CHAPTER VII

IMPLEMENTATION FOR THE STUDY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

> ... the reader has tended to remain in shadow, taken for granted, to all intents and purposes invisible.
>
> (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 1)

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with examining the implementation of the interactive model for the study of English literature. In Chapter VI it was concluded that conditions in the N.S.W. system are, on the whole, currently unfavourable for the adoption and implementation of the interactive model, but this does not mean that changes may not occur in the future. Research on the implementation of innovations suggests that implementation is incremental whether the change contemplated is large or small scale and changes can be achieved given time and a developmental approach (Fullan, 1982). Implementation of the interactive model in one subject area may be the first step towards the wider school-based implementation of the model.

Justification for the choice of English literature as the context for implementation on the grounds of professional and personal interest has been presented in Chapter I. In addition, the conclusions drawn about the N.S.W. system in Chapter VI suggest that implementation may be possible in a subject area which may be more readily conceptualized in a form which accommodates an active role for the students. Implementation may not, in that case, meet with resistance due to incongruence

between the teacher's perceptions of the structure of the subject and the interactive model. This is not to suggest that the interactive model may not be implemented in subject areas which apparently possess such well defined boundaries, in terms of conceptual and syntactic structure, that room for student input is very limited, as is often alleged in the case of mathematics. Implementation in mathematics may require reconceptualization of the subject. Confrey (1981) clearly indicates that contemporary epistemological theory refutes the view that the structure of mathematics can only be portrayed as linear or hierarchical and "predominantly free of theoretical assumptions" (p. 247). However, it would be the task of further research and beyond the scope of this study, to examine the various conceptualizations of the structure of the subjects presently included in the secondary school curriculum and the potential for implementing the interactive model in each. Disciplines do not have the same epistemologies and therefore research "must be undertaken by people with a command of the subject matter and with a concern for the theory of knowledge" (Confrey, 1981, p. 251).

With respect to English literature, there are competing rationales for the teaching of the subject and a theoretical framework which accommodates participation is more commonly applied to the teaching of language rather than of literature. Therefore the chapter attempts to identify the theories applicable to the teaching of literature which an advocate of the interactive model may draw upon or subscribe to for supporting arguments.

Finally, English literature has been selected for the practical reason that English is a subject taken by most students in both the junior and senior years and changes in its teaching would affect a large number of people. Therefore, it is worthwhile to examine the factors which would facilitate or obstruct implementation of the interactive model.

Conflicting Positions in the Teaching of English

The problematic nature of the subject area in which the implementation of the interactive approach is being considered is evidenced by a brief overview of developments in English. The year 1966 is a benchmark in the rather brief history of the teaching of English because it was the year when the first large-scale international conference was held at Dartmouth College in the United States. The conference was convened to allow participants from both sides of the Atlantic to exchange ideas on a broad range of issues including such fundamental ones as what the content of English should be. There were differences of opinion among the conference participants with the American contingent emphasizing a subject-centred view of teaching, stressing the need to identify structure and sequence in English and attempting to identify the subject as a discipline. The British contingent emphasized self-discovery, creativity and personal growth. Two major reports were written on the conference, one by Muller (1967), an American and one by Dixon (1967), a British participant. Muller expressed the view that "there is no generally accepted philosophy to guide decisions about what the study should be centred on, what should be its primary aims - not to mention how best to achieve those aims" (1967, p. 4). Dixon in his report identified three models of English teaching in current practice: the "skills" model, the "cultural heritage" model and the "personal growth" model of English. While one of the decisions of the conference was to advocate a unitary approach to the teaching of English, with the pupils' experience and growth as the unifying principle in English activities, the literature which appeared in subsequent years does not reflect a sustained consensus view. Some writers argue for language as the central concern of English, others argue for the centrality of literature. Some argue for an experience-centred English and some for English integrated with other subjects on the curriculum. Curriculum proposals are available with different rationales and recommended teaching

strategies. The present position with respect to the teaching of English in the United Kingdom is described by Ball (1982) as

> ... a contested area of curriculum knowledge involving endless disputes about its proper definition. At any one time, one of the contemporary definitions may appear to be predominant but the disputation is never satisfactorily resolved for all concerned.

(p. 1)

