers completed in their own time. It must be said that, though interviews are more time-consuming, the quality of response is greatly enhanced, as the evaluator can clarify any ambiguities in the questions and can cross-

check immediately the meaning of statements made at the interview.

From the above, it will be clear that techniques of triangulation (page 14) could readily be employed among these methods of data collection in order to verify an observation. One example should suffice.

A major concern of the survey was to establish whether or not the various Goals of the new syllabi were being achieved in the classroom. Firstly, the adaptation of these Goals into the stated and tacit objectives of each English department was assessed by interview and examination of documents. Teachers' work plans and some examination papers were also scrutinised. Then the views of the pupils were tested both by closed responses to the questionnaire and by open-ended ones. The opinions of English teachers were obtained through the open-ended format of their questionnaire. Statistical cross-tabulations were run on the pupil responses and areas of statistical significance noted and analysed. Thus both qualitative and quantitative data were available to build up a reasonably full picture of the classroom reality.

The questionnaires

Essentially, there were three questionnaires used in the survey, though, as has been explained (page 20), one interview construct was used as a questionnaire to teachers of subjects other than English at School 2 (Appendix 8.3.6, p.162). With the exception of Section A Questionnaire 1 (the Pupil Questionnaire), the questions all called for open or free responses (page 20). Though this kind of response is more difficult for an evaluator to process, the richness of comment that it can produce, the idiosyncratic factors that it can illuminate and the freedom of opinion that it encourages are forceful reasons for adopting this type of approach in a small-scale illuminative evaluation. As has been argued before (pages 7-14), the personal perspectives, however apparently peripheral, of those actively involved in the learning milieu are what evaluators must address, if they are to reproduce in recognisable colour the often untidy realities of educational life.

For those who are perhaps less voluble or articulate, the simplicity of the closed response questionnaire and its comparative ease of completion are preferable. It also has a persuasive air of anonymity and objectivity about it, whereas, from the evaluator's point of view, far more ground can be covered in the time available than with open-ended responses. Besides, it is simplicity itself to code for computer data-capturing and is invaluable in a large-scale survey.

Whatever approach is used, it is essential that the questionnaire be inviting and not inhibiting or annoying. Moreover, the language used must be in a register appropriate

to the levels of education and maturity of the respondents, whose interest at all times must be maintained. In the hopes of touching chords of co-operation, it was decided to make an informal yet plaintively sincere approach through the medium of a personal letter on the cover of each questionnaire, which explained the motivation for the survey and exhorted respondents to be frank, honest and serious in their responses. The language chosen was deliberately conversational and colloquial in register.

Problems did arise with the phrasing of certain questions and these are discussed in detail in the chapters that follow. The main difficulty with a questionnaire for pupils is how to render abstract concepts, such as those enshrined in the Goals of the syllabi, into language accessible to a range of age-groups (from Stds 6 to 10) without distorting the meaning of the original ideas. At times, too, the diction selected was too provocative or 'leading' to elicit considered responses. On the whole, misinterpretations were few and easily explained.

No complaints were received about the format of the questionnaires. The closed response questions were self-coding and this worked well. Only three responses ("Agree", "Disagree" and "Don't know") were allowed in the interests of simplicity. Although this is more restrictive than a four or five code response, it was felt to be more suitable for the age-groups concerned, especially as a free response section followed.

The selection of material for the questionnaires represented the concerns of the CED (syllabus Goals and content), teachers of English, parents, pupils and English subject heads. Apart from the syllabus documents, the evaluator relied heavily upon his fifteen years of experience of PTA meetings, English department meetings, Teachers' Centre discussions and countless informal conversations with English teachers. For example, Q 1.1 (Pupil Questionnaire): "I feel shy or embarrassed when I have to do orals", is relevant to Goal 2.1.1 of both the HG and OG syllabi, has frequently been mentioned in his own classroom by pupils over the years, and is often a talking point among teachers and parents. Taking only the 65 closed response questions of Section A into account, 63% of those questions relate to the syllabus Goals, 52% reflect concerns voiced by pupils in class, and 83% refer to topics raised by teachers. Many questions are repeated in various ways to check consistency of answering, results of which are reported in the chapters that follow.

Data-processing

Perhaps the most unusual application of computer-aided data-processing in this survey was the work done on Section B of the Pupil Questionnaire. Normally, the complete

freedom of comment allowed in an open response questionnaire is not amenable to computer processing. To take an actual example, Q 1 asks: "What do you like most about English?" The first pupil in the survey wrote:

> I enjoy reading and discussing the meaning of books and poems. Grammar has helped me to understand the authors and poets better.

This response shows an appreciation of reading, literature study and grammar. There are thus three actual answers given to one question.

Firstly, a coding frame had to be drawn up for each of the questions. This was based very largely on the type of responses given in the 1986 pilot study, which had a very similar Section B (see page 17). A skim reading of the 1988 responses showed considerable similarities, plus a few original ideas. From this a fairly accurate prediction of the responses could be made and a coding frame devised (Appendix 8.3.2, p.154). For some questions only three responses were predicted, but for others the number rose to nearly thirty. Some respondents gave one answer to a question, others as many as seven. Once the coding was established, each response had to be read carefully and manually coded in the block supplied on the questionnaire. Particularly striking remarks were highlighted and filed for quotation in the report. Oddly enough, with the 247 questionnaires, this did not take very long.

The result was that the computer could then generate frequency tables and calculate percentages of response by the variables of total, school, standard, grade, standard by school, and grade by school. The sex variable was not used. In this form, the information could be used to supplement the responses to Section A, though cross-tabulations with the data in Section A were ruled out because of the totally different logic affecting the responses in the two types of questions. For a discussion of this, see page 59.

The BMDP data analysis programme package available at Rhodes University was used on the Pupil Questionnaire only, where approximately 19800 items of information were processed. In Section A, frequency and percentage tables were calculated on the following variables: total, school, standard, grade and sex. Various cross-tabulations of these variables could then be run for specific purposes.

The first of these was to check consistency of answering that might indicate difficulties with the wording of a question, as well as incidental lapses of concentration which might warrant disregarding that particular pupil's responses. It was argued, for instance, that whoever answered 1 ("Agree") to Q 1.1 must consistently answer 1 to Q 1.3, that if he answered 2 ("Disagree") he was being inconsistent. The issue of contradiction is what is relevant, thus those answering 3 ("Don't know") to

either question were excluded from the calculation. The resulting correlation coefficients were examined for significance and, of the 17 checks run, 82,4% proved to be consistent.

The second type of cross-tabulation involved testing whether the declared Goals of the syllabi were being achieved (page 20). This also involved cross-tabulating the results of different questions and calculating correlations.

Finally, an analysis by variables of the responses on each of the questions was required for general commentary, which produced another set of cross-tabulations and statistical correlations to indicate significant differences between the responses of the groups.

These applications of computer-generated statistics are discussed in the relevant chapters of the report. Though at times the quantitative data appears prominently, it must be understood that it reflects only one section of one of the questionnaires used and has no privileged position within the total methodology of this evaluation. By the same token, it was immensely helpful in charting the general picture upon which progressive focusing techniques could be used.

Terminology and abbreviations used

1. Upper case:

   The use of a capital letter to begin a word or abbreviation is to denote a specific and recurring concept: Goals and Elucidations refers to those headings in the format of the syllabus; Pupil Questionnaire is particularised as that specifically used in the survey, not any such questionnaire; Stds relates to a specific variable used in the calculations which denotes a standard or year group in a school.

2. Abbreviations:

   A, D and DK: occasionally used to represent "Agree", "Disagree" and "Don't know" within the context of the questionnaire.

   HG and OG: denote a subject on the Higher Grade or the Ordinary Grade.

   SG and LG: denote Standard Grade and Lower Grade.

   CED: Cape Education Department.

   PTA: Parents-Teachers' Association.

   Std(s): standard(s), as in Std 6.

   Q: question, as in Q 1 (Question One).

   p: page

3. **Reporting frequencies:**

Responses to Questionnaire 1 ("Agree", "Disagree" and "Don't know") are usually quoted in the report in an abbreviated form within parentheses, each figure representing a percentage, e.g. [90,9 : 7,3 : 1,8]. Thus 90,9% of the respondents agreed, 7,3% disagreed and 1,8% did not know.

CHAPTER TWO

JUNIOR SECONDARY COURSE: ORDINARY GRADE: English First Language

2.1 INTRODUCTION

From 1 January 1986, the Junior Secondary Course syllabus for English First Language Ordinary Grade was introduced simultaneously into Stds 5, 6 and 7. This arrangement caused some perplexity among teachers of Stds 6 and 7, who had to solve the problem of completing a three-year programme in either one year (Std 7) or two (Std 6). The lack of suitable language study textbooks designed around the key concept of 'language in action' compounded the difficulties confronting those who had to teach a new syllabus rooted in sensitivity to different language registers.

The regrettable communication chasm which often exists between Std 5 teachers and those of Stds 6 and 7 in schools which separate into Junior (up to Std 5) and High (from Std 6) affected, and continues to affect, the grading and structuring of a syllabus that straddles the traditional division of schooling.

It should be noted that both of the schools in this survey are academically and physically so split. Each of the High Schools has a feeder Junior School with its own management council, principal and staff, operating from its own campus. For this reason, the data obtained in this survey is restricted to the Std 6 and 7 years, omitting the perspective of Std 5 which is not part of the High School and thus not part of the two English departments being evaluated. Accordingly, the picture of the OG programme that emerges is not representative of all three levels of the syllabus.

So that future researchers are not tempted to dismiss totally the data gathered in this survey, it is worth pointing out that, in practice, the full range and depth of the OG syllabus is explored in the two years of High School work recorded here. This is certainly within the spirit of the syllabus, which warns against three separate year-divisions of the material, though its root cause lies in the comparative isolation of the High and Junior School English departments. As ideas, information and resources are not shared, Std 6 teachers begin again with the OG syllabus, assuming that little has been carried over from Std 5. This tendency to start again is given further impetus by the fact that not all the Std 6 pupils come from the same Junior School.

Terminology identifying the CED English First Language syllabi can be confusing. The two schools in this survey offer the Junior Secondary Course on Ordinary Grade only

and there is no Lower Grade option given, though a syllabus does exist at this level. From Std 8 onwards, the Senior Secondary Course is available on three grades: High, Standard and Lower. Neither of the two schools offers Lower Grade and this survey restricts itself to the study of the Senior Secondary Higher Grade programme only.

2.2 THE OG SYLLABUS: GOALS AND AIMS: DIFFERENCES FROM HG

It is tempting to assume that the OG syllabus is merely a simplified and pruned version of HG. This is true in so far as the syllabus planners have to take into account the progressive acquisition of English skills by the maturing adolescent as he works towards the final Senior Certificate examination. But it does overlook the fact that detailed differences do exist in the deliberate dovetailing of the OG syllabus into the two options presented in Std 8, namely HG and SG.

Ignoring the details of subject matter, some of the differences in Aims and Goals between OG and HG are summarised below. These differences have relevance to the Pupil Questionnaire as both OG and HG pupils were asked to respond to the same questions, some of which are not applicable to the OG syllabus. Headings and paragraph numbers refer to the syllabi (Appendices 8.1.1, 8.1.2, p.127).

GLOBAL AIMS:

HG includes a reference to the term "English-across-the-curriculum" (1.6), but the remaining five Aims are identical to OG.

ORAL COMMUNICATION:

The syllabi are very similar in terms of Goals with only one real omission from the HG syllabus, namely 2.1.8, which refers to the appropriateness of certain speaking registers. The OG syllabus also omits 2.1.2 (advice on techniques of oratory), but these issues are clearly implied in the OG Elucidation of the syllabus (2(d), 2.1.1 and 2.1.3). The Elucidation also implies that work should be done at OG level on developing the "ability to think independently and speak logically" (2(a)), although these phrases are omitted from Goal 2.1.2 (OG). Finally, the Goals concerning listening, although differently expressed in the two syllabi, amount in the context of the Elucidation to much the same thing (HG 2.1.6 and OG 2.1.5).

READING AND LITERATURE STUDY:

There is a strong similarity between the basic Goals, but the HG syllabus emphasises

skills of literary analysis and reading (3.1.1 and 3.1.2), requires some knowledge of literary genres (3.1.6), and draws attention to the "literary heritage" of the English-speaking world, including Southern Africa (3.1.7 and 3.1.8). Substituting for these Goals, the OG syllabus spells out the importance of integrating reading "with other aspects of the Syllabus" (3.1.4) and the need for pupils to "respond effectively to both fiction and non-fiction" (3.1.7).

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:

In this area, the Goals of the HG syllabus have merely been simplified for OG, e.g. 4.1.4 and 4.1.5 in HG begin with the words "learn to use", whereas the same paragraphs in OG are introduced with "be introduced to". In HG, 4.1.3 is amplified to include the "demands", "technicalities" and "language" of "various kinds of writing"; and a list of different kinds of writing is appended to 4.1.6.

LANGUAGE STUDY:

It is perhaps in this field that the greatest differences are to be found between the syllabi. Summarised, it would be fair to say that the OG programme concentrates on the acquisition of basic grammatical and expressive skills. By contrast, the HG course focuses on registers, 'loaded' language, syntax and the use of terminology, and includes work on the development of the English language. The five Goals of the OG syllabus are reflected again in HG, but a further eight are added, providing the distinction above. Of these, the addition of summary work (5.1.7) is curious in that it does not appear in the OG list, despite the fact that 20 marks are allocated to it in Std 7 (6.1 OG).

ELUCIDATION OF THE SYLLABUS:

The OG Preamble is identical to HG, as are the Language Aims. The Goals of Oral Communication are differently worded in the two syllabi, but, rendered down, they amount to very much the same thing, although the OG syllabus Elucidation is less detailed on technique. The Elucidations of the Reading and Literature Study syllabi reveal an emphasis in OG on encouraging enjoyable reading, whereas, predictably, the HG syllabus seeks a more serious and discriminating study including film viewing. Under the heading Written Communication, the differences that exist are few and graded to the level of maturity. As expected, the Goals under the heading Language Study in the Elucidations are very different and support the remarks made under this heading above. Again it is worth pointing out that the OG Elucidation does not mention summary work, although it is apparently to be examined in Std 7.

In Summary

The Ordinary Grade (OG) syllabus differs most markedly from Higher Grade (HG) in the following areas:

1. the skills demanded in the Reading and Literature section are less sophisticated;

2. in OG, the Language Study emphasis falls mainly upon grammatical and expressive skills, whereas in HG the focus is more upon register, 'loaded' language, syntax and the acquisition of specialised terminology;

3. though it is to be examined in Std 7, summary work is first described in the HG syllabus.

2.3 ORAL COMMUNICATION

The popularity of oral work is amply vindicated by the responses to both sections of Questionnaire 1, where, for instance, in Section B, oral work topped the list of the things liked most about English (Q 1). In second and third places were reading and writing, both 8% behind oral in terms of the 435 responses made. Though more HG pupils nominated oral work, the difference (4%) is not great. Except at School 2, where 7% more HG pupils voted oral as the most popular activity, OG and HG responses were otherwise similar.

In Section A, there was overwhelming agreement with the statement (1.13): "I pay attention when other people do orals in class": [76,5 : 10,9 : 12,6]. In fact, there was not one dissenting voice among the Std 7s at School 1 and 89,3% agreed. Likewise, the popularity of oral is indicated by the strong disagreement to 1.14: "Personally, I don't think that oral work in English has helped me much": [27,5 : 56,7 : 15,8]. The Std 6 group registered the strongest disagreement (by 44%) and OG rejection of the statement was 19% stronger than HG (though this difference is not statistically significant).

Consistency checking

Three separate consistency checks were run on Question 1, involving six statements in all. No inconsistencies emerged.

Firstly, the responses to 1.1 ("I feel shy or embarrassed when I have to do orals")

were compared to 1.3 ("I enjoy speaking to the whole class"). The frequency tallies below indicate the degree of self-consciousness that afflicts many teenagers called upon to perform before their classmates and teacher:

1.1:	46,6	44,5	8,9
1.3:	34,8	49,0	16,2

Comparing the "Agrees" in 1.1 with the "Disagrees" in 1.3, consistency of answering is obvious. In fact, the probability coefficient (r) was not significantly different from zero.

Teachers may find this diffidence somewhat depressing, but almost 45% disagreed that they felt shy, and the Stds 6 and 10 samples rejected 1.1 by a majority of 7%. It was only the Std 7s who agreed fairly strongly (by 15%), and many teachers can testify to the awkwardness of this age-group in social situations compared to the relative spontaneity of Std 6s. With 1.3, again it was Stds 6 and 10 who were boldest: Std 10 evenly split at 48%; Std 6 disagreeing by only 6% (DK: 18%). Std 6s are often uninhibited enough to "enjoy speaking to the whole class" and Std 10s have, through what will be called the 'maturity syndrome', become used to it. In Std 8, the "Don't knows" amounted to 31%, which is certainly more encouraging than outright disagreement.

Cross-tabulations of 1.2 ("Orals have helped me to be more self-confident about speaking in public") and 1.4 ("Through ... oral ... it is now easier for me to give my opinions ... and to stand up and ask questions") showed equally consistent results:

1.2:	56,3	24,3	19,4
1.4:	45,3	36,4	18,2

The final consistency check involved 1.11 ("By having to read aloud to others, I have learnt to understand the meaning of a passage better") and 1.12 ("When I read aloud, I can't follow the meaning of what I am reading"). The null hypothesis assumed that there would be no significant differences between the responses to the two questions and this was rejected conclusively, showing consistency of answering. Again the difference between the value obtained and zero was negligible. It must be reiterated (page 23) that, for consistency checking, only the positive and negative factors need to be compared, when the hypothesis is that a pupil who answers TRUE to one proposition must, consistently, answer FALSE to the next. Thus the "Don't knows" were omitted from the cross-tabulation. Consequently, it is possible for answers to be statistically consistent even though the frequency tallies show an unexpected result,

as here both 1.11 and 1.12 are rejected:

1.11:	40,1	46,6	13,4
1.12:	32,4	59,1	8,5

Verifying the Goals of the OG syllabus

Despite highly consistent answering, the attempt to verify the Goals of the syllabus was not as conclusive as the syllabus planners might have hoped.

The first test was on Goal 2.1.1:

> That pupils speak fluently, distinctly and with ease and enjoyment, acquiring poise and confidence in communicating.

Here responses to the following questions were compared:

1.1: "I feel shy or embarrassed when I have to do orals"

1.2: "Orals have helped me to be more self-confident about speaking in public"

1.4: "Through ... oral work ... it is now easier for me to give my opinions in other classes and to ... ask questions"

The "enjoyment", "ease" "poise" and "confidence" factors are examined in these questions. Though the null hypothesis was rejected in terms of the total sample, both schools and both grades, verification was not so clear in smaller samples (e.g. Std 6, where 1.1 and 1.2 were inconsistently answered).

Similar tests were conducted on Goal 2.1.2:

> That pupils be able to convey to others their observations, feelings and thoughts in an orderly, convincing and coherent manner.

Responses to the following questions were analysed:

1.7: "Through oral work, I have definitely learnt to express my ideas better and more fluently"

1.9: "Through oral lessons, I find I think more clearly and can organise my thoughts better"

Though a majority of 18% agreed to 1.7, there was a majority disagreement of 9% to 1.9; and the "Don't know" factor in each question was over 30%. This rejection of 1.9 and the high "Don't know" response makes verification of Goal 2.1.2 rather inconclusive, despite the rejection of the null hypothesis in all but two of the cases (Stds 7 and 9).

The final verification tests concerned the topic of reading aloud:

Goal 2.1.4: That pupils learn to show their understanding of the meaning, feeling and tone of a passage in reading it to an audience.

This called for the acceptance of 1.11 ("By having to read aloud ... I have learnt to understand the meaning of a passage better") and the rejection of 1.12 ("When I read aloud, I can't follow the meaning ..."). The responses to these two questions appear on page 31, where the rejection of 1.11 (by 6%) was noted. Despite this (as discussed), the null hypothesis was rejected by the total sample and by each subgroup within it: school, standard, sex and grade. All this supports verification.

However, a statistically significant difference between the responses of the grades was noted with regard to 1.11: OG agreed that reading aloud helped in understanding the meaning of a passage (A: 52,3; D: 38,5), whereas HG disagreed (A: 30,4; D: 52,9).

Progressive focusing on this problem showed that the Std 7s at School 2 were unusually enthusiastic about reading aloud, agreeing with 1.11 by 61,5% and disagreeing with 1.12 by 73,1%. By comparison, their counterparts at School 1 followed the trend but by 7,0% and 39,3% respectively. One explanation may be that the teacher of Std 7 at School 2 is encouraging constructive reading aloud in class.

Further observations on OG oral work

Continuing the discussion above, the enthusiasm for reading aloud in Std 7 at School 2 does not appear to extend to the Std 10s at that school: 1.11 was rejected emphatically (by 56,5%) and opinions were equally divided on 1.12 (A and D: 47,8).

The written responses of this Std 10 group indicate that it is a capable and articulate English class. When their lukewarm response to reading aloud is confirmed by the HG rejection of 1.11 noted above, the question arises as to whether increasing maturity and sophistication leads to decreasing tolerance for such 'junior school' activities as reading to others.

Experienced First Language teachers are often surprised to find that a pupil who in Std 6 seemed to have insurmountable problems with a particular skill, such as spelling, is discovered a few years later to have improved dramatically. Similar remarkable improvements in speaking and reading skills, as well as writing ability, are often noted within the last two years of High School. What has happened to change such inadequacy into relative competency?

Were English a 'learning subject' in the sense of having a large core of factual knowledge to absorb, one could argue that such a pupil had decided to do some learning at last. But, at First Language level, English is much more a question of

progressively acquiring expressive and analytical skills than of 'swotting up' a body of knowledge. The second (and tempting) explanation is to put the improvement down to the perseverance and personal attention of a good teacher or two, but often this does not fit the facts.

In such a case, it is likely that the pupil has simply matured. Years of continual exposure to and practice of his home language in increasingly demanding contexts, both within and outside of school, coupled with physical and psychological maturing, lead by a process similar to osmosis to improvements of certain expressive skills. It is beyond the scope of this study to explore what might be called the 'maturity syndrome' in First Language learning beyond recording that some evidence of it appears in the survey undertaken.

It may be, for instance, that the skill of reading aloud is perceived to be less relevant and challenging by HG pupils simply because they have, to a greater or lesser extent, mastered it well enough to cope in most practical situations. Perhaps this explains the difference in response between HG and OG in 1.11.

A similar pattern emerges when the responses to Questions 1.7, 1.8 and 1.9 are considered. This group of questions explores the contention of the syllabus (and many teachers) that oral work develops clarity of thought leading to fluency, coherence and correctness of both written and spoken expression. In each question, a similar kind of tapering effect was noted, agreement tending to be highest in OG, uncertainty greatest in Std 8, and agreement lowest in Stds 9 and 10. The abbreviated table below expresses in round percentages these tendencies:

	1.7			1.8			1.9		
Std 6:	56	20	24	40	35	25	55	27	18
Std 7:	50	22	28	35	43	22	25	43	32
Std 8:	31	19	50	33	17	50	31	31	38
Std 9:	38	31	31	19	50	31	15	52	33
Std 10:	36	34	30	23	43	34	25	43	32

Comparing Grades, it is only with Question 1.9 that there are statistically significant differences between HG and OG (at the 5% level), but in all three questions the probability coefficient (r) is similar: r = 0,02 (1.7), 0,03 (1.8) and 0,02 (1.9). It is also worth noting that for both 1.8 and 1.9 a statistically significant difference in the responses of the Stds was recorded.

On balance, it would seem that there is a higher degree of agreement from OG pupils to the three questions and this could be the result of the 'maturity syndrome'. It

is arguable that the benefits of oral work are more apparent to OG pupils, whose ability to express themselves both in writing and speech is generally less sophisticated than it is in older children.

OG enthusiasm for group work is evident in the responses to 1.5 and 1.6 and it would appear that working in groups remains popular throughout the High School. Gratifying to some teachers must be the overall response to 1.6 ("From working in groups, I can now co-operate better with others"): [71,7 : 14,2 : 14,2]. As group work remains something of a Cinderella in most High School classrooms, future researchers might be interested to explore the indications given above more deeply.

In summary

1. Oral work is clearly a very popular component of the English curriculum.

2. No inconsistencies of answering emerged from the three consistency checks run on Question 1 of the Pupil Questionnaire.

3. Attempts to verify statistically that Goals 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 (fluency and clarity of oral communication) of the OG syllabus were being achieved were not entirely conclusive. Goal 2.1.4 (reading aloud) appears to be verified with the OG sample, though there are doubts about HG.

4. A degree of self-consciousness about performing in front of the class was noted, especially in Std 7.

5. There is some evidence that appreciation and enjoyment of oral activities decreases with age, perhaps as a result of the 'maturity syndrome'.

6. Working in groups is apparently enjoyed throughout the High School.

2.4 READING AND LITERATURE STUDY

Consistency checking

Seven checks for consistency of answering were run by means of cross-tabulations on Section A Question 3 of the Pupil Questionnaire. The only anomaly discovered was when 3.8 and 3.14 were compared. This irregularity was based on an incorrect assumption, namely that 3.8 ("In High School, I have learnt to read with greater understanding of what the writer is actually saying") would elicit responses opposite to those given for 3.14 ("Teachers dig all sorts of things that I can't see out of the

books, poems and plays that we study"). In fact, these questions are not mutually exclusive. It is quite possible for a pupil to answer TRUE to 3.8, as his understanding has improved and also TRUE to 3.14, simply because the teacher has a greater insight than he has attained and still sees things that he does not. Thus these two questions should not have been selected for consistency checking.

This point becomes relevant when the verification of syllabus Goals cross-tabulations are considered.

Verifying the Goals of the OG syllabus

Goal 3.1.1 of the OG syllabus seeks "That pupils be encouraged to enjoy reading". This is the same as the HG statement, except that the phrase "skill in reading" is dropped. Yet the concept of "skill" is not omitted from OG, see Goal 3.1.7: "That pupils develop reading skills necessary to respond effectively to both fiction and non-fiction". If there is any difference at all, it is a matter of degree only. OG aims for mere reading effectiveness, whereas HG emphasises "appreciation" and "discrimination" (Goal 3.1.2).

To verify these Goals in both OG and HG, first 3.1 (" I enjoy reading") and 3.3 ("I read a lot at home") were cross-tabulated. Thereafter, to check the acquisition of "skill", 3.8 and 3.14 were compared. The problems associated with selecting this latter pair of questions for cross-tabulation are discussed above. So, in trying to verify the "skill" aspect, recourse could only be made to the frequency tallies reflecting 3.8 (which asserts that the pupil has learnt to read with greater understanding since entering High School). The picture is indeed positive: [65,6 : 17,0 : 17,4]. There are no significant differences between the Grades. Thus, it is tempting to assume that skills are acquired and the Goal is being achieved, but a second or third check of verification would have been desirable.

On the question of "enjoyment", there can be no doubt. Pupils on both Grades express high enjoyment of reading, as can be seen from the overwhelming agreement to 3.1: [74,9 : 15,8 : 9,3]. The figures are almost identical for both Grades. Reading (with Writing) appears as the second most popular choice in Section B, where from 455 responses 21% mentioned reading as the thing that they liked most about English. Here, however, OG enthusiasm was 9% higher than HG.

It is interesting to note that the girls in the sample seem to enjoy reading more than the boys. In 3.1, for example ("I enjoy reading"), the figures in round percentages are:

Boys:	66	26	8
Girls:	80	10	10

This is borne out in the responses to other cross-tabulations where the null hypothesis (that there is no significant difference between the responses of the sexes) is also rejected, as in 3.3 ("I read a lot at home")and 3.5 ("I don't read much because of TV and videos"). In Question 3, a tendency for girls to be less decisive was also noticed, e.g. in 3.13, 3.17 and 3.20 the "Don't know" factor for girls was between 9% and 11% higher than that for the boys.

Goal 3.1.3 of both syllabi reads:

> That pupils develop the capacity for critical thinking about, and the ability to form and express their own views on literary works.

To verify this, cross-tabulations were run on 3.10 ("These days I think about what I am reading and feel that I could express an opinion on it") and 3.11 ("I often don't know what to say about what I have read"). Verification would require the acceptance of 3.10 and the rejection of 3.11. Though this was achieved in terms of the total sample and the null hypothesis was rejected (at the 5% level) by both boys and girls, there was a division among the Grades, the Schools and the Stds. Ignoring for the moment these differences and looking at the frequency tables of the overall sample, there seems enough evidence to say that Goal 3.1.3 is verified by the responses of the pupils (though with some reservations):

3.10:	65,6	21,1	13,4
3.11:	25,9	60,7	13,4

These reservations concern the OG pupils where, particularly and understandably, the Std 6s are more inclined to agree with 3.11: A : 38; D : 47. Their agreement with 3.10 is 10% lower than the average and the number of "Don't knows" is 10% higher. By Std 7, the figures have fallen into line with the overall sample. One would expect the Std 6s to be less confident than the Std 10s in formulating and expressing opinions about literary texts. Perhaps the more formal examining of two literary texts in Std 7 results in these pupils coming more into line with the HG expectations. The verification tests mentioned above do indicate a difference between the Grades. Thus the safest assumption to make is that Goal 3.1.3 is not fully achieved in OG, though encouraging progress is made by Std 7.

A similar pattern emerges in testing Goal 3.1.5 (3.1.4 on HG):

> That pupils expand their experience of life, gain empathetic understanding of people and develop moral awareness.

Here the responses to 3.18 ("The works we have to study are irrelevant to our lives") and 3.22 ("Through studying literature, I have learnt about life and human nature")

were compared. The null hypothesis was rejected convincingly enough by the total sample, which supports verification, and agreement to 3.22 was 46% higher than disagreement. Question 3.23 ("Literature makes us think about what is right and wrong") was not used in the verification test and perhaps should have been, as it mentions specifically "moral awareness". Here again there was strong agreement (by 34%). All this seems to verify Goal 3.1.5 reasonably well.

On the other hand, 3.18 (which was used in the test) was not rejected by the total sample; a majority of 17% agreed that the texts studied were irrelevant to their lives. "Don't knows" amounted to 23%. Perhaps some respondents did not understand the implications of the work "irrelevant". A closer examination of the responses to this question follows. At this stage, it is pertinent to point out that, taken in conjunction with 3.22, the responses from OG result in an acceptance of the null hypothesis. This in turn leads to some doubt as to whether Goal 3.1.5 is verified in Stds 6 and 7 fully and, considering the maturity level of these pupils, that seems a reasonable conclusion. However, the term "irrelevant" might be the source of the anomaly.

Question 3.18 was also used in testing whether Goal 3.1.6 (3.1.5 on HG) is verified by the respondents in the sample. Goal 3.1.6 reads:

> That pupils develop self-knowledge and self-understanding.

Here "The works we have to study are irrelevant to our lives" (3.18) was compared to "Through studying literature, I have learnt some things about myself" (3.21). Given the aforementioned general agreement (by 17%) to 3.18 (see above), and noting a general disagreement to 3.21 (albeit by the small margin of 6%), one cannot claim that this Goal has been verified. That on total and by sex the respondents were consistent in accepting the one question and rejecting the other proves only consistency of answering, when the expected polarities have been reversed. The hypothesis assumed FALSE would be the prevailing answer to 3.18 and TRUE to 3.21. In fact, the exact opposite occurred. Thus the Goal is rejected overall, except - and this is interesting - Std 10 and Std 6. The table below expresses in round percentages the responses to 3.18 and 3.21:

	3.18			3.21		
Std 6:	29	40	31	42	27	31
Std 10:	39	43	18	43	41	16

In both cases, Std 6 reflects a 31% "Don't know" factor which, allowing for maturity, is to be expected. Their rejection of 3.18 (on irrelevancy) could be explained by

the comparative freedom given by the Prescribed Books Committee to Std 6 selections, e.g. any "suitable" poetry anthology may be used and the selection of poems to be studied is (unlike Std 10) not prescribed. Thus teachers are comparatively free to select material which is relevant to the lives of Std 6s. But the even firmer acceptance of 3.21 (on self-knowledge) is not so conveniently explained. Could it be that the selection of relevant material results in more effective study and thus the kind of self-exploration that Goal 3.1.6 desires? Or, more disturbingly (and perhaps related to the question of relevant literature), is it simply that High School teachers start well with enthusiastic Std 6s and then 'lose' them for a few years as ennui and adolescent factors set in? The comparative uncertainty of the Std 10 response seems to suggest this, as does the overall rejection of 3.21 by the other standards.

Further observations on OG reading studies

Looking at the responses to 3.16 ("Most of the books, poems and plays that we study at school are not enjoyable"), one finds a strong rejection from the OG pupils (by between 33% and 36%), the Std 8s are afflicted with their usual confusion, and Stds 9 and 10 agree by about 10%). Statistically, this difference between OG and HG is significant (at the 1% level). This situation supports the view expressed above that greater freedom of selection allowed in OG permits more enjoyment of literature and more syllabus-effective teaching. It must also be noted that formal examinations are not set in Std 6 on the literature studied and in Std 7 only two of the texts are examined (compared to four in Std 10). Freedom could indeed be the key to good teaching.

The factor of "literary heritage" (Goal 3.1.7 HG) is not relevant to the OG syllabus and thus will be discussed later.

Before leaving the question of whether the English curriculum leads to fruitful self-examination, mention must be made of the responses to Section B Question 11: "Have you learnt anything about yourself? Please explain." 40% of the 265 open-ended responses stated simply, "No." Yet only 19% of the Std 10s replied negatively. The next most popular group of responses (25%) was too diverse to be codified, but a view that was expressed several times was that only Jesus Christ could teach you about yourself. This type of response was too infrequent to be taken seriously, but it does add a new dimension to the term 'relevancy' in teaching modern adolescents. Also in Section B, the third most popular cry for improvements in the English programme (Q 15) was for "more relevant literature" (10% of 432 responses).

In passing, for these issues will be discussed more fully later, it is interesting to

note that Std 6s from the sample take more books out of libraries than any other group (Q 3.2): the average agreement to this question was about 19%, whereas in Std 6 this rose to 49%. There is also some evidence that the baleful effect of television and video viewing on reading eases with maturity. The Std 9 and 10 groups rejected 3.5 ("I don't read much because of TV and videos") more emphatically than the younger groups.

The 'maturity factor' is again evident in the responses to 3.9 ("I have learnt to judge good writing from inferior work"). This is a stated Goal of the HG syllabus (3.1.2), but is omitted from the OG Goals, except for a reference to the desirability of encouraging critical awareness, given in the OG Elucidations (Goal 3.1.3). Overall, there was agreement to 3.9 by almost 30%, although 27% indicated "Don't know". But, if Stds 6 and 10 are compared, the difference is striking:

Std 6:	41,8	29,1	29,1
Std 10:	70,5	11,4	18,2

Statistically, when the Grades were compared, no significant differences emerged, though the chi squared value of 7,591 (at 2 degrees of freedom) is very close to that required for rejection at the 5% level of significance. Looking at the actual frequencies, had Std 8 (whose "Don't know" factor is 38,1%) been omitted from the HG numbers, it is arguable that a statistically significant difference between OG and Stds 9 and 10 would have emerged.