Ball provides a useful representation (Fig. 7.1) of the "dimensions and structure of the current state of allegiance and conflict in English" (p. 21).
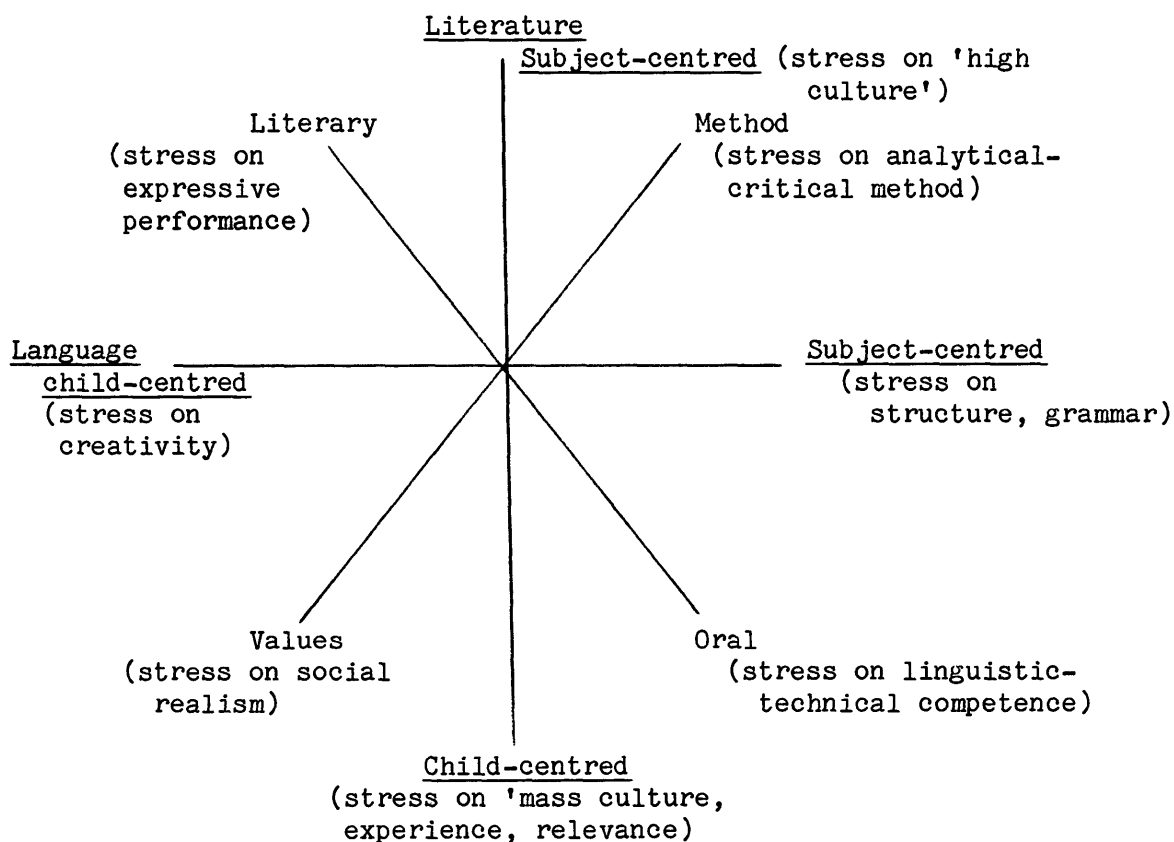

Figure 7.1

Paradigms of English teaching
(adapted from Ball (1982, p. 22))

The vertical and horizontal axes, designated as Language and Literature, represent the two current extreme positions identifiable in the literature: one advocating the teaching of English with a language emphasis and the other with a literature emphasis. Within these two positions there are differences among those who advocate a more subject-centred approach and those who advocate a child-centred one, represented on the figure as polarities on the Language and Literature axes. Positions between these are represented by the diagonal lines and indicate varying degrees of orientation towards a child-centred language or literature or a subject-centred language or literature emphasis. Ball maintains that the diagram represents the current divisions among British educators but it could also be used to represent divisions in American views as evidenced by Tanner's (1971) account of curriculum change and Ohman's (1976) more recent work. It also applies to divisions in Australian views as evidenced by articles in the journals English in Australia, The Teaching of English and Watson's (1981) recent book, English Teaching in Perspective. Australian teachers have been more strongly influenced by British authors but during the last decade through the energetic efforts of professional associations (Brock, 1982) they have also been exposed to the views of American English specialists with the result that the teaching of English is "irrevocably changed" (Boomer, 1977, p. 11).

There is some evidence to suggest that the divisions, conflicts and disputes are not confined to journal articles and books but are also occurring in schools (Ball and Lacey, 1980; Watson, 1978; Diamond, 1979). If division and conflict are widespread then the implementation of new curriculum proposals is likely to be a difficult process. It therefore behoves anyone advocating a model of curriculum development (as this study does), to be as clear as possible about the orientation of the model and its implications for practice.

The student-centred rationale

In the development of the interactive model the previous chapters have emphasized decision-making procedures and teaching practices which accommodate input from the students. A definition of English in terms of a body of knowledge or content about language and literature to be imparted to the students would not be compatible with the model. It would leave no room for student input in decision making and may not adequately build on the knowledge and linguistic resources students bring with them to the classroom. There is of course a body of knowledge related to both the nature of language and literature which the teacher should use to guide her teaching but the pressure to impart this knowledge to the students and to make it the content of the curriculum has to be resisted if the "banking" concept of education is to be avoided (Freire, 1972b).

As Ball indicates, there is already a student-centred rationale for the teaching of English which an advocate of the interactive approach can draw upon for justification and support. Those who advocate a student-centred approach maintain that language is a linguistic resource, a tool for shaping, organizing, articulating and understanding experience (Britton, 1970) which children already possesses by the time they are of age to attend school. They have developed this resource not by learning about language but by using language in social interaction in various contexts - reading, writing, speaking, listening - which they can relate to and which have meaning for them. What the school can achieve is to build upon these resources, help extend and amplify them. To the extent the teacher provides pupils with opportunities to talk, write and read about the things that deeply concern them, and to deal with the experiences they bring to the classroom by talking and writing about them, she provides the pupils opportunity to shape for themselves their experiences in the English classroom.