Another question which technically does not apply to OG is 3.12 ("Setwork essays are difficult"). It is only in Std 8 (HG) that setwork essays are required and these are of the 'structured' variety, i.e. paragraph headings are supplied. In OG, pupils may write paragraphs about their reactions to literary texts, but these are by no means discursive essays. Consequently, the "Don't know" factor in OG is 8% higher (Q 3.12) and this rises to 36% at School 1 among the Std 6s.

Question 3.13 ("Setwork exams pull my marks down") should not technically apply to Std 6, where a mark for literature is accumulated and not made the subject of a final examination. Hence there is a fair division of opinion among the Std 6s here with 40% recording "Don't knows". Agreement to 3.13 is statistically more significant with the HG group ($r = 0,01$).

Furthermore, 3.19 which relates to the HG Goal (3.1.7):

> That pupils develop some understanding and appreciation of their literary heritage

is not applicable to the OG syllabus. In answering the question "It is pointless to

study (historical literature)", OG agreed by 7% and HG disagreed by 10%, a fact which may have attained statistical significance had Std 8 been omitted from the HG figures (their "Don't know" tally at 19% is more than twice that of Std 10). Certainly, the definite disagreement of Stds 9 and 10 was confirmed when the Stds were cross-tabulated.

In summary

1. Seven checks on consistency of answering showed only one anomaly, caused by the incorrect assumption that statements 3.8 and 3.14 of the Pupil Questionnaire were mutually exclusive.

2. Five Goals of the syllabus were checked statistically for verification and produced the following results:

   3.1.1 (enjoyment of reading): verified on both OG and HG;
   3.1.7 (reading skills): inconclusive, because of the problems associated with Q 3.8 and 3.14 (see above);
   3.1.3 (critical thinking): verified, but not convincingly so with the OG pupils, especially the Std 6s;
   3.1.5 (learning about life and human nature): verified, but with some reservations about the OG pupils;
   3.1.6 (self-knowledge): not verified.

3. Girls, in this sample, enjoy reading more than boys.

4. At OG level, the texts studied are apparently enjoyed and are successful, perhaps because of the greater freedom allowed to teachers to select relevant and stimulating material within the system of prescribed texts.

5. Some evidence emerged that the effect of television and video viewing on the time given to reading eases with maturity.

6. The Std 6s in the sample use libraries more than any other group.

2.5 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Consistency checking

Four checks on consistency of answering were run on Section A Question 2 of the Pupil

Questionnaire. These involved analysis of six of the fourteen questions.

Question 2.7 ("Composition work is boring") was cross-tabulated with 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3. These three questions explore attitudes towards different types of writing, namely subjective, narrative and discursive. Each statement begins with the words "I like ...", except for 2.3 which says "I enjoy giving my ideas about things". The assumption was that a pupil who liked any of these types of writing would not also claim that composition work was boring.

Looking at the frequency tallies, 2.7 is rejected by 32%, i.e. composition is not seen to be boring, a fact borne out by recourse to Section B where writing received almost the same amount of support as reading (only 8% behind oral) in the three activities liked most in English. However, 2.1 ("I like writing about myself and life") provoked slight disagreement (by 4%), whereas the remaining two questions, 2.2 ("I like inventing stories and characters") and 2.3 ("I enjoy giving my ideas about things"), showed overwhelming agreement:

2.7:	25,5	57,5	17,0
2.1:	41,7	45,3	13,0
2.2:	73,7	21,5	4,9
2.3:	74,1	13,8	12,1

But the cross-tabulations produced some curious results. When the "Don't know" factor was removed for consistency checking (see page 30), the answers to 2.7 proved to be inconsistent with the responses to both 2.1 and 2.3. The only case in which the null hypothesis was rejected involved 2.2. This gives a clue as to what might have gone wrong.

Question 2.7 uses the term "composition work". It is possible that this non-defined term, which was meant to include all kinds of writing, was interpreted as 'writing stories', i.e. narrative writing. This would not be surprising, particularly among the younger respondents who have been used to writing stories since Sub A in their "Composition Books". It is argued that composition is so often associated with narrative writing that 2.7 could have been interpreted as 'Writing stories is boring'. Thus a strong rejection of 2.7 would be consistent with emphatic agreement to 2.2 ("I like inventing stories and characters").

If indeed this is the case, then 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 (poetry) and 2.7 might have come to be regarded as a list of different types of writing (with one repetition: 2.2 and 2.7) from which pupils could pick what they liked most as if rating them on a scale. It would then become meaningless to look for consistency between anything other than

the two narrative items, "composition work" and "writing stories".

It is submitted that this is what has happened. The frequency tables, thus interpreted, simply reveal that narrative and discursive writing are top of the list, and subjective writing and verse are least preferred. This matter again draws attention to the difficulties involved in applying statistics to non-defined concepts in questionnaires simplified enough to be accessible to a range of age-groups.

The final check involved 2.10 and 2.13, which both assert that practice in writing improves expression of ideas. No inconsistency of answering was noted and the null hypothesis was rejected.

Verifying the Goals of the OG syllabus

As noted before (page 28), the Goals of the HG syllabus have been slightly simplified for OG. Goal 4.1.4 OG reads:

> That pupils be introduced to elements of style such as register, diction, tone, syntax, denotation and connotation, and the use of literal and figurative language.

In HG the phrase "be introduced to" is replaced with "learn to use". The achievement of these Goals was tested by cross-tabulating the responses to Questions 2.8 ("Through practice in writing, I can now set out to create a special effect, e.g. a mood, an emotion, ... etc.") and 2.9 ("I always seem to write in the same kind of way and in the same style"). The assumption was that the answers would be different. The null hypothesis was in fact rejected by the total sample, both schools and OG (not HG), which suggests a degree of verification. However, the picture is clouded by the fact that there was 28% more agreement in 2.9 than disagreement, whilst 2.8 also showed very high agreement (by almost 46%). The high agreement to 2.8 and the cross-tabulations for OG indicate verification of the Goal for Stds 6 and 7, especially as the Std 6s were very evenly divided on 2.9: [41,8 : 40,0 : 18,2]. Yet, looking at the total sample, the anomaly of the 28% agreement to 2.9 seems to suggest that the respondents did not grasp the relationship between 2.8 and 2.9. Perhaps the word "style" was not understood; or creating special effects was not seen to be different from writing "in the same kind of way". In defence of the wording of these questions, it is difficult to render Goal 4.1.4 into something specific and simple enough to be understood by thirteen-year-olds.

There was no problem with Goal 4.1.5:

> That pupils be introduced to (use = HG) some of the devices of cohesion and coherence.

This was tested in 2.10 and 2.13, which assert that practice in writing has helped "to express my ideas better" (2.10) and "to think and write more clearly" (2.13). As noted before, answers to these questions were consistent. Further cross-tabulations did not throw up any anomalies in terms of the sub-groups School, Std, Sex and Grade. The frequency tallies confirm an average 37-39% agreement over disagreement. Thus Goal 4.1.5 is clearly verified.

Further observations on OG writing work

Differences between the responses of OG and HG pupils were obvious in Questions 2.1 to 2.4 of the questionnaire. In summary, the older pupils preferred the challenges of subjective and discursive writing (2.1 and 2.3) and were less interested in narrative and poetry (2.2 and 2.4).

More specifically, these trends can be seen in 2.1 ("I like writing about myself and life") where Stds 6, 7 and 8 disagree by between 7% and 20% majority over the agreements, whereas both Stds 9 and 10 agree with the proposition (by 19% and 5%). HG pupils agree as a group (by 7%) and OG pupils disagree (by 16%). Statistically, the differences are not large enough to be significant.

Yet the trend is again seen in the answers to 2.2 ("I like inventing stories and characters"). Here the degree of agreement wanes in an almost perfect progression as one moves up the school:

Std 6:	by 73%
Std 7:	by 59%
Std 8:	by 62%
Std 9:	by 40%
Std 10:	by 23%

Over one third of the total sample of pupils agreed that they liked writing poems, though the disagreement factor was 20% higher than agreement: [36,0 : 56,3 : 7,7]. It was the Std 6 group who showed the most enthusiasm for writing poems: [45,0 : 44,0 : 11,0]. Yet the Std 7s mirrored the overall picture above. HG generally showed more emphatic disagreement.

Poetry appears to be a less daunting concept to Std 6s, whose comparative lack of inhibitions and greater freedom (both in terms of pressure and syllabus) might be the obvious explanations. But teachers ought to take note that in this survey almost 30% of the Std 10s were still keen on writing poetry. Many might also be surprised to learn that there were no statistically significant differences between the sexes with

regard to poetry writing. Though 10% more girls agreed with 2.4, there were more boys who could not decide:

Boys:	29,9	59,8	10,3
Girls:	39,4	54,5	6,3

On the other hand, boys distinctly disagreed with the proposition that they liked writing about themselves and life (by 20%), whilst the girls tended to agree with 2.1 (by 5%). The difference, however, was not large enough to be statistically significant.

Question 2.5 explores the effect of television and videos on writing: "I often borrow ideas from TV, videos, etc. because I don't know what to write". Here again a clear trend emerges in relation to age and maturity. Overall, disagreement is clear: [30,8 : 55,1 : 14,2]. But, by Grade, OG disagreement is only 5% higher than agreement, whereas with HG it is 39%. This was found to be statistically significant at the 5% level. By Stds, the significance is clear at the 1% level.

The younger pupils tend to agree far more than the older pupils: Std 6 disagreed by 11% and the Std 7s were equally divided. But the Std 10s rejected the proposition vehemently: [4,5 : 88,6 : 6,9]. Std 8 was fairly divided, but in Std 9 rejection was strong (by 29%).

Similar opposition to the influence of television is seen in 3.5 and will be discussed in the HG chapter. OG pupils are apparently more inclined to watch television and are more susceptible to its influences. But one cannot rule out the possibility that, over the years, training in the classroom on how and what to write frees pupils from reliance upon outside sources for ideas.

Somewhat disturbing was the Std 6 reaction to the idea that "Composition work is boring" (2.7). School 1 rejected this strongly (by 60%), but School 2 accepted it (by 20%). On balance, up to one third of the Std 6 sample was inclined to agree, which is higher than the average. This matter will be discussed more fully when the schools are compared.

Teachers often believe that practice makes perfect, so that more practice in writing will improve a child's spelling and grammar (2.11). Overall, there was strong agreement for this idea (by 42%), but there were significant differences in the reactions of the Stds that tend to support the 'maturity syndrome' hypothesis. Compare Std 6 to Std 10:

Std 6:	83,6	10,9	5,5
Std 10:	38,6	38,6	22,7

Perhaps by Std 10, grammar and spelling have improved enough for those pupils to be undecided as to whether writing practice is helping at all.

Of the components of the English curriculum, Written Communication (composition work) is arguably the most controversial, eliciting strong views from parents, pupils and many harassed English teachers. Some of the problems will be discussed when Written Communication as it relates to HG is explored.

In summary

1. Consistency of answering checks were plagued with further problems arising from the terminology employed in the statements of the Pupil Questionnaire. Clearly, the term "composition work" was variously interpreted in 2.7. Only one consistency check indicated no anomalies.

2. Likewise, attempts statistically to verify Goal 4.1.4 of the syllabus were unsuccessful for reasons of terminology, occasioned by trying to translate "elements of style" and other jargon into language simple enough for Std 6s. Yet, enough evidence emerged to indicate that, for OG at least, Goal 4.1.4 was verified by the sample. No problems emerged with Goal 4.1.5 (devices of cohesion and coherence) and, in the sample, it appears to be clearly verified.

3. Older pupils apparently prefer subjective and discursive writing, whilst OG pupils show more interest in narrative forms.

4. Over one third of the sample indicated their enjoyment of writing poems, even in Std 10.

5. Again some evidence emerged to suggest that television and videos have a lesser effect upon the work of older pupils.

6. It seems that practice in writing may improve spelling and grammar in the younger standards, but the 'maturity syndrome' renders this doubtful by Std 10.

2.6 LANGUAGE STUDY

Consistency checking

To check for consistency of answering, the responses to Questions 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 (which make three positive claims about the value of comprehension work) were com-

pared to 4.4 of Section A of the Pupil Questionnaire: "Comprehension work has not actually taught me anything - like a crossword puzzle, you can either do it, or you can't". The cross-tabulations showed very high consistency of answering.

Verifying the Goals of the OG syllabus

Differences between the HG and OG syllabi as regards Language Study are summed up on page 28. These differences emerged clearly in the survey. Parts of Q 4 of the questionnaire understandably do not apply to both Grades. Specifically, 4.10 and 4.11 have no direct relevance to the OG syllabus and were included in order to verify Goal 5.1.6 HG, discussion of which follows in the next chapter.

However, Goals 5.1.1 OG and 5.1.2 HG are broadly similar:

> That pupils increase their ability to comprehend language in action (OG);
> That pupils improve their comprehension in reading and listening (HG).

Both refer to what the questionnaire terms "comprehension work". To verify these Goals, 4.1 ("Comprehension work has taught me to read carefully") and 4.2 ("Comprehension work has taught me to think about what I am reading") were cross-tabulated. In all cross-tabulations run, the null hypothesis was rejected emphatically and the frequency tallies obtained attest to the respondents' appreciation of the value of comprehension work:

4.1:	74,9	17,8	7,3
4.2:	81,0	13,8	5,3

The Goal seems to be verified conclusively.

Further observations on OG language study

Formal grammar is strongly defended by the OG group. There are two possible reasons for this. Firstly, the OG syllabus lists a large amount of grammar which should be mastered and, consequently, the OG classes budget more time for studying such things as "... parts of speech, phrases and clauses, transitive and intransitive verbs, concord, direct and reported speech, tense, active and passive (voice), etc." (4.5 = note). The second reason is probably the 'maturity syndrome'. Over the years, pupils acquire basic grammatical skills in the same way in which they improve their spelling, namely by a gradual process associated with maturity. This comes about with years of exposure to and practice of written, oral and reading skills in all kinds of contexts, formal and informal. Thus, by Stds 9 and 10, pupils are likely to be less

convinced that "Grammar lessons have helped me to write more correctly" (4.5) and more inclined to the view that grammar is a bore, or is pointless.

Thus statistically significant differences are to be found in the responses of the two Grades to 4.5 (above), 4.6 ("Through grammar lessons, I can now see what my teacher means when he corrects my composition errors") and 4.7 ("Grammar lessons repeat the same old thing year after year").

Std 6 enthusiasm for the claim that "Grammar lessons have helped me to write more correctly" (4.5) must be gratifying to many teachers who labour hard with concepts whose relevance they themselves often doubt: [90,9 : 7,3 : 1,8]. By Std 7, however, the keenness seems attenuated somewhat: [57,4 : 31,5 : 11,1]. By Stds 9 and 10, there is an almost equal number agreeing and disagreeing. The figures for both Std and Grade were found to be statistically significant at the 1% level:

OG:	74,3	19,3	6,4
HG:	46,4	38,4	15,2

Question 4.6 produced very similar results. Agreement was general with no group disagreeing:

	% of A over D
Std 6:	65,5
Std 7:	44,5
Std 9:	17,3
Std 10:	27,3

By Grade, differences were significant at the 5% level, OG agreeing more strongly.

That the grammar syllabus is tiresomely repetitive from year to year was accepted without a dissenting group (4.7). Most Stds produced figures close to the overall average: [67,2 : 23,5 : 9,3]. Std 6 showed least agreement (by 42%) and Std 10 most agreement (by 52%). But, when the Grades were compared, the differences became statistically significant with HG showing much stronger agreement:

OG:	59,6	24,8	15,6
HG:	73,2	22,5	4,3

This pattern is to be expected, given the nature of the syllabi.

Pupils often complain that English grammar is difficult (4.8) and, overall, this

premise was supported by a majority of 41%. Agreement, however, was lowest in Std 6 (by 25%, with 24% "Don't knows") and highest in Std 8 (by 55%, with 7% "Don't knows"). After the first year of the HG syllabus, agreement decreases in Stds 9 and 10 to the average, presumably as pupils become familiar with the new emphasis.

Again Std 6 support for grammar is seen in 4.9: "Grammar is seldom any use for exams". At School 1, there was zero support for this proposition and 92% objected to it. The two Std 6 groups together showed disagreement by 74,5%, but by Std 7 this had dropped to 38,9%. It must be pointed out that Std 7s spend more time on mastering 'setwork' analysis (examined for the first time that year) than Std 6s. It would follow that examinations in Std 6 are largely language orientated and that grammar would form a large part of these.

Questions 4.10 and 4.11 focus on 'loaded language' - the language of persuasion - and how "writers can manipulate people", as well as consideration of the author's "purpose" (intention) in writing. This is HG material, which explains the high "Don't know" factor in the responses of Stds 6 and 7 (28% to 39%). It is doubtful whether the Std 6s understand the implications of 4.10 and so their agreement was comparatively tentative:

4.10:	Std 6:	49	15	36
	Std 10:	75	18	7
4.11:	Std 6:	31	40	29
	Std 10:	57	27	16

Reactions to 4.12 ("I cannot see the point of summary work") were particularly illuminating, especially as they concern the two schools. This point will be taken further in another chapter, but, as regards the responses of the Grades, a statistically significant difference was noted, which merits short discussion.

As noted before (page 28), summary work is not actually itemised in the OG syllabus, yet Std 7s are expected to be examined on it (for 20 marks). The 'new syllabus' textbooks which have become available locally for Language Study include sections on different types of summary work. The result is that summary work, while rather vague in Std 6, is certainly launched in elementary fashion during Std 7. It is probably this tentative approach in OG, occasioned by an ambiguity in the syllabus, that accounts for the comparative uncertainty compared to HG. Furthermore, it must be realised that summarising successfully is a mature skill, which is more palatable to senior pupils and more relevant to their immediate study needs in other subjects. Thus disagreement was much higher in HG:

OG:	33,0	52,3	14,7
HG:	28,3	67,4	4,3

The final question suggests that "Language exams are more entertaining than useful in testing what we know" (4.13). Here the comparative reluctance of the girls to make up their minds recalls similar wavering in Q 3 (page 36: 3.13, 3.17 and 3.20). Girls were less inclined to agree to 4.13 than boys and, although the differences were not statistically significant, the tendency remains interesting. Perhaps it is not indecisiveness so much as greater tolerance or greater insight that explains the female hesitation, a point which future researchers might be interested to investigate:

4.13:	Boys:	35,6	47,1	17,2
	Girls:	22,5	46,2	31,2

In summary

1. Consistency checking showed no anomalies in the answering of the questions.

2. Goal 5.1.1 (on comprehension) was conclusively verified in the survey.

3. The efficacy of grammar teaching was strongly defended by the OG group, but the HG sample was less enthusiastic.

4. The grammar syllabus was found to be tediously repetitive by all groups.

5. Skills of summarising were better appreciated by the older pupils.

CHAPTER THREE

SENIOR SECONDARY COURSE: HIGHER GRADE: English First Language

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Although the Senior Secondary Course HG syllabus for English First Language was also introduced into schools from 1 January 1986, unlike the Junior Secondary Course syllabus, it was not to appear simultaneously in all three years of the HG course. Instead, it was only the Std 8s who confronted the new syllabus in 1986, Stds 9 and 10 remaining on the 1973 syllabus. Thus it was this same generation of Std 8s who were to write the pioneering Senior Certificate examination on the new syllabus at the end of 1988. It follows that it was not possible to conduct an illuminative evaluation of the 1986 syllabus until 1988, when, for the first time, all three years of the Senior Secondary phase would be occupied with the new syllabus. Accordingly, this survey was timed for the middle of 1988.

It is worth pointing out that by that stage the Std 10s had experienced two and a half years of the new HG syllabus and the Std 8s had been through two years of the new OG syllabus and six months of HG.

Perhaps, more than any considerations of mid-adolescent turmoil, it is this last factor of brief acquaintance with a syllabus that is in many ways very different in emphasis from OG that accounts for the striking indecisiveness and comparative confusion of the Std 8 responses. Throughout the survey, the Std 8 group appears reluctant to commit itself on key issues and, at times, their high "Don't know" response blurs the statistical significance of otherwise clear HG trends. An example of this has been discussed on page 39 of the previous chapter and concerns reactions to 3.9.

Another group which emerges through the survey as being somewhat negatively out of step is the Std 10 class from School 1. This problem will be investigated fully in the chapter on the schools. Suffice it to say that, in a comparatively small-scale survey such as this, the presence of a maverick group can blur the clarity of the picture. The reactions of this class are very different in many cases from the other classes in School 1 and are often strikingly different from their counterparts in School 2.

It is not necessary to repeat the distinctions between the OG and HG syllabi, as these are summarised on pages 27 and 28 of the previous chapter. Likewise the consistency of answering tests have been fully discussed under the relevant headings in that chapter. Verification of the syllabus Goals have in almost every case also been

presented in Chapter Two. None of these will be repeated. This chapter must, however, be read in conjunction with the OG section as many points affecting the HG situation are raised there.

In summary

The 1986 HG syllabus was first examined at Senior Certificate level in 1988, which was the time when this survey was undertaken. As at that stage the Std 8s had only worked with the syllabus for six months, this may account for their comparative indecisiveness in responding to the Pupil Questionnaire.

3.2 ORAL COMMUNICATION

Discussion of the cross-tabulation of 1.2 ("Orals have helped me to be more self-confident about speaking in public") and 1.4 ("Through doing oral work in English, I find it is now easier for me to give my opinions in other classes and to stand up and ask questions") of the Pupil Questionnaire is presented on page 30, but what is not shown is the surprising lack of confidence displayed by the Std 10s in answer to 1.4. Having displayed the strongest agreement of any group to 1.2 (by 43%), the Std 10s actually disagreed with 1.4 (by 2%) and one quarter of them could not decide. The only other group to mirror this reaction (almost exactly) was the Std 8s, whose agreement to 1.2 had been much more tentative.

The uncertainty of Std 8s generally has been commented upon, but it is difficult to explain why the Std 10 group, whose maturity is normally very obvious, is unsure about voicing opinions and asking questions in other classes. Of course it is possible that they focused on the words "Through doing oral work in English" and rejected 1.4 on the grounds that their abundant self-confidence had nothing to do with English lessons. But, if this is how they interpreted the question, it is clearly out of step with the next age-group, the Std 9s, whose degree of agreement to both questions is similar. The results of the consistency test do not support any diversity of interpretation of the questions. It remains puzzling, as classroom experience certainly negates the notion that Std 10s struggle to raise the confidence to ask questions and voice opinions.

A classic indication of the dilemmas and indecisiveness of Std 8 - and this time it can hardly be attributed to brief acquaintance with the syllabus - is seen in their reaction to 1.3 ("I enjoy speaking to the whole class"): [21,4 : 47,6 : 31,0] (average DK = 16,2). Questions 1.7, 1.8 and 1.9 assert that oral encourages clarity of thinking, fluency of expression and correctness. Here again the Std 8s recorded

the highest level of "Don't knows": 50% in 1.7 and 1.8 (18% above average); 38% in 1.9 (8% above average).

In summary

1. An unexpected diffidence and lack of confidence emerged from the Std 10s in connection with asking questions and voicing their opinions in other classes.

2. A clear example of the indecisiveness of the Std 8 group was noted.

3.3 READING AND LITERATURE STUDY

The HG responses to this section of the Pupil Questionnaire are characterised by a gratifying maturity of attitude shown by the Std 10s and, as before, perplexity amongst the Std 8s.

It is very encouraging to note that Std 10s were the most enthusiastic respondents to 3.1 ("I enjoy reading"): [88,6 : 11,4 : 0,0]. This is despite the many preoccupations of the matriculation year. To underline the point, it was again the senior classes (and Std 6) who claimed the highest agreement to 3.3 ("I read a lot at home"), with 64-65% of Stds 9 and 10 agreeing. This reading does not, according to the Std 10s, extend to a preference for magazines and light reading as opposed to "books" (3.6). Again the Std 10 opinion was the most emphatic of all. The rejection from Stds 9 and 10 of 3.5 ("I don't read much because of TV and videos") was about 50% higher than the agreements (see pages 39 and 44). Perhaps the twin factors of matriculation pressures and maturity of discrimination explain the Std 10 disenchantment with the largely puerile fare available on the small screen.

Though not statistically significant, it is interesting to note that the boys in the sample claim more parental encouragement to read than the girls do (3.4) and also claim to have more books at home (3.7):

3.7:	Boys:	80,5	16,1	3,4
	Girls:	68,8	23,7	7,5

Yet the girls enjoy reading more than the boys (see page 35-6). Is it that boys are naturally less inclined to read, so that their parents have to encourage them more?

Returning to the problems of Std 8, it may be that their disappointing responses to

such questions as 3.8 ("... I have learnt to read with greater understanding ...") and strong agreement with the view that teachers "... dig ... things that I can't see ..." out of literary texts (3.14) result from the prescribed literature that they have to study, particularly perhaps the Shakespeare play. It is noteworthy that of all the groups the Std 8s agreed most strongly with 3.18 ("The works we have to study are irrelevant to our lives") and with 3.19 ("It is pointless to study books, poems and plays that were written many years ago"). Compare the attitudes of the Std 10s to these questions:

3.18:	Std 8:	70,0	15,0	15,0
	Std 10:	38,6	43,2	18,2
3.19:	Std 8:	52,4	28,6	19,0
	Std 10:	25,0	65,9	9,1

Out of all the suggestions made by Std 8s to improve the English programme at school (Section B, Q 15), the first plea was for more relevant literature (10,4%) and the third most frequent request was to ban the study of Shakespeare (7,5%). But the anti-Shakespeare lobby was restricted only to School 1. By comparison, a negligible number of Std 10s suggested ousting the Bard (1,0%) and this request came exclusively from School 2. Suffice it to say that the value of the prescribed selections is less apparent at Std 8 level, where it is arguable that grasping Elizabethan English could be a problem.

Discussion of the verification of the syllabus Goal 3.1.3, particularly as it applies to OG, is to be found on page 36, where the cross-tabulation results of 3.10 and 3.11 are presented. What does not emerge clearly from that discussion is the fact that the Goal of "critical thinking" and expressing "their own views on literary works" can be regarded as verified in the case of Std 10, which was the only Std group to reject the null hypothesis. However, the group was split in terms of schools with School 1 demurring.

In retrospect, 3.15 ("Literature is there for enjoyment; it shouldn't be studied") is too much of a leading question to be taken seriously. If teenagers are given the choice between 'studying' something or just 'enjoying' it, their vote is highly predictable. It is arguable that if "Maths" or "Science" were substituted for "Literature" the results would have been the same, namely strong agreement. In the case of 3.15, this is strongest in Std 9 (by 50%) and weakest in Std 10 (agreement by 13%). If there is any encouragement to be taken from this, it is perhaps that the school-leaving group is beginning to grasp the richness of education. Again the school factor is interesting (disagreement at School 2 in Std 10) and will be dis-

cussed later. The responses to 3.17 ("Setwork lessons are boring") fit the same mould. Although OG disagrees and HG agrees, the differences are not statistically significant, possibly because of the high "Don't know" factor in OG (21,1%).

Goal 3.1.8 of the HG syllabus mentions the study of "literary works from Southern Africa". Though this Goal is not reflected accurately in 3.20 ("I prefer to study South African literature"), as the Goal goes on to mention other non-British sourced literature including translations and specifies "Southern" not South Africa, the responses are interesting: [16,6 : 59,1 : 24,3]. The "Don't know" factor rises to 30% in one group and this seems to indicate that little South African literature is in fact studied. Disagreement is highest in Std 10 (by 60%) with only 14% "Don't knows". By this stage of their careers, these pupils may have studied a full length novel in HG such as The Beadle, may have met Pauline Smith again in a short story anthology (perhaps reading The Pain) and have encountered a small number of South African poems since Std 8. The OG fare may have included some Herman Charles Bosman and a few poems. Clearly, none of this has impressed the Std 10 group and the question arises again as to whether freedom to select texts for study might not result in more effective teaching than the present system of prescriptions in HG. Of course, teachers seeking more 'relevant' Southern African literature to offer to HG pupils are likely to enter a politically sensitive area - some will remember the debacle that ensued when an attempt was made to introduce an Athol Fugard play into the HG prescriptions some years ago. With the current political debate in South Africa, it is quite possible that more will be done to bring contemporary South African writing into the classrooms of state schools and thus, perhaps, the prejudice against indigenous literature will be eased.

Discussion of 3.18, 3.21, 3.22 and 3.23 in the light of syllabus Goals 3.1.5 and 3.1.6 OG (3.1.4 and 3.1.5 HG) is to be found on pages 37 and 38. These questions probe the relevance of literature to the personal development of the pupils. Here it is perhaps sufficient to point out that the Std 10 responses are, predictably, the most mature and encouraging, whereas Std 8 is very often uncertain. One illustration will suffice: Q 3.23 ("Literature makes us think about what is right and wrong"):

Std 10:	68,2	22,7	9,1
Std 8:	40,5	31,0	28,6
Std 8 School 2:	33,3	33,3	33,3

In summary

1. Despite the pressures of Std 10, this group emerged as keen readers.

2. Some evidence surfaced to suggest that the Std 8s are not keen on their prescribed literature, possibly because of resistance to Elizabethan English (at least at School 1).

3. Goal 3.1.3 of the HG syllabus (on "critical thinking" and adequate expression) seems to have been achieved with this Std 10 sample.

4. Questions 3.15 ("Literature ... shouldn't be studied") and 3.17 ("Setwork lessons are boring") seem to be too provocatively worded for a reasoned response.

5. Goal 3.1.8 (literary works from Southern Africa) is unlikely to be realised unless considerable modifications are made to the typical prescriptions given. The smattering of South African literature encountered by white High School pupils is generally not relevant to the sensitive issues of growing up within the current political debate.

6. From the Std 10 responses, it would seem that the value of studying literature is appreciated at this level.

3.4 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

Most of what needs to be said about HG responses to this section of the Pupil Questionnaire is covered in the OG chapter, largely because of the great similarities between the syllabi.

The point has been made that HG pupils tend to prefer the challenges of discursive and subjective writing to inventing stories (page 43). One question which takes this a step further is 2.12 ("Through doing writing tasks in English, my essay writing has improved in other subjects, e.g. history"). This is the kind of thing that the Global Aims of the Senior Secondary Course seek to foster in mentioning "English across the curriculum" (1.6).

Interestingly, the Std 9 group, who showed the greatest agreement to 2.3 ("I enjoy giving my ideas about things") by the huge margin of 71%, indicated the greatest degree of uncertainty about 2.12: [40,4 : 28,8 : 30,8]. The average response was one of strong agreement: [50,2 : 27,1 : 22,7] and the Std 8 and 10 answers fit this pattern.

It is fair to say that Std 9s are under a lot of pressure to master the techniques of discursive writing in various subjects and this may account for their comparative un-

certainty as to whether they are making progress. Certainly, in answering Section B Q 7 ("Does the English programme help you with your other subjects?"), the Std 9s were the least enthusiastic of the groups that voted "Yes: essay writing" into first spot. Of the 335 responses to this question, 22,1% mentioned discursive writing as the one aspect of English that helped most with other subjects. Of the Std 9 responses, only 14,1% selected this item, compared to 31% of the Std 8s and 26% of the Std 10s.

Question 12 of Section B enquires whether teachers of other subjects concern themselves about the pupils' use of English. Here 40% of the 268 responses itemised "Written expression". This topped the list, 1% ahead of the answer "No". The Std 8s and 10s followed the trend but again the Std 9s were out of step: their most popular response was "No" (60%) and then "Written expression" (20%). From the responses to this question, it seems that the history and biology teachers were the most concerned: 10,4% and 3,7% of all responses. Both these subjects require discursive writing in HG. Certainly, there seems to be a problem with Std 9 essay writing which future researchers might be interested to probe.

The problem with Written Communication is the perennial one of marking, a highly contentious issue which surfaces in this survey. The Parents' Questionnaire (Appendix 8.3.4, p.159) asks whether parents are "satisfied with the English programme ... at school" (Q 3). One parent wrote:

> Yes, relatively satisfied but I wish the books were MARKED more regularly and systematically so my child could see if he were on the right track.

The same parent comments further (Q 6: "Is there sufficient English homework?"):

> No - I would like more English homework; ... Besides, homework given is seldom marked!! This makes me MAD!

Another parent (Q 3) put it bluntly:

> Not enough essay work.

And, for Q 6, wrote:

> ... far more homework could be set. ... More essay work could definitely be given. A great lack here.

When parental concern is added to the fact that pupils enjoy writing tasks, the anguish of the English teacher is intensified. It has been said before (page 41) that this survey found Written Communication to be as popular as Reading (second only to Oral) in a list of things liked most about the English programme. Of the things liked least (Section B, Q 2), writing was bottom of the list with only 5,6% of 337 responses mentioning it. Asked whether pupils thought they were really learning any

thing (Q 5), top of the list was writing and self-expression (17,7% of 333); and the third most popular response to Q 6 was that their writing had improved through the work done in English classes. Add to this the responses to Q 7 (page 56) and the value of Written Communication is established beyond doubt.

Every conscientious English teacher is aware of his duties in this area - and the agony that goes with it:

> (Try to) Mark five or more pieces of written work a term. I have - and it's very tough going!

The contributions of the English teachers to this survey are alive with references to "marking load", "over-commitment", "all that marking" and the "time factor" (Questionnaire 2). One teacher concludes by saying (Q 11):

> English is the best subject in the school! The only one really worth teaching! Having said that, would somebody mind inventing a marking machine?

Most of the teachers in this survey would be teaching between 120 and 140 pupils. To carry out an effective writing programme (even at fewer than five pieces a term) becomes a full-time job with those numbers, if books are "marked ... regularly and systematically so my child could see if he were on the right track". There is simply no substitute for careful and sensitive marking of written work; no audience is more important to the child than that of a trained and experienced teacher. Marking machines do not exist and other short-cut methods are less than satisfactory. Writing is only one field of a four-core curriculum and time must be found for effective teaching of language, literature and oral expression as well. Yet writing is so important that to cut back on it seems almost criminal and certainly is one of the greatest sources of anxiety to an English teacher.

In summary

1. Discursive writing appears to be a problem for the Std 9 group.

2. With parents asking for more writing to be set and marked, and pupils also keen to write more at home and in class, English teachers expressed the anguish they feel in being unable to cope with the volume of marking. The problem is not amenable to easy solution, as there is no real substitute for careful and sensitive appraisal of written work by the teacher.

3.5 LANGUAGE STUDY

Goal 5.1.6 HG is not reflected in the OG syllabus (pages 46 and 48):

> That pupils distinguish between fact and opinion, objectivity and bias, emotion and sentimentality, and assess the function of such elements in given contexts.