The advocates of a student-centred approach also maintain that a wider range of language uses than the literary should be the concern of the English teacher; that is, language as it is used in daily life for a variety of purposes in a variety of contexts. Literature is only one of these contexts. It provides examples of language in use, language in various situations, and models of writing. Literature, is broadly defined to include all types of writing prose, poetry, drama, factual, documentary or imaginative writing. The broad definition does not restrict literature to "masterpieces" or to the "very best" of what has been written. It does not define literature in an elitist way and it admits students' compositions as literature along with those of professional writers. Literature, however, is not perceived as the core of English studies, but as an input, a "second-order" experience. The reading of literature is seen to contribute to the personal, cultural and linguistic development of the student but reading and listening are deemed to be essentially receptive experiences and thus rather less valuable than the active process of speaking and writing. The literature emphasis in English teaching, particularly at the secondary school level, is seen as the product of teacher training in the academic study of literature. To balance this emphasis and to enable teachers to teach language in all its complexity training in linguistic theory is also seen to be essential.

The student-centred view of English teaching in the United Kingdom can be traced back to what Abbs (1980) calls the "Progressive Movement" in education in the 1930's which advocated the importance of self-expression and individuality in English studies and the role of play in learning. As early as 1917, Caldwell Cook, in his book The Play Way, stressed the active involvement of pupils in reading and writing through play. The progressive movement, however, had its most direct impact at the primary school level, particularly in the schools developed during the 1960's (Ball, 1982).

In the United States, the influence of the Progressive Education Association was manifested in various proposals, between 1935 and 1952, to integrate the teaching of English with other subjects on the curriculum, particularly social studies (Tanner, 1971). These proposals were concerned with developing a curriculum in English based on activities related to students' experiences and interests. English was conceived not as a discipline to be studied for its own sake but as the activities of reading, writing, speaking and listening. In Tanner's (1971) view, it was the era of the cold war and Sputnik which catalysed the forces of specialization and "disciplinarity" in American curriculum development efforts and led to a rejection of student-centred curriculum proposals in favour of attempts to reconstruct the curriculum through specialized subject fields and through disciplines. Thus an emphasis on structure and sequence was the predominant orientation of the American participants at the Dartmouth Conference in 1966. It is interesting to note, however, that Moffett, in 1968, again argued for curriculum integration and language across the curriculum in the belief that "Nothing less than the growth of the whole human being requires a new integration of learning" (p. 215).

The student-centred rationale for English teaching was again articulated by Dixon (1967) in Growth Through English, his report of the Dartmouth Conference. In this work Dixon maintains that activities in English are unified by a commitment to the personal growth of individual pupils. The child's experience was to be the unifying factor in English activities which would be concerned with all aspects of growth, intellectual, emotional, social, cultural, and spiritual. Dixon argues that among the three models of teaching, the emphasis in the "cultural heritage" model is on enrichment which the study of literature offers students through the insights of creative, intelligent people, but he criticizes it for viewing the culture

as "given", as a commodity to be passed on to students and for ignoring the "personal culture" which the students bring to their reading and interpretation.

He identifies the "skills" model of English with the goal of teaching initial literacy in writing and reading, and criticizes it for an over-simple definition of English, concentrating on the mechanics and techniques of expression and omitting much of value in the use of English. Watson (1981) maintains that it is once again the dominant model of English in the schools receiving its impetus from the "back to basics" movement.

The skills model assumes that language use can be broken down into a number of discrete skills and items of information arranged in hierarchical order with each taught separately, such as spelling, punctuation, grammar, paragraphing, pronunciation, word recognition, inferring, generalising. In the teaching of reading the skills approach has two main strands, each of which assumes that the reading process can be separated into observable behaviours and both emphasize direct skills teaching. Fielding (1982) maintains that "skills theorists tend to see reading as the source of complex thinking ... their programs imply that critical thinking is learned primarily through reading" (p. 73). This view of teaching is not supported by cognitive development theory and psycholinguistic theory, both of which began to play an increasingly greater role in the student-centred approaches to English teaching in the late 1960's and in the 1970's.

Moffett's (1968) theory of English teaching is based on a theory of language development and psychological development towards increasing levels of abstraction. He conceives language as an abstracting, symbolizing process and system which one learns by use. Individual development in language is linked with cognitive development "toward a differentiation of kinds of

discourse to match the differentiation in abstraction [sic] levels of thought" (p. 50). He defines "discourse" as "any piece of verbalization complete for its original purpose" (pp. 10-11) and he is concerned with identifying different kinds of discourse and the level of abstract thinking each requires. Speaking and writing are perceived as active discoursing, whereas reading is a receptive pastime, an "input" activity, like listening and of less value. He argues for placing more emphasis on the students' own creative writing rather than on reading. Art forms are seen as objectifying inner experience but he is more interested in the cognitive dimensions of language development than in the development of feelings or the dynamics of the creative process.

Britton (1970) and Britton et al. (1975) expand on Moffet's theory on the functions of language and language development and provide teachers with a more detailed conceptual framework for planning language activities in English to provide pupils with experiences in using language for a "transactional" function, to get things done, to record facts, exchange opinions, construct theories; for an "expressive" function, to verbalize personal thoughts and feelings,, and for a "poetic" function, to construct imaginative linguistic art forms reflecting experience. The expressive use of language is seen as the seed-bed or the matrix for the development of the other two modes.