To verify whether this Goal was being achieved, cross-tabulations were run on 4.10 ("Language lessons have shown me how writers can manipulate people, how they can influence, trick, or persuade people into accepting their views") and 4.11 ("I have learnt to detect the purpose that lies behind different kinds of writing"). The wording of these questions was made even more awkward by the attempt to include the concepts of "emotive language and dishonesty" taken from Goal 5.1.5.

Despite the tortuous wording, the gist of 4.10 and 4.11 seems to have been grasped by the HG pupils as the null hypothesis, that the answers to these questions would not be the same, was rejected in every case except Std 8. This excludes the OG responses. Closer examination of the frequency tallies shows that there was no problem with 4.10, where HG agreement over disagreement ranged from 35% to 56%, but 4.11, which focuses on intention, was rejected by Stds 8 and 9 (with a high "Don't know" rate):

4.11:	Std 8:	26	43	31
	Std 9:	33	46	21
	Std 10:	57	27	16

Detecting purpose is not an easy skill to master and thus the results above are not surprising. It remains pleasing to note that the Std 10 group is willing to agree (by 30%) and so it is probably fair to say that Goals 5.1.5 and 5.1.6 are being realised by the end of the HG course.

The discussion on comprehension work (page 46) focuses on OG and omits the interesting enthusiasm that the Std 8 group showed in responding to the first two items of Q 4, which assert that comprehension work improves reading. Here their level of agreement over disagreement was 78% in 4.1 and 4.2 (with "Don't knows" being in the acceptable area of 2-12%). This is much more in line with the OG responses and may reflect, after a mere six months, a carry-over of OG support for comprehension. Certainly, the Std 10s are less positive, agreeing to 4.1 by 35% and to 4.2 by 41% - though here clear differences emerge between the Std 10s of School 1 (much less positive) and School 2. Though the Std 8 responses to 4.1 and 4.2 were the most positive of any Std, their customary uncertainty emerged in relation to 4.3 ("Comprehension work has taught me to express myself carefully"). Here they agreed by 36%, but 26% recorded "Don't knows". Again the Std 10s were less enthusiastic and those of School 1 actually disagreed by a small majority.

It has been argued that the 'maturity factor' and the repetitive nature of the syl-

labi (pages 46 and 47) lead to a degree of boredom with Language Study as pupils move up the school. The Std 10 reaction to most questions in this section of the Pupil Questionnaire is at best listless and comparatively lukewarm, whilst responses to Q2 of Section B place Language Study as the least liked aspect of English. Of the 337 responses to this question, 53,7% opted for language work. Next in line was setwork at 22%. Oddly enough, of the Stds, 65% of the Std 6 responses placed language as least liked compared to 44% of the Std 10 responses. This may appear to be in direct contrast to what was noted about the comparative keenness of the OG group towards aspects of Language Study, but it must be pointed out that the logic of the questions in the two sections of the questionnaire is very different.

Section B offers a totally open-ended type of question to which any response or any number of responses from one pupil, ranging from (Q 2) "Nothing in particular" to "Everything equally", is possible. "What do you like least about (English)?" invites a rating list of possibilities and any item on this list need not be inconsistent with an earlier response to the specific and closed questions of Section A. In these, attention is drawn to nominated aspects of each section of the four-core English curriculum and responses are limited to three possibilities: True, False, Cannot say. Rating the items of preference is not what is asked for and, furthermore, there is a strong psychological pressure to record a response in the block provided, because of the agenda-like format of the questionnaire. In fact, only one respondent in the entire survey failed to complete all the questions in Section A, whereas a number ignored or passed over parts of Section B.

Thus, for example, Std 6s may in Section A agree strongly that (4.5) "Grammar lessons have helped me to write more correctly", because it is a specific issue, and yet, given the freedom to think about what they like least in the whole English programme, may validly select language work. Likewise, Std 10s may, through the 'maturity syndrome', decide that grammar lessons are not helping them to write correctly any more, yet (and again because of maturity factors) temper their dislike of language work because they can see its value over the years.

This is not to deny the value of the responses to Section B; it is simply to point out that inconsistencies with Section A are possible, because of the different logic of the situation.

In support of what was said about the Std 10s above, it is interesting to see that, when asked if the work done in English classes helped their use of English at all (Q 6), these pupils mentioned "Language usage improved". "Speaking improved" and "No" as their most popular answers (each at 16,4%). The support for language here was greater than any other Std group.

More work is done for examinations on language revision than anything else (Q 8): 39% of 318 responses spread evenly through the groups. "Setwork notes" was a poor second at 20%, though, by Std 10, the response was about the same as language. When asked what improvements pupils would like to see in the English programme (Q 15), the first specific suggestion was "Less language work" (11,8% of 432 responses). Further down the list, the concept of "Fun grammar" received mention from 9% of the Std 8 suggestions.

A problem which will be explored in more detail when the reactions of Schools are compared deserves brief mention here. In Section A, 4.13 suggests that "Language exams are more entertaining than useful in testing what we know". The total sample disagreed fairly strongly, though with a high "Don't know" factor, but the weakest degree of disagreement was to be seen in Std 10 (by 9%):

Total sample:	27,1	46,6	26,3
Std 10:	34,1	43,2	22,7

Two things may have influenced this response. The first has been (until this year) the lack of an indigenous textbook for Language Study designed for the 1986 syllabus up to Std 10 level. Secondly, Senior Certificate language papers have perplexed many teachers, who have criticised them on the grounds of caprice and unpredictability. The restrictive nature of this dissertation does not allow for a detailed investigation of this problem, beyond pointing out that it has been very unsettling for the Std 10 teachers at both schools in this survey. For example, the position and weight of formal grammar in the Std 10 syllabus is not clarified by recent question papers. Other areas of disquiet concern the centrality of dictionary work, cartoons and puns, ambiguity, and even 'traditional' skills of 'reported speech' and 'precis' to the syllabus. Given the lack of suitable textbooks, it has been difficult to know what to set in internal examinations, or even what to teach in Language Study. Repeated recourse to recent Senior Certificate papers has failed to highlight any clear directions in language examining, other than the broad factor of "language in action". Teachers look to the allocation of marks given to various areas of language work in the final paper as a guide to their relative importance and here the picture is even murkier. That the papers are "more entertaining" these days is not disputed. How "useful" they are in testing language knowledge, future researchers may be tempted to investigate.

In summary

1. Goal 5.1.6 (on 'loaded' language) appears to be realised by the end of the HG course.

2. As suggested before, interest in and appreciation of the Language Study component appears to wane as pupils grow older, possibly because of the repetitive syllabus and the 'maturity syndrome'.

3. It was pointed out that responses to Section B of the Pupil Questionnaire cannot be compared directly to responses from Section A, owing to the different logic of the situations.

4. Pupils in the sample claim to spend more time revising for language examinations than any other component of English.

5. Dissatisfaction with current Senior Certificate language papers resulted in over one third of the Std 10s agreeing that "Language exams are more entertaining than useful in testing what we know" (4.13). Teachers from both schools expressed considerable disquiet at the range of topics examined, the allocation of marks to these topics, and the often tenuous relationship of the paper to the published syllabus.

CHAPTER FOUR

TWO SCHOOLS: TWO ENGLISH DEPARTMENTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

What follows in these pages is an attempt to highlight some of the more interesting issues affecting the English programmes at the two schools in the survey. It is hoped that some of these findings will be useful to those schools in the future planning of their English programmes.

Of necessity, comparisons will have to be drawn and certain contrasts indicated, as, in a sense, each school provides a control group function in respect of the other. It must be clearly understood that the comment arising from this and the comparisons themselves are made purely in the interests of constructive research. No criticisms are intended; neither is it in the nature of this survey to be judgemental.

Again, it must be pointed out that, in terms of the conditions laid down by the CED, no school, individual, or official may be identifiable in any way.

4.2 SCHOOL ONE

This is essentially a suburban, co-educational High School, drawing nearly all of its 770 pupils from its immediate white residential environment. The school is English-speaking, though a number of its pupils come from homes where both official languages are used. It would be fair to say that the community which the school has served for over a century is stable and conservative, culturally unambitious and, by today's standards, not particularly upwardly mobile. Most of the parents are salaried workers and very few are in the recognised professional groups.

The English department operates 30 English classes, giving an average of 25,5 pupils per group. As five of these are SG groups, which tend to be below average in size, the HG classes used in the survey would average out at about 28 pupils in number in normal circumstances when no pupils are absent. The number of boys and girls in the school is roughly equal (girls = 53%), but, of the sample used in the survey, 62% were girls.

In Stds 9 and 10, both the HG and the SG classes are 'set' on the timetable. Thus,

for example, all the Std 10 HG English classes meet simultaneously each day. This has allowed for fluidity between the groups so that pupils of similar English ability are grouped together. At the extremes, there is a 'top' English set and a 'bottom' HG set. Because the English department controls the composition of the groups, the size of each can be evened out. Naturally, one of the reasons for this arrangement is to allow for 'team-teaching', where some or all of the classes are combined for core-material lessons led by one or more members of the team. With the Prescribed Literature, for instance, one teacher will present to all the classes involved the lead-in material and will prepare the follow-up material for the rest of the team to use in their individual classes later. He thus becomes responsible for piloting the study of a text, e.g. the novel, and for examining it, marking all the papers across the standard. Not only does this mean that all the pupils in a standard receive the same essential fare, but it also reduces the amount of preparation that each teacher must do, as only one 'expert' is needed for the teaching of each text. Standardisation of examining benefits are obvious.

Stds 6 to 8 are not set in this way and here the English classes are simply the register classes. Most of these are mixed ability groups, dependent on subject choice for their composition, but a degree of 'streaming' does operate loosely in each standard. Thus again a 'top' and a 'tail' is evident in each standard, but these are not defined by English ability and the 'top' group may include a number of pupils who are certainly not among the best at English.

All the teachers in the English department are English graduates and all are very experienced, save for one first-year teacher. This has allowed for a system of English 'Standard Heads' to be introduced in order to give English teachers the opportunity to organise and administer a 'mini English department' in each standard. Thus the control of English in each standard is in the hands of one teacher who designs the programme for that standard, from selecting texts to drawing up a detailed work scheme covering the whole year. That teacher is free to decide policy and to set goals in consultation with his team - and within the restraints of the syllabus and general English department policy. He also organises the examining in each standard and moderates both the scripts and the marks.

The English department at School 1 is fortunate to have access to an English department office, where, apart from the storage of all textbooks, a library of video tapes, lessons and examination papers is maintained. Teachers are encouraged to share resources and to put successful lessons on file. The room also acts as a study, where marking and preparation can be done, as well as a meeting place.

The Goals of the English department are explicitly stated (see Appendix 8.2.1, p.141)

require only brief comment here.

Goal 1.1: Results: The HG average in 1987 was in fact 0,6% lower than the Provincial Median. But the goal of being on or above the median in 1988 was not achieved: School 1: 50,5%, Provincial Median: 54,7%.

Goal 1.2: Academic Standards: In May 1988, the language textbook needed for Std 7 appeared. The Std 9 book in this series was available in January 1989 and the Std 10 book was only introduced during 1990.

Goal 1.5: Enrichment: Of the activities suggested in the second paragraph, the Olympiad was not entered until 1989 and the Arts Festival was not attended. Attempts were made to have work published and a Std 9 girl won a prize in a national essay competition.

Further evaluation of these Goals will be given later in this chapter.

4.3 SCHOOL TWO

As is the case with School 1, School 2 is a co-educational High School for white pupils being taught through the medium of English. At the time of the survey, the enrolment stood at approximately 930 pupils. By comparison to School 1, it is a very much younger establishment with a less clearly-defined residential feeder area. The suburbs near the school house a comparatively more affluent population. A large number of the pupils commutes some distance to the school, owing to the lack of High School facilities in the two adjacent dormitory towns that feed the city. Generally speaking, the pupils come from wealthier, more culturally aware and more upwardly mobile backgrounds than their counterparts in School 1. The number of parents who belong to the traditional professional echelon is correspondingly very much greater.

Though there are 32 classes in the school, 33 English groups have been formed, which gives an average of about 28 pupils in each group. There are no SG groups. Girls outnumber boys in the school significantly (girls = about 65%) and, of the sample used in the survey, 67,5% were girls.

Unlike School 1, the timetable does not accommodate the 'setting' of English and so there are no English groups based on English ability. All could be characterised as mixed ability groups, though each standard has one "magnet" class which contains the top academic group in that standard, with one or two exceptions. Subject choice accounts for the composition of each group.

Clearly, therefore, the advantages which English teachers enjoy at School 1 in Stds 9 and 10 (see pages 62-3) do not apply. There is, however, a period of thirty minutes set aside for silent reading throughout the school once every two weeks. Though this need not be specifically English reading that is done, it is nevertheless impressive when the whole school stops to read in silence and is thus a welcome innovation.

As with School 1, the English department is fortunate to have well-qualified and experienced teachers. Including one part-time teacher who occupies a half-post at the school, the English staff number nine, of whom eight are qualified to teach to Std 10. Six of these have been at the school for more than three years and there are no first-year teachers. Thus it has been possible to develop a system of 'Standard Leaders', which operates in very similar fashion to the 'Standard Heads' of English in School 1 (see page 63 and Appendix 8.2.2).

The generating and sharing of resource material among teachers is also encouraged at School 2, though it has not been entirely successful. Meetings occur once per term at school and usually two major meetings of the English department are arranged over supper at teachers' homes in the course of a year. These latter meetings include a 'professional growth' factor where, for example, a teacher will present a lesson that has been successful for general comment. Other meetings occur as and when necessary. The English department does not have an English 'den' such as that at School 1.

In discussion with the English Subject Head, two clear goals of the English department emerged:

1. that the English department plays a vital and sustaining role in the cultural life of the school;
2. that teachers of English ensure that pupils study and prepare themselves for English examinations.

Thus, as can be seen from the English department policy sheet (see Appendix 8.2.2, p.144), the first-mentioned responsibility of the 'Standard Leader' is "To co-ordinate all matters to do with that standard such as films, oratory contests, creative drama." Paragraph (f) goes on to indicate "Areas of the school where the English department should be prominent" and lists nine cultural aspects. Furthermore, in the interview, the Subject Head declared that it was policy of his department that examinations set had to be on work that had been taught in the classroom and learnt by the pupils in the full understanding that it would in fact be examined. This latter point perhaps needs some clarification for those who might regard the policy as educationally self-evident.

Summarised, the second goal (page 65) implies the need for pupils to do some serious study for English examinations, analogous to the degree of preparation that one would expect of them before a science, mathematics, or history examination. The policy above then follows: English examinations must be relevant to the work actually taught in the classroom and not be a kind of general knowledge test, assuming a graded (by standard) general language competency tested by exposing pupils to a range of unseen texts and exercises suddenly produced in the paper. It is submitted that this has often been the case with both internal and external examining. It is further submitted that this plays into the hands of parents who assume that, because the child is English-speaking, he must naturally pass HG English; and it justifies the viewpoint of many pupils that they do not have to do any work for English, because they do not know where to start learning what is a vague, amorphous and 'creative' subject in which natural ability dictates how well you do.

Such an attitude on behalf of pupils is out of step with the demands and expectancies of the 1986 HG syllabi, which require the mastery of skills of appreciation and expression that can and must be taught, as only in child prodigies do they come naturally. Apart from wanting to minimise rude shocks in the final Senior Certificate examination, the English department is motivated by the fact that English is not taken seriously by many pupils who are inclined to sit back and regard it as 'soft', compared to subjects which demand disciplined study. If it will motivate pupils to go home and work on English in a constructive manner, it may even be advisable to indicate to them beforehand what to expect in the paper, so that the examinations are worth working for and confidence is restored in otherwise exasperated pupils.

There is little doubt that the first goal mentioned (page 65) of involvement in the cultural life of the school is being met without much difficulty. A perusal of the school magazine of 1988 indicates the wealth of cultural activity within the school and English teachers feature prominently in such cultural initiatives as drama, oratory, school newspaper, debating, book club and such board games as Scrabble and Trivial Pursuit.

The second goal, discussed above, will be explored further in a later part of this chapter, but, for purposes of comparison with School 1, the Senior Certificate English HG results are as follows:

		1987	1988
School 1:	Average %:	52,8	50,5
	Prov. Median:	53,4	54,7
	A-Symbols:	1	0
School 2:	Average %:	57,1	50,3
	Prov. Median:	53,4	54,7
	A-Symbols:	7	0

It must be noted that the 1988 results at School 2 were some 7% lower on average than those obtained in the previous three years. Moreover, no A-Symbols were awarded when many were expected (1986 = 3; 1985 = 8). Generally, the results at the top end of the scale were felt to be out of step with what the same pupils achieved in other subjects. The CED was asked to investigate the matter and the outcome of that inquiry is still pending.

It is the function of this study to illuminate and to evaluate areas of an English department - not to pre-empt the results of an official and confidential inquiry into Senior Certificate results. The matter is raised, as without it the picture would be incomplete. It is submitted, however, that future researchers could adapt the techniques of illuminative evaluation demonstrated in these pages to the specific task of this kind of investigation.

In summary

1. Similarities between the two schools:
   1.1 co-educational suburban High Schools - English medium;
   1.2 roughly comparable in size - both over 750 pupils.

2. Differences between the schools:
   2.1 School 1 is much older and serves a less affluent population;
   2.2 the pupils at School 1 are drawn very largely from the immediate suburban area - more of a 'community' school;
   2.3 girls comprise two thirds of the enrolment at School 2, compared to half at School 1.

3. Both English departments are staffed with qualified and experienced teachers, which allows for a 'Standard Head/Leader' system to flourish.

4. Class sizes are similar, but, at School 1, the Stds 9 and 10 groups are 'set' on the timetable, allowing for 'streaming' according to English ability and for team-teaching.

5. Local objectives of the English departments differ considerably in emphasis. School 1 focuses on matriculation results, improved academic standards, a reading and literacy programme, and the provision of enrichment activities. School 2 aims to train pupils to work for English examinations by creating a body of knowledge that can be learnt and is also keen that English should play a leading role in the cultural life of the school.

6. In 1988, both schools obtained similar English averages in the Senior Certificate examination, both about 4% below the Provincial Median. This represented a considerable drop from 1987 at School 2, whilst the aim of improving the results was not achieved at School 1.

4.4 QUESTIONNAIRE 1: THE PUPILS

Of the 247 pupils involved in this survey, 124 came from School 1 and 123 from School 2, so, for all intents and purposes, each school contributed exactly half of the total sample.

Before considering differences between the responses of each school, a table showing the composition of the sample by School, Std, Sex and Total of each Std follows for reference:

		Boy	Girl	Total x Std
School 1:	Std 6:	32,0	68,0	20,2
	Std 7:	42,9	57,1	22,6
	Std 8:	45,8	54,2	19,4
	Std 9:	26,9	73,1	21,0
	Std 10:	42,9	57,1	16,9
	Total	37,9	62,1	100,0
School 2:	Std 6:	46,7	53,3	24,4
	Std 7:	46,2	53,8	21,1
	Std 8:	22,2	77,8	14,6
	Std 9:	19,2	80,8	21,1
	Std 10:	21,7	78,3	18,7
	Total:	32,5	67,5	100,0

The total shows a distinct preponderance of girls in the survey, particularly in Stds 6 and 9 of School 1, and Stds 8 to 10 (the HG group) of School 2. So it is only in Stds 7, 8 and 10 (School 1) and Stds 6 and 7 (School 2) that a more even balance of the sexes is apparent.

The implications of these sex differentials to the findings of this study are not explored in any depth, as the restrictive nature of a half-thesis imposes boundaries on what can be investigated. Any further analysis of the responses in this survey should consider whether sex differences have coloured the results of this small-scale investigation. Where sex differences are of statistical significance to the results, note has been taken and mention of it made in the text.

In summary

1. The size of the sample was very evenly distributed between the two schools.

2. There was a preponderance of girls in the sample: 62% (School 1) and 67% (School 2).

Oral Communication

One factor which has not received its due recognition in the analysis thus far is that of the individual influence of particular teachers. In the entire classroom equation, most especially in First Language tuition, the influence that the teacher has upon the attitudes and progress of the pupils is of paramount importance. Wherever there are unusually vehement responses made by a particular class, whether enthusiastic or cynical, it is tempting to postulate the influence of that English teacher in the situation. Perhaps he encourages reading aloud (see page 32, Q 1.12), or creates a classroom atmosphere that causes inhibitions during oral work. Along this line of logic, everything could be explained in terms of the teacher. Yet experience shows that all too many classes lack effective teachers in High Schools, but still make positive progress and evolve encouraging attitudes.

A strength of this particular survey is the fact that the evaluator was unable to identify the teachers of the particular groups who took part. The selection of groups was made so that they and their teachers would remain anonymous. Thus the tendency to blame or praise all on the teacher was curbed and other possibilities had to be considered first. Obviously, those with more intimate knowledge of the classes and their teachers in this survey, namely those who made the selections of the participants, may interpret certain findings differently. But at least they will have been presented with other possibilities.

It is a poor evaluator who does not take the 'teacher factor' into account, whatever method he uses, and so a few cases of possible teacher influences have been highlighted in this study.

Of the areas of the English programme covered in the Pupil Questionnaire, some are more obviously amenable to 'teacher factor' responses than others. Reading aloud has been mentioned (page 32), but group work is another (1.5). The Std 8 group at School 2 showed a surprisingly high degree of agreement to "I prefer group work to individual orals":

School 2:	83,3	5,6	11,1
School 1:	50,0	45,8	4,2
Average:	68,0	25,1	6,9

The same tendency from that class is seen in their response to 1.9 ("Through oral lessons I find I think more clearly and can organise my thoughts better"):

School 2:	44,4	11,1	44,4
School 1:	20,8	45,8	33,3
Average:	30,5	39,4	30,1

Std 8 at School 2 thus shows twice as much positive agreement to 1.9 than their counterparts at School 1. It may be that this class has a very positive oral work programme operating through groups, whereas the teacher at School 1 may be doing things that are less effective and appealing. Perhaps again this factor is traceable in the responses of the Std 6 classes to 1.9:

	Std 6: % of A over D
School 1:	52,0
School 2:	6,7

It seems clear that this Std 6 class at School 1 is generally more enthusiastic about oral work than its comparable group at School 2. At least its responses to 1.1 ("I feel shy or embarrassed when I have to do orals"), 1.2 ("Orals have helped me to be more self-confident about speaking in public"), 1.3 ("I enjoy speaking to the whole class") and 1.4 ("Through oral ... it is now easier for me to give my opinions ... and to ... ask questions") are less inhibited:

1.1:	School 1: Std 6:	20,0	68,0	12,0
	School 2:	56,7	30,0	13,3
1.2:	School 1: Std 6:	68,0	28,0	4,0
	School 2:	53,3	26,7	20,0
1.3:	School 1: Std 6:	52,0	36,0	12,0
	School 2:	26,7	50,0	23,3
1.4:	School 1: Std 6:	56,0	36,0	8,0
	School 2:	33,3	36,7	30,0

A similar situation, though reversed in terms of the schools, pertains in Std 10, where the responses from School 2 are distinctly more positive. The Std 10 'maverick factor' at School 1 is mentioned on page 50 and is certainly visible in the responses to the questions on oral work, particularly in 1.14 ("Personally, I don't think that oral work in English has helped me much"):

School 1:	61,9	38,1	0,0
School 2:	21,7	69,6	8,7
Average:	27,5	56,7	15,8

Comparing the responses to 1.2, the Std 10s at School 2 were the most enthusiastic of all the classes in supporting the contention that oral work aids confidence in public speaking, whereas their counterparts at School 1 were comparatively lukewarm, their agreement being about 13% lower than the overall average:

School 2:	73,9	8,7	17,4
School 1:	47,6	28,6	23,8
Average:	56,3	24,3	19,4

Two distinct tendencies emerge in the survey with regard to the Std 10s. Firstly, there is what has been called the 'maverick factor' in the Std 10 class at School 1, by which is meant that this class is negatively out of step with the prevailing opinions of all the other classes in both its own school and School 2. This certainly does not happen all the time, but the tendency shows itself enough to be noteworthy. Secondly, the Std 10s at School 2 are similar to the Std 6s at School 1 in reflecting a generally positive attitude to many of the issues in the survey. They are not out of step with the other groups, but, comparatively speaking, are often more decisive and enthusiastic.

It has been suggested that, in the second case, such clear enthusiasms may stem from teacher influence. The problem with Std 10 at School 1 is complex, as very often their reactions to questions probing the effectiveness of the syllabus are normal in terms of the average response and those of the other Std 10s. But, where a question makes a sweeping statement (such as 1.14 above), this class seems to exhibit a degree of cynicism which is unique in the survey. The impression is gained that they are not incapable of appreciating the work in English, but that they cannot accept the relevance of the programme to their own lives. More discussion about this class will follow in this chapter.

One question in Section B of the Pupil Questionnaire addresses the 'teacher factor' directly, namely Q 3:

> "Is your teacher important in what you feel about English? Does he/she influence the way you feel about the subject?"

This elicited 228 responses, 124 from School 1 and 104 from School 2. With reference to the classes mentioned above, some interesting contrasts emerged.

The bright and positive attitude of Std 6 at School 1 has been remarked upon and their response to Q 3 is quite different from the Std 6s at School 2:

	Yes	No	Cannot say
School 1:	88,0	8,0	4,0
School 2:	18,2	54,5	27,3
Average:	75,0	18,4	6,6

The Std 6 class at School 2 was the only group to respond negatively to Q 3. The Std 7s at the same school recorded a 'Yes' vote of 92,3% with no negatives and 7,7% unable to say. In response to Q 4 ("What makes a good English teacher?"), the Std 6s at School 2 nominated 'innovative teaching' first (19%), whereas this factor attracted only 2% of the Std 6 response at School 1 and 4% of the Std 7s at School 2. There appears to be a problem with the Std 6 class at School 2 with regard to their perception of the teaching they receive.

Another group at the same school which rates 'innovative teaching' (along with 'enthusiasm') as their top criterion for good English teaching was the Std 10s (both 13% of their total nominations). But this class, whose attitudes are generally positive, agreed (91,3%) that their English teacher was important in influencing their attitude to the subject. Here the inference is one of satisfaction, even admiration, of the teaching they receive.

There seems to be some evidence that positive attitudes, as in Std 6 (School 1) and Std 10 (School 2), are related to the influence of the individuals who teach those classes.

However, these two questions in Section B do not shed much light on the puzzle of the Std 10s at School 1. They admitted the influence of their English teacher quite readily (Q 3) with 71% indicating a 'Yes' and 24% disagreeing, which is not a striking difference from the average response. Their top criterion for a good English teacher was "Explains well" (14%); then followed 'innovative teaching' and 'enthusiasm' (both 10%).

In summary

1. Comparative enthusiasm for oral work in Std 6 (School 1) and for group work in orals (Std 8, School 2) seems to suggest evidence of the 'teacher factor' in English studies.

2. The Std 10 class at School 1 was shown to be frequently out of step with prevailing attitudes (the 'maverick factor').

3. The Std 6 class at School 2 appeared to be negative about its teacher.

Reading and Literature Study

In this section, it will be argued that there is strong evidence that the English department goal at School 1 (1.4, see Appendix 8.2.1, p.141) is being achieved:

> Our campaign to woo pupils into the reading habit has been highly successful in Stds 6 and 7 and must once again be aggressively pursued. It is essential that time be set aside regularly in these classes for reading and visiting the library.

This has been a priority of School 1 since 1986, as it was felt that a lot of children came from homes where reading was not a normal family pursuit, where books were few and of unsuitable quality, and where visits to the local library were at best very rare. Poor reading skills crippled achievement in English in many cases (let alone in other subjects) and were directly responsible for inarticulate speaking and written expression. At PTA meetings, staff were forever advising anxious parents to make their children read, but the school was doing little about it.

Thus in 1986 a campaign was launched, aimed particularly at Stds 6 and 7 and given enthusiastic impetus by the new school librarian, herself an experienced English teacher. Funds were secured to purchase additional sets of relevant and appealing readers; at least one third of the weekly teaching time was set aside for uninterrupted silent reading; pupils were badgered into joining their local municipal libraries; each had to have a book at school every day; lists were kept and monitored; and the OG pupils worked through twice as many books as are prescribed in the syllabus reading programme.

The school library was greatly improved and was made available to pupils as a gathering place before and after school, as well as during breaks. It became a busy part of the school, both socially and academically.

Borrowings from the library began to rise steadily: from 7 (in 1986) to 11 books per pupil by the end of 1988, effectively a 57% improvement. School 2 at that stage had a borrowing rate of 8 books per pupil, which compares with the Provincial average of 11. As borrowings from the school library tail off distinctly by Std 10, it is arguable that the borrowing rate in Stds 6 and 7 at School 1 showed a far greater improvement than the 57% overall recorded during the reading campaign.

Further evidence that this ongoing goal at School 1 is being achieved is to be found in the responses to the Pupil Questionnaire. Almost 81% of the respondents at School

1 claimed that they enjoyed reading (3.1) and the percentage agreement over disagreement amounted to 69% (compared to 49% at School 2). In response to 3.2 ("I often take books out of libraries") and 3.3 ("I read a lot at home"), the agreement at School 1 was statistically greater than at School 2 (both significant at the 1% level):

3.2:	School 1:	66,9	29,0	4,0
	School 2:	47,2	47,2	5,7
3.3:	School 1:	68,5	23,4	8,1
	School 2:	48,8	36,6	14,6

The Std 10s at the two schools indicated very similar responses to both of these questions, but all the other Stds showed more interest in reading at School 1. Three Stds were particularly interesting:

	Agree		Disagree		Don't know	
	School 1	School 2	School 1	School 2	School 1	School 2
3.2: Std 6:	80,0	60,0	12,0	26,7	8,0	13,3
Std 8:	62,5	27,8	37,5	61,1	0,0	11,1
Std 9:	73,1	34,6	19,2	65,4	7,7	0,0
3.3: Std 6:	72,0	50,0	12,0	26,7	16,0	23,3
Std 8:	58,3	27,8	29,2	50,0	12,5	22,2
Std 9:	76,9	53,8	15,4	38,5	7,7	7,7

That the Stds 8s at School 2 disagreed strongly with both questions is both curious and somewhat alarming, when compared to the enthusiasm of the Std 6s at School 1.

These responses are somewhat unexpected when the cultural backgrounds of the pupils are taken into account (see pages 62 and 64). Undoubtedly, part of the explanation is the deliberate and determined reading campaign at School 1, but there may be a sociological factor as well. It is interesting, for instance, to see that the Std 6s at School 2 accepted (by a slight majority) the contention that "I don't read much because of TV and videos" (3.5), whilst this was rejected strongly at School 1:

School 1:	12,0	68,0	20,0
School 2:	40,0	33,3	26,7

The Std 7s at School 2 were evenly divided on the issue and the Std 8 class, as with Std 6, accepted the suggestion. Rejection at School 1 was consistently strong throughout and, though the comparison of the schools did not show a statistically significant difference ($r = 0,29$, which is close to significance at the 5% level),

the tendency for School 2 to agree more strongly is noted. These differences are less noticeable in Stds 9 and 10, where rejection was strong (see page 39).

Taken in conjunction with the responses to 3.3 (above), which indicate that more reading is being done at home by the pupils of School 1, it may be that pupils at School 2 are allowed to watch more television and videos at home. Perhaps their parents are more permissive; perhaps there are more distractions generally. This aspect merits consideration in further research, as it cannot be explored fully here.

Considering the broad differences in social background, it is not surprising that the pupils at School 2 agree with 3.7 ("We have a lot of books at home") more emphatically than those at School 1:

School 1:	67,7	26,6	5,6
School 2:	78,0	15,4	6,5

These differences were not found to be statistically significant, but individual differences were dramatic in Stds 7 and 10:

		% of A over D
Std 7:	School 1:	35,7
	School 2:	84,6
Std 10:	School 1:	38,1
	School 2:	69,6

Despite the fact that the Std 7s at School 2 have far more books at home, they admitted to preferring "... magazines and light reading to books" (3.6) by a majority of 11% of agreements over disagreements, whereas their counterparts at School 1 rejected the notion by 32%. Of all the agreements polled to this question, 61% of them came from School 2.

According to the pupils, parents at both schools have "... always encouraged me to read" (3.4): [74,9 : 17,0 : 8,1]. Moreover, taking the Std 7s at School 2 as an example, their homes are well stocked with books. Despite this ostensible encouragement, it seems that pupils from School 2 are more likely to lay a book down and watch television, or pick up a magazine, than those at School 1.

Another interesting discovery from the responses to these questions concerns the 'maverick class' of Std 10s from School 1. Compared to their far more enthusiastic colleagues at School 2, this class had fewer books at home (3.7) and perhaps significantly, had not had the same encouragement to read from their parents (3.4):

3.4:	School 1:	52,4	23,8	23,8
	School 2:	91,3	8,7	0,0
3.7:	School 1:	64,3	28,6	7,1
	School 2:	92,3	7,7	0,0

This could well be the key to explaining the striking differences in attitude towards English between these two classes and may also serve to explain why the 'maverick class' is so often out of step with all the other classes. It could never be the full explanation, but if reading has not been a home priority (as it obviously has been with Std 10 at School 2), then this group would be comparatively disadvantaged, especially with literature and writing.

The most striking reversals in opinion between the two Std 10 classes were seen in their responses to those statements in the Reading and Literature Study section of the questionnaire which contain pejorative terms or phrases such as "... pull my marks down" (3.13), "... shouldn't be studied" (3.15), "... not enjoyable" (3.16), "... boring" (3.17), and "... irrelevant" (3.18).

In each case, as with fish to the bait, the Std 10s at School 1 agreed while their fellows at School 2 begged to differ. The impression gained in this part of the survey (as in other parts) is that the Std 10 group at School 2 is mature by comparison to its cynical counterparts at School 1. This impression is reinforced by the responses to those statements which assert the value of studying literature. Included in this list are 3.9 ("I have learnt to judge good writing ..."), 3.23 ("Literature makes us think about what is right and wrong") and 3.24 ("Through reading ... I have learnt to write better ..."). Here the degree of positive agreement is the issue, not so much reversal of opinion.

Two examples of this difference in attitude will suffice. The responses are to 3.21 ("Through studying literature, I have learnt some things about myself") and 3.22 ("Through studying literature, I have learnt about life and human nature"):

3.21:	School 1:	33,3	47,6	19,1
	School 2:	52,2	34,8	13,0
3.22:	School 1:	61,9	23,8	14,3
	School 2:	82,6	8,7	8,7

It is not surprising then to discover that "Setwork exams pull my marks down" (3.13) at School 1 in Std 10 [A : 57; D : 29], whilst this is not the case at School 2 [A : 17; D : 70].

There is also evidence of a difference in approach to literature teaching in the two schools, more obviously in Stds 6 and 7. The only question where this is statistically significant (at the 1% level) is 3.11 ("I often don't know what to say about what I have read"):

School 1:	19,4	70,2	10,5
School 2:	32,5	51,2	16,3

The Std 6 response to this question is interesting:

School 1:	16,0	72,0	12,0
School 2:	56,7	26,7	16,7

Enough has been said about the policy of School 1 to encourage mass reading, especially in Stds 6 and 7. Here the emphasis is on volume rather than study, and on appeal rather than prescriptions of the CED. No setwork exams are set in Std 6 and the setwork essay is not seriously taught until Std 8. Instead, a lot of time is devoted to oral discussion of the texts read and to vocalising responses. This may account for the kind of response to 3.11 by the Std 6s at School 1.

At School 2, the approach at this level is more systematic and, by comparison, slightly more formal. Pupils are directed into project work on the texts in which a lot of their responses are written, not in the sense of formal setwork essays, but more in the nature of following threads of meaning, setting and characterisation from the text outwards. Fewer texts are handled, but they are explored more deeply, some concept vocabulary is acquired and modes of expression are less oral than at School 1.

Consequently, 3.12 ("Setwork essays are difficult") and 3.13 ("Setwork exams pull my marks down") have more relevance to School 2, where, it would seem, their more formal treatment of literature is not perceived to be easy:

3.12:	School 1:	32,0	32,0	36,0
	School 2:	66,7	23,3	10,0
3.13:	School 1:	20,0	40,0	40,0
	School 2:	46,7	13,3	40,0

Neither, on the face of it, do they find setwork particularly exciting. The entire sample (of the two schools together) was evenly divided on the claim that "Setwork lessons are boring" (3.17) with 41% for and against. This pattern was upheld in the responses from Stds 6 and 7 at School 2, while the notion was rejected at School 1 by

a majority of 32% in Std 6 and 22% in Std 7. In context, one can understand that heaps of reading and comparatively little writing is more appealing to OG pupils than the more disciplined approach at School 2.

Which approach is more effective is not at issue. Both OG groups in both schools acknowledged that they "... have learnt about life and human nature" (3.22), though the degree of agreement was more positive at School 1, especially in Std 6.

Perhaps also because of the less formal approach, there was a vehement defence of traditional literature (3.19) from the Std 6s at School 1, while the position was exactly reversed at School 2:

School 1:	28,0	68,0	4,0
School 2:	60,0	30,0	10,0

The response of the Std 7s to the two questions which probe literary appreciation and judgement (3.8 and 3.9) is interesting. At School 1, there was much more positive agreement that they had learnt to read "... with greater understanding" and to tell "... good writing from inferior work":

3.8:	School 1:	85,7	3,6	10,7
	School 2:	53,8	26,9	19,2
3.9:	School 1:	57,1	25,0	17,9
	School 2:	26,9	30,8	42,3

One thing that can be said with certainty here is that at School 2 the Std 7s are less decisive about matters of literary insight. In 3.9, for instance, 42% recorded "Don't knows" and the remainder was almost equally divided. Experience suggests that this response is to be expected from fourteen-year-olds, so the comparatively positive response from School 1 is unusual. In support of this difference between the two Std 7 classes over the question of literary discrimination, the responses to 2.14 which mentions "... I have learnt to tell good writing from bad" will be compared later in this chapter.

Finally, given the difference in approach towards literature that operates at OG level in the two schools, it is easier to accept that at School 1 pupils are more comfortable about verbalising their ideas and opinions (especially orally) than at School 2. This has been illustrated with reference to 3.11 on page 77, where the differences overall attain statistical significance. A last illustration of this situation as it affects the OG groups is taken from the companion question to 3.11, namely 3.10 ("These days I think about what I am reading and feel that I could

express an opinion on it"):

Std 6:	School 1:	72,0	8,0	20,0
	School 2:	40,0	33,3	26,7
Std 7:	School 1:	82,1	10,7	7,1
	School 2:	61,5	34,6	3,8

In summary

1. The objective at School 1 to "woo pupils into the reading habit" appears to have been highly successful. Both library borrowing statistics and responses to the Pupil Questionnaire indicate an enthusiasm for reading greater than that at School 2.

2. Despite the pupils at School 2 appearing to have more books in their homes, the survey suggests that not as much reading is done as at School 1. This may be a factor of more relaxed parental control, suggested by the admission by pupils of School 2 that they watch more television than they do reading.

3. Perhaps the problem of the negative perceptions of the Std 10 class at School 1 arises from their not having had as much encouragement to read at home as their more positive counterparts at School 2.

4. Approaches to OG Literature Study differ in the two schools. The more formal and systematic 'project' approach at School 2 appears to be less popular than the discussion-orientated exposure to a multitude of texts adopted at School 1. The pupils at School 1 appear to be more confident about verbalising their responses to the texts than at School 2.

Written Communication

Continuing the discussion above, it should be noted that certain of the responses to the writing section of the Pupil Questionnaire support the contention that the younger pupils at School 1 are less inhibited about expressing their views. Compare the Std 6 responses to 2.3 ("I enjoy giving my ideas about things"):

School 1:	80,0	8,0	12,0
School 2:	66,7	20,0	13,3

Also interesting is the response of Stds 6 and 7 to 2.14 ("Through my own writing attempts, I have learnt to tell good writing from bad"). As with 3.9 (page 78), the contingent from School 1 was much more positive than their counterparts:

Std 6:	School 1:	60,0	20,0	20,0
	School 2:	46,7	23,3	30,0
Std 7:	School 1:	67,9	21,4	10,7
	School 2:	38,5	15,4	46,2

By Stds 9 and 10, however, the situation was very different with regard to 2.14:

Std 9:	School 1:	46,2	30.8	23,1
	School 2:	65,4	26,9	7,7
Std 10:	School 1:	38,1	33,3	28,6
	School 2:	73,9	0,0	26,1

The contrast of attitudes between the two Std 10 classes has frequently been remarked upon. Perhaps the large degree of uncertainty that afflicts the Std 7 group at School 2 (see 3.9 page 78 and 2.14 page 78) is also merely a class characteristic.

Again the Std 10 class at School 2 was much more positive than its totally divided counterparts at School 1 in responding to the contention that "Through doing writing tasks in English, my essay writing has improved in other subjects" (2.12):

School 1:	28,6	28,6	42,9
School 2:	69,6	21,7	8,7

A school-wide difference emerged in the responses of the sample to 2.7 ("Composition work is boring"). This proved to be statistically significant at the 5% level: School 1 rejected the idea with a majority of 46%, whilst School 2 rejected it by only 18%:

School 1:	17,7	63,7	18,5
School 2:	33,3	51,2	15,4

Considering that the sample size from each school was almost exactly the same, this indicates that over twice as many pupils at School 2 find composition work boring than at School 1. Given that the term "composition work" may have been misinterpreted (see page 41), such possible misinterpretation must be assumed to have affected the entire sample, in the absence of any evidence to suggest the contrary. Thus the problem remains: why the comparative disillusionment with writing work at School 2?

Looking at the responses of each standard, the most curious reaction from School 2 was in Std 6, where agreement to 2.7 predominated by 20%. This was the only group to

agree by a majority. Their fellows at School 1 rejected the idea by 60%. Rejection in Stds 7 and 8 was greater at School 1, and Stds 8 and 9 at School 2 rejected by a very small margin (5% and 8%). Only the Std 10 group at School 2 disagreed with the contention forcibly (by 74%, compared to 24% at School 1):

2.7:	Std 6:	School 1:	12,0	72,0	16,0
		School 2:	46,7	26,7	26,6
	Std 7:	School 1:	14,3	67,9	17,9
		School 2:	26,9	57,7	15,4
	Std 8:	School 1:	29,2	45,8	25,0
		School 2:	38,9	44,4	16,7
	Std 9:	School 1:	3,8	73,1	23,1
		School 2:	38,5	46,2	15,3
	Std 10:	School 1:	33,3	57,1	9,5
		School 2:	13,0	87,0	0,0

The popularity of writing has been discussed (page 56) and a closer consideration of the responses to Section B of the questionnaire does not shed any clear light on the comparisons above. Of the responses made there to "What do you like most about English?" (Q 1), only 3% more selected writing at School 1 than at School 2. This figure is exactly reversed in the responses to Q 2 ("What do you like least about it?"), where 7.3% at School 2 selected writing compared to 4% at School 1. Of course, responses to this section of the questionnaire were entirely unprogrammed, so that direct comparison to the figures above is not possible. For example, the Std 10s at School 2 mentioned writing as a very poor third choice in saying what they liked most about English (Oral 31%, Setwork 29%, Writing 12,5%), whereas their comparatively lukewarm counterparts at School 1 (see table above) nominated writing with reading as their first choice (25%).

The response to 2.7 in Std 10 fits a now familiar pattern, thus it might be more helpful to consider two strongly contrasting responses in the table above, namely those of the Std 6s and Std 9s. At School 1, both Std 6 and Std 9 rejected the contention vehemently, whereas at School 2 it was accepted in Std 6 and rejected narrowly in Std 9. Given the contentious nature of writing (see pages 56-7), it may be that these extreme contrasts have something to do with the nature of the teaching operating in those four classes. Enthusiasm in writing exercises is often directly related to the amount of time budgeted for it by the teacher, and the sensitivity and helpfulness of his evaluations. This is clearly a point worthy of further research.

Perhaps something else which points to the 'teacher factor' playing a role in this matter is that the same Std 9 class from School 2 evinced great enthusiasm for 2.3

("I enjoy giving my ideas about things"), whereas a question concerning the acquisition of writing techniques such as 2.8 ("Through practice ... I can now set out to create a special effect ...") produced a similar response to that of 2.7:

Std 9:	2.3	School 1:	73,1	11,5	15,4
		School 2:	88,5	7,7	3,8
	2.8:	School 1:	84,6	7,7	7,7
		School 2:	46,2	42,3	11,5

Finally, it is interesting to note the reactions of the Std 9s to 2.6 ("I struggle to write compositions because I haven't got much imagination"). At School 1, the Std 9 response rejected the idea by nearly 58%, whereas at School 2 the percentage of rejection over agreement was a narrow 4% (the "Don't knows" were the same in each school). It is tempting to postulate teacher influence here.

A related area in which teaching plays a particularly sensitive role is that of writing poetry. This time the Std 6 position at the schools was quite different when compared to 2.7 and it was School 2 which was more enthusiastic: 2.4 ("I like writing poems"):

Std 6:	School 1:	40,0	56,0	4,0
	School 2:	50,0	33,3	16,7

In Stds 8 and 10, the rejection of poetry writing was much stronger at School 1 than at School 2; the 7s and 9s were about the same. Again, it may be a teacher factor at work here.

The question on the influence of television in this section of the questionnaire did produce statistically significant results when the overall response at the two schools was compared. This time the null hypothesis was rejected with 99% certainty ($r = 0,01$) when the responses to 2.5 ("I often borrow ideas from TV, videos, etc. because I don't know what to write") were tabulated:

School 1:	22,6	64,5	12,9
School 2:	39,0	45,5	15,4

Although both schools rejected the idea, School 1 rejected it by a majority of 42% compared to 6,5% at School 2. When the standards in each school were compared, every standard at School 1 rejected 2.5, whilst at School 2 four out of the five standards agreed, the only exception being Std 10 (which rejected the contention as vehemently as their counterparts at School 1). Three examples will suffice:

Std 10:	School 1:	4,8	90,5	4,8
	School 2:	4,3	87,0	8,7
Std 9:	School 1:	7,7	73,1	19,2
	School 2:	46,2	38,5	15,4
Std 8:	School 1:	29,2	54,2	16,7
	School 2:	50,0	27,8	22,2

The tendency for the older pupils (HG) to reject the influence of television on writing and for the younger ones to accept it (OG) is noted on page 44. Further discussion of the influence of television on reading (3.5) is to be found on pages 39, 52 and 74-5. This last discussion (page 74) suggests that the pupils at School 2 are more likely to be distracted by television viewing than at School 1, a point which seems to be supported by the analysis above on 2.5, which probes the practical influence of the small screen on English work.

In summary

1. More than twice as many pupils at School 2 claim that composition work is boring than at School 1. The difference is most striking in Stds 6 and 9, perhaps because of the 'teacher factor'.

2. The influence of television and videos on the work of the pupils in English again appeared to be significantly greater at School 2.

Language Study

There seems to be some evidence of a difference in approach to Language Study between the two schools. Two questions from Section A of the Pupil Questionnaire, namely 4.10 and 4.12, produced statistically significant differences when the responses of the schools were compared.

The greater contrast concerns 4.12 ("I cannot see the point of summary work"). Here the difference was significant at the 1% level:

School 1:	21,8	71,8	6,4
School 2:	39,0	49,6	11,4

In comparing the reactions of the different standard groups, it is obvious that appreciation of summary work only begins to appear from Std 8 upwards at School 2 and then it is comparatively lukewarm, even in Std 10, when set against the strong support from School 1:

	Agree		Disagree		Don't know	
	School 1	School 2	School 1	School 2	School 1	School 2
Std 6:	12,0	43,3	72,0	43,3	16,0	13,3
Std 7:	35,7	38,5	60,7	34,6	3,6	26,9
Std 8:	16,7	33,3	83,3	55,6	0,0	11,1
Std 9:	23,1	46,2	69,2	50,0	7,7	3,8
Std 10:	19,0	30,4	76,2	69,6	4,8	0,0

The point was made on page 48 that summary work is not clearly specified in the Std 6 syllabus and that its only mention in OG is as part of the Std 7 examination. This partly explains the difference noted there between the Grades. Particularly interesting in the context of that discussion, were the reactions of the Std 6 and 7 pupils in the table above. Those at School 2 in Std 6 were evenly divided, whilst the Std 7s showed a similar pattern with a small majority actually agreeing with 4.12 and almost 27% undecided. At School 1, support for summary work in Stds 6 and 7 was comparatively dramatic.

This leads to the conclusion that summarising is being taught at the Std 6 level at School 1 and that its relevance and importance is clearly grasped by both OG groups at that school. The HG picture is possibly a more reliable area to compare attitudes to summary work and, again, the conclusion is that its value is more strongly asserted at School 1. The phrase "see the point of" is unambiguous enough and it seems inescapable that the pupils at School 2 differ in their attitude to this aspect of Language Study compared to those at School 1.

The problems facing teachers at both schools with regard to the 1986 Language Study syllabus have been illustrated on page 60, where the non-availability of suitable language textbooks designed for that syllabus is highlighted. This factor may be responsible for differences in emphasis and approach between the two schools.

School 1 decided to implement the graded language course offered by the Comprehensive English Practice series. The Std 8 book was the first to appear, followed by the Std 6 version shortly afterwards, but it was only in June 1988 that copies of the Std 7 edition reached the school. At the time of this survey, these were the only groups using a language textbook designed for the new syllabus and Std 7 had just begun with it. These three groups also made use of a language primer, edited by Rose and Purkis, called English Grammar. Stds 9 and 10 operated with material developed by the English department and based largely on the concept of "language in action" (a point which may become relevant later on), beefed up by some of the more traditional material that could still be used in the then obsolete Std 9 and 10 Comprehensive English Practice.

The picture at School 2 is similar with Comprehensive English Practice being used in Stds 6 to 8, though with both OG groups this was supplemented by the useful Skills of English series. In Std 8, the supplementary books were Essential Grammar, Practical Punctuation and Matter of Style. The emphasis then was clearly upon 'learnable' language work. Continuing this trend - and rather interesting considering the discussion on summary work - in Std 9, the primer Principles of Precis was used in conjunction with From Reading to Writing and the Australian book Senior Language. This last text was used again in Std 10 and, offsetting the modern approach, the pupils also made use of the very dated book High School English. Thus a wide variety of language textbooks was used, offering both traditional and modern approaches to language.

Bearing in mind the stated goal of the English department at School 2 to offer pupils an almost tangible learning core in Language Study, work that could be 'swotted up' and would be examined (see pages 65-6), and looking at the range of texts provided to assist in this objective, it is interesting to examine the responses to 4.9 ("Grammar is seldom any use for exams"). The idea was rejected at School 2 unequivocally, the highest disagreement being by 69% (Std 9) and the lowest being by 28% (Std 8, where one third agreed with the statement). Thus, at School 2, there is evidence from 4.9 that the declared objective of the English department is being met, though it must be pointed out that the support for the usefulness of grammar in examinations is not confined to this school.

In fact, the Std 6s at School 1 rejected 4.9 by an overwhelming 92% with not one dissenting voice (see page 48), whilst 20% of the Std 6s at School 2 recorded "Don't knows" and disagreed by a majority of 60%. Even the problematical Std 10s at School 1 dismissed the idea forcefully (by 62%), whilst their peer group at School 2 was actually less positive, disagreeing by 48%. Yet, in Stds 7 and 9 at School 1, some degree of support for 4.9 was noted, the rejection majority being 28% and 34% respectively.

In Std 9, there was twice as much disagreement at School 2 (69%) and that can possibly be explained by the fact that the pupils at the two schools had been following distinctly different approaches to language work. By contrast to the stated focus of language work at School 2, the Std 9 group at School 1 had been exploring a loosely structured language course designed to train sensitivity to and articulation about "language in action". Exposure to a variety of different language contexts, registers and styles was offered through photocopied material with exercises appended. It follows, then, that their language examinations did not feature much "grammar", nor much that could be 'swotted'. Instead, skills of discrimination and description were tested.

As a companion question to 4.9, pupils were asked to respond to the idea that "Language examinations are more entertaining than useful in testing what we know" (4.13). The reaction of the Std 10 classes to this has been discussed on page 60, but the differences between the two classes were not highlighted in the general comment about confusion as to what ought to be taught to prepare pupils for the Senior Certificate examination. In fact, School 2 disagreed strongly, but 30% of them reserved judgement. The 'maverick factor' probably played a part at School 1, where the Std 10s seem to have latched onto the cynical tone of the statement and, despite their viewpoint in 4.9, agreed strongly:

School 1:	57,1	28,6	14,3
School 2:	13,0	56,5	30,5

At the other academic extreme, the Std 6s at School 2 actually accepted the idea (by a very small margin) and, despite a large number of "Don't knows". the impression given at School 1 is far more positive:

School 1:	8,0	52,0	40,0
School 2:	40,0	36,7	23,3

With this kind of question, a high "Don't know" factor is to be expected and, it is arguable, knowing the nature of the two Std 10 classes, that those at School 2 would prefer wisely to reserve judgement, whilst their peers at School 1 would be quick to condemn. It is arguable, in other words, that both groups share a degree of perplexity about language examinations at Senior Certificate level.

Uncertainty in Stds 6 to 8 varied between 21% and 40% and afflicted both schools equally, but the OG support for 4.13 from School 2 was surprising in the light of the Language Study objective discussed on page 85. The Std 7s, for instance, showed similar divisions to the Std 6s at School 2 and were equally split:

School 1:	32,1	42,9	25,0
School 2:	30,8	30,8	38,4

Both Std 8 groups rejected 4.13 strongly and, consistent with the responses to 4.9 (page 85), the Std 9s rejected it at School 2 with much more force than at School 1 (by 42% and 11% respectively). Only 11% of the Std 9s were uncertain at School 2, whereas nearly 35% at School 1 recorded "Don't knows".

On balance, there is enough evidence to conclude that the language objective at School 2 is being met, though the OG groups seem slightly confused.

In support of the argument that there is a difference of approach to language work in the two schools, it is necessary to look at the responses to 4.10 ("Language lessons have shown me how writers can manipulate people, how they can influence, trick, or persuade people into accepting their views"). As with 4.12 (see page 83), the responses of the two schools were different enough to be statistically significant, though only at the 5% level:

School 1:	62,9	19,4	17,7
School 2:	52,0	14,6	33,4

The obvious difference is in the number of "Don't knows". At School 2, these amounted to one third of the sample and it was particularly noticeable in Stds 6, 7 and 8: 47%, 54% and 39%. The corresponding figures at School 1 were: 24%, 25% and 17%. The Std 10 comparison was also interesting:

School 1:	85,7	9,5	4,8
School 2:	65,2	26,1	8,7

This seems to suggest a different orientation in the two schools as regards the persuasive power of language, or its use as a vehicle for propaganda. Certainly, this kind of emotive language is a major component of the Std 9 and 10 work devised by the teachers at School 1. As discussed before (pages 46, 48 and 57), 'loaded language' does not form part of the OG syllabus, hence the higher "Don't know" factor in these groups. Yet it seems to creep into the work done at School 1 in OG, where responses to 4.10 are far more positive than at School 2.

But a different picture emerges when those questions which probe the practical application of grammar are examined. Responses to 4.5 ("Grammar lessons have helped me to write more correctly") and 4.6 (Through grammar lessons, I can now see what my teacher means when he corrects my composition errors") suggest that grammar is more meaningfully integrated into the Std 9 and 10 courses at School 2:

		Agree		Disagree		Don't know	
		School 1	School 2	School 1	School 2	School 1	School 2
4.5:	Std 9:	26,9	65,4	57,7	30,8	15,4	3,8
	Std 10:	33,3	52,2	52,4	34,8	14,3	13,0
4.6:	Std 9:	42,3	65,4	42,3	30,8	15,4	3,8
	Std 10:	42,9	73,9	47,6	17,4	9,5	8,7

This fits in with what has been said concerning the place of 'learnable' grammar in the English curriculum at School 2, and also supports the view (page 85) that School

1 is more concerned with working on skills of discrimination in language lessons.

Two anomalies from School 2 which future researchers may be motivated to explore concern 4.7 ("Grammar lessons repeat the same old things year after year"). Here the agreements from Stds 6 and 9 were particularly strong: by 67% (Std 6) and 73% (Std 9). By comparison, the degree of agreement from School 1 was weak: 12% (Std 6) and 19% (Std 9). It may be that, in the case of School 2, there is a better carry-over from the Std 5 Language Study syllabus than at School 1, so that a lot of work is repeated in Std 6. But the Std 9 response is puzzling, considering that the degree of agreement in Stds 7 and 8 at School 2 was only 34%.

Another oddity concerns the OG responses to 4.8 ("Grammar is difficult") at School 1. The only group in the whole survey to disagree with this was the Std 6s at School 1 (by a mere 8%). Their colleagues at School 2 agreed by 54%. Yet, in Std 7 at School 1, there was a majority of 64% prepared to agree that grammar is difficult. These diametrically different attitudes within the OG course might be the result of the 'teacher factor'.

Finally, more for the record than for any new illumination, it should be pointed out that the Std 10 class at School 1 continued its record of being out of step with most of the other classes in the survey, particularly in those questions which struck a provocative note, for instance "Comprehension work has taught me: (4.1) to read carefully; (4.2) to think about what I am reading; (4.3) to express myself carefully." This tendency to be negative is also seen in 4.6 (page 87), 4.7 (page 88) and 4.11.

Before turning to what the teachers had to say in the survey, it is interesting to look at the responses of the pupils to Q 4 of Section B of the Pupil Questionnaire: "What makes a good English teacher?". To this question, there were 552 responses, 258 from School 1 and 294 from School 2. In the table below, the suggestions made appear in ranked order of the total sample, followed by a percentage. The other percentages calculcated refer to those groups and are indicated to show changes in the rank order from group to group:

Quality	Total	School 1	School 2	OG	HG
Explains well	14,7	20,5	9,5	16,7	13,4
Innovative	10,7	8,5	12,6	7,9	12,5
Sense of humour	7,6	6,2	8,8	7,4	7,7
Understanding	7,4	8,9	6,1	9,8	5,9
Enthusiastic	7,2	7,4	7,1	4,7	8,9
Knowledge of subject	6,9	4,7	8,8	7,0	6,8

Quality	Total	School 1	School 2	OG	HG
Patient	5,3	5,4	5,1	7,4	3,9
Relates to the class	5,3	4,7	5,8	5,6	5,0
Helpful	4,9	4,3	5,4	6,5	3,9
Communicates well	4,3	5,8	3,1	4,2	4,5
Enjoys his job	4,0	2,7	5,1	3,3	4,5
Interested	3,4	4,3	2,7	2,3	4,2
An interesting person	3,3	1,9	4,4	4,2	2,7
Open-minded	2,5	2,7	2,4	0,9	3,6
Encouraging	2,4	1,6	3,1	0,9	3,3
Thorough	2,4	1,9	2,7	0,9	3,3

Among the remaining suggestions (1.3% or below of the total sample), were: "Involves the class; Impartial; Friendly; Kind; Well-organised" and "Firm".

Though it must be conceded that such qualities as "Explains well" fit the profile of any "good" teacher and are not specific to English teaching, yet the table above is not without interest in an illuminative evaluation. One could argue that such highly rated qualities as "Innovative" and "Sense of humour" have more validity in the teaching of English than they might in mathematics or accounting. Perhaps too the concept of "An interesting person" and being "Open-minded" are especially relevant to the success of an English teacher.

But what is particularly interesting about the items listed in the table is the rank order. School 1 rates "Explains well" as more than twice as important as the next items "Understanding" and "Innovative". At School 2, "Explains well", though rated second on the list, attracted half the response that was recorded at School 1. This seems to suggest a general difficulty in coping with the subject of English at School 1, which is not shared to anything like the same degree at School 2. Closer examination shows that the contrast is greatest in Stds 6 and 7 (25% in School 1, 10% in School 2). In support of the general perplexity noted before in Std 8 in this survey, "Explains well" was rated higher by the Std 8s of both schools than any other group: (28% in School 1 and 17% in School 2).

Looking at this another way, it would seem that the pupils at School 2 are more confident about coping with English than they are at School 1 and this could perhaps be related to sociological differences between the two groups (see pages 62 and 64).

Perhaps the same reason explains why 'innovation' was rated so much higher at School 2. Here it was ranked first, about 4% higher than the next three qualities (which were clustered together), namely "Explains well", "Sense of humour" and "Knowledge of

subject". In Std 6, "Innovative" was first by far with 19% of the responses, whereas at School 1 this quality attracted only 2% (compared to 25% for "Explains well").

It could be argued that children from more affluent and culturally aware homes are correspondingly more confident about coping with the subject and are more apt to be bored with the repetitive nature of the syllabus, particularly as it affects Std 6s. It may well be that, with regard to Std 6, the work done in that year at School 2 is very similar to what had been done in Std 5, whereas at School 1 this might not be the case.

In summary

1. The value of summary work seems to be more strikingly asserted at School 1 than at School 2.

2. Though both schools use Comprehensive English Practice as a core text, School 2 employs several other texts to assist in providing a learning element for English. At School 1, Stds 9 and 10 work largely from photocopied material to explore 'language in action', and concentrate less on formal grammar.

3. Evidence suggests that the objective at School 2 of providing pupils with a body of language work that can be studied for examinations is being achieved, at least at HG level.

4. Both Std 10 classes seem at a loss as to what to expect in the Senior Certificate language paper.

5. Stds 9 and 10 at School 1 seem not to share the same appreciation for grammar as their counterparts at School 2, possibly because of the different emphasis noted in point 2 above.

6. It would seem that the pupils at School 2 are more confident about the English curriculum than those at School 1. The most desirable quality of an English teacher emerged as "Explains well" at School 1, whereas at School 2 "Innovative" was ranked first.

4.5 QUESTIONNAIRE 2: THE TEACHERS

This questionnaire, directed to all of the teachers of English in the two schools, comprised eleven open-ended response questions (see Appendix 8.3.3, p.156). Teachers

were free to combine responses, to omit questions, or to concentrate more on some questions than others, as long as they did not consult each other. Thus answers vary greatly in length and scope.

It must also be noted that the teachers quoted here are not necessarily the teachers of the classes polled in Questionnaire 1, though, in setting up the first questionnaire, an effort was made to have at least one class of each of the 'mainstream' English teachers represented in the survey.

Subsequent to the gathering of data, both schools have experienced a significant staff turnover in their English departments. Thus a current sampling of views may differ from what is reflected here.

Each of the questions will be considered in turn and the more interesting responses will be highlighted. The reader may find it useful to refer to Appendix 8.3.3, as the wording of some of the questions is lengthy, allowing various directions of response.

Question 1: "Are the aims and objectives of the syllabus-makers being met in our English programme at school?"

The twin problems of too little time and too much work surfaced here and led half the staff in both schools to express serious reservations about success in achieving the Global Aims of the syllabus:

> Another major problem that influences the effectiveness of the programme is the time factor. The syllabus invites (and encourages?) teachers to stimulate and motivate pupils. The more creative lesson and follow-up work is often hampered by the lack of time available, or over-commitment of the teachers. (School 1)

> The Department's goals are specific and idealistic because TIME does not allow for the appropriate activities to be carried out by each pupil if each goal is to be developed respectively. ... Time doesn't allow for the variety and depth of specificity required in the Global Aims. (School 2)

The Goals of the syllabus for oral work, writing and reading were seen as particularly problematical in their broad-reaching ambitions:

> In writing we don't cover all the forms and varieties mentioned because of the sheer volume they represent. (School 2)

Apart from being haunted by the spectre of not doing enough through having too much to do, English teachers appeared to be frustrated by the difficulties involved in evaluating the success of their endeavours in the light of the Global Aims:

> The aim of involving pupils in "active participation" is certainly being met. Many of the aims, however, are so nebulous that it is virtually impossible to make an assessment. (School 2)

This whole thesis is inspired by the problems of evaluating English teaching, and, in particular, the evaluation of those Aims which hinge upon the development of the pupil as a person. It is submitted that the difficulties involved in rating one's success as an English teacher in these relatively intangible areas contribute strongly to teacher 'burn-out' and disillusionment.

In the light of the discussion on the 'maturity syndrome' (page 46), the respondent who mentioned the "nebulous" aims above made another interesting remark:

> Perhaps the improvement in the pupils' language skills is as much a function of their maturing as it is of their response to our teaching.

Again one is aware of the prevailing tone of self-doubt that permeates so many of the responses to this part of the questionnaire.

Unique and most searing among the responses of the staff was that which charged the English course with failure on the grounds of social irrelevancy and consequent artificiality:

> The Global Aims of the syllabus, communication through writing, oral and comprehension skills, are not being met, because of the avoidance of the realities of South Africa (life). This avoidance of real issues has reached such proportions that the English syllabus is seen by pupils as a subject isolated from the real happenings of the world - a state incompatible with the teaching of communication on the First Language (home language) level. Thus, the English course takes on the nature of a technical course, divorced from real communication of feelings, ideas and experiences. This schizophrenic attitude to reality cannot result in true learning, within the accepted framework. (School 1)

In order to clarify the standpoint and the anger of this respondent, it is necessary to look briefly at the comments made by this teacher to Questions 4 and 5. Not surprisingly, this respondent does find teaching the English programme to be "inhibiting, frustrating" and "a source of anxiety" (Q 5). And, in answer to Question 4, which probes whether the programme is "static, archaic, rigid", the teacher commented:

> Yes. No topical poetry, novels, poetry of music, local (S.A.) writing, etc. No third-world emphasis - personal, psychological and spiritual communication is suppressed or not followed up. Sincerity and truth of communication is impossible. ... The unreal and insincere approach to communication is a severely limiting factor in the English syllabus.

Finally, it was alleged that the programme is out of step with the pupils' experience of life.

Such remarks are indeed serious accusations. English First Language is seen as a course of communication-training within a socio-political milieu that demands urgently of the white group, and of English-speakers in particular, sensitivity, integrity, flexibility, humility and out-reaching, open-minded communication. Lacking this, the challenges of the present and future are not being faced, hence the irrelevancy of the CED syllabi, which avoid the real issues of life in South Africa where sensitive, sincere and empathetic communication is needed for whatever future is to be negotiated.

Though a lone voice in the survey, this profound criticism of the situation cannot comfortably be dismissed, however sweeping some of its claims may be. Everyone is aware of the central role that English must play in the future dispensation in South Africa and many English teachers, if asked, would concur that the present curriculum is not likely to be found adequate in any 'open schools' of the future.

A problem area common to both English departments is that of practical and tangible co-operation between English teachers. If the work load and the lack of time are accepted as major causes of disillusionment among English teachers (page 91), then any systems that can reduce the load and can save time will be welcome. Conversely, teachers who fail to be "conscientious", or who are guilty of not "doing what is requested of them" (both quotes from School 1), become a source of extreme annoyance to those of their colleagues who then have to "pick up the pieces". This is most evident during examination periods, i.e. times of greatest pressure.

These issues are recurrent in many of the questions in this part of the survey and will be discussed fully when the answers to Question 5 are examined.

Question 2: "Each English department has its own individual objectives related to the particular needs of the school. ... Are these local objectives being met in practice?"

Specific goals of the two English departments are discussed on pages 64-5. Appendices 8.2.1 and 8.2.2 contain the policy documents of these English departments.

There was broad agreement among all the English teachers that local objectives were being met, yet there were some interesting qualifications made. A full and sensitive analysis of the position at School 1 warrants quoting:

> Many local objectives are being met. Most Matrics are now writing their final exam on the correct grade and overall results have improved. The top end needs more attention perhaps. A major objective has been to try to instil a work ethic re. English. Here Stds 6 and 7 remain a problem. Difficult for many teachers to reach a balance between 'fun lessons' and work. Often pupils fail to settle down before Std 9 or even Std 10. ...

> Reading was identified as an area that needed attention. While much positive work has been done here, much still needs to be done. Writing too. This is one of the most important areas, and the one I probably neglect the most - why? Time involved!
>
> The saddest failure of the English department has been the enrichment programme. Most of the English teachers are involved in extra-murals. Sadly, very few involve cultural enrichment. Part of the problem is the school hierarchy's lack of support and commitment to such a programme.

The respondent itemised debating, public speaking, school newspaper and drama as being dead, "stilted", or dying and concluded that "all staff need to become motivated".

The contention that progress is being made with the reading campaign was supported by two other teachers at School 1. Two more pointed out that poor cultural backgrounds are a handicap, especially when it comes to correctness of expression (oral and written) and originality of writing. Another echoed the "need to write more frequently" in the face of daunting marking loads.

The point about the enrichment programme was not raised by anyone else, yet, in conversation it appeared that even the "hierarchy" was well aware of the problem and it had been discussed at several Senior Staff meetings. It seems that the difficulty is not so much one of priorities at the school as the assumption (made even by the English staff) that the initiative must come from the English department, whose members are often over-committed to teaching work loads and sporting extra-murals already.

At School 2, cultural extra-murals have received a boost by their inclusion within the timetabled school week. This is not to say that the 'cultural period' is the only time when clubs, groups and societies function, but a lot have been born during that weekly period and have developed a life of their own outside of school hours. The appointment of a senior member of staff (an English teacher) with the portfolio of Cultural Activities has, in addition to the timetable concession above, indicated clearly that enrichment is a priority of that school "hierarchy" (see discussion on page 66).

The English staff at School 2 seemed satisfied that the second goal (page 65) of the department was being met:

> An objective of our department is to get pupils to do some WORK for English. We need to fight the attitude that English is something you can naturally either do or not do. ... Pupils in Std 10 have started to realise that you can learn for English.