The interactive model is compatible with the student-centred rationale; however, this rationale is more clearly formulated in relation to the teaching of language than of literature. Its goals and value base are not as clearly discernible, in relation to literature and the implications for teaching not as clearly defined. It remains to be indicated what view of literature and its teaching are compatible with a student-centred rationale.

The literature-centred rationale

The critics of the student-centred rationale maintain that it undervalues the role and contribution of <u>literature</u> to personal and cultural development. Allen (1980), for example, claims that a discredited subject-centred approach has been "superseded by an imbalance of child-centredness" in the theory of English teaching and he argues for a more balanced view of the relationship of culture, teacher and learner (p. 5). Whitehead (1976) also shares this view and maintains that in the current theory of English teaching there is an "erosion of belief" in the value of literature.

Those who advocate the teaching of English with a literature emphasis argue that the activities of reading, writing, speaking and listening can be effectively integrated around the study of literature and thus literature is an appropriate and meaningful context for developing language skills. Literature introduces new possibilities of language use over and above the resources the pupil already has. It provides experience of language use at its best, "rich vocabulary, vivid description, rhythmical power and subtle variety of tone, impressive characters and coherent and balanced structure" (Hunt, 1981, p. 11). The literature focus is thus seen to define the unique concern of English and distinguishes it from the concern with language use in other subjects.

The British critics of the student-centred English argue from a tradition of English teaching shaped by Arnold and Leavis, a tradition which Abbs (1980) terms the "Cambridge School of English". Within this tradition, the place of literature in education is justified in terms of its humanizing, "civilizing" values. For Leavis and Thompson (1933) language in contemporary use is "debased" and it is in literature where "its subtlest and finest use is preserved" (p. 6).

It is due to the influence of Leavis that English was established as a respectable academic discipline at the tertiary level. In his Education and the University (1948) Leavis developed the idea that a cultural tradition can be preserved and extended only by a rigorous training of the intellect and of a discriminating literary taste. The method advocated is practical criticism but the purpose is ultimately moral in order to answer the question "What ultimately for?" In Leavis' view it is to develop judgements that are "inseparable from that profound sense of relative values which determines or should determine the important choices of actual life" (1948, p. 35).

While Leavis was concerned with the teaching of English at the University level his influence on teaching in lower schools has also been profound. Mathieson (1975) describes the spread of this influence through professors and lecturers in universities and departments of education, through their students who became teachers in secondary schools, and through influential journals. Ball (1982) also traces the spread of influence perpetuating the critical tradition through a network of apprenticeships during university studies, colleagueship, co-authorship of books and articles, and participation in curriculum projects. His analysis provides insight into the social structure which maintains a discipline and a particular orientation within it.

The critical tradition has, in fact, contributed to the separation of literature and language in English work in schools. Leavis himself felt it necessary that English as a university discipline be "emancipated from linguistics and philology" (1948, p. 33) and separation has also been supported by educational philosophers such as Phenix (1964) and Hirst (1974) who argue for recognizing literature as a distinct form of knowledge. The tradition also supports two separate but interrelated strands in contemporary English teaching, the

cultural heritage model identified by Dixon (1967) and the analytical-critical model.

The cultural heritage model appears in the emphases on the link between literature and cultural values. Allen (1980) maintains that an important reason for basing English teaching on literature is that literature is characteristic of the "civilized" life education ought to foster; that is, a life characterised by joy, curiosity, wonder, depth of feeling and thought , respect for the effective use of language, a striving to understand the conditions of human existence and to realize the "good life". To justify the inclusion of literature in the curriculum one needs an account of the value of culture in one's life and in Allen's view, this seems to be lacking in the student-centred approach. Such an account would provide a purpose for literature education and criteria for selection and emphasis. In Allen's opinion, the teacher abdicates her responsibility if she does not attempt to influence the students to choose certain values and live their lives in certain ways. For Inglis (1969) too, the function of the English teacher is "to nurture the growth of values" (p. 180). To do this, the teacher "must keep alive the vision of a good society for without that vision we have no function and without function no status nor pride" (p. 180). For Inglis, as for Leavis, this vision is a moral vision: "the end of the study would be the grip on solid moral reality" (Inglis, 1969, p. 185). Inglis, therefore, argues for an approach to English teaching which enhances the appreciation of culture as it is embodied in literary works, and which realizes and fosters a sense of the past, a sense of place and of coherence, a language of tenderness, and powers of discrimination.

Whitehead (1976) maintains that the personal growth model fails to cultivate the cultural values literature stands for in the face of values promulgated by other cultural influences in society, such as the mass media, which strongly influence

children's values and perspectives on life. Furthermore, the approach does not appreciate literature for its <u>own</u> sake and value but treats it instrumentally as a means for stimulating talking, writing and recall of first-hand experiences. The uses of literature seem to be of more value than the actual encounter with literature.

For these writers the student-centred approach does not appear to offer criteria for helping teachers select what to offer students for reading, for distinguishing what is "good" literature form what is poor, for judging the worth of what is read, and for determining the kind of development that one should strive for in literature education. Allen (1980) maintains that the criteria operating in schools for selecting works are what the teacher personally likes and what the students enjoy and he considers both arbitrary and inadequate. The criterion of teacher preference does not stand up to "publicly" agreed upon criteria of excellence and value and the criterion of pupil enjoyment is criticized because it can lead to a choice of books reinforcing existing values rather than creating new awareness, and lead to an escape from life rather than an "arming" for life. The "public" implied consists of critics and scholars, not the masses of people.

These views on the role and value of literature are not exclusive to British writers as the study of literature education in ten countries conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Education Achievement (I.E.A.) has shown (Purves, 1973; 1974; 1975). This study indicates that a version of the cultural heritage model, the "imitative" model, is emphasized in teaching literature in several countries (Purves, 1975). The aim is to transmit the historically evolved cultural values of society, or the established "standards of excellence". Literature is seen as an important component of the cultural heritage of any society and it is assumed that by reading, absorbing and imitating this heritage the enduring

cultural, social and moral values of society and aspects of knowledge and skills will be transmitted to young people. Persons thus educated will have read and understood both classical and modern literature, and will be able to speak and write knowledgeably about it and the social, political, and intellectual contexts which engendered it. They will understand how the works mirror the culture in which they were produced.

The contemporary Cambridge School writers do not completely endorse the imitative model. They do not advocate teaching about literature or teaching imformation which is "extrinsic" to the literary work or irrelevant to its understanding or appreciation. They are concerned with helping students respond personally with feeling to what they read and not merely "objectively" or in line with the teacher's or the critics' views. At the same time they are also concerned with developing a critical-evaluative stance to literature and thus advocate teaching methods which incorporate what the I.E.A. study terms the "analytical" approach to literature (Purves, 1975). This approach is concerned with the development of the students' critical faculties, their abilities to comprehend, analyse, interpret, and critically evaluate the works studied. It is a dominant approach to literature in many countries particularly at the upper secondary school level. It is distinct from the personal growth model which focuses on the student's experience with literature and has gained little currency at the upper secondary levels in the countries studied which included Britain and the U.S. (Purves, 1975).

Critical analysis and interpretation have been major emphases in American approaches to literature study up to 1967 (Purves 1971). This analytical orientation in American education has been influenced by the so called "New-Critics" in literature study, represented by the literary theorists Wellek and Warren (1956). The new critics made a distinction between the creative artistic activity of the author in producing a work

and the activity of the reader which was conceived primarily in intellectual terms as a problem-solving activity. In the tradition of Richards (1934) and Leavis (1948), Wellek and Warren advocated close textual analysis of a work, or "intrinsic" study, concentrating on the work itself as against its "extrinsic" study as a document in literary or social history. The work is perceived as having intrinsic value by virtue of its material and formal properties, apart from any individual's reading of it. This essentially "formalist" view (Phenix, 1964) is also maintained by some contemporary representatives of the Cambridge School, such as Allen (1980) and Whitehead (1976). Wellek and Warren maintain that it is possible to have an objective reading of a text, a "correct" interpretation which is closest to the work's "mode of existence". The correct interpretation is usually not the individual reader's but the informed and sensitive critic's.

Critics of the analytic approach maintain that it overemphasizes an intellectual mode of enquiry in the study of literature and underemphasizes the emotional and imaginative response of the reader which seems to be the basis of a sustained interest in and enjoyment of literature. It defines literary encounter in intellectual terms and does not account for the fact that literature may be enjoyed without much objective analysis, where the reader knows what he or she likes but cannot explain why. It is also claimed that the mastery of information and critical acumen is worthless if the reader does not enjoy literature or desire to read another book.

An example of this point of view is Carpenter's (1971) argument that the critical-analytic treatment of literature resembles the treatment given to scientific prose. Students are asked to apply terms and methods of literary criticism to what they read and thereby translate expressive language into literal language. In criticism, terms are defined, meaning is given by stipulation. Statements made by the critic take the form of

propositions testable by evidence to be found in the work or by consulting the author or his biography, or by relating them to psychological or other theories. Validity of meaning is determined as it is in science, by replication and consensus. Literary criticism, therefore, resembles scientific study of an art form and seems to encourage an attitude towards expressive language that is more appropriate to science.

Carpenter (1971) argues that while literature may contain propositions, their truth and falsity is not the measure of aesthetic meaning. In other words, while literary works may be useful for teaching literary criticism, literature also "happens" for the responsive reader who is not in possession of the terms and techniques of criticism. In theory one need not object to a course in literary criticism being offered to interested students. However, the critics do object to this treatment of literature in literature education for all students.

Literature need not become a vehicle for teaching literary theory and criticism. A distinction can be made by teachers between knowledge which informs their teaching - that is, literary theory - and that which should be imparted to their students. Unfortunately, as Applebee (1974) notes, teachers of literature have never successfully resisted the pressure to formulate their subject as a body of knowledge to be imparted.

While it can be explained to a person how the various elements of a work relate to each other, its total effect cannot. It can only be felt by the reader. One's appreciation of literature may not be the result of any logical reasoning process but rather a sudden recognition, a gestalt-like insight. One may not be able to communicate or articulate in a logical, discursive way why the work is appealing because it may be tapping unconscious impressions and emotional associations. It would seem to be an error, therefore, to emphasize an

intellectual treatment of the work at the expense of an emotional, imaginative one, since an act of the imagination and an emotional response are simultaneously needed to identify with the experience in the work and to perceive the emotive and imaginative aspects of the language. The written, critical response to literature receives pedagogical emphasis in schools because it seems more closely aligned to cognition and therefore more amenable to teaching and more susceptible to evaluation and measurement.