Another commented:

> Pupils now understand that one should study for English papers. ... The pupils feel more confident and this pays off in Std 10 finals - more A's.

However, extra work, such as reading an extra novel with each class per term, or extra written work, is "swamped by pressure to complete the syllabus". Again one is confronted by the demands upon an English teacher's time.

Question 3: "Discuss whether the aspirations of the following are being realised: the school executive; the pupils; the parents; and other staff."

Broadly, speaking, English teachers at both schools felt that their departments were catering for the aspirations of the interested groups mentioned above, but what was interesting was the perceived lack of sympathy for the work of an English teacher implied in their responses. The tone of many was tinged with cynicism, as this comment from a teacher at School 1 on "other staff" illustrates:

> They generally have little idea of the general nature of the syllabus and judge communication ability from spelling skills.

The same point was made by a respondent at School 2, whilst another confessed to having "no idea" what teachers of other subjects hoped for from the English department. A teacher, again from School 1, wrote:

> Most couldn't really care less. Certainly very few show an interest. Some bemoan the fact that English teachers fail to make the pupils "write better".

An interesting and worrying factor that emerged from this part of the survey is the tendency for English teachers to become isolated from the rest of the school with respect to their daily work. It seems that English teachers feel misunderstood, unappreciated and peripheral, which may explain the cynicism noted above. With disarming honesty, one wrote "Don't know" four times in answer to Q 3 and then added, with reference to parental aspirations:

> I am very seldom approached by a parent because he is worried that his child is not doing well in English - more likely maths. (School 1)

Perhaps the glib assumption that all that the "school executive" requires from an English department is good results, A-symbols in Senior Certificate and that "the programme should run smoothly" is the product of this isolation. In like fashion, most assumed that all that the pupils wanted was to pass and that the aspiration of parents fell between these two poles, namely to pass well.

Only two responses, one from each school, perceived that pupils and parents might expect more of their English teachers, such as preparing "the pupils for life" and giving them "means and opportunity to develop and grow". A side thought on this

theme from one of these teachers was that parents have a responsibility too towards the English curriculum:

> Many parents feel that teachers can provide some magic answer to all problems and turn any child into a young Shakespeare. Often they don't realise the role that they need to play. (School 1)

Here is the essence of the problem: communication between English teachers and other interested parties is not good in either school.

Later in this chapter, the views of parents and "other staff" will be discussed.

Question 4: "Is the programme static, archaic, rigid? ... Comment on its present character and its potential for development."

The use of such 'loaded' words in the phrasing of a question tends to produce somewhat stereotyped results. Respondents tended to react to one or two exclusively and almost obsessively, thus nearly all claimed that their English departments were "flexible". The intention was to provide sufficiently provocative stimulus words to illuminate the "present character" and "potential for development" of the English department. Few wrote such an appraisal, yet some of the points made are worth noting.

At School 1, in commenting on the assertion that the programme is not static, one teacher raised a relevant problem with team-teaching:

> ... it is unique to the English department. Thus many pupils battle. Much of what we are trying to achieve here is out of step with the school, in that we are often caught short by the timetable requirements and rigidity of, say, the Afrikaans department, which affects our ability to organise our classes and programmes effectively.

Certainly, accustoming pupils to the demands of team-teaching is not made easier when no other academic department is using this technique.

For two very different reasons, two other staff members at School 1 felt that the programme was "out of step" with the pupils. The first claimed that it was "out of step with the pupils' experience of life" (the genesis of which viewpoint is to be found on pages 92-3), whilst the other said the same thing for depressingly different reasons:

> ... when one considers how culturally deprived many are. How can we expect Johnny to enjoy and understand a "heavy" novel when all he can think about is the next party or fixing his bike?

The 'cultural deprivation' factor was mentioned several times in connection with School 1, but usually by the same respondents. Clearly, it cannot be dismissed, as

it seems to affect the morale and attitudes of certain staff teaching there, yet it must be pointed out that this issue was not mentioned by all and cannot be construed as a general problem.

At School 2, only one teacher felt that the programme was "fairly rigid". This teacher suggested that the time had come for an "update" of the programme, but was not sure how to set about it. One suggestion made was that English teachers should work more closely with teachers of other subjects and gave the example of co-operating with Business Economics teachers on the issue of advertising. This interesting comment has, of course, relevance to the earlier discussion (page 95) on the isolation of English teachers, particularly from their other colleagues.

Another respondent described the programme at School 2 as "structured" rather than rigid and pointed out that regular meetings of the English staff cleared up problems. Yet another demonstrated that the system of "standard co-ordinators" (see page 65) ensured flexibility, as each brought different perspectives to bear. A third declared that there were "no set approaches", that nothing was forced upon the staff by the Subject Head, yet guidance and a core of basic notes were always available.

Question 5: "Do you find teaching this programme is inhibiting, frustrating, exhausting? Is it a source of anxiety? Or does it allow you a sense of achievement, security and freedom? ..."

Several respondents combined their answers to Question 5 with their responses to Question 6, thus it would make sense to discuss both questions together.

Question 6: "Does the English programme allow you to develop as a teacher? ..."

On page 93, mention was made of the frustrations caused when one's colleagues in the English department do not do their jobs properly, thus creating more work for others. A teacher from School 1, in stating that the programme "certainly is exhausting at times" but is not inhibiting, commented frankly upon this source of disillusionment:

> A problem is often the other English teachers. If they don't work, or conduct themselves professionally (marking, attitude towards pupils, in-fighting) they can often undermine what one is trying to do. This has, unfortunately, happened this year. (Can range from giving pupils exam questions, to discussing teachers with pupils, to ignoring deadlines or team-teaching responsibilities.)

For the record, it ought to be said that the teacher to whom this comment refers has subsequently left the school, but the point made cannot simply be passed over as a personal clash. There are traces of the same irritation in the answers of other respondents from both schools and, more than anything else, this comment shows the need for improved communication among members of the same department, let alone with their other teaching colleagues. Moreover, the need is not for simple communication

of administrative arrangements, which is what is discussed at the bulk of English meetings, but for meaningful and "stimulating English professional growth". Translated, this means that English teachers in a particular school should get together to discuss teaching (good lessons, assessment schemes, new trends), that they should be learning from each other, challenging each other, discussing their subject and where it is going - not talking about who will set what and when the papers have to be in for typing:

> Our greatest need is to meet more regularly and to communicate our progress. (School 1)

Directly related to this, and also mentioned on page 93, is the need for English teachers to reduce their work load by actively sharing in the preparation of lessons, worksheets and class tasks. This point was made by three different teachers at School 2, two of whom had interesting things to say about the teacher-freedom ethic:

> You can do very much your own 'thing', but can become isolated. People are willing to help, except the rush makes it so difficult. It would be wonderful to have a built-in period when teachers could discuss/prepare together for a section of work. (Q 6)

The other commented on Q 5:

> Not much sharing - each person does his own 'thing'. This can be exhausting and frustrating because progression differs and pupils panic when they compare. They then play one teacher off against the other. This causes bad vibes.
>
> This sense of "freedom" can therefore cause pupil anxiety, which defeats the purpose of teaching. ...

On page 91, lack of time and overwork are highlighted as sources of real strain in the life of an English teacher. Several responses to Questions 5 and 6 illuminate this problem. One in particular deserves quotation in full as it powerfully illustrates the torment of a practising English teacher. The response was from School 2 to Q 5:

> Exhausting - after 360 scripts in the exam alone! At the end of the term I feel totally exhausted, drained, demented and crazy (unfortunately, I'm doing this questionnaire in exactly that state). There are times I want to leave teaching and do something totally mindless, which, incidentally, probably pays more! So that answers the "frustration" question as well. Anxiety - yes, with so little time to do so much setwork, not to mention writing (all that marking!) and then language (how do you drill in basics when you're totally cross-eyed anyway?). There are occasional 'highs' - when a lesson is successful; when someone understands something; when they hand in good work. Some of the deeper insights shared in a poetry lesson are extremely valuable and worthwhile, but I don't know if the balance of suffering is worth it.

Any conscientious English teacher will recognise this situation. The operative word is "suffering". Whatever this part of the study may achieve, it is hoped that the messages in this for syllabus planners, school principals and subject heads may be

clear. The only palliative for this syndrome is dramatically better communication; the only solution lies in creating meaningful support structures. Gone are the days when English teachers were to be found on every street corner. This country cannot afford the 'burn-out' of caring and experienced teachers of English, when, whatever educational dispensation emerges from the negotiating chambers, English is likely to be the priority in the educational upliftment of the masses of children in Southern Africa.

In operating between the poles of freedom and rigidity, subject heads should take note that there are many teachers who appreciate what they call "organisation":

> I feel secure within the framework of clearly set out syllabus aims and objectives. It is comforting to know that all members of any one standard are doing the same work. (School 1)

Another from School 2 described the English department as being "well-organised - responsibilities are clear", whilst a colleague from the same school pointed to the other danger:

> It is important that not too much work be prescribed by the (Standard Leaders') programmes for any one term as this can lead to anxiety. We need to be able to use our own initiative apart from the rigid programme set.

There is a lot of sense in this last remark. English cannot be taught at a gallop: the acquisition of skills of perception, analysis and expression requires time, patience and repetition.

Finally, teachers from both schools praised the system of 'Standard Leaders', a system which gave individuals "freedom, responsibility, opportunity to show initiative" and "leadership opportunities".

Question 7: "How do we co-operate as a team? ... What is your assessment of the leadership role of the Subject Head?"

Generally, both subject heads emerged with praise and only two criticisms were offered of each. At School 1, he was accused of being "over-committed" to responsibilities outside the English department, for example, he was also a standard head: "... very time consuming - need to concentrate on one job; unfortunately, like other teachers, over-committed". The other criticism ran as follows:

> I just wish he'd smile more! Nothing to do with English, but important all the same.

Perhaps the two issues are linked! There is not much room for smiling when one is over-committed! Yet the warnings are clear to those who undertake positions of leadership: it is not just what you do that sends messages to other teachers, but how you appear to be.

The subject head at School 2 was accused of being "a bit remote" to offer the necessary assistance "sometimes". It was also alleged that, though he ran the department very well, he exhibited a "slight resistance to innovation". Both these comments had particular reference to the handling of new teachers.

On the credit side, the accolades were plentiful:

> ... leads well; approach is positive and full of understanding.
>
> Most helpful. Committed. Worked assiduously on the creation of realistic goals and the setting out of work schemes.
>
> ... informed, thorough, leads well ... (School 1)
>
> ... thorough, clear-thinking, approachable and vigilant, but non-threatening.
>
> ... tries not to be prescriptive. He does not inhibit; he does not dictate, if possible. (School 2)

Yet, on the topic of team co-operation, respondents from both schools were less enthusiastic:

> We appear to co-operate on the surface. Do we? Do we share as much as we could/should? Of ideas and worksheets, I mean? The get-together at the HOD's house earlier was an excellent idea - but couldn't we have others ... to build spirit? (School 1)

This thought was echoed in a remark from School 2:

> When required to do so, we can and do work together ... Teachers are willing to share ideas if asked. Not many offer (for fear of being thought to push their viewpoint, I suspect!).

There is enormous resistance to opening one's classroom door in most schools. Teachers have become territorial animals who jealously guard their domains against invasion by their colleagues. Many are empire builders for whom sharing expertise, lessons and notes is an anathema. One solution to breaking down these barriers is, of course, team-teaching:

> There could be more co-operation (e.g. team-teaching), but this is a timetabling and an organisational problem. The subject head has to provide the motivation, otherwise nothing happens. (School 2)

At School 1, team-teaching does take place, though only in Stds 9 and 10. Through this, dramatic progress has been made in breaking down barriers, yet, as noted before (page 97), new ones arise when teachers fail to do their team duties conscientiously.

Other respondents were happy with the level of co-operation, though again, at School 1, complaints about colleagues not carrying out instructions and not pulling their weight were voiced.

Question 8: "Is the work load fairly distributed in the English department?..."

There were no complaints from either English department regarding the distribution of work. It is interesting to note that at School 2 the English teachers are given special consideration when the examination timetables are drawn up.

The only complaints came from three teachers at School 1 who strongly disliked the system (introduced in 1986) of 'whoever sets the paper, marks it - across the standard.' One objected to "doing someone else's marking" just because that person set the paper. Clearly, this teacher has not understood the careful system of metering work loads for examinations described in the English Work Scheme (Appendix 8.2.1, p.141). Another remarked, more accurately, that the marking load seemed heavier when one marked across the standard. The third was more vehement:

> I loathe marking across the standard. After marking the first 30 papers, I am sure I am too bored to be as effective as I should be. I miss seeing exactly what my pupils are doing and find it difficult to go over the paper when I have not marked it.

Space does not permit one to debate the wisdom of this policy, but the objections, whether valid or not, are numerous enough for cogniscance to be taken. It does seem to say something about the degree of team co-operation too.

Question 9: "What is good about the English programme in this school?"

Three teachers at School 1 mentioned "standardisation" under this heading. The term refers to the setting of common standards for each age level throughout the school by, amongst other things, setting common papers marked across the standard; moderating question papers, memoranda and scripts, as well as final totals; training teachers to use the same assessment instruments for oral and written work; drawing up a detailed and scheduled programme of work for each standard; and, above all, grading both the work and the pupils by the standards set in Senior Certificate HG and SG.

Two others felt that the clear objectives set and the continual assessment of goals were strong points. Other points mentioned were the clear guidance given by the subject head, efficient administration, and team work. Flexibility and freedom were also nominated.

Specific innovations that were praised included team-teaching, the reading campaign, the grammar programme, the system of 'Standard Heads' of English, the improvement in the school magazine and the "... excellent social programme! Can't fault the braais!"

Comments from School 2 were more varied. One aspect praised was the "graded, sequen-

tial approach which builds confidence". The same respondent praised the friendly atmosphere and the sharing of ideas that led to creative teaching. Another liked the variety - "the balance between formal and creative work". Two felt that this factor allowed teachers to extend the more willing and able pupils, the consequence of which was good Senior Certificate results - "more A's than most other subjects".

There are, of course, certain contradictions here with views expressed in earlier parts of the questionnaire. Illuminative evaluation is not invalidated as a technique by such contradictions. In fact, its virtue is that it can accommodate such aspects of reality as opposing views, whether statistically significant or not. Likewise there is a certain irony in the assertion about A's at Senior Certificate level (see pages 66-7) which makes that teacher's remarks particularly interesting.

Another aspect of the programme at School 2 which was praised is the fact that examinations are "related to the work actually taught" (see page 66). Finally, the support given to cultural activities is mentioned (see page 66).

Question 10: "What is not right? Mention some changes that you would welcome."

Two comments from School 1 stressed the need for more frequent meetings of English teachers, a thought echoed from School 2, where the respondent pointed out the pressures on administration that occur in a large school, which in turn reduce the time available for meetings. The consequence of this is, of course, lack of communication within the English department - a topic which has been aired on pages 97-8.

Undoubtedly, planners at School 2 should look at the concept of team-teaching in the English department. Throughout this part of the survey, team-teaching was raised by staff at School 2 and again this was to be found among the responses to Q 10. Two teachers mentioned it and one of them put it this way:

> Not enough sharing of the load - we all sweat away on our own, when one person could prepare a section and present it, another person could do something else, and so on.

A meeting at the end of the year "to discuss the next year" is also needed, whilst another teacher wondered whether "new brooms" might be an idea, as the subject head had perhaps "held the position for too long". The only other complaint from School 2 was the perennial one of work load.

At School 1, the need for more teaching periods in Std 6 was stressed, as well as the size of some of the groups, particularly as it affected team-teaching. Weaknesses in the cultural programme at the school were pointed out and, finally, the need for more

free time for English teachers was aired.

Question 11: "A final comment? For example, would you rather be teaching something other than English?"

Not all teachers responded to this question, but, of those who did, the great majority were very positive about being English teachers. Only two (one from each school) expressed a longing to teach another subject, both citing the sheer volume of work as killing their motivation:

> If it weren't for the volume of marking and all the bits and pieces to add up and evaluate, I'd be happy to teach English only. I need the relief (of my other subject) to keep my sanity and to make sure I keep in touch with other subjects and their needs. (School 2)

Though it has already been quoted (page 57), the final remark on the Teachers' Questionnaire, because it sums up so much of what has been discussed, is given to that teacher from School who commented:

> English is the best subject in the school! The only one really worth teaching! Having said that, would somebody mind inventing a marking machine?

In summary

1. Sheer work load and time pressure emerged as factors hampering English teachers in their efforts to realise the Goals of the syllabi.

2. Aims were often seen to be nebulous and difficult of evaluation, which factors aggravate teacher frustration in assessing their effectiveness as teachers.

3. One respondent accused the curriculum of being irrelevant to the real issues of communication facing South Africans today.

4. Actual and tangible co-operation between English teachers emerged as a problem in both schools.

5. Some reservations as to whether the local objectives of the English departments were being realised surfaced in the survey.

6. It seems that English teachers are, to a degree, isolated from their colleagues who teach other subjects. This leads to a feeling of not being appreciated or understood. Evidence suggests that this lack of communication extends also to parents and exists among English teachers themselves.

7. Accordingly, suggestions were made that English teachers should pool resources to lessen the work load. Department meetings should include meaningful 'professional growth' opportunities and should not be called simply to discuss administrative arrangements.

8. It is felt that the country can no longer afford to lose experienced and caring English teachers through the "burn-out" occasioned by unrealistic demands on their time and energies that currently obtain.

9. English teachers indicated their appreciation of a well-structured and organised teaching programme in their departments.

10. Several noted that team co-operation among English teachers could be improved. Many still seem reluctant to share expertise and resources.

11. Both subject heads were praised for their clear-headed leadership.

12. Some teachers at School 1 complained about marking 'across the standard'.

13. Factors praised by the teachers included clear objectives, attempts to establish common standards of assessment, social gatherings and (at School 1) team-teaching.

14. Teachers at School 1 asked for more frequent meetings of the English staff. At School 2, several would like to try team-teaching.

15. Despite the work load, the great majority enjoy teaching English.

CHAPTER FIVE

OTHER TEACHERS : PARENTS : SCHOOL EXECUTIVE

5.1 TEACHERS OF SUBJECTS OTHER THAN ENGLISH

It must be pointed out that this part of the survey was restricted to teachers of four subjects, namely history, geography, biology and science, and then only to the subject heads of each of these subjects in the two schools. The aim is to illustrate how this component of an illuminative evaluation into English teaching may be approached. The restrictive nature of a half-thesis has prevented this area from being comprehensively researched in this survey and so its findings are those from a small, though important, sample.

The English teachers in the survey had little idea of what the "aspirations" of other staff were with regard to English in the school (page 95). Those who did comment were somewhat disparaging. In that context, the remarks below may be of particular interest.

Teachers of 'other' subjects at School 1 were interviewed (see Appendix 8.3.6, p.162) and their responses to the questions were recorded by the researcher.

A scrupulous effort was made not to rephrase questions, to offer illustrations, or to indicate by any gesture or tone of voice a 'preferred' response. To check that the recorded response was exactly what the respondent meant, the written comment was read back for final approval. This technique had three advantages:

1. any ambiguity or doubt about the meaning of a question could be remedied then and there;
2. the researcher could make quite sure that each respondent understood the question in the same way as the next;
3. it created a marvellous opportunity for meaningful discussion about English and teaching in general.

Unfortunately, the same technique could not be used at School 2 and there the respondents simply answered the questions on their own without collaborating with each other.

Question 2.1: "What areas of overlap exist between your subject and English?"

Basically, reading skills and writing ability were suggested. Understanding textbooks (science and biology) and perceiving the drift of an argument (history and geography) were areas of concern. Summary and note-making were seen as useful in science and biology, whereas history and geography asked for more demanding skills. Obviously, the ability to write an articulate, succinct and structured essay was stressed in history, where correct analysis of the questions set, the ability to synthesise several sources and to see similarities and differences, finally rendering this material into an objective closing comment, were seen as necessary attributes of the HG pupil. Biology also claimed that objectivity (distancing) was useful. Geography commented that other useful areas of overlap were training in role-playing and "imaginative games".

Question 2.2: "Does the work done in the English programme assist you in the teaching of your subject in any way? ..."

Much of the material discussed above was repeated in answer to this question, however one science teacher commented that the oral work done in English classes was useful - "Talking about what they are doing gets ideas clear in their minds". One history teacher remarked that the training given in English classes in the setwork essay was evident in the history essay, but "the weaker pupils tend to disregard all rules of grammar when writing history essays".

Question 2.3: "Do you ever work with the English department on cross-curricula projects? ... any potential in this idea?"

Of the subject heads approached, not one had experience of this notion. Two teachers (science and geography) saw some gain in creating a climate of expectancies across the subject divides that might lead to pupils taking more care with language and being more logical. A history teacher felt that the "lower ability groups" would benefit greatly from this, but doubted whether it would be useful for the "brighter classes".

Question 2.4: "In project work, do you insist that pupils render their source material into their own words? ..."

Only the history departments were vehement that "quotations must be acknowledged as such" and pointed to the fact that 50% of the marks for HG essays are given to presentation. Plagiarism is actively discouraged. Geography was in agreement, but the comment "they may not do a whole project lifted verbatim" seemed to be less insistent. The only comment made from a biology teacher was that there was a tendency to accept plagiarism in projects, a view shared by one science teacher - though his colleague said that pupils "have to put things in their own words". On the whole, there was a disappointing lack of unanimity here, given the previous comments about objectivity, logic and understanding.

Question 2.5: "Do you ever penalise pupils for using faulty or slovenly English in written projects or exams?"

Obviously, with 50% of the HG essay mark given to presentation, the history teachers do exact a penalty for weak expression. To a lesser extent, geography follows suit. As one teacher put it, "Poor expression exacts its own penalty", presumably in the sense that what cannot be understood clearly cannot be credited. One biology subject head admitted that one tends to "assume" what the pupil means at SG level, giving "the benefit of the doubt", whereas it is more serious at HG level though, even here, no penalty is actually exacted in essays. One science teacher claimed that "often words don't even fit together" and was not prepared to credit such answers, but his colleague at the other school answered "No" to Q 2.5. The overall impression gained is that, though all are irritated by poor expression, few will take active steps to discourage it.

Question 2.6: "Do you ever correct their faulty speech or written work?"

Both history departments claimed that they did, one giving an example:

> Common errors, e.g. runaway, complicated sentences which end up meaning absolutely nothing; and the use of 'big' words with which the pupils are not familiar and therefore use incorrectly.

The remaining subject heads' replies were terse: geography - "Seldom"; biology - "No"; science - "Some only" and "Yes". Again one feels that only history teachers see this training as part of their job.

Question 2.7: "Are you satisfied with the standard of English used by your pupils?"

Omitting the top pupils, whose standards of usage were acceptable, all the teachers who responded had difficulties in teaching caused by problems of language ability. One history teacher pointed to the lack of sensitivity to persuasive ('loaded') language. This impaired the pupil's objectivity, often caused him to latch onto the incorrect emphasis or inference, and was a major factor in misconstruing essay titles. A geography teacher also mentioned not understanding the question, as well as limited vocabulary and poor syntax. In biology, this was made worse by an inability to grasp and use symbols correctly. The same applied to science.

Question 2.8: "Do you see it as the English department's job to improve the standard of English used by pupils in the school? Is it their task alone?"

Answers were faintly evasive here, but all agreed that indeed this defines the English department's job in a school. The evasiveness concerned whether the task should be shared among all teachers or not. Only two replies were positive on this point - and neither offered comment beyond "but not alone".

Question 2.9: "What do you see as the main job of an English department?"

Here lists of particular suggestions clouded the general point. Only two responses tried to sum it up:

> Teaching communication skills. The ability to state, clearly and concisely, what is in the mind. (history)
>
> Enable pupils to express themselves adequately and to understand textbooks. (science)

Communication skills and technical reading offer a wry distillation of the 31 pages of the Syllabus and Elucidations, yet, judging by the list of suggestions that follows, this is indeed typical of the perceptions of other teachers on the job description of an English teacher.

In no particular order, the detailed suggestions follow:

> analysing questions accurately, writing (discursive) essays, making comparisons, comprehension, reading skills, logical presentation, note-making, conciseness of expression, correctness of grammar and spelling, objectivity and subjectivity, concept analysis (e.g. "analyse", "infer"), clear style, paragraphing, sentence structure.

The list is a bit longer than "spelling skills" (page 95) and, to look at it positively, could form a useful basis for beginning a discussion on a 'language across the curriculum' project.

Question 2.10: "Do you regard English as an important subject...?"

All replies were in the affirmative - without comment. The reasons are clear from the responses above.

Question 2.11: "Can your pupils cope with the language used in their textbooks? If they can't, what do you do about it?"

Both history departments were concerned about the difficulties that younger and also SG pupils had with their textbooks. One gave an example:

> At the end of each section in the textbook is a paragraph headed "Significance of the ...". Rather than a discussion of the significance, pupils often list immediate results.

Obviously, careful explanation is necessary and, to this end, the other history teacher insists that the right hand page of the pupils' workbooks is reserved for building up a glossary of abstract words and for writing explanations of sections in the textbook. In geography, poor general knowledge is an added problem, especially when it comes to understanding symbols used on maps. Many children apparently do not know what a "junction" is, a "siding", a "spur", or even a "navigational light". One

teacher commented that over one third of his Std 8 class had never been on a train; one wonders how many have been on a ship. In biology and science, the textbooks are often obscure for children and teachers spend valuable time paraphrasing the "complex-sounding sections".

Much has been written about the language of textbooks, but future researchers might like to look at the 'generation gap' of general knowledge that exists between textbook authors and modern teenagers born in the mid-seventies. English teachers also find that little can be taken for granted anymore, that, for example, the evocative power of a steam locomotive (Spender) or Masefield's "Dirty British coaster with a salt-caked smoke stack" is lost on a generation of children who have known neither.

Question 2.12: "Does your subject demand that pupils master a specialised vocabulary? ... difficulties ...?"

To train pupils to think on an abstract level is the main problem in history, otherwise it is more a question of general but sophisticated vocabulary. The other subjects do have a jargon of their own and it was interesting to see that in one biology classroom lessons on affixes were given! Apparently, this is effective in making the "jaw-breakers" understandable. The main problem with science is that the terminology learnt is misapplied.

Question 2.13: "Do your pupils really follow what they are reading? Is their ability to extract meaning from a passage and to grasp its essential arguments problematical ...?"

All the respondents agreed with the history teacher who wrote:

> No, they do not. They do not, for example, know how to extract the primary essential point from a paragraph. A summary is often simply a re-hash with some substitute words.

All saw this as a major problem and comments on the scale of it ranged from "more than we are aware of" to "affects their progress grossly". "If you can't read, you can't do history," said one teacher.

Question 2.14: "Can your senior classes construct a clear written argument using the concepts ... taught them?"

Many of the responses repeated what has been reported before in this part of the survey, the general consensus being that "only the brightest" can do it.

Question 2.15: "Do your senior classes have a critical awareness about what they are reading, or do they just accept it?"

Again the consensus seems to be that the "top classes are very good at this; others accept anything" (science). One history teacher mentioned motivation as a factor

here, suggesting that without interest there can be no critical awareness.

Question 2.16: "Apart from errors, can your pupils articulate clearly what they want to say? Or do they fall back onto slang, analogies and 'you knows'?"

Responses to this were disappointing. Perhaps teachers of other subjects are not as attuned to talk (oral expression) as English teachers are. Of the two responses made, both said that good articulation was the province of the brighter child, a contention which few English teachers would support.

In summary

1. There is a huge field of common interest between English teachers on the one hand and those teaching history, geography, biology and science.

2. Though English is the key to successful learning in these subjects, the subject heads approached have never tackled the problem with any cross-curricula initiatives. Instead they tend to patch up the worst areas of the problem as best they can where it most affects them.

3. Thus there is a tendency to side-step the problem and to leave it to the English teachers. Moreover, they tend to see capability as a product of intelligence and thus beyond their control.

5.2 QUESTIONNAIRE 3: THE PARENTS

As this dissertation is in the nature of a half-thesis, a full-scale survey of parent views was not deemed possible. Instead, it was decided to restrict it to a small group in order simply to illustrate the techniques used in illuminative evaluation. A small but concerned group was sought and thus the questionnaires were sent to the executive members of the PTA (Parents-Teachers' Association) in each school. It was assumed that parents who stood for election to a PTA would be interested in the education of their children. Considering the quality of the responses received, this was a fair assumption, but the quantity returned was most disappointing - despite a second appeal to each individual.

Of the nineteen sent out, only six (three from each school) were returned completed - a seventh was simply sent back. Thus the return rate was about 32%.

From this minute sample, few persuasive conclusions can be drawn. Yet it must be

pointed out that the responses were perfectly in tune with this researcher's experience of numerous PTA meetings at various schools.

Question 1: "Among the subjects that your child does at school, how importantly do you rate English? ..."

Unanimity prevailed: "very important" and "exceptionally important". English was seen as the "basis of all communication", the "medium for all teaching" and especially important as a lingua franca in South Africa. This last perception was particularly striking in the context of the Teachers' Questionnaire (see pages 93 and 99).

Question 2: "What do you expect your child to learn in English classes? ..."

The answers at School 1 tended to be more specific than at School 2, for example, grammar, correct usage, spelling, setwork, comprehension and vocabulary. Two parents stressed the ability to "speak properly" and "confidence in using English". One suggested (interestingly) "business English" and another hoped that the child would acquire the ability to read "good quality books".

Some of these points were echoed in the responses from School 2, but with slightly more sophistication:

> The ability to speak on a subject;
> Exposure to excellent written and spoken English;
> Expansion of vocabulary and language skills;
> The ability to write expressively.

One parent produced this list of priorities:

1. Effective communication;
2. Understanding of the written word;
3. Sheer enjoyment of the beauty of words.

Point number 3 was unexpected and extremely heartening to those English teachers who see their job as far more than training in communication skills. The vogue, even in Senior Certificate language papers, is English as communication. It is good to know that at least one parent expects more.

The only other point of interest was that children should acquire the ability "to gather information". Though tersely put, this also suggests some skills of discrimination beyond the merely functional communicative skills.

Question 3: "Are you satisfied with the English programme ...?"

Two parents in each school answered in the affirmative. At School 1, another claimed

to be "fairly satisfied" but felt that the choice of setwork books was not "contemporary" enough.

At School 2, one of those who answered affirmatively had this rider:

> Yes, relatively satisfied, but I wish the books were MARKED more regularly and systematically, so my child could see if he were on the right track.

Another replied:

> Not always. Not enough essay work. Do they ever learn where to use commas and full stops?!

Both these responses have been discussed in conjunction with the marking dilemma of the English teacher on page 56.

Question 4: "Are you satisfied with your child's marks in English exams? ..."

A clear distinction between the schools emerged here. At School 1, none of the parents was satisfied. Two respondents bemoaned the fact that their children failed to see the importance of English (a view shared by a parent at School 2 with a child in Std 8). Thus not enough time was being spent on English in preparation for examinations. Another argued the other way, saying that English should not be a failing subject. One of these parents pointed out that the child concerned had had three English teachers in one year.

The parent with a child in Std 8 (see above) at School 2, also had a child in Std 10 about whose marks there were no complaints. The other parents in this group were perfectly satisfied. One comment was interesting in illustrating the weight parents put upon reading and having a good grounding:

> My child achieves his highest marks in English, but then he's always been an avid reader and <u>was</u> exceptionally well-taught in Junior School.

It is when one looks at this parent's comment on Q 5 that the significance of the underlined "was" becomes clearer.

Question 5: "Give a very brief evaluation of the teaching of English as you see it in this school. ..."

Continuing with the parent mentioned immediately above, the response to this question was as follows:

> The first term teacher was a GEM - keen, interested, extroverted. The "new" teacher is definitely insecure and unsure, and has taught one or two WRONG things!

What is interesting here is a parent's perspective on what makes a good English

teacher. Keenness, confidence, interest, subject knowledge and "an interesting person" rate 5, 12, 6 and 13 (omitting "confidence") on the scale of 16 qualities enumerated in Section B of the Pupil Questionnaire (pages 88-9).

The parents at both schools were generally satisfied with the standards set and the teaching, three making the point that a lot depended upon the individual teacher in English (see discussion on the 'teacher factor' : page 69).

Question 6: "Is your child casual or concerned about English? ... Is there sufficient English homework?"

This produced a set of generally negative responses. Four parents accused their children of being "casual"; three said that they did not devote enough time to English; and responses on homework set were lukewarm at School 1 and unanimously negative at School 2. This debate has been aired on page 56 and the views of a teacher at School 2 have been given prominence on page 98. At the risk of repetition, but to complete the picture, the comments of these parents follow:

> No - I would like more English homework; but my child reads daily and adores crossword puzzles, so I feel that he does his own "homework" in the end. Besides - homework given is seldom marked!! This makes me MAD!
>
> ... far more homework could be set. Is its importance underlined at school? More essay work could definitely be given. A great lack here.
>
> ... spends enough time if there is enough homework.

Question 7: "Do you think that the English programme at school has contributed to the broader education of your child?"

Only one parent was really unsure. The work done in literature and orals was highlighted by another parent (School 2). A third parent (also at School 2) pointed to strides made in other subjects as evidence of the child's broader education through English (see page 111):

> He writes excellent history or biology essays, for example, and is able to communicate with any age group at their level.

Question 8: "Are you concerned about the amount or type of reading that your child does at home? ..."

Replies to this were very terse. Two parents expressed concern at the quantity of reading done at home from School 1, whereas at School 2 only one parent felt this way. The rest possessed children who were "avid readers".

Question 9: "Does your child's use of English out of school worry you?"

Two thirds of both groups of parents answered negatively; the other two both men-

tioned slang and one obligingly gave examples:

> He is silly sometimes in his usage of SLANG of the worst possible kind. He speaks like his peers - a kind of "surfer's jargon", e.g. "kiff", "rad", "catch my drift?"

Question 10: "Any further comments?"

Two parents at School 1 felt that English could be more exciting. The other felt that standards of English must be maintained.

At School 2, one remarked philosophically that a gain in vocabulary did not seem to be matched by an improvement in spelling. Another closed by reiterating that English is not given the importance that it should have.

In summary

1. The sample is too small to feel comfortable about drawing conclusions.

2. Nevertheless, there are a few responses that seem by experience to be fairly general: the support for English from parents; the basic concern for reading well and communicating well; the frustration that not enough homework, especially writing work, is being set and thoroughly marked.

5.3 THE SCHOOL EXECUTIVE

Interviews were conducted with each of the school principals in their capacity as chief executive officers. The intention was to gain information on the place of English in the school (see Interview Construct, Appendix 8.3.5, p.161). Nothing polemical emerged from these interviews and whatever factual information was required was obligingly furnished, so there seemed little point in repeating the exercise with the Deputy Principals.

Those questions which refer specifically to arrangements for the English programme in the school are reported upon in the general descriptions of the two schools in Chapter Four (pages 62-7).