While some of the Cambridge School writers express concern about the student's response it is not clear how the analytical approach can encourage a "feeling response" or how the cultural heritage model can be successfully married with a student-centred approach particularly at the secondary school level. The cultural heritage model contains an elitist view of culture in relation to both the selection and interpretation of literature and assumes that cultural values are acquired in an impressive, receptive fashion. The analytic approach can be identified with a skills model and does not appear to do justice to the nature of literature as an art form. Neither approach seems to accommodate the activity and subjectivity of the reader. Both undervalue expressive activity and subjective knowing. Both separate artistic expressive activity from aesthetic appreciation rather than attempting to integrate them. This seems to be based on a traditional but mistaken distinction between artistic and aesthetic experiences which leads to a loss of contact between a living culture and culture as embodied in the arts.

A rationale for a student-centred approach to literature education is, however, currently available and its basis is in the field of arts education. Allen (1980) touches upon this source but does not fully develop its implications for teaching when he speaks of literature as "art-speech", a term he borrows from D.H. Lawrence (p. 101). By art-speech he means the use of

language for aesthetic purposes. He maintains that "the life in writing so far as English is concerned is to be found in art-speech" (p. 124), in its creation and in its reception. It is the use of language "most successful at dealing with human experience as felt reality" (p. 102).

What is argued in the following discussion is that the active role envisioned for the student in the interactive model can be accommodated if the reading of literature is conceived as a recreative, interactive process between the reader and a text. Also, appreciation of the formal values in literature - that is, its form and structure - can be enhanced, if the literature program provides opportunity for the creative, expressive use of language either in response to the literature read or to other stimuli.

Student-centred Study of Literature

The argument in this section is that the subjective/ personal/expressive perspective on experience, whether in direct first-hand experience or in reading literature, is a valid mode of knowing which can be cultivated or nurtured through creative expressive writing and through the encouragement of subjective interpretation of literature. It is one of the major modes available to us for processing our experience. It involves reflection, and is linked with understanding and knowing as Reid (1976; 1980; 1981) effectively argues. He maintains that cognition, conation (willing), and feeling are organically united in a person, with feeling as the "inner side" of cognition and conation. In education, however, we tend to relegate the subjective/expressive mode to the arts rather than acknowledge that this mode is a valid means of gaining understanding, of knowing, of relating to our environment and of exploring content in any subject area. The subjective/ expressive mode may be particularly significant for adolescents

who are generally concerned with understanding themselves and developing a sense of identity as persons distinct from their parents and family. Instead, we tend to reward manifestations of objectivity in thought and in language use more strongly than creative self-expression. Even in arts education we sometimes tend to emphasize knowing about the arts rather than knowing through the arts. English teachers concerned with developing students' abilities to express themselves have the opportunity to counter-balance this tendency. Education through the arts - and literature is one of them - implies putting the emphasis on a process of knowing, knowing subjectively, knowing by living-through an experience, knowing by creative self-expression. It is in the context of education through the arts that the concern for cultural values in literature education can be translated into a curriculum which provides opportunity for feeling cultural values, that is, values lived-through as felt-experience rather than perceived only objectively or understood at the intellectual level.

Reading and interpreting literature

There are currently available theories of the reading process supported by studies of response to literature which assign a central role to the reader in interpreting literature. These theories maintain that readers construct rather than discover meaning as they interact with the text and possibly other readers; that the meaning readers derive depends on their ability to pick up the structural and semantic clues provided by the text, but more importantly, on the personal knowledge and perspective taking abilities they bring to the task; that response is not a passive, receptive process but requires activity in the form of a genuine deep engagement calling upon thought and feeling, and in the process, the reader's affect, prior knowledge and personal response all have a legitimate role.

Natanson (1968) argues that the reader's task is akin to that of the author in constructing the work in that the reader reconstructs the meaning of a work. Final and absolute meaning may never be resolved or proclaimed and possibilities for further meaning may increase with experience. This is why, as an adult, one may find new meaning and pleasure in re-reading the books enjoyed as a youth. Natanson claims that the survival of an art work depends on the availability of an audience to reconstruct meaning from the work.

Smith (1981) holds a view similar to Natanson's in his claim that the reader imaginatively creates a world in the process of reading and this is "an active and inherently creative part to play" (p. 5).

Holland (1968; 1973) has developed a psychoanalytic theory of response to literature, based on case studies of reader's responses. He identifies four principles governing the ways readers recreate literary works for themselves. The first principle is that "Each reader tries to compose from the elements of the work a match to his own characteristic style" (1973, p. 145). In other words, the reader builds an experience from the words and this experience is shaped in a way which is characteristic of his or her personality. Second, the work provides or embodies a central fantasy and to build and shape one's experience this fantasy has to be admitted past one's censoring defenses and experienced as part of oneself. Holland suggests that this involves a "giving" of oneself to the experience of the work. The third principle is concerned with what occurs once the work is experienced. The reader shapes from it "a fantasy of the type that <u>matters to him</u>" (1973, p. 145 emphasis added). In shaping this fantasy the reader adds to it, "enriching the central fantasy with our own associations and experiences that relate to it" (1968, p. 310). Finally the reader transforms (or interprets) that "fantasy toward a moral,

esthetic or intellectual "point" that enables him to find in the work unity, significance and pleasure" (1973, p. 145).

Readers derive pleasure from the feeling of having a fantasy of their own and their own associations to it "managed and controlled but at the same time allowed a limited expression and gratification" (Holland, 1968, pp. 311-312). The reading experience also allows the reader to "try on a different identity" based on different values and attitudes which is particularly significant for adolescents if we accept that the search for identity is one of the developmental themes of adolescence. In Holland's words

> ... with literature, we introject an experience of fantasy and (more important, morally) defensive modes we would not ordinarily have, namely those the writer has embodied in the text ... culture shapes the writer's character, his patterns of fantasy and defense; the reader introjects the writer's character for the time he is absorbed in the writer's writing; the reader may then modify the culture around him as a result of his literary experience.

(1968, p. 335)

Although the encounter with literature does not necessarily lead to such modification at least "literature may open for us some flexibility of mind so that growth from it and other kinds of experience remains possible" (1968, p. 340).

The pleasure one derives from the experience is a private, personal thing. Holland insists that response depends on the reader, not the critic or the teacher, and more specifically, "on the reader's own character, which only a therapist - at best - can alter" (1968, p. 332). In commenting on his students' responses, Holland writes that "The response created the poem just as much as the poem created the response" (1973, p. 156). The teacher's role in the experience is to enable students "to have fuller experiences of literature" (1968, p. 328). The teacher can encourage students to articulate their feelings about what they read and thus make

feelings more available to themselves and to others. Holland found that in this process the reader "begins to have more feelings and more of a literary experience, if for no other reason than sheer curiosity about himself" (1973, p. 134). In talking about feelings and associations one learns more about oneself and more about literature. Thus greater self-awareness can be achieved through reading and discussing literature.

Bleich (1975; 1978) also maintains that greater self-understanding may be achieved in reading literature, if one is encouraged to examine one's perceptions of literary works in terms of "Why do I think I saw the poem in this way?"; or "Is there anything I know about myself that might explain my particular perception?" Discussion of individual responses can enable students to recognise that their responses are in some sense unique from those of others and whereas solitary response would not reveal these differences.

Bleich's theory of response is based on his own studies of students' written responses to literary works. He maintains that while each respondent can "see" something in a work that everyone else can see, each person also has "a special way of seeing that something which gives it its own personalized character" (1975, p. 32). This special way of seeing is "an expression of personal style and concern" (p. 32). He also argues for the use of strategies in literature education which will enable students to articulate and explore their subjective, emotional responses. He maintains that "critical judgements are implicit in emotional reactions" and "the separation of conscious judgement from its subjective roots is false and artificial" (p. 49). His analysis of students' responses leads him to conclude that what the reader finds critically important in literature is always the result of "personal predilection" (p. 57).

Rosenblatt, as far back as 1938 and as recently as 1978, has also explored the role of the reader in responding to literary works. She argues that in the history of literary theory the emphasis has been on the book or the author but the reader has been taken for granted. She presents a theory which examines the role of all three - the author, the text and the reader - but her special concern is with the neglected reader.

She sees the reading process as "a coming-together, a compenetration of a reader and a text" (1978, p. 12). The verbal text is the product of the author's creative activity, consisting of verbal symbols meaningful to the author but only of potential meaning to a reader. She rejects the formalist view that the meaning of a work resides in its intrinsic material and formal properties. Actual meaning has to be evoked, brought forth into being by a reader. For Rosenblatt, the text itself does not constitute a literary work of art. Art "is not an object, or an ideal entity"; it is an "event in time", or "an experience shaped by the reader under the guidance of the text" (1978, p. 12). The text functions as a stimulus, "activating elements of the reader's past experience - his experience both with literature and with life" (p. 11). It also functions like a musical score created by a composer to guide the production of a work of art by a performer whose keyboard is him or herself (p. 14). What the reader, therefore, brings to the work is at least as important as what the writer attempts to convey in his or her text. Meaning, therefore, does not reside primarily in the text to be discovered by the reader; it is constructed or evoked as a result of the reader interacting with the text.

Rosenblatt maintains that there is a difference between an aesthetic and a non-aesthetic literary work - that is, between literature as a scientific work or as a newspaper article and literature as a poem or play - but the difference is not in the text alone, (i.e. in its syntax, diction, grammar,

subject or theme). The difference is also in the response of the reader to the text so that the reader may perform an "aesthetic" reading of the text or a non-aesthetic or "efferent" reading.

She uses the concept of "efferent" (derived from the Latin word "effere", to carry away) and the "aesthetic" to describe different stances to literature or differences in the focus of attention and in the set of activities one may choose to adopt in reading a text. In non-aesthetic reading, "the reader's attention is focused primarily on what will remain after the reading - the information to be acquired, the logical solution to a problem, the actions to be carried out" (p. 23) when the reading is over. One's personal associations with the words and concepts, one's qualitative responses to the rhythm and the sound of the words are not important and the more one can ignore these and to make oneself transparent and the reading impersonal, the more efficiently one reads. As one responds to the printed words and symbols, one's attention is directed outward towards concepts to be retained, ideas to be tested, actions to be performed after reading.

In contrast, in aesthetic reading, "the reader's primary concern is with what happens during the actual event" (p. 24). Even though one has to decipher the images, concepts or assertions the words point to, one "also pays attention to the associations, feelings, attitudes and ideas that these words and their referents arouse" (p. 24). One's attention is focused inward instead of outward. One's primary purpose is fulfilled during the reading event as one "fixes his attention on the actual experience he is living through" (p. 27). One is content to live in the moment created by the work; one is willing to experience it, to "suspend disbelief", to fantasize and bring imaginative associations to the work. In responding to the text the reader also draws "on resources from his own fund of experience and sensibility to provide and organize the substance of his response" (p. 43).