In general terms, it is fair to say of both schools that, whilst the principals are sympathetic towards English as a subject, it occupies no place of privilege in the policy and procedures of the school. The silent reading period at School 2 and the timetabling of English classes at School 1 have been discussed. Beyond these, there are no further specific arrangements made to facilitate the English programme,

though, at School 2, English teachers are given special consideration to accommodate their marking load during examinations.

Neither principal would be drawn on staffing policy, as circumstances obtaining at the time would dictate who was appointed. Good English teachers were no more expendable than any other good teacher and tended to fare very well in terms of promotability, achievement awards and leadership. The impression given was that there are no 'reserved' places in the hierarchy to attract or retain teachers of 'scarce' subjects such as mathematics, science, or accountancy.

Both schools posted disappointing Senior Certificate results in English at the end of 1988 and the principal of School 2 was particularly concerned about this (see page 67). At School 1, the principal seemed satisfied that English was no longer a problem subject and that standards were steadily improving. Only at School 1 was SG English an option; neither school operated LG classes. School 2 did not at that stage see a place for SG English.

Both principals were aware that English as a First Language plays a key role in the social, psychological and mental development of the child. Such words as "caring" and "concern" were used to describe the qualities that a good English teacher should have. One commented that a sense of humour was useful and both added: "... and a capacity for hard work". Beyond that, they both agreed, predictably, that the function of the English teacher was primarily to improve standards of English expression and reading in the school. This extended to taking an active part in the cultural life of the school.

In summary

1. English does not occupy a special position in either of the two schools in the survey, though both are flexible and accommodating towards any well-motivated innovations which might have impact upon school organisation.

2. English teachers are not undervalued by their principals, nor accorded any special status above their other colleagues. All good teachers are rewarded and recognised in terms of achievement awards, promotability and evaluations, irrespective of the subjects they teach.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The survey of the two English departments is reported in Chapters Two to Five, each section of which ends with a brief summary of the findings and observations made by the evaluator. It is not proposed to repeat those findings in this chapter of the report. Instead, an overview of the whole project is presented in terms of the original hypothesis, and including certain comments and recommendations.

6.2 THE NEED FOR EVALUATIONS OF ENGLISH PROGRAMMES IN SCHOOLS

One of the most salient socio-political issues in South Africa today is that of High School education. Whatever provisions are negotiated, the position of English, both as medium of instruction and as a subject within the school curriculum, is likely to be central. This has certainly been the case in Namibia, whereas here protests about the medium of instruction began to develop momentum in black schools from 1976.

From January 1991, the concept of non-racial or 'open' schools will be extended to those that are state-funded. Currently, as a matter of course, revisions of the existing syllabi in state schools are being considered and, among these, updating of the 1986 syllabi for English will also be on the agenda of curriculum developers.

Within this context, innovations affecting the teaching of English in state schols are likely to be imminent. Moreover, adaptations within High Schools to accommodate non-racial education will conceivably have impact upon English teaching at those schools.

Thus it is strongly recommended that English teachers, and subject heads of English in particular, should familiarise themselves with the concept and techniques of what Simons (1981) calls 'insider' evaluations of the 'process' type (see pages 15-6). That section of this survey involving School 1 amounts to such an 'insider evaluation'.

English teachers at both schools in the survey have asked for more meaningful English department meetings than those usually called to discuss such administrative detail as examination arrangements. It is submitted that the climate of the future is

likely to call for considerable re-appraisal and for sensitive planning of English programmes within the school. Therefore, the tag "If we do not know where we are, we cannot plan where to go" used in the preamble of Questionnaire 2 assumes a special relevance.

Through such techniques as illuminative evaluation, it is possible for a subject head to amass information of an 'illuminating' and a diagnostic nature upon which future directions of the English programme in the school can be planned. It is submitted that this has been demonstrated in the survey undertaken and in the 1986 'pilot study' at School 1. It is recommended that future planning, which could be critical for an English programme in a non-racial school, should be based on validated information generated by the disciplines of illuminative evaluation, rather than by the informal and ad hoc methods that often guide English department decisions. Finally, it is recommended, within the present context of curriculum debate in South African schools, that this be accorded priority status in English department meetings.

6.3 THE EFFICACY OF ILLUMINATIVE EVALUATION

This research began with the hypothesis that:

> ... the technique of curriculum evaluation known as 'illuminative evulation' provides an effective instrument with which to probe into the 'learning milieu' of a High School English department, uncovering, in the process, information of interest and use to the school concerned. (page 3)

The intention was to illustrate the procedures of this kind of evaluation and to demonstrate that data could be gathered on a broad range of topics which would aid informed decision-making.

The submission is made that, even without recourse to the full range of information reflected in each chapter, a perusal of the summaries given at the end of each section of Chapters Two to Five of this report will indicate that a lot of valuable data has been generated on the two English departments surveyed.

As the evaluator was able to assume an 'insider' perspective on School 1, the information and insights gathered on School 2 (where he was an 'outsider') are particularly relevant in deciding whether the survey was effective or not. Again it is submitted that the research done at that school is of a quality useful for diagnosis and decision-making.

In recommending the technique of illuminative evaluation to those interested in undertaking research into the 'instructional systems' and 'learning millieux' of

English departments in High Schools, the evaluator has noted particularly the following advantages and disadvantages of the approach.

Unlike the methodology of the 'objectives' (scientific) model, the approach of illuminative evaluation is inherently flexible. This flexibility is demonstrably useful in 'progressively focusing' upon matters of relevance to the concerns of the evaluation, be they apparently idiosyncratic or more frequently observable. Because of this, it is possible to change direction midstream should an observation or development warrant it.

The techniques of illuminative evaluation are fully adaptable to small-scale investigations, such as those appropriate to a subject department in a school. Large samples are not required to validate observations made. To focus upon the particular rather than the general is quite acceptable and does not result in loss of clarity.

Perhaps the greatest advantage of the approach is that it is sympathetic to the range of untidy complexities which reflect the reality of First Language English teaching. It is arguable that no school subject is more multi-faceted, less clearly defined and more unrestricted than a First Language. The 'transactions' that take place in the learning milieu of English teaching defy tidy analysis and measurement. No simple boundaries can be drawn when the truth is that the whole social, psychological and intellectual development of the child depends upon his perceptive, cognitive and communicative ability within his own language.

Because illuminative evaluation does not attempt to limit, define or control the field of study in the interests of 'laboratory experiment', 'universal laws' of behaviour, or quantitative measurement, its impact on the learning milieu is comparatively non-disruptive and the 'reactivity' factor (page 15) is less.

Finally, the picture it produces of the reality of teaching English is alive, colourful and persuasively recognisable. Thus it has great advantages for informed decision-making.

Two distinct disadvantages emerged from this survey. The first is that, whatever precautions are taken, the evaluator has an uneasy feeling that his observations are open to charges of partiality. This is discussed on page 15, where the evaluator is seen as a specialist whose approach must be professional and beyond reasonable reproach. Perhaps this is possible for those well-versed in the theory and techniques of various types of educational evaluation, but it does have worrying implications for 'insider' evaluations conducted by busy, practising teachers. Helen Simons (1981) is aware of the problem:

> It should also recognise that there is a need to protect such exercises from public scrutiny for a period so that teachers have time to acquire evaluative skills. (quoted by McCormick and James, 1983, p.101)

She goes on to suggest that such evaluations "should be isolated from accountability demands for a time", a position which is undesirable and somewhat difficult to defend.

Time is the second problem. Enough evidence emerged in this survey to show that English teachers are under enormous time pressure to do justice to their day-to-day work. Illuminative evaluation is very demanding of the researcher's time, as, for example, each stage of 'progressive focusing' requires sensitive and informed judgements upon existing information. Observations made may well require elaborate procedures of verification, using different methods in the process termed 'triangulation'. Most of the data is qualitative in nature and is thus slow of assessment. The simple pre-test post-test frame of the traditional 'scientific' model, with its quantitative data processed automatically by computer, may well be less time-consuming.

To summarise, the subject head evaluator must budget time to familiarise himself with illuminative techniques before beginning and, at each stage of the investigation, to analyse his observations. This can be done, as the pilot study of 1986 shows, and it ought to be done.

6.4 TWO ENGLISH PROGRAMMES: AN OVERVIEW

Despite the headlong launching of the new OG syllabus simultaneously into Stds 6 and 7 in 1986, and despite the initial lack of suitable Language Study textbooks specifically designed for the new syllabi, both schools have implemented effective programmes that reflect the spirit and parameters of the Goals and Elucidations. A measure of this is that sufficient evidence emerged in the survey to indicate that most of the Goals of the syllabi are being achieved.

Little criticism of the syllabi content was noted from teachers, other than that respondent who charged the English curriculum with being irrelevant to the needs of a developing South Africa (pages 92-3). It is recommended that this point be taken seriously by state curriculum developers who must devise English programmes to meet the needs of 'open' schools and a future non-racial society.

One immediate recommendation concerns Goal 3.1.8 HG, which discusses the desirability of introducing pupils to literary works from Southern Africa. It is submitted that the texts traditionally prescribed both for OG and HG are largely irrelevant to the

very real issues of growing up within the current political debate. There have been exceptions (the protest poetry of a few black authors has appeared) and some of the traditional prescriptions have oblique reference to racial issues, though these are somewhat dated. The point is that pupils in the survey showed no particular interest in Southern African literature, and the prescriptions committees would be well advised to address this problem afresh, even in the wake of the Boesman and Lena debacle.

A step in the right direction would be to grant more freedom to teachers to select texts related to the interests and capabilities of their classes, as is the situation with OG prescriptions. There was some evidence from the survey that this approach leads to far greater enjoyment and discussion of literature, and, ultimately, to more avid reading. The result is more effective English teaching. It is likely that those who teach English in 'open' schools of the future will need the freedom to adjust to classroom circumstances in teaching literature.

In this connection, the special place that English may well occupy within the socio-political reorganisation of this country and all its educational resources requires the services of trained, experienced, motivated and innovative English teachers. Such staff cannot be regarded as expendable manpower and of less importance than teachers of technical or numerical subjects. The English teachers in this survey complain of stress and exhaustion in trying to implement the new syllabi, particularly with regard to coping with the marking of written work. It is strongly recommended that, in planning future curricula and staffing policies for schools, state education departments take note of existing English teacher 'overload' and 'burn-out', and devise provisions that will encourage good and conscientious English staff to face the challenges ahead.

Why some classes should blossom and enjoy work that others do not; why some groups should be enthusiastic and others decidedly negative; why some pupils do far better than expected and others do not; these, and other phenomena encountered in the survey, can sometimes be ascribed to what was termed the 'teacher factor'. Few experienced teachers and few parents dispute the fact that a good teacher can make a world of difference to the performance and attitudes of a class. The point is made to underline the previous paragraph about protecting good English teachers, as, ironically, it is those who are most effective in the learning milieu who are also most at risk in terms of morale and 'burn-out'.

In this context, it is strongly recommended that both English departments address the issues of real co-operation and sharing between English staff to lessen the work load and to build up morale. A strong feeling of frustration was evident among the

English teachers, who find it difficult to evaluate their own success. This is another strong argument for evaluation studies within English departments. But that is not the only cause of frustration. The other concerns the degree of isolation that English teachers feel from their other colleagues and even parents. Many of the teachers in the survey felt unappreciated or misunderstood. These are concerns both of the school executive and English subject heads. Such problems of co-operation and communication need urgently to be addressed if the corps of good English teachers at both schools is to be maintained intact and motivated.

A shared frustration of Std 10 pupils and their teachers is the current style of examination used for Language Study at Senior Certificate level. As the final examination is perceived by both teachers and pupils to be definitive of standards and approaches to the syllabus, it usually provides a good indicator of what should be taught in the classroom and at what level. School 2, which has striven to inculcate a learning ethic as far as the language component is concerned, is not alone in feeling at a loss as to what to expect and what to stress for the final examination. It is suggested that the CED compare the written syllabus to Paper Threes from 1985 onwards and amend either the papers or the elucidations in the syllabus of what 'language in action' is meant to be.

A related complaint is that of the tedium of the grammar syllabus, which it is claimed, is decidedly repetitious from Std 6 onwards. The anomaly of the OG syllabus not providing guidance on summary work yet expecting it to form part of the Std 7 examination is also in need of attention.

Generally, the research done indicates that an English programme in a school must be a dynamic organism and not simply the passive transmitter of what Parlett and Hamilton (1972) call the 'instructional system'. It must not wait for syllabus revisions and outside directives, but must take its cue from the vitality of the learning milieu. In short, it must be alive to change, re-appraisal and innovation, especially in view of the likely challenges and demands that lie ahead along the front of English teaching.

A programme that is static and a subject head who is complacent will soon generate levels of stress and frustration among English staff, which in turn will lead to tired and half-hearted teaching, a fall in standards, and a discontented client body of pupils and parents.

Innovation begins with evaluation. English teachers in this survey have expressed their need for stimulation, for 'professional growth' rather than administrative meetings. Appraisal and innovation form the life blood of an English department.

Again it is submitted that "If we do not know where we are, we cannot plan where to go". Again it is recommended that subject heads, not only of English, conduct 'insider' evaluations of the illuminative type in order to generate the information they need to take informed decisions that will keep teaching dynamic.

7.

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8.

APPENDICES

JUNIOR SECONDARY COURSE: SYLLABUS FOR ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE ORDINARY GRADE

A. THE SYLLABUS

1 GLOBAL AIMS

1.1 To encourage the natural enthusiasm, vitality, spontaneity and originality of pupils through their *active participation* in meaningful language activities

1.2 To enrich pupils' ideas, to stimulate their thoughts and feelings and to develop their *understanding* of themselves and their own emotional and moral responses to life and the world around them, so that they may live more fully, more consciously and responsibly

1.3 To develop pupils' ability to *express* their ideas, thoughts and feelings effectively through language

1.4 To develop pupils' ability to *communicate* ideas, thoughts and feelings effectively through language

1.5 To help pupils develop the *language skills* which contribute to effective expression and communication

2 ORAL COMMUNICATION

2.1 GOALS

That pupils

2.1.1 speak fluently, distinctly and with ease and enjoyment, acquiring poise and confidence in communicating

2.1.2 be able to convey to others their observations, feelings and thoughts in an orderly, convincing and coherent manner

2.1.3 realise that differences exist between speech and writing, and explore these differences

2.1.4 learn to show their understanding of the meaning, feeling and tone of a passage in reading it to an audience

2.1.5 learn to listen intelligently, courteously and with comprehension, developing a readiness to consider new ideas and other points of view

2.1.6 experience oral activities as integral with other kinds of communication.

2.2 EVALUATION OF ORAL COMMUNICATION

2.2.1 One cannot always prescribe in matters of accent and word usage, but pupils should be led to see that, according to circumstances, some ways of speaking are more acceptable than others. For this reason the method of assessment is of great importance. (See Section 6.2.1 on Evaluation.)

3 READING AND LITERATURE STUDY

3.1 GOALS

That pupils

3.1.1 be encouraged to enjoy reading

3.1.2 bridge the gap between their voluntary reading and viewing and the reading of selected literature of merit at school

3.1.3 develop the capacity for critical thinking about, and the ability to form and express their own views on literary works

3.1.4 integrate their reading with other aspects of the Syllabus

3.1.5 expand their experience of life, gain empathetic understanding of people and develop moral awareness

3.1.6 develop self-knowledge and self-understanding

3.1.7 develop reading skills necessary to respond effectively to both fiction and non-fiction.

3.2 READING AND COMPREHENSION SKILLS

The importance of reading is reaffirmed. Unless pupils have both *a desire to read* (reading for enjoyment and information) and the *ability* to do so (reading skills), they will not be able to cope adequately in the classroom, nor will they later be able to use to the full the many opportunities for career advancement in a literate society.

4 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

4.1 GOALS

That pupils

4.1.1 write for their own satisfaction and enjoyment

4.1.2 discover that fundamental differences exist between written and spoken communication

4.1.3 gain insight into the styles and conventions of various kinds of writing

4.1.4 be introduced to elements of style such as register, diction, tone, syntax, denotation and connotation, and the use of literal and figurative language

4.1.5 be introduced to some of the devices of cohesion and coherence

4.1.6 learn to handle effectively the variety of writing tasks they will face both in and out of school.

5 LANGUAGE STUDY

5.1 GOALS

That pupils

5.1.1 increase their ability to comprehend language in action

5.1.2 increase their insight into the grammar of the language

5.1.3 extend their vocabulary

5.1.4 learn to spell

5.1.5 learn to improve their punctuation.

B. ELUCIDATION OF THE SYLLABUS

FOR ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE ORDINARY GRADE (STDS 5, 6 AND 7)

(NOTE: Numbered paragraphs are cross-referenced with the Syllabus)

PREAMBLE: JUNIOR SECONDARY COURSE

Teachers must note that, with the exception of items actually specified for teaching or examining in either Standards 5, 6 or 7, the contents of both the *Syllabus* and the *Elucidation of the Syllabus* must be treated at the level of competence that may reasonably be expected of pupils in the standard being taught. Teachers should be aware that items in the Syllabus should be applied at progressively higher levels of competence.

Consequently, the teaching of any aspect of the Junior Secondary Syllabus must be adapted to the needs of the pupils and based on contexts of a readability and maturity level appropriate to the standard concerned. This implies that the Syllabus has not been designed to be divided into separate "packages" for each of the three years.

Although the *Syllabus* itself is of manageable length, the *Elucidation of the Syllabus* is very wide-ranging and is designed to allow for considerable enrichment material which need not necessarily be examined. Teachers are advised to make constant reference to the *Elucidation* in order to ensure that they adapt the basic Syllabus to the needs and abilities of their pupils. It is not necessary — or even desirable — to attempt to implement *all* of the *Elucidation* during the course, but regular reference to, and study of, the guidance it contains will help English teachers to teach this course satisfactorily.

NOTE: (i) Each school must frame a policy regarding Sections 4 and 5 of the *Elucidation* in order to relate the goals to the needs and abilities of the pupils. *Language Study* should be based mainly on 5.1.1–5.1.5.

(ii) Section 3.2.2.1, i.e. *The Development of Comprehension Skills*, details useful information which can be utilized during the teaching of the rest of the Syllabus.

INTRODUCTION

(a) ASSUMPTION

The underlying assumption of the Syllabus is that the receptive skills (listening and reading) and the expressive skills (talking and writing) cannot be acquired in isolation but need to be developed in an integrated process involving pupils' experiences and needs in and beyond school.

(b) GENERAL AIM

The general aim should be to promote pupils' intellectual, emotional, social and cultural development through developing their competence in using the language and through enriching their experience and enjoyment of the language.

(c) PROGRESSION

This Syllabus spans Standards 5, 6 and 7. Language development occurs at different rates and at different chronological ages for different pupils. Although pupils entering the Junior Secondary Phase should have progressed to a level of language competence that enables them to cope with the demands of the subject, it will be necessary to give fuller attention to language skills as they are applied in more complex situations. The teacher should motivate and guide pupils to use the skills involved in effective listening, speaking, reading and writing and should be familiar with the Senior Primary Phase Syllabus to ensure continuity in each pupil's language growth.

(d) INTEGRATION

For convenience and clarity this Syllabus is presented in four sections (Oral Communication, Reading and Literature Study, Written Communication, and Language) but it must be stressed that in practice the work should, wherever possible, be integrated. Language competence grows through experience of listening, reading, talking and writing and through direct study of the language itself in both literary and non-literary contexts. The outcome of such study should form an organic whole. How integration is implemented will depend upon the teacher's methods, approaches and emphasis. It follows that the teacher should use the periods allocated to English in a flexible manner, provided that these four sections of the work receive regular attention. Moreover, teachers should explore the fruitful possibilities of language across the curriculum.

1 GLOBAL AIMS

1.1 Language development occurs through continual exposure to appropriate examples of language. The pupils' own experiences and interests are crucial to their language development. They will respond readily to topics and situations that engage their curiosity and that they enjoy and care about. The teacher should be perceived as a genuinely receptive audience who responds with enthusiasm and encouragement to what the pupil says or writes.

1.2 The relationship between language competence and personal development is important. Observation and discussion of states of mind; of emotional responses; of human relationships, predicaments, crises and of moral values, particularly in the context of literature and all its forms (including television programmes, films, leisure reading) enjoyed by pupils can promote this global aim. Exploration of the pupils' own

experiences, feelings, hopes, fears, attitudes and concerns is necessary through speech, discussion, writing and drama. Pupils' language experience outside the English classroom should be engaged: they should be awakened to the powers of persuasive language (e.g. in advertising, propaganda, reporting, the mass media) and learn to respond more critically and with deeper insight, not only to the world in general but also to the rest of their school experience (language across the curriculum). In a relationship of trust and genuine concern the teacher will be able to guide pupils beyond personal experience and interests towards exploring and articulating new experiences.

1.3 Pupils are usually moved to discuss an issue which concerns them before they are ready to resort to written expression. The teacher must play a key role in promoting pupils' ability to express themselves, increasing their capacity to observe, to discriminate, to see relationships and to use language as a medium to express and to organize their thoughts and feelings logically, coherently and appropriately. The teacher should determine the richest and most effective contexts to stimulate pupils' imaginations.

1.4 All communication should be regarded as a two-way process involving not only the ability to express but also a willingness to respond: to listen, to speak, to read, to comprehend, to think, to evaluate, to infer, to observe and to participate. Pupils should learn to impart information, to express themselves with feeling and sensitivity and to persuade an audience. Communicative competence (both oral and written) should be developed in person-to-person, person-to-group and person-within-group situations. Each language context is unique: pupils should discover the appropriateness and effectiveness of language in relation to audience, context and purpose. Through participation in a variety of language situations pupils should be led to draw conclusions about patterns of usage. Teachers should show pupils, through involvement with examples of English usage, how to improve their communicative competence.

1.5 Language study should not be seen as an end in itself. The focus should be on effective communication: if the purpose is achieved the language used will have been effective and appropriate to the particular context. Syntactical relationships, appropriateness of vocabulary and logical organization of ideas are relevant to precision in communication.

Pupils must be given systematic help and constructive criticism and be encouraged to use language as effectively as possible, by continuous attention to and practice in the development of the skills associated with effective listening, speaking, reading and writing in meaningful contexts.

The pupils should reach a level of language competence that will enable them to meet the demands on their language skills made by English and by other subjects across the curriculum.

2 ORAL COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION

(a) People are immersed in words which play upon issues that will affect their lives in a variety of ways. Television and radio have brought these issues into pupils' lives. Since people are often regarded by the media not as individuals but merely as passive consumers, pupils have pressing reasons to listen with discrimination and equally pressing reasons to speak effectively.

(b) Every teacher's own speech is an important influence in developing pupils' competence in spoken English. The teacher's example as a listener who concentrates and responds with sincere interest to the speaker is equally important.

(c) Suggested goals are given under separate headings, but it should be remembered that oral communication is an integral part of living and cannot be taught as a set of isolated skills. Proficiency in oral communication, while in part dependent on specific abilities, is an important aspect of total personality development and social competence.

(d) Particularly in the Junior Secondary Phase where many pupils are engaged in the search for identity typical of early adolescence, and where through role-playing they are able to act out some of their tensions, oral communication work should be marked by encouragement and experimentation, rather than by regimentation. At the same time, pupils need guidance in the development of oral skills.

2.1 GOALS

2.1.1 Speaking experiences should assist pupils to develop personally and socially, and they should find satisfaction through an increasing competence in the use of speech. At times the practice of specific skills may be desirable.

2.1.2 From taking part in stimulating speech situations, pupils can develop a sense of what makes for effective communication.

2.1.3 Communication of meaning depends not only on *what* is said but on *how* it is said. The pupil should discover that one cannot always write as one talks. Effective communication includes use of registers, gestures and body language.

2.1.4 Teachers should bear in mind that reading aloud is an important part of oral communication and they should provide guidance in and opportunities for reading aloud effectively. Successful reading aloud implies comprehension of the passage by the reader.

2.1.5 Listening requires effort and concentration and involves comprehension and a critical evaluation of what is heard.

2.1.6 Oral work, rather than existing as an entity, needs to be fully integrated with the whole educational process. Pupils should realize that it involves not only discussions, presentations and dramatizations in the English class but also their effective communication in all subjects.

3 READING AND LITERATURE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Pupils may respond strongly to literature in which they see their own experiences reflected, but they must also be encouraged to extend their experience through facing ideas and feelings which are new to them, in order to develop an understanding of the world around them and an awareness of their own potential.

In the study of literature all aspects of the Syllabus (listening, speaking, reading, writing and language study) are engaged in a meaningful context.

Reading skills must be developed to enable the pupil to cope with the demands made by literature in other subjects.

3.1 GOALS

3.1.1 If teachers can help pupils to find enjoyment in reading, they will have done them a lasting service. Without pleasure from and active participation in reading, the other goals cannot be achieved effectively. The teacher's enthusiasm and example are of prime importance in cultivating a desire to read. The availability of books that appeal to the pupils is also very important in promoting reading.

3.1.2 The reading of selected or prescribed literature in class and the pupils' voluntary reading (and viewing of TV, films and plays) should be seen as part of a continuum.

Literature in this broad sense is at the core of English studies and is an extremely valuable accessible resource for the teacher. Through reading widely pupils can discover a vast range of human experience to enjoy, evaluate and contemplate.

The pupils' voluntary reading and viewing may not satisfy the criteria of 'good' literature, but the responses they make to the books they choose to read form the basis for the more mature responses that will be expected of them later. The teacher should encourage and guide them in their choice of books.

3.1.3 Although the teacher cannot force the development of a sensitive awareness and critical response, he or she can increase the pupils' awareness of the importance of form, of the range and power of language and of the superior quality of experience and insights into life that are characteristic of good literature. Reading is a thinking and affective process. Comprehension should develop from the literal level to the interpretive, critical and creative levels. The teacher should lead pupils to observe, to discriminate and to see relationships by encouraging them to discuss and evaluate ideas, and help them to respond genuinely to the work. The teacher's role is to develop the subtlety and complexity of this response without forcing opinions or allowing only a one-way flow of ideas.

3.1.4 Oral activities and the reading of books and stories in class are essential to promote effective response and critical thinking. Listening, speaking, reading and writing should be fully integrated in these activities.

3.1.5 Literature can stimulate pupils to question and to redefine for themselves their assumptions, attitudes and values. It can also open their minds and hearts to new ideas and sensations.

Because literature explores people's lives and gives insight into their motives, values and feelings — insight not easily obtained from everyday encounters with other people — it can increase the pupils' awareness of others. Cultures differ in values, customs and world view, and acquaintance with the writings of members of other cultures can help them understand such differences.

3.1.6 By responding to literature and through vicarious involvement, pupils may learn more about themselves. The ordering of experience accomplished linguistically by a writer can produce in the readers some ordering of their own experiences and attitudes. As a result they may acquire more self-knowledge, a clearer perspective on, and insight into their own situation, motivations and choices.

3.1.7 The achievement of the preceding goals depends largely on the pupils' acquisition of certain reading and comprehension skills.

These skills should not be taught in isolation or as starting points, but should be dealt with in meaningful contexts as the need arises.

3.2 READING AND COMPREHENSION SKILLS

The outline of Reading and Comprehension Skills below is intended as a guide to some of the skills that may have been introduced in the Senior Primary Phase and should be developed in the Junior Secondary Phase.

These skills should not be taught in isolation or as starting points, but should be dealt with in meaningful contexts as the need arises.

3.2.1 STUDY SKILLS AND READING FOR INFORMATION

(Co-operation with a teacher-librarian and with teachers of other subjects is essential, as this section is not the responsibility of the language teacher only.)

4 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION

(a) In listening, talking, reading, observing and feeling, pupils experience a multitude of impressions. Writing is a very effective method of ordering this experience, and of helping one to reflect upon it, and of crystallizing one's thoughts and feelings so that one becomes more aware and can enjoy communicating sincerely and competently. There is an intimate connection between this area of the Syllabus and all the others. Writing should continually flow from and support pupils' reading and language study as well as oral work.

(b) Pupils must be guided in their writing to move outwards, towards extending their knowledge of the world and other human beings, and inwards towards a deeper understanding of themselves. The teacher needs to provide a wide variety of stimuli and contexts which, with a sense of audience, generates the urge to communicate. These should as far as possible be found in pupils' personal experience and needs, and should also be drawn from the rest of the Syllabus and the total curriculum.

(c) Written communication needs to be taught. Although writing techniques should be taught from real or simulated situations, they should be preceded and followed by appropriate discussion. The *purpose*, the *audience* and the *context* must be kept in mind and the writing planned accordingly. Pupils should be given the opportunity of writing frequently for various purposes and audiences. The audience should be clearly defined for it is this concept which will determine style, tone and language, and give direction to pupils' writing.

4.1 GOALS

4.1.1 The writing of prose, poetry, diaries, journals, etc. should be encouraged. The pupils' experiences outside the classroom should be engaged to stimulate writing. Newspapers, magazines, films, television and radio programmes, a Boys'/Girls' Annual, as well as personal sporting and social activities provide numerous opportunities for writing.

4.1.2 Written communication needs to be more explicit in logic and tone, and grammatically more carefully constructed than speech. For it to be efficient it must be correctly spelt. In addition to addressing the specified audience in the appropriate register written communication must make more explicit use of the aids to coherence and cohesion.

A variety of oral activities, e.g. reading aloud and the discussion of various topics can be used as stimuli to prepare for writing. Furthermore, in revising and editing drafts, group and class discussions are valuable. Pupils can be encouraged to read aloud and to evaluate what they and their fellow pupils have written.

4.1.3 This goal is inseparable from most of those listed under Section 3 (Reading and Literature). The reading and study of good literature should play an integral part in any writing programme. Reading and literature study should suggest other appropriate writing modes and topics which pupils may be stimulated to explore, e.g. prose and verse, reviews, reports, advertisements, letters, instructions and directions.

4.1.4 Pupils' study of language should be closely related to their own writing, through which they should be led to explore

- different sentence structures for different purposes
- judicious handling of generalization
- the achievement of vividness and clarity by the use of imagery
- the vocabulary, phrasing and idiomatic expression appropriate to a given purpose
- appropriate tone
- drafting and editing.

4.1.5 Pupils need to acquire not only the grammar of the sentence but also the principles of constructing paragraphs and of organizing paragraphs into coherent sequence by exploring the use of

- the topic sentence and paragraph unity
- various ways of developing a paragraph, e.g. climax, comparison and contrast, illustration
- connectors and referents to achieve coherence e.g. relative pronouns and words such as "however", "therefore", "so", "furthermore", "thus"
- sentence variety, length and inversion to achieve flow
- logical and interesting sequence of and transition between paragraphs.
- introductory and concluding paragraphs.

4.1.6 The writing conventions, forms and techniques appropriate to different modes should be developed in the context of the pupils' own needs and experience as well as that of reading and discussion, e.g. sketches, poems, paragraphs, stories, informal letters, essays, reports, instructions, directions, notices, telegrams, summaries, essays in other subjects.

NOTE:

Continuous Assessment of Writing

As far as possible, teachers need to take an overall view of the developing language competence explicit in their pupils' written work: progress made from one writing assignment to the next should be carefully noted. Continuous assessment of writing, based as it is on a more extensive knowledge of the pupils' written work than can be obtained from a single, end-of-year examination, enables the teacher to develop those forms and aspects of writing that find no place in an examination paper.

Continuous assessment of writing not only enables a wider spectrum of types of writing to be evaluated, but also ensures that pupils work more consistently and take a keener interest in their progress; it enables them to

revise and edit work, thereby benefiting immediately from the teacher's guidance. Competence in writing should be demonstrated in a variety of contexts.

Where possible the examination mark at the end of the year should include an evaluation of some of the pupils' best work written during the course of the year.

5 LANGUAGE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

(a) While it must be stressed that linguistic competence rather than the academic study of language should be the main aim, some understanding of how language works will help pupils to appreciate the principles underlying their own speech, reading, and writing more fully. Such understanding will, in turn, help them to communicate more effectively, to appreciate literature more fully, and to cope with the demands of language across the curriculum and outside the classroom.

(b) A study of language in action should form an integral part of all aspects of English teaching — listening, speaking, reading and writing. Language activities must meet the needs of the pupils.

5.1 GOALS

5.1.1 The ability to comprehend is developed through practice and study.

5.1.2 Language exercises should be seen only as a means of making appropriate usage a habit and of improving communicative competence. Grammar as employed here, refers to rules which govern the formation of acceptable sentences. It should be seen as a branch of language study, *not* an end in itself. Detached formal language exercises can be counter-productive: the emphasis must be on language in action, which implies an incidental approach based on error analysis of pupils' written work.

Nevertheless, while it is important to stress pupils' ability to use and to understand the language, not merely to label language, they should be shown that the ability to identify, name and use grammatical concepts will improve their understanding of language as used by others, and their own usage.

By the end of Standard 7 the following concepts and their functions should be known:

— parts of speech (word classes)

nouns, pronouns, adjectives (including articles), verbs (including participles, auxiliary verbs and the concept of finite and non-finite verbs), adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections

— the function of the verb in respect of

tense (stressing importance of sequence of tenses, and including practice of reported speech)

voice (stressing use of auxiliary verbs in the passive, and transitive and intransitive use of verbs)

concord

number

— sentence structure

statements, exclamations, questions and commands exhortations; simple, complex and compound sentences; main and subordinate clauses; adjectival and adverbial phrases (detailed, mindless clause analysis is definitely not recommended)

— lexical terms: synonym, antonym, homophone

— functional concepts such as subject, predicate, object, complement, modifier, connective

— literal and figurative use of language, including use of metaphors and idiomatic language

— appropriate English usage, including colloquialisms, slang, clichés

— direct and reported speech (stressing correct punctuation of direct speech, and effects and functions of both direct and reported speech).

5.1.3 Vocabulary and idiomatic fluency should be enriched as part of a deliberate teaching policy. Pupils should acquire a vocabulary that enables them to cope with the demands made by their own writing, literature, the media and social situations. Knowledge of roots, prefixes and suffixes can provide clues and help pupils build up their vocabularies. Words should be explored in configurations or in context, e.g. in relation to literature or in "word families".

5.1.4 A thorough approach to the learning of spelling should be fostered in the pupil. The teacher should identify and meet the needs of the individual pupil. Suitable dictionaries should be used as a matter of course. The incidental way of learning spelling must be complemented, where appropriate, by attention to spelling rules and exceptions to the rule.

NOTE: The dictionary is a rich source of material for 5.1.3, 5.1.4 and 5.1.5. Pupils must learn to regard the dictionary as indispensable.

5.1.5 Teachers should stress as far as possible the dependence of meaning upon punctuation.

By the end of Standard 7 pupils should be able to use the following punctuation marks correctly:

capital letters, full stop, comma, colon, semi-colon, apostrophe; question, exclamation and quotation marks; parentheses and brackets, dashes and hyphens.

NOTES: The teacher should stress these and other such items according to the needs and the abilities of the pupils.