Rosenblatt's efferent and aethetic stances have parallels with Witkin's (1977) theory of "impressive" and "expressive" knowing and language use. In impressive or "object-knowing", "knowledge is abstracted from the object itself" (p. 17). Expressive or "subject-knowing", involves "the knowing of one's sensing and feeling" (p. 19). Subject-knowing is involved in the appreciation of expressive forms created by others and this mode of consciousness is perceived to be similar to that which is involved in the creation of art forms.

Both writers maintain that they are identifying <u>extremes</u> in modes of experience. Rosenblatt maintains that in reality "It is more accurate to think of a continuum, a series of gradations between the non-aesthetic and the aesthetic extremes" (1978, p. 35). Witkin also asserts that "All action ranges along a continuum from the most purely expressive to the most purely impressive" (1977, p. 6). The readers' attitudes or stances or their "mental sets" towards the text determine whether their attention moves toward the efferent/impressive or the aesthetic/expressive ends of the continuum.

The same text can be read with either a predominantly efferent/impressive or an aesthetic/expressive attitude. Rosenblatt's example of the two modes in operation is useful in illustrating the differences:

> ... the mathematician turns from his efferent, abstract manipulations of his symbols to focus his attention on, and to aesthetically savor, the "elegance" of his solution. Again, we may focus our attention on the qualitative living-through of what we derive from the text of "Ode on a Grecian Urn", or we may turn our attention to efferent analysis of its syntax.
>
> (p. 25)

The analytical activities involved in reading should not be confused with with the evocation of the work as an art form. While such activities may be involved in evoking the work if they dominate the reading and interpreting process the reader is not functioning in the aesthetic mode but "as a linguist, a biographer, a historian, a psychologist, a literary theorist, a stylist, or whatever his technical or scholarly specialization confers" (p. 162). This is, in effect, the position assumed in the critical-analytical approach to literature.

If the reading experience is uniquely personal and if interpretation and criticism can never be wholly "objective", how can sound criteria of interpretation be achieved? What is to count as a valid interpretation? Interpretation seems to have several dimensions. It occurs during and after reading, it can be a private matter or be made public. As one reads and mentally reconstructs the work one tries to make sense of what has been evoked, to comprehend it and find meaning in it. Interpretation at this level, during reading, has an "ineffable and inward character" and "cannot be shared directly with anyone else" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 132). After reading, one may privately reflect on what has been evoked in an effort "to realize it more keenly", to fix it in one's mind or "to hold on to the special quality and texture of the experience" (pp. 133-134). Rosenblatt suggests that such reflection can strengthen feelings of personal identity if it leads to making distinctions between oneself and the characters depicted in the text. If one is required to describe one's interpretation to someone else, one moves into the public dimension of interpretation which involves an attempt to abstract and explain "the qualitative character of the experience, the assumptions and ideas that entered into our shaping of it and the responses to the evocation" (p. 135).

Public interpretation also involves justification of one's interpretation. Holland (1968) argues that in this process it is absurd for a teacher to maintain that any one

meaning supplied by the reader or herself "is erroneous or that one is essential and correct in a way that others are not" (p. 331). Rosenblatt, however, argues for accepting the validity of an interpretation on the criteria that "the reader's interpretation not be contradicted by any element of the text and that nothing be projected for which there is no verbal basis" (1978, p. 115). Thus, in Rosenblatt's view, the text itself constrains the number of possibly valid interpretations.

For Bleich (1978) validity is socially determined. Bleich conceives interpretation as the "resymbolization of the interpreter's response" (p. 125). Since interpretation is always subjective the resymbolization is based on the reader's perception, understanding and association with the work. But the public validity of this resymbolization is "negotiated" with other readers also interested in interpreting the same work. Thus the validity or "truth-value" of an interpretation is determined by the consensus of a community of readers, small or large, of which an individual is a member and there is no absolute standard of validity. The social context is not needed to confirm the _personal_ validity of an interpretation but it confirms its wider _public_ validity.

Readers also respond to their interpretations of meaning by judging or evaluating them or to use Bleich's (1978) term, by making "judgemental interpretations". Evaluation occurs during the process of evoking a work, in interpreting it and in testing the validity of one's interpretation. There are many criteria, many frames of reference which can be used in evaluation. For example, Purves and Rippere (1968) cite the criteria of genre, history of its type, aesthetic order, author's expressed intention, multifariousness, credibility, originality, moral significance and acceptability. Rosenblatt argues that personal meaningfulness should be accepted as at least "one standard of judgement among others" (p. 161) and:

> Those who insist on the formal or
> technical as the only legitimate
> criterion simply disregard the other
> yardsticks or, more usually,
> unconsciously smuggle in their own moral
> and social assumptions under the rubric
> of art for art's sake.

(1978, p. 156)

Bleich (1975), however, maintains that all judgements have a feeling or emotional base and thus can never be totally objective; in other words, affect and judgement "are both part of a single and more general process of response, which begins in complete subjectivity and is then transformed into judgements that appear to be objective" (p. 26). Thus the reader