The study of language should not be undertaken out of context, i.e. through a series of unrelated exercises or questions.

The teacher should keep a sense of proportion in deciding how much time to devote to the study of grammar.

SENIOR SECONDARY COURSE: SYLLABUS FOR ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE

The following syllabus for English First Language Higher Grade for the Senior Secondary Course will be introduced from 1 January 1986.

The syllabus will be introduced in Standard 8 in 1986 and the first Senior Certificate examination on this syllabus will be held in November/December 1988.

SENIOR SECONDARY COURSE: SYLLABUS FOR ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE
A. THE SYLLABUS

1 GLOBAL AIMS

1.1 To encourage the natural enthusiasm, vitality, spontaneity and originality of pupils through their *active participation* in meaningful language activities

1.2 To enrich pupils' ideas, to stimulate their thoughts and feelings and to develop their *understanding* of themselves and their own emotional and moral responses to life and the world around them, so that they may live more fully, consciously and responsibly

1.3 To develop pupils' ability to *express* their ideas, thoughts and feelings effectively through language

1.4 To develop pupils' ability to *communicate* ideas, thoughts and feelings effectively through language

1.5 To help pupils develop the *language skills* which contribute to effective expression and communication

1.6 To assist pupils in using material from other subjects in developing comprehension, note-taking and writing skills (English across the curriculum)

2 ORAL COMMUNICATION

2.1 GOALS

That pupils

2.1.1 speak fluently, distinctly and with ease and enjoyment, acquiring poise and confidence in communicating

2.1.2 receive constructive advice on aspects such as articulation, breathing, posture, voice-projection and pitch

2.1.3 develop the ability to think independently and speak logically, and to convey to others their observations, feelings and thoughts in an orderly, convincing and coherent manner

2.1.4 realise that differences exist between speech and writing, and explore these differences

2.1.5 show understanding of the meaning, feeling and tone of a passage in reading it to an audience

2.1.6 grow in ability to listen attentively, sensitively and critically

2.1.7 experience oral activities as integral with other kinds of communication

2.1.8 see that some ways of speaking are more acceptable and appropriate than others according to circumstances.

3 READING AND LITERATURE STUDY

3.1 GOALS

That pupils

3.1.1 gain enjoyment from and skill in reading

3.1.2 appreciate literature and read with discrimination

3.1.3 develop the capacity for critical thinking about, and the ability to form and express their own views on literary works

3.1.4 expand their experience of life, gain empathetic understanding of other people and develop moral awareness

3.1.5 increase their self-knowledge and self-understanding

3.1.6 gain some knowledge of basic literary genres and the techniques appropriate to each

3.1.7 develop some understanding and appreciation of their literary heritage

3.1.8 study literary works from Southern Africa as well as the rest of the English-speaking world, and translations of other world literature if appropriate.

3.4 READING AND COMPREHENSION SKILLS

The various skills outlined in the Junior Secondary Syllabus should continue to be developed, as far as possible, at appropriate levels of difficulty.

3.5 Silent Reading

Wherever possible, time should be allocated daily to uninterrupted silent reading throughout the school. This time should be obtained equally from all subjects. The material should be of the pupils' own choice, should preferably be fiction, and may be either English or Afrikaans. The co-operation of the principal and of teachers of other subjects must be sought.

4 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

4.1 GOALS

That pupils

4.1.1 write for their own satisfaction and enjoyment

4.1.2 discover that fundamental differences exist between written and spoken communication

4.1.3 gain insight into the demands, styles, conventions, technicalities and language of various kinds of writing

4.1.4 learn to use the elements of style such as register, diction, tone, syntax, denotation and connotation, and the use of literal and figurative language

4.1.5 use some of the devices of cohesion and coherence appropriate to discourse (i.e. the grammar of the paragraph and of the longer composition)

4.1.6 learn to handle effectively the variety of writing used both in and out of school, such as

- compositions (narrative, descriptive, discursive, expository, argumentative)
- letters (formal, informal and letters to the Press), reviews, objective descriptions, subjective descriptions, reports, poems, drafts of speech, dialogues, instructions, directions, memoranda, formal invitations and replies, agendas and minutes of meetings, sketches, paragraphs, notices, telegrams, summaries, essays

5 LANGUAGE STUDY

5.1 GOALS

That pupils

5.1.1 gain understanding about the way language works

5.1.2 improve their comprehension in reading and listening

5.1.3 identify different registers used across the range of language

5.1.4 judge the appropriateness or not of registers and contexts and convert discourse from one register into another for a changed purpose

5.1.5 detect the use of emotive language and dishonesty

5.1.6 distinguish between fact and opinion, objectivity and bias, emotion and sentimentality, and assess the function of such elements in given contexts

5.1.7 be able to extract the essential points from a text and summarize it for specific purposes

5.1.8 acquire terminology to describe language and an ability to apply it in the analysis of language in a manner which reveals the communicative function of parts and the coherence of the whole

5.1.9 acquire a vocabulary which will enable them to communicate easily, appropriately and fluently in diverse situations

5.1.10 learn to spell well

5.1.11 learn to punctuate accurately and effectively

5.1.12 learn to produce and understand the structures of acceptable sentences and of their component parts within a coherent whole

5.1.13 gain some understanding of the effect on English of historical, social and demographic developments.

B. ELUCIDATION OF THE SYLLABUS FOR ENGLISH FIRST LANGUAGE HIGHER GRADE (STANDARDS 8, 9 AND 10)

(NOTE: Numbered paragraphs are cross-referenced with the syllabus.)

PREAMBLE: SENIOR SECONDARY COURSE

Teachers must note that, with the exception of items actually specified for teaching or examining in either Standard 8, 9 or 10, the contents of both the *Syllabus* and the *Elucidation of the Syllabus* must be treated at the level of competence that may reasonably be expected of pupils in the standard being taught. Teachers should be aware that items in the syllabus should be applied at progressively higher levels of competence.

Consequently, the teaching of any aspect of the Senior Secondary Syllabus must be adapted to the needs of the pupils and based on contexts of a readability and maturity level appropriate to the standard concerned. This implies that the syllabus has not been designed to be divided into separate "packages" for each of the three years.

Although the *Syllabus* itself is of manageable length, the *Elucidation of the Syllabus* is very wide-ranging and is designed to allow for considerable enrichment material which need not necessarily be examined. Teachers are advised to make constant reference to the *Elucidation* in order to ensure that they adapt the basic syllabus to the needs and abilities of their pupils. It is not necessary or even desirable to attempt to implement *all* of the *Elucidation* during the course, but regular reference to and study of the guidance it contains will help English teachers to teach this course satisfactorily.

NOTE: Each school must frame a policy regarding Sections 4 and 5 of the *Elucidation* in order to relate the goals to the needs and abilities of the pupils. *Language Study* should be based mainly on 5.1.1 — 5.1.13.

INTRODUCTION

(a) ASSUMPTION

The underlying assumption of the Syllabus is that the receptive skills (listening and reading) and the expressive skills (talking and writing) cannot be acquired in isolation but need to be developed in an integrated process involving pupils' experiences and needs in and beyond school.

(b) GENERAL AIM

The general aim should be to promote pupils' intellectual, emotional, social and cultural development through developing their competence in using the language and through enriching their experience and enjoyment of the language, as well as their understanding of more advanced concepts in literature and language study.

(c) PROGRESSION

This Syllabus spans Standards 8, 9 and 10. Language development occurs at different rates and at different chronological ages for different pupils. Although pupils entering the Senior Secondary Phase should have progressed to a level of language competence that enables them to cope with the demands of the subject, it will be necessary to give fuller attention to certain language skills as they are applied in more complex situations. The teacher should motivate and guide pupils to master the skills involved in effective listening, speaking, reading and writing, and should be familiar with the Junior Secondary Syllabus so as to ensure continuity in each pupil's language growth — that syllabus remains of fundamental importance but an appropriate advance in level and ability is assumed here.

(d) INTEGRATION

For convenience and clarity this syllabus is presented in four sections (Oral Communication, Reading and Literature Study, Written Communication, and Language) but it must be stressed that in practice the work should, wherever possible, be integrated. Language competence grows through experience of listening, reading, talking and writing and through direct study of the language itself in both literary and non-literary contexts. The outcome of such study should form an organic whole. How integration is implemented will depend upon the teacher's methods, approaches and emphases. It follows that the teacher should use the periods allocated to English in a flexible manner, provided that these four sections of the work receive regular attention. Moreover, teachers should explore the fruitful possibilities of language across the curriculum.

1 LANGUAGE AIMS

1.1 Language development occurs through continual exposure to appropriate examples of language.

Pupils' own experiences and interests are crucial to their language development. They will respond readily to topics and situations that engage their curiosity and that they enjoy and care about. The teacher should be perceived as a genuinely receptive audience who responds with enthusiasm and encouragement to what the pupil says or writes.

1.2 The relationship between language competence and personal development is important. Observation and discussion of states of mind; of emotional responses; of human relationships, predicaments, crises and of moral values, particularly in the context of literature and all its forms (including television programmes, films, leisure reading) enjoyed by pupils can promote this global aim. Exploration of the pupils' own experiences, feelings, hopes, fears, attitudes and concerns is necessary through speech, discussion, writing and drama. Pupils' language experience outside the English classroom should be engaged: they should be awakened to the powers of persuasive language (e.g. in advertising, propaganda, reporting, the mass media) and learn to respond more critically and with deeper insight, not only to the world in general but also to the rest of their school experience (language across the curriculum). In a relationship of trust and genuine concern the teacher will be able to guide pupils beyond personal experience and interests towards exploring and articulating new experiences.

1.3 Pupils are usually moved to discuss an issue which concerns them before they are ready to resort to written expression. The teacher must play a key role in promoting pupils' ability to express themselves, increasing their capacity to observe, to discriminate, to see relationships and to use language as a medium to express and to organize their thoughts and feelings logically, coherently and appropriately. The teacher should determine the richest and most effective context to stimulate pupils' imaginations.

1.4 All communication should be regarded as a two-way process involving not only the ability to express but also a willingness to respond: to listen, to speak, to read, to comprehend, to think, to evaluate, to infer, to observe and to participate. Pupils should learn to impart information, to express themselves with feeling and sensitivity and to persuade an audience.

Communicative competence (both oral and written) should be developed in person-to-person, person-to-group and person-within-group situations. Each language context is unique: pupils should discover the appropriateness and effectiveness of language in relation to audience, context and purpose. Through participation in a variety of language situations pupils should be led to draw conclusions about patterns of usage. Teachers should show pupils, through involvement with examples of English usage, how to improve their communicative competence.

1.5 Language study should not be seen as an end in itself. The focus should be on effective communication: if the purpose is achieved the language used will have been effective and appropriate to the particular context. Syntactical relationships, appropriateness of vocabulary and logical organization of ideas are relevant to precision in communication.

Pupils must be given systematic help and constructive criticism and be encouraged to use language as effectively as possible, by continuous attention to and practice in the development of the skills associated with effective listening, speaking, reading and writing in meaningful contexts.

1.6 The pupils should reach a level of language competence that will enable them to meet the demands on their language skills made by English and by other subjects across the curriculum.

2 ORAL COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION

People are immersed in words which play upon issues that will affect their lives in a variety of ways. To an unprecedented extent, television and radio have brought these issues into the pupils' lives. Since people are often regarded by the media not as individuals but as passive consumers, pupils have pressing reasons to listen with discrimination and equally pressing reasons to speak effectively.

Every teacher's own speech is an important influence in developing pupils' competence in spoken English. The teacher's example as a listener who concentrates and responds with sincere interest to the speaker is equally important.

Suggested goals are given under separate headings, but it should be remembered that oral communication is an integral part of living and cannot be taught as a set of isolated skills. Proficiency in oral communication, while in part dependent on specific abilities, is an important aspect of total personality development and social competence.

2.1 GOALS

2.1.1 Speaking experiences should assist pupils to develop personally and socially, and they should find satisfaction through an increasing competence in the use of speech.

At time the practice of specific skills may be desirable.

The teacher should determine the richest and most effective contexts to stimulate the pupils' imaginations. A speech context is created by a speaker, a listener, an environment and such behaviour — both verbal and non-verbal — as arises from their interaction.

2.1.2 By listening to others, pupils should come to realise the need for audibility, clarity, meaningful phrasing, effective stressing, a sense of rhythm, an awareness of the use of pause, variety of pitch, pace and colume, acceptable pronunciation and appropriate speed. They should strive for natural and fluent speech with a clear and easy delivery.

2.1.3 Pupils should learn to analyse their thoughts and subject matter and to organise their responses logically and coherently in speech. As their powers of discrimination improve, they should be able to select suitable vocabulary and idioms and communicate clearly in speech of appropriate register.

2.1.4 Communication of meaning depends not only on *what* is said, but also on *how* it is said. Speakers use paralinguistic features which supplement the words used and govern the way in which a thing is said: tone of

voice, pitch, intensity and timing facilitate expression; pauses, physical gestures and posture may contribute to the speaker's message.

Written language requires a precision and complexity of linguistic structure not demanded of speech. (See also 4.1.2)

2.1.5 Teachers should bear in mind that reading aloud is an important part of oral communication and they should provide guidance in and opportunities for reading aloud effectively. Successful reading aloud implies the reader's comprehension of the passage.

2.1.6 Listening is an art. It differs from hearing in that it requires effort and concentration. It involves comprehension and critical evaluation of what is heard. If pupils know why they are to listen and how to do so effectively, the improvement in their listening skills will facilitate communication and learning across the curriculum.

Concentration can be developed through attention to such factors as recognition of pace, pitch, stress and pause, as they affect meaning and tone.

Teachers should encourage

- the development of responsible attitudes in the listener
- pupils to listen with concentration, discrimination and an open mind
- the extension of pupils' responses to form, style, feeling and intention by exposing them to a variety of situations and to materials from across the curriculum
- pupils to develop their ability to listen critically to information, to understand meaning, and to recall accurately what has been heard.

2.1.7 Oral activities might well include some of the following and should be integrated with other aspects of the curriculum wherever possible:

- *discussion of topics* of interest in preparation for original writing assignments, of pupils' written work, of prescribed literature, and of pupils' leisure reading and television and film viewing, and critical evaluation of language as used in the mass media
- *Oral delivery* such as short talks to various types of audiences followed by questions and discussion, interviews, giving practical instructions, oral word games and story-chains, and varied dramatic activities
- *reading* aloud and/or memorizing of prose, poetry and drama followed by discussion
- *listening* comprehension, involving recall and sensitive and perceptive response to tone, style, feeling and intention.

Participation in oral communication should be seen as an exercise in learning. Where appropriate, such exercise may be in response to materials from the four media identified in the literature component of the syllabus: print, sound, screen and stage. Material from subjects across the curriculum may also be suitable.

2.1.8 Audience, situation, purpose and content affect the role played by the speaker and the style of language used.

Within a sympathetic classroom atmosphere, the pupil can be helped to recognise many registers and then to select the language appropriate to a particular situation.

The pupils should learn to gain the interest and attention of an audience, to adjust their speech to the responses they receive and to use the forms appropriate to the people being addressed.

3 READING AND LITERATURE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Pupils may respond strongly to literature in which they see their own experiences reflected, but they must also be encouraged to extend their experience through facing ideas and feelings which are new to them, in order to develop an understanding of the world around them and an awareness of their own potential.

In the study of literature all aspects of the Syllabus (listening, speaking, reading, writing and language study) are engaged in a meaningful context.

Reading skills must continue to be developed to enable pupils to cope with the more sophisticated demands made by literature and in all subjects.

STUDY GUIDELINES

Wide reading, as well as the intensive study of a limited number of books, should be the basis of the course. In addition to the study of prescribed literature, every pupil should read as widely as possible (including some non-fiction) during the three-year course. Pupils should read an increasing range of material and acquire some knowledge of the distinctive features of major genres. The teacher must give guidance to the pupils in their choice of voluntary reading but encourage them to become increasingly independent in choosing books.

The poetry course should continue to provide pupils with a widening and deepening experience of different poetic forms from different periods.

At this level it may be desirable to read a number of poems by one poet. However, the study of poetry, rather than of poets, should be the basis of the poetry course.

While consideration should continue to be given to dramatic presentation and audience participation, the study of plays based on their literary merit should become an increasingly important aspect of drama in Standards 8, 9 and 10.

The emphasis should be on full-length plays, particularly Shakespearean, although extracts may be considered desirable to bring pupils into contact with a wide range of material. Whenever possible, pupils

should see worthwhile stage productions. Suitable films and recorded material should be used where appropriate.

Through discussion and writing pupils should develop a critical and discerning attitude towards television and film and should be encouraged to explore ideas and make judgements in regular class discussion and in the writing of reviews and analyses. While it may be valuable to introduce pupils to the language of filming and film criticism, this should be explored *only* in so far as it increases the pupils' understanding and appreciation of film.

3.1 GOALS (See also 4.1.3)

3.1.1 If teachers can help pupils to find enjoyment in reading they will have done them a lasting service. Without some pleasure from and active participation in literature, the other goals cannot be achieved effectively. Enjoyment of and interest in reading (including literature, leisure reading, and other subjects across the curriculum) depend upon the teaher's guidance and the development of the pupils' reading abilities. Vocabulary, comprehension and study skills are particularly important. In this respect, the teacher's enthusiasm and example play a key role. The developing of comprehension and study skills as well as vocabulary, enables pupils to read more effectively and heightens their enjoyment of reading.

3.1.2 Reading of novels, plays, poems, and experience of the mass media, should be seen within a continuum. The study of prescribed literature should give the pupils a frame of reference and a basis for judging their experience with other fiction and for responding to leisure reading and film viewing with greater insight and discrimination. Thus the gulf that so often separates the prescribed literature from voluntary reading and viewing may be bridged.

3.1.3 Works which will help pupils to observe, to discriminate and to see relationships, should be studied. As pupils learn to think and to feel, they will read more effectively. Frequent opportunities must be provided for pupils to discuss and evaluate ideas with one another and with the teacher. Personal responses and interpretations should be encouraged provided that opinions are substantiated by valid evidence from the text. The basic literary or technical terms that enable the pupils to describe with insight and to evaluate with cogent comment should be introduced when necessary.

Emphasis should be placed on the development of the pupil's ability to analyse, interpret and evaluate rather than on the mere reproduction of another person's response or opinion.

Pupils must be acquainted with the techniques of quotation, and must be trained in the use of the present tense sequence conventionally used in English for such discussions and analyses.

The comprehension skills listed under 5.1.1 to 5.1.6 in the Syllabus are of particular relevance here as well.

3.1.4 Literature can stimulate pupils to question and to redefine for themselves their assumptions, attitudes and values. It can also open their minds and hearts to new ideas and sensations.

Because literature explores people's lives and gives insight into their motives, values and feelings — insight not easily obtained from everyday encounters with others — it can increase the pupils' awareness of other people. Cultures differ in values, customs and world view, and acquaintance with the literature of other cultures can help pupils understand such differences.

3.1.5 By responding to literature and through vicarious involvement, pupils may learn more about themselves.

The ordering of experience accomplished linguistically by a writer can produce in the readers some ordering of their own experiences and attitudes: as a result they may acquire more self-knowledge, a clearer perspective on and insight into their own situations, motivations and choices.

3.1.6 Literary appreciation can be deepened through

- a study of figurative language
- an awareness of different literary styles and techniques
- the identification of types of literature, e.g. fables, myths, novels, historical fiction, science fiction, ballad, sonnet, short story, comedy, tragedy, satire
- an awareness of literary features, such as structure, milieu, character, setting, style, theme, plot, point of view
- some knowledge of conflict, suspense, climax, tone and irony
- some understanding of the elements of poetry , e.g. metre, rhyme and rhythm.

It must be emphasized that aspects and literary features such as those listed above ought to be studied in the context of prose and verse. The knowledge gained should enhance pupils' responses to literature.

3.2 Criteria for the selection of prescribed work:

- Work prescribed for study should lend itself to the achievement of the stated goals.
- The work should meet the intellectual and emotional needs of the pupils concerned, broaden their horizons, increase their capacity for critical thinking and heighten moral awareness.
- The work should be potentially enjoyable.
- The language, style, content, theme and intellectual quality should be worthy of study.
- Form, structure and technique should not be too difficult for the age group concerned, although the work should be challenging enough to extend talented pupils.
- The principle of progression should be taken into account to ensure continuity between year levels and adequate preparation for the following year.

4 WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION

In listening, talking, reading, observing and feeling, the pupil experiences a multitude of impressions. Writing is a very effective method of ordering this experience; of consolidating it and helping pupils to reflect upon it; of crystallizing their thoughts and feelings so that they become more aware and can enjoy communicating sincerely and competently. There is an intimate connection between this area of the syllabus and all the others; writing should continually flow from and support pupils' reading and language study as well as oral work.

Pupils must be guided in their writing to move outwards, towards extending their knowledge of the world and other human beings, and inwards into a deeper understanding of themselves. The teacher needs to provide a wide variety of stimuli and contents which, together with a sense of audience, generates the urge to communicate. These should as far as possible be found in pupils' personal experiences and needs, and should also be drawn from the rest of the syllabus and the total curriculum.

Written communication needs to be taught. Although writing should arise out of real or simulated situations, it should be preceded and followed by appropriate discussion. The *purpose*, the *audience* and the *context* must be kept in mind and the writing planned accordingly. Pupils should be given the opportunity of writing frequently for various purposes and audiences. The audience should be clearly defined for it is this concept which will determine style, tone and language and give direction to pupils' writing.

4.1 GOALS

4.1.1 The writing of prose, poetry, diaries, journals etc. should be encouraged. The pupils' experiences outside the classroom should be engaged to stimulate writing. Newspapers, magazines, films, television and radio programmes, as well as personal, sporting and social activities provide numerous opportunities for writing.

4.1.2 Written communication needs to be more explicit in logic and tone and grammatically more carefully constructed than speech. For it to be efficient, it must be correctly spelt. In addition to addressing the specified audience in the appropriate register it must make more explicit use of the aids to coherence and cohesion.

A variety of oral activities, e.g. reading aloud and the discussion of various topics, can be used to stimulate preparation for writing. Furthermore, in revising and editing drafts, group and class discussions are valuable. Pupils can be encouraged to read aloud and to evaluate what they and their fellow pupils have written

4.1.3 This goal is inseparable from most of those listed under section 3.1 (Reading and Literature Study). The reading and study of good literature should play an integral part in any writing programme. Reading and literature study should suggest other appropriate writing situations and topics which pupils will be stimulated to explore. Furthermore as occasion warrants, there could be discussion of prose, drama and poetry, film, television and book reviews, reports, advertisements and propaganda, editorials, letters to the editor, business letters, instructions, directions, etc., including the examination of their appropriate and distinctive use of language. Such examples would not necessarily be presented as perfect models for pupils to imitate: they should be read and discussed critically so that pupils may become more aware of how these kinds of writing function.

4.1.4 Pupils' study of language should be closely related to their own writing, through which they should be led to explore

- different sentence and paragraph structures for different purposes
- logical reasoning, awareness of some of the main fallacies in thinking and logic; correct use of logical connectors (such as 'therefore' and 'however'), and comparisons to link ideas
- the achievement of vividness and clarity by the use of imagery
- the handling of structural devices such as suspense and climax
- the vocabulary, phrasing and idiomatic expression appropriate to a given purpose
- the control of tone in written discourse
- the concept of appropriateness in grammar, expression, punctuation, and spelling as functionally important for clarity and acceptability
- the purpose and advantages of proper drafting, editing and polishing of written work
- the advantages of identifying purpose, audience and context clearly
- usefulness of grammatical terminology and an understanding of grammatical principles in discussing and improving their writing.

4.1.5 Pupils need to acquire not only the grammar of the sentence but also the principles of constructing paragraphs and of organizing the paragraphs into coherent discourse by exploring the use of

- the topic sentence and paragraph unity
- various ways of developing a paragraph, e.g. spatial, temporal, comparison and contrast, illustration
- connectors and referents to achieve coherence, e.g. relative pronouns and words such as 'however', 'furthermore', 'thus'
- sentence variety, length and inversion to achieve flow
- logical and interesting sequence of and transition between paragraphs
- introductory and concluding paragraphs

The writing conventions, forms and techniques appropriate to different situations should be developed in the context of the pupils' own needs and experiences as well as that of reading and discussion in other subjects.

4.2 EVALUATION OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

The teacher's response to what the pupil writes is of vital importance in motivating the pupil, in stimulating delight and in encouraging the pupil's growth as a writer. In evaluating a pupil's writing the teacher should avoid destructive criticism and praise achievement. Pupils must be encouraged to explore, experiment and experience. Teachers should appreciate that errors will occur in the course of learning to write effectively. Analysis of errors made in writing can provide an indication of pupils' progress. Therefore, teachers should apply a positive approach in the assessment and evaluation of the pupils' writing.

As far as possible, teachers need to take an overall view of the developing language competence explicit in their pupils' written work: progress made from one writing assignment to the next should be carefully noted. Continuous assessment of writing, based as it is on a more intensive knowledge of the pupils' written work than can be obtained from a single, end-of-year examination, enables the teacher to develop those forms and aspects of writing that find no place in an examination paper.

Continuous assessment of writing not only enables a wider spectrum of types of writing to be evaluated, but also ensures that pupils work more consistently and take a keener interest in their progress; it enables them to revise and edit work, benefiting immediately from the teacher's guidance. Competence in writing should be demonstrated in a variety of contexts.

5 LANGUAGE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

A study of language in action should form an integral part of all aspects of English teaching — listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Language activities must meet the needs of pupils and promote their language development effectively. The formal teaching of language concepts and skills introduced and developed in Standards 5, 6 and 7 should be positively extended, bearing in mind the goals and principles outlined in this section. In focusing on the skills that promote language competence, the teacher must not lose sight of the need for pupils' enjoyment of language activities, as language is essentially creative and expressive.

Pupils' experience of language should be extended and developed to a low growth to a mature level of competence. Increasingly pupils should be led to discover that language is a means of abstraction, and that some understanding of how it works will help them to adapt it to circumstances and situation, and to develop the ability to formulate ideas and judge with insight the messages of others.

At Higher Grade level, the acquisition of some linguistic or grammatical terminology should be seen as part of the extension of communicative skills, as well as of the ability to learn more effectively how language works and to participate intellectually in responding to language in action.

5.1 GOALS

5.1.2 to 5.1.6 The ability to use language appropriately is a complex process depending on the acquisition of many skills which should be developed through practice. Pupils may also benefit from the explicit study of thetorical devices employed across a variety of styles of language at different levels of complexity.

The ability to read with a high level of comprehension is fundamental to school achievement. Language and thought are inseparable, and different disciplines, contexts and purposes make different demands on the language. This intimate connection should be explored in the close study of texts taken from a wide range of sources, e.g.

- in informal discussions, talks, newspaper reports, business reports, legal contracts, literature
- the victim of an accident, in turning his personal account of the event into a police statement, would have to select an appropriate register from Standard English, dialect, formal language, colloquialisms, jargon and slang
- the language of persuasion as encountered in propaganda and advertising

5.1.7 Much of what is said under the section on Reading and Writing is relevant here, but pupils should also be shown that the ability to follow main arguments, select relevant materials, evaluate bias, identify assumptions, etc., depends on the recognition of language cues. The writing of a summary must presuppose a specific purpose, which in turn demands a specific register of language.

5.1.8 Detached formal language exercises can be counterproductive: the emphasis must be on *language in action*, which implies an incidental approach whenever possible based on the error analysis of pupils' written work. Nevertheless, pupils need to be shown that the ability to identify, name and use concepts such as the following will be an aid to their understanding of language and style, and may lead to the improvement of their own usage.

It is essential that pupils view the above as a means to an end and not and end in itself, and that they come to realise that the knowledge of certain basic teminology will facilitate both the teaching and the learning processes.

It must be pointed out that the Senior Secondary Phase implies a natural continuation and consolidation of the Junior Secondary Phase; many of the components outlined in the Junior Secondary Phase syllabus are therefore repeated here. It is expected, however, that these components, together with additional, more complex concepts, be studied in greater depth. The terminology listed below is by no means exclusive of alternative terminology for the same concepts.

The following concepts should be taught in appropriate contexts, with due emphasis being placed on their functions.

It must be noted that no one terminology is universally acceptable. What follows covers most areas suggested

in the Goals but is *not* prescriptive. Nevertheless, the following should assist those who feel that they do not have a wide background in linguistics. The spirit of the Syllabus implies that what follows is not to place an extra burden upon teachers and pupils. Many of the following may well be used by the examiner in the final examination paper. It must be stressed again that language must be taught in action and not as a series of dead exhibits.

- parts of speech (word classes): nouns, pronouns, adjectives (including articles), verbs (including infinitives, participles, gerunds, auxiliary verbs and the concept of finite and non-finite verbs, reported speech), adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections
- the function of the verb in respect of tense (sequence of tenses, use of historic present, etc.), mood (paying particular attention to imperative mood used in commands, and subjunctive mood used in hypothetical sentences and wishes), voice (paying attention to function and effect), concord and transitive and intransitive use
- subjective, objective and possessive cases of nouns and pronouns
- sentence structure: simple, complex and compound, main and subordinate clauses, adjectival and adverbial phrases, loose periodic and balanced, inversion (foregrounding), parallelism

NOTE:

(i) the relationship of sentence structure to intention and style should be stressed

(ii) detailed, mindless clausal analysis is definitely not recommended

- lexical terms, e.g. synonym, antonym, homonym, homophone, compound words, denotation, connotation, ambiguity, diction
- various stylistic devices such as irony, pun, innuendo, satire, ambiguity, pathos, climax, rhetorical question, repetition, ellipsis, antithesis, hyperbole, foregrounding
- phonic devices such as alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia
- functional concepts such as subject, predicate, object, complement, modifiers, connectives, determiners
- appropriate usage, including Standard South African English, slang, colloquialism, cliché, jargon, dialect
- literal and figurative use of language
- factual and emotive language, referring to neutral and emotionally 'loaded' words
- register and tone.

NOTE:

The teacher should exercise great discretion in deciding on the amount of time to devote to the concepts. Difficult items should be stressed according to the needs and abilities of pupils. There should be a definite commitment on the part of the teacher to teach *concepts* which relate to how language works, but when grammatical terminology, latinate or other, is employed, it should be for convenience only, e.g. to assist pupils in proof-reading, editing and polishing their own writing.

5.1.9 Vocabulary should be enriched as part of a deliberate teaching policy. Pupils should acquire a vocabulary that enables them to cope with the demands made by their own writing, literature, other subjects in the curriculum, the media and social situations.

Words should be explored in configuration or in context, e.g. in relation to literature or in 'word families'. Denotation, connotation, and the compatibility of vocabulary with register and context need attention. Knowledge of roots, prefixes and suffixes can provide clues and help pupils extend their vocabulary. Pupils should be proficent in the use and conventions of the dictionary.

5.1.10 A meticulous approach to the learning of spelling should be fostered. The teacher must identify and meet the needs of the individual pupils. The incidental learning of spelling must be complemented, where appropriate, by attention to spelling rules. Suitable dictionaries should be used as a matter of course.

5.1.11 Accurate punctuation clarifies meaning and promotes effective communication; pupils should be aware that negligent or faulty punctuation interferes with communication. They should become completely proficient in the effective use of the punctuation, e.g. full-stop, comma, colon, semi-colon, apostrophe, question, exclamation, and quotation marks, parentheses (brackets, dashes), hyphens, correct punctuation and functions of direct speech.

5.1.12 Although the acquisition of syntax is a natural process, practice and functional analysis can help to produce insight into the nature of language and improvement in performance. Pupils should realize that a writer's choice of syntax is part of his intention and reflects decisions about audience and occasion.

5.1.13 Language development for both the individual and society is organic and continuous. Changes in use and meaning take place over time and (particularly in the case of English) in different parts of the world because of different demands, different cultural context, and the proximity or interference of other languages. Pupils should

- be able to identify some of the essential differences in usage and idiom between South African, British and American English
- have some understanding of the influences at work on the language they and others use
- have some knowledge of the historical development of English, particularly with reference to its vocabulary and its descent from an inflected language
- be able to distinguish between slang, jargon, colloquialism, dialect and Standard English as they function in context.

APPENDIX 8.2.1
SCHOOL 1

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT: 1988

1. GOALS

1.1 RESULTS:

All concerned in 1987 are to be congratulated on an improvement of about 7% in our Senior Certificate results, which certainly marks the best performance by our matriculants for many years. The HG average of 52,8% is probably within 2% of the Provincial Median and the SG average of 54,6% must be very close indeed. We had but one outright failure and precious few HG/SG conversions, which more than vindicates our deliberate policy to differentiate in English between HG and SG pupils. Furthermore there are probably several matriculants who owe their passing aggregate to the comparatively good English marks that they recorded.

To be on or above the Provincial Median remains our goal for this year. The material we have is average and there is no reason for us not squeezing those extra two or three percent to meet the Medians of the Province.

One A and two B's were recorded in 1987 and, given the results in other subjects, we must look to improve upon the top end results even further. Pupils who cannot cope with HG English must be moved to SG no later than May.

In this economic climate and given the need to market our school aggressively, teaching for good Matric results is essential.

1.2 ACADEMIC STANDARDS:

There remains an unfortunate gap between the expectancies set in Stds 9 and 10 and those that have pertained in Stds 6 to 8. A lot of our attitude problems that surface in Std 9 can be traced to the then entrenched ideasthat you do not have to work in English, that you do not have to prepare for English exams, that English is an automatic pass, and that anybody who speaks the language must be able to do it on HG at school. An equally sad by-product of this is the very poor carry-over from one year to the next, which causes us to spend hours repeating teaching that was done in Std 6 with our Std 7 and 8 classes. A classic example of this is parts of speech, which seems to require re-teaching from basics every single year.

We have to inculcate a work ethic in English; we must not accept work that is second rate; we have to make parents and pupils aware that HG English requires a set of skills as complex as any in Mathematics. The new textbooks which cover the new syllabi should help greatly in setting the correct standards and expectancies, but at this stage only the books for Stds 6 and 8 are available. Meaningful tasks and demanding standards must be set in full understanding of the Aims and Elucidations of the syllabi.

1.3 1986 SYLLABI:

These are now in effect throughout the school and must be followed closely. Please note the emphasis given to critical evaluation, register, purpose, tone, a critical and linguistic vocabulary, reading and language competence.

1.4 READING AND WRITING:

Our campaign to woo pupils into the reading habit has been highly successful in Stds 6 and 7 and must once again be aggressively pursued. It is essential that time be set aside regularly in these classes for reading and visiting the library. The same can be recommended for Stds 8 to 10 where, sadly, we

have been less successful so far.

A particular goal this year must be to improve the range and the quality of pupil writing in the school. Writing must become as much a habit as reading and we need to do a lot more towards introducing pupils to what their peers write about in other schools and other environments. We should aim at concise, fresh expression stimulated by real problems and real observations, real feelings and real wishes.

1.5 ENRICHMENT:

Related to all the points above is the need for us to formulate a programme of English enrichment in the school. The vehicle for this now exists in the _ _ _ _ Union and each English teacher is urged to play a part in setting up some avenue of English enrichment, e.g. a writers' club, a book club, a literary society, a film/video club - in addition, of course, to such activities as drama, speaking, debating, forum discussion, publications.

We must also aim to take part in the Arts Festival in Grahamstown and to contribute to writing periodicals such as English Alive. The English Olympiad is another possibility.

1.6 TEAM COHESION:

We are fortunate in having a team of experienced and very competent teachers which has allowed us to develop our own 'English Standard Head' system. This year the Standard Heads will be playing an even more meaningful role as architects of the various curricula and as administrators-in-chief of the work in their standards.

The Standard Heads are: Mr _ _ _ (10 and 7), Mr _ _ _ (9), Miss _ _ _ (8), Miss _ _ _ (6) and Mr _ _ _ _ _ (SG Senior classes). During Terms 2 and 3, Mr _ _ _ will also be acting as Head of English in the absence of Mr _ _ _.

Apart from the meeting every third Wednesday of the full English department, the English Standard Heads are asked to convene meetings of the teachers in their standard as often as makes sense. Thursday, Period 1, for example, allows the HG teachers of 9 and 10 to meet together. Such meetings should not be purely administrative in nature. Time must be set aside for 'professional growth' in our department.

Team teaching worked much better last year and must be used wherever the timetable allows it. It has proved its value conclusively in 9 and 10, where, once again, HG and SG English groups are set.

To survive a year of English teaching we need team spirit and this must remain a goal. We must plan a few social functions again.

2. EXPECTANCIES

Implicit in what has gone before is the idea that this year should again be one of consolidation (although a lot of innovation is required). Seen in that perspective, certain areas of professional conformity ought to be outlined. These should not be seen as impinging upon the individual freedoms of teaching style and teaching material - certainly not in a significant way. But, for the boat to be in motion purposefully, the oarsmen have occasionally to pull together.

2.1 WORK PLAN AND RECORD BOOK:

If followed correctly, this should allow for substantial quantities of the curricula to be examined across the standard in the periodic school examinations. This co-ordination also facilitates team-teaching and the acquisition and sharing of resources material.

2.2 EXAMINATIONS AND TESTS:

Examinations will follow the practice of "whoever sets marks - across the standard" (see Examinations supplement). The same cannot be organised for the Test Series. Here individual teachers must compile a mark (ex 100) showing a normal balance of English activities, i.e. oral, written, literary and linguistic. Derive the ratios from the final examination allocations (see Appendices). Teachers may set their own tests for the hour slot allotted, but the total mark must cover all of the four aspects of the English core. Marks will be standardised by pre-calculating the averages for each English group and then adjusting the actuals for each group accordingly. Please take care with test marks as they count for prizes and Merit Awards.

Other class testing through the year is essential as units of work are completed. Failure to do this will render the aim of inculcating English studying habits less attainable.

With examinations, question papers and memoranda must be submitted in draft form for circulation and approval well before the typing deadline. A completed batch of scripts must be returned to the standard head for moderation, bearing a full symbol distribution and top and bottom marks (with names). Comment on the success or otherwise of the paper is particularly useful. An analysis of common errors is very useful mid-year when papers may be returned to pupils. Finally, the examiner must see that scripts are batched together, wrapped and filed for storage, each batch bearing a photocopy of the paper, memo and symbol distribution - and clearly labelled.

2.3 BOOKS:

Text-books must be covered, the name of the pupil written into each, plus the year and his class group. Pupils must learn to take books home and bring them on the appointed day. Furthermore, each must be responsible for his own book, sign for it at the beginning of the year, sign it back at the end, and be seriously dealt with if he loses it. No book costs less than R10 these days. No pupil may write in a text-book other than a prescribed work, and then only in pencil.

Exercise books must also be covered and kept neat and clean. There is no reason for us to accept the insult of slovenly work in addition to our existing load. Rulers must be used and work must be dated and identified.

2.4 CORRECTIONS AND MARKING:

Errors of concord, idiom, prepositions, spelling, abbreviations, punctuation (especially the "comma splice") and direct speech must be corrected. It is a good idea to leave the facing page of the essay blank for this purpose. Lessons should be designed around recurring errors and the opportunity taken in marking to build up a grammatical and literary vocabulary.

An individual spelling list can be built up at the back of each pupil's composition book and individual testing done on his spelling "blind spots." Likewise, a BOOKLIST of reading done in the course of the year must be kept in the composition book and checked and encouraged regularly.

Marking must be done on the marking grids and the evaluation (e.g. 4C) indicated as well as the total mark out of the correct, approved allocation.

We have only ourselves to blame if pupils offer us sub-standard work and slovenly presentation.

3. THE ENGLISH ROOM

This is meant to be our own study, where one can mark, type, read, research or ponder - or just escape. Material is desperately needed to build up a resources centre, particularly class lessons, tests, or assignments that have worked well. Please think of running off a copy for the English room at the time. A private library of reference books will be built up as well as tapes.

APPENDIX 8.2.2
SCHOOL 2 ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

a). SUBJECT HEAD AND STANDARD LEADERS

The English Department operates under the guidance of the Subject Head and the Standard Leaders. Please work closely with the Standard Leader, and refer problems and suggestions to the Subject Head.

Responsibilities of the Standard Leader:

1. To co-ordinate all matters to do with that standard such as films, oratory contests, creative drama.
2. To work out the language exercises and comprehensions to be done in that standard. This information is to be handed to the teachers of that standard on the first day of each term. Guidance on the direction of setwork teaching is also necessary.
3. To see to the setting of examination papers for that standard. At least 80% of the language paper should be set on the exercises and skills taight before the examination.
4. To co-ordinate the issuing of handouts for the standard.
5. To moderate examination papers for the standard.
6. To file all exam papers and memoranda in the appropriate file which is kept in the strongroom. This file is to be signed by the Standard Leader and remains his/her responsibility for the year.

b). RECORD BOOKS

Please have all pages in place, and planning up to the June exam complete by the appropriate date. Hand in to _ _ _ _ _ _ _ on that date. Use the work scheme given to you by your Standard Leader as a guide, and include innovations of your own. Include exercise numbers and page numbers. Essay topics and the areas to be covered in setwork must also be included.

c). PUPIL WORK

Please keep a close check on all pupil work; it should be inspected (and signed) once a week. All pupils should have an English file which should look smart, be organised in sections (language, setwork, writing, oral) and cumulative, ie. previous handouts should be kept. An index should be kept in front of the file. These files are IMPORTANT! (See Index for Stds 8-10). A language notebook for Stds 8-10 will also be introduced in Std 8. See further instructions for the use of this notebook.

d). HOMEWORK AND MARKING

Please set a manageable amount of homework for each day (10 minutes - Juniors; 20 minutes - Seniors). Homework diaries should be used by the pupils and checked. At least five pieces of writing for every pupil should be marked per term. At least three sets of marks for writing should be recorded per term. (Marks are not necessary for every writing assignment). Additional writing may be marked by the pupils in groups. All writing books must have an INDEX of writing assignments on the first two pages. The index is to be divided into terms.

e). EVALUATION AND MODERATION

Please ensure that the pupils understand how work is evaluated. A copy of the evaluation scheme for writing should be on a wall in your room. Try to evaluate in such a way that there is a spread of marks from distinction to failure with the average being D/E.

Please let me _ _ _ _ have, for moderation, two books from the first set of writing you mark and then any you are doubtful about. All English teachers should have acquired a common standard by the time the second term exams come. All exam work should be moderated by the Standard Leader before marks are handed in.

.../2

f). AREAS OF THE SCHOOL WHERE THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE PROMINENT

1.	English Olympiad	The topics obviously change every year.
2.	Debating	Senior and Junior.
3.	Oratory Contests	
4.	Programme for the annual production.	
5.	Tentrabis	English teachers play a vital role in encouraging and collecting writing.
6.	The magazine	Submit pupils' writing
7.	Reading	It is our responsibility to encourage the pupils as much as possible.
8.	Open Night displays and performances.	
9.	Contributions to "English Alive", poetry competitions etc...	

g). PLEASE EMPHASISE THE BASIC ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE EVERY WEEK

eg. Reading - how to read, how to enjoy a book.
Spelling - weekly tests.
Punctuation - explanation of punctuation marks.
Imagery - use of comparison and contrasts.
Sentence construction - parts of speech, syntax - tests.
Meaning - objective and subjective language.
Clear Expression - speaking and writing techmiques.
Sincerity and simplicity - style.

h). ALLOCATION OF PERIODS (This needs to be adapted to fit your needs).

Period 1	:	Oral (20 mins)	:	Grammar (40 mins)
Period 2	:	Writing (20 mins)	:	Grammar (40 mins)
Period 3	:	Poetry (20 mins)	:	Other setwork (40 mins)
Period 4	:	Setwork (60 mins)		

1. ALLOCATION OF MARKS

		Std 6	Std 7	Std 8	Std 9-10
1. Oral Communication:	Talk	50	50	40	30
	Reading	50	50	40	20
2. Reading and Literature Study:	Book project	50	80	90	120
	Poetry project	50			
3. Writing:	Composition	70	70	70	70
	Letter or Other	30	30	30	30
4. Language:	Comprehension	40	40	40	40
	Summary		20	20	20
	Language	60	60	70	70

TOTAL: 400

SPECIAL NOTE FOR STD 6

The "Reading and Literature" marks for June and December should be calculated as follows:

Terms 1 and 2 : Project on a book that has been read by the class. Standard leader to give guidance (out of 100).

Terms 3 and 4 : Poetry Project (out of 100)

Include both project marks in the final year mark (Halve the total to give a year mark out of 100).

Mark allocation for project: Content :40
Presentation :30
Grammar & Spelling:30
TOTAL 100

2. ALLOCATION OF CLASSES

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Standard 10	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Standard 9	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Standard 8	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Standard 7	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Standard 6	X	X	X	X	X	X	

3. STANDARD LEADERS

Standard 10	X
Standard 9	X
Standard 8	X
Standard 7	X
Standard 6	X

4. TEXTBOOKS

Standard 6	Skills of English/Rumboll
Standard 7	Skills of English/Rumboll
Standard 8	Rumboll/Essential Grammar/Practical Punctuation Matter of Style (Each teacher to get a class set).
Standard 9	From Reading to Writing (share as set)/Senior Language/Principles of Precis (get these in term 3).
Standard 10	Senior Language/Fletcher and Sceales.

5. STATIONERY

All books will be A4 soft covers.	Writing	Setwork	Language
Standard 6	1		1
Standard 7	1	1	1
Standard 8	1	1	1
Standard 9	1	1	1
Standard 10	1	2	1

P.S. Use foolscap paper for written notes. Pupils must FILE them.

6. ISSUE AND RETURN OF SETWORKS

Please collect ALL copies for the year from X and return them as soon as the examination on that book has been written.

7. MARK BOOKS

Each teacher must have a mark book/file in which ALL marks are recorded. The marks must be CLEARLY labelled and kept in the teacher's classroom.

8. SUPPLEMENTARY READING PROGRAMME

The following books (among others) are available for the following standards. The approximate number of copies available is indicated in brackets. Please try to read one book per term with each class, and do not choose a book that is suggested for another standard. The books are stored in the setwork room. The key is available from ____.

Std 6 : The Yearling (40); 12th Day of July (30); A Severnside Story (30); A Pattern of Islands (70); The Albatross (34); Shane (25); Goodnight Mr Tom (100)

Std 7 : The Old Man and The Sea (100); The Incredible Journey (26); The Pied Piper (35); Pudd'nhead Wilson (74); The Kon Tiki Expedition (50).

Std 8 : Tiger in the Smoke (110); I Heard the Owl Call my Name (150); Episode of Sparrows (70); Death to the French (70); Lord of The Flies (70); Animal Farm (150); The Third Man (for advanced class).

Std 9 : Wuthering Heights (150); A Rose for Winter (50); Cry the Beloved Country (110); The Go Between (140); Tess of the d'Urbervilles (100); Mayor of Casterbridge (120).

APPENDIX 8.3.1

TAKING A LOOK AT OUR ENGLISH PROGRAMME: Questionnaire 1.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY: Please leave blank:			
	1	2	3

Dear Pupils

English is the most popular subject in the school - it MUST be because you all take it!

So anybody who has to draw up a programme of English in the school must know what you, his customers, really think about the programme. Otherwise, how is he to know what is going to help you to learn from and to enjoy the English lessons? And that is very important to know when there are so many of you to consider.

So we need your help. We want you to think very SERIOUSLY about the questions below. We want you to answer them HONESTLY - don't write down what you think might please your teacher, or what you think you would be expected to say!

You don't have to worry about who is going to read what you have to say, because no one will be able to identify you from your answers. Your name does not appear on the paper, and, believe us, we certainly haven't time to go around trying to identify your handwriting!

But please take this thing SERIOUSLY and, above all, BE HONEST. Work on your own - we want YOUR opinion, not your friend's!

Your assistance will help us to think about the English programme for next year and the years to come, so we really value the help that you can give us in this questionnaire.

Thanks very much.

Yours sincerely

with the help of your English teachers

Rhodes University

FIRSTLY, PLEASE COMPLETE THESE FEW PARTICULARS:

Choose the number that applies to you and write it down in the box provided, e.g. if you are a boy, you would write 1 in the box opposite. Ignore the numbers on top of the boxes.

SEX: Boy = 1, Girl = 2 [4]

STD: Std 6 = 1, Std 7 = 2, Std 8 = 3, Std 9 = 4, Std 10 = 5 [5]

GRADE: Higher Grade (Stds 8 to 10) = 1,
Ordinary Grade (Stds 6 to 8) = 2 [6]

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE REST OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

All you have to do in SECTION A is write down a number, but in SECTION B we would like you to write out your answer.

Let's deal with SECTION A first:

SECTION A:

Things that you do in the English programme involve you in talking to the class, reading aloud, reading at home, writing all kinds of compositions, learning about books, poems and plays, answering comprehensions and studying language and grammar.

The following lists of statements are connected to these various activities. Please answer TRUE, FALSE, or CANNOT SAY to each, by writing down in the block provided one of the following numbers:

if you AGREE with the statement (you feel it is TRUE) = 1;

if you DISAGREE (you feel the statement is FALSE) = 2;

if you DON'T KNOW (you feel you CANNOT SAY) = 3.

Ignore the numbers on top of the boxes. They are for the computer.

1. ORAL WORK:

1.1 I feel shy or embarrassed when I have to do orals. 7 [ ]

1.2 Orals have helped me to be more self-confident about speaking in public. 8 [ ]

1.3 I enjoy speaking to the whole class. 9 [ ]

1.4 Through doing oral work in English, I find it is now easier for me to give my opinions in other classes and to stand up and ask questions. 10 [ ]

1.5 I prefer group work to individual orals. 11 [ ]

1.6 From working in groups, I can now co-operate better with others. 12 [ ]

1.7 Through oral work, I have definitely learnt to express my ideas better and more fluently. 13 [ ]

1.8 Practice in oral work has helped me to speak and to write more correctly. 14 [ ]

1.9 Through oral lessons, I find I think more clearly and can organise my thoughts better. 15 [ ]

1.10 I enjoy reading aloud to the class. 16 [ ]

1.11 By having to read aloud to others, I have learnt to understand the meaning of a passage better. 17 [ ]

1.12 When I read aloud, I can't follow the meaning of what I am reading. 18 [ ]

1.13 I pay attention when other people do orals in class. 19 [ ]

1.14 Personally, I don't think that oral work in English has helped me much. 20 [ ]

2. WRITING:

2.1 I like writing about myself and life. 21 [ ]

2.2 I like inventing stories and characters. 22 [ ]

2.3 I enjoy giving my ideas about things. 23 [ ]

2.4 I like writing poems. 24 [ ]

2.5 I often borrow ideas from TV, videos, etc. because I don't know what to write. 25 [ ]

2.6 I struggle to write compositions because I haven't got enough imagination. 26 [ ]

For easy reference, here again is the list of code numbers:
if you AGREE with the statement (you feel it is TRUE) = 1;
if you DISAGREE (you feel the statement is FALSE) = 2;
if you DON'T KNOW (you feel you CANNOT SAY) = 3.

(WRITING continued ...)

2.7 Composition work is boring. 27

2.8 Through practice in writing, I can now set out to create a special effect, e.g. a mood, an emotion, a character, a description, tension, humour, etc. 28

2.9 I always seem to write in the same kind of way and in the same style. 29

2.10 Practice in writing has genuinely helped me to express my ideas better. 30

2.11 Composition work has helped to improve my spelling and grammar. 31

2.12 Through doing writing tasks in English, my essay writing has improved in other subjects, e.g. history. 32

2.13 Practice in writing has helped me to think and write more clearly. 33

2.14 Through my own writing attempts, I have learnt to tell good writing from bad. 34

3. READING AND LITERATURE STUDY:

3.1 I enjoy reading. 35

3.2 I often take books out of libraries. 36

3.3 I read a lot at home. 37

3.4 My parents have always encouraged me to read. 38

3.5 I don't read much because of TV and videos. 39

3.6 I prefer magazines and light reading to books. 40

3.7 We have a lot of books at home. 41

3.8 In high school, I have learnt to read with greater understanding of what the writer is actually saying. 42

3.9 I have learnt to judge good writing from inferior work. 43

3.10 These days I think about what I am reading and feel that I could express an opinion on it. 44

3.11 I often don't know what to say about what I have read. 45

3.12 Setwork essays are difficult. 46

3.13 Setwork exams pull my marks down. 47

3.14 Teachers dig all sorts of things that I can't see out of the books, poems and plays that we study. 48

3.15 Literature is there for enjoyment; it shouldn't be studied. 49

For easy reference, here again is the list of code numbers:
if you AGREE with the statement (you feel it is TRUE) = 1;
if you DISAGREE (you feel the statement is FALSE) = 2;
if you DON'T KNOW (you feel you CANNOT SAY) = 3.

(READING AND LITERATURE STUDY continued ...)

3.16 Most of the books, poems and plays that we study at school are not enjoyable. 50

3.17 Setwork lessons are boring. 51

3.18 The works we have to study are irrelevant to our lives. 52

3.19 It is pointless to study books, poems and plays that were written many years ago. 53

3.20 I prefer to study South African literature. 54

3.21 Through studying literature, I have learnt some things about myself. 55

3.22 Through studying literature, I have learnt about life and human nature. 56

3.23 Literature makes us think about what is right and wrong. 57

3.24 Through reading and studying literature, I have learnt to write better myself. 58

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4. LANGUAGE STUDY:

4.1 Comprehension work has taught me to read carefully. 59

4.2 Comprehension work has taught me to think about what I am reading. 60

4.3 Comprehension work has taught me to express myself carefully. 61

4.4 Comprehension work has not actually taught me anything - like a crossword puzzle, you can either do it, or you can't. 62

PLEASE NOTE: "Grammar" means things like parts of speech, phrases/clauses, transitive/intransitive verbs, concord, direct/reported speech, tense, active/passive, etc.

4.5 Grammar lessons have helped me to write more correctly. 63

4.6 Through grammar lessons, I can now see what my teacher means when he corrects my composition errors. 64

4.7 Grammar lessons repeat the same old thing year after year. 65

4.8 Grammar is difficult. 66

4.9 Grammar is seldom any use for exams. 67

4.10 Language lessons have shown me how writers can manipulate people, how they can influence, trick, or persuade people into accepting their views. 68

4.11 I have learnt to detect the purpose that lies behind different kinds of writing. 69

4.12 I cannot see the point of summary work. 70

4.13 Language exams are more entertaining than useful in testing what we know. 71

SECTION B: THE ENGLISH PROGRAMME IN GENERAL

Here you must WRITE your answer. Please fill your comment in where spaces are provided, and, if you can't fit it all in, write on the BACK of the page (but remember to write the question number down as well, if you do this).

By the way, YES and NO answers are not much use to us. We need and really value your comments. So please give your REASONS for your answer in this Section and answer as FULLY as you can.

Thanks again for all your help.

1. What do you like most about English? 72

2. What do you like least about it? 73

3. Is your English teacher important in what you feel about English? Does he/she influence the way you feel about the subject? 74

4. What makes a good English teacher? 75

5. Do YOU think you are learning anything (never mind the exam results!)? Please explain. 76

6. Does the work done in English classes help YOUR use of English at all? Please explain. 77

7. Does the English programme help you with your other subjects? 78

8. Do you do any work for English exams? Please clarify. 79

9. Do you worry about what might come up in an English exam? In other words, are you often dismayed to see what is in the paper? 80

10. Have you learnt anything about life and people in general from studying English? Please explain. 81 ☐

11. Have you learnt anything about yourself? Please explain. 82 ☐

12. Do teachers of your OTHER subjects bother about your use of English, especially your written work? Please clarify. 83 ☐

13. Are your parents concerned about your use of English? 84 ☐

14. In terms of marks, is English one of your better subjects? 85 ☐

15. What improvements would you like to see in the English programme at school? 86 ☐

QUESTIONNAIRE 1: CODING OF SECTION B: Open-ended responses

1. Oral work 01
   Discussions 02
   Debates 03
   Drama 04
   Writing/composition work 05
   Reading 06
   Literature 07
   Poetry 08
   Comprehension work 09
   Language work 10
   It is easier than other subjects. 11
   There is less memory work. 12
   More relaxed atmosphere. 13
   Others 14

2. Oral work 01
   Reading aloud 02
   Drama 03
   Writing/composition work 04
   Literature 05
   Poetry 06
   Comprehension work 07
   Language work/grammar 08
   Others 09

3. Yes 01
   No 02
   Cannot say 03

4. Sense of humour 01
   Enjoys his job 02
   Enthusiastic 03
   Friendly 04
   Relates to the class 05
   Understanding 06
   Encouraging 07
   Interested 08
   Helpful 09
   Patient 10
   Kind 11
   Lenient 12
   Firm 13
   Impartial 14
   Open-minded 15
   An interesting person 16
   Innovative 17
   Well organised 18
   Subject knowledge 19
   Reads well 20
   Communicates well 21
   Explains well 22
   Involves the class 23
   Others 24
   Thorough 25

5. Speak/communicate better 01
   Self-confidence 02
   Improved vocabulary/pronunciation 03
   Read/comprehend better 04
   Write/express self better 05
   Improved spelling 06
   Use language more correctly 07
   Insight into how language works/is used 08
   Appreciation of literature 09
   How others view life/feel 10
   To use my imagination (sensitivity) 11
   Self-knowledge 12
   Open-mindedness 13
   Career confidence 14
   General knowledge of the world 15
   No 16
   Others 17

6. Speaking improved 01
   Vocabulary/pronunciation improved 02
   Reading improved 03
   General communication/self-expression 04
   Writing improved 05
   Spelling improved 06
   Language usage improved 07
   Insight into literature 08
   Experience of literature 09
   Clarity of thought improved 10
   No 11
   Others 12

7. Reading of textbook/source material 01
   Essay writing (discursive) 02
   Planning of work 03
   Analysing the task 04
   Logic/clarity of argument 05
   Correctness of expression 06
   Spelling 07
   Summarising 08
   History 09
   Geography 10
   Biology 11
   Typing/shorthand 12
   No 13
   Others 14

8.	A lot	01
	Some	02
	A little	03
	Very little/none at all	04
	Don't know what to do	05
	Setwork notes	06
	Language revision	07
	Others	08
9.	Yes	01
	No	02
	Not really	03
10.	Insight into human nature	01
	Confrontation of values	02
	Different views on life	03
	New ideas	04
	General knowledge	05
	Cultural heritage/tradition	06
	Open-mindedness/tolerance	07
	Sympathy for people	08
	No	09
	Others	10
11.	How my personality must affect other people	01
	To identify with others	02
	To be less prejudiced	03
	To value my own ideas	04
	Self-respect	05
	To improve myself	06
	Humility	07
	No	08
	Others	09
12.	About the way I express myself orally	01
	About my written expression	02
	History teacher	03
	Geography teacher	04
	Biology teacher	05
	No	06
	Others	07
13.	Yes	01
	No	02
	Cannot say	03
	My use of slang	04
	My reading	05
	Others	06

14.	Yes	01
	No	02
	Cannot say	03
15.	More orals	01
	Less orals	02
	More discussions/debates	03
	More drama	04
	More reading	05
	More silent reading	06
	More writing on stimulating topics	07
	More self expression	08
	More project work	09
	More literature	10
	Less literature	11
	More relevant literature	12
	No literature exams	13
	No Shakespeare	14
	Less poetry	15
	More language work	16
	Less language work	17
	Fun grammar	18
	More practical/applied English	19
	More guidance/teaching for results	20
	Less crowded syllabus	21
	Smaller classes	22
	More individual attention	23
	More group work	24
	More pupil participation in lessons	25
	More use of audio-visuals/media	26
	More outings	27
	Others	28
	None	29

APPENDIX 8.3.3

TAKING A LOOK AT OUR ENGLISH PROGRAMME: Questionnaire 2.

Dear Colleagues

If we do not know where we are, we cannot plan where to go. To establish both location and direction the best people to ask are those who teach and those who are taught the English programme.

Thus, I ask your indulgence, amid marking and surviving, to complete as soon as you can the following open-ended questionnaire. A sample of your pupils has already been approached for comment, which is why this is Questionnaire 2.

The findings will assist me in a project for Rhodes University called 'Evaluating an English Department', which (translated) means finding out where we are and what we are actually doing in our teaching programme.

I chose to do this project for REAL reasons. Any Subject Head needs and wants to know what his colleagues honestly feel about the course on which his department is embarked. Are we nearing our objective? Or are we sailing in circles? Thus this survey is important in getting our bearings and planning future voyages.

Only if your anonymity is entirely preserved can I take seriously what you have to say. There is nothing on this questionnaire that can identify you, but there are certain other precautions that I must ask you to take:

1. Do not consult with each other.
2. Please type your responses, or ask someone else to write them out, so I cannot be suspected of recognising your handwriting.
3. Please hand your completed responses to the school secretary, who has agreed to keep them there for my collection.

Remember, please be absolutely frank and candid, otherwise the entire exercise is invalidated.

To set you thinking, here are some of the factors that influence the operation of an English curriculum:

1. the Cape Education Department (syllabi, prescribed texts, external examinations, Subject Advisors, various controls);
2. the executive authority in the school (staffing, timetabling, class grouping, allocations, policy, budgeting,etc.);
3. parents (aspirations, value-systems, support, cultural, etc.);
4. colleagues teaching other subjects (co-operation, attitude,etc.);
5. the pupils (ambitions, peer-group, priorities, motivation, interest, aptitude, etc.);
6. the English staff.

The English programme is the chief vehicle through which we make contact with the young individuals whom we teach. What it does and where it goes is important.

Thank you for your time and your caring.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Please answer on A4 or typing paper. Number your answers in careful accordance with the numbering system used below.
2. Obviously, a yes/no answer is not much help without a comment. Please qualify your responses as freely as you wish.
3. Some of the questions cover several topics. Please try to address your reply to each issue mentioned.
4. You may prefer to omit some questions altogether, to combine some of them, or to throw your weight onto certain questions at the expense of others. Please feel free to do this, but in your responses make it perfectly clear what questions you are handling, combining, or omitting.
5. The more ground that each of you covers, the better balanced the total picture will become; the more that is omitted, the more blurred the result.
6. Your subject is the English programme at your school as it is currently operating, including syllabi, work schemes, the keeping of records, objectives (discussed and unstated), policies (explicit and implicit), expectancies (overt and hidden), and actual practices. Whatever is relevant to the programme is relevant to discussion.

QUESTIONS:

1. Consider the Global Aims (paragraph 1) of the Cape Education Department syllabus. Read through the Goals of the different sub-sections: Oral Communication, Reading and Literature Study, Written Communication and Language Study.

   Are the aims and objectives of the syllabus-makers being met in our English programme at school? If not, where not and why not?

2. Each English department has its own individual objectives related to the particular needs of the school. Some of these are clearly stated, others are implicit; some are written down, others are hidden in emphases, directions and attitudes shown.

   Are these local objectives being met in practice? Are some being quietly buried? Have other tacit ones taken their place? Are some in conflict? Please comment.

3. Discuss whether the aspirations of the following are being realised: the school executive; the pupils; the parents; the other staff.

4. Is the programme static, archaic, rigid? Does it need to evolve? Is it out of step with the school and the pupils it purports to serve? How flexible is it? Comment on its present character and its potential for development.

5. Do you find teaching this programme is inhibiting, frustrating, exhausting? Is it a source of anxiety? Or does it allow you a sense of achievement, security and freedom? Please comment fully on your reaction to working with the English programme.

6. Does the English programme allow you to develop as a teacher? What about newcomers to the English department, e.g. first year teachers? Can we grow professionally in what we do here?

7. How do we co-operate as a team? What about your co-operation with your other English colleagues? What is your assessment of the leadership role of the Subject Head?

8. Is the work load fairly distributed in the English department? Comment frankly upon the work load of yourself and your colleagues and how this impacts upon your teaching and morale. Remember the distinction between factors within the control of the Subject Head and those beyond his control.

9. What is good about the English programme in this school?

10. What is not right? Mention some changes that you would welcome.

11. A final comment? For example, would you rather be teaching something other than English?

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR TIME AND HELP.

APPENDIX 8.3.4

TAKING A LOOK AT OUR ENGLISH PROGRAMME: Questionnaire 3.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:			
1	2	3	

Dear Parents

With the permission of the Department of Education and the Principal, I am undertaking research on the topic of 'Evaluating an English Department' for submission to Rhodes University in fulfilment of the requirements for the M.Ed. degree.

As a practising English teacher and Subject Head, I am interested in finding out whether what we set out to do is in fact being achieved. This cannot be ascertained purely from examination results of the pupils. Thus I have invited a sample of the pupils, all the teachers, and now you as parents to express opinions on a number of topics related to the English programme.

The purpose of all this is to gather information that will help the Subject Head and English staff to plan the future direction of the English department to the benefit of the children being taught.

Thus I ask your indulgence to complete as soon as you can the following questionnaire.

Your anonymity and that of the school is guaranteed. There is nothing on any of the questionnaires that can identify anybody - pupil, teacher, or parent. This is a paramount requirement of the research.

Please then feel free to respond in an absolutely honest and frank manner to the questions below. Failure to do this renders the exercise worthless.

Please address your completed questionnaire to the school Secretary in a sealed envelope for me to collect. Do not sign it, or put your name on it.

I must also ask you not to consult with other parents but to give your own views.

Your assistance is very greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

R N Thorpe

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Please ignore the numbered block. That is for computer coding.
2. A yes/no answer is not much help without a comment. Please qualify your responses as freely as you wish.
3. You may prefer to omit certain questions, or to treat some with more weight than others. That is fine, but obviously the larger the range of responses, the clearer the picture becomes.
4. If there is not enough space below, please continue overleaf but retain the numbering system that I have used.

MANY THANKS AGAIN.

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1. Among the subjects that your child does at school, how importantly do you rate English? Please explain. 4

2. What do you expect your child to learn in English classes at high school? Please rank your ideas in order of priority. 5

3. Are you satisfied with the English programme that your child is in fact following at school? Please clarify. 6

4. Are you satisfied with your child's marks in English exams? Please clarify. 7

5. Give a very brief evaluation of the teaching of English as you see it in this school. PLEASE - NO NAMES! 8

6. Is your child casual or concerned about English? Does he/she spend enough time on it? Is there sufficient English homework? 9

7. Do you think that the English programme at school has contributed to the broader education of your child? 10

8. Are you concerned about the amount or type of reading that your child does at home? Please explain. 11

9. Does your child's use of English out of school worry you? 12

10. Any further comments? 13

TAKING A LOOK AT OUR ENGLISH PROGRAMME: Interview questions.

1. THE SCHOOL EXECUTIVE: Principal and (possibly) Deputy Principals

1.1 Does English have any special place in the policy of the school, or in its yearly objectives?

1.2 Where would you rate English in the hierarchy of subjects offered at the school?

1.3 Does the school have any specially English-orientated programmes? e.g. a time slot for silent reading; an English-Across-the-Curriculum project; cross-curricular theme work; remedial English; immigrant English.

1.4 Does the school budget for such things as: English Festivals; poetry periodicals (e.g. English Alive); a school newspaper; SACEE membership; reading laboratory (e.g. SRA); the library; the school play; setwork tours; etc.?

1.5 What is the pupil-teacher ratio in English classes?

1.6 Do you prefer to appoint English specialists or teachers who have English as a subject and will be active in other teaching areas as well? How many full-time English teachers are there?

1.7 Are English teachers given any special privileges, e.g. extra free time for their marking and preparation load; less exam invigilation; remission from part of the extra-mural programme?

1.8 How many classes does each English teacher take?

1.9 Have any special time-tabling arrangements been made to facilitate English teaching, e.g. setting of a whole standard?

1.10 Is the composition of class groups influenced at all by English department considerations?

1.11 What do you see as the chief duty and concern of the English teacher?

1.12 What special qualities would you say an English teacher ought to have or cultivate?

1.13 Are English teachers more expendable than others?

1.14 Generally speaking, how well do English teachers compare to others in terms of promotability, achievement awards and seniority? Do they generally make good leaders?

1.15 Is English a problem subject in the school in the sense of standards set and achievement attained by the pupils? Is there particular anxiety among the parents about the English work?

1.16 Do you see a place for SG and LG English in the school?

2. TEACHERS OF SUBJECTS OTHER THAN ENGLISH: Subject Heads

2.1 What areas of overlap exist between your subject and English?

2.2 Does the work done in the English programme assist you in the teaching of your subject in any way? e.g. summary, essay writing, group oral presentations.

2.3 Do you ever work with the English department on cross-curricula projects? Do you see any potential in this idea?

2.4 In project work, do you insist that pupils render their source material into their own words, or do you accept copying verbatim?

2.5 Do you ever penalise pupils for using faulty or slovenly English in written projects or exams?

2.6 Do you ever correct their faulty speech or written work?

2.7 Are you satisfied with the standard of English used by your pupils?

2.8 Do you see it as the English department's job to improve the standard of English used by pupils in the school? Is it their task alone?

2.9 What do you see as the main job of an English department?

2.10 Do you regard English as an important subject in the school?

2.11 Can your pupils cope with the language used in their textbooks? If they can't, what do you do about it?

2.12 Does your subject demand that pupils master a specialised vocabulary? Do you have difficulties in this area?

2.13 Do your pupils really follow what they are reading? Is their ability to extract meaning from a passage and to grasp its essential arguments problematical in the teaching of your subject?

2.14 Can your senior classes construct a clear written argument using the concepts that you have taught them?

2.15 Do your senior classes have a critical awareness about what they are reading, or do they just accept it?

2.16 Apart from errors, can your pupils articulate clearly what they want to say? Or do they fall back onto slang, analogies and "you knows"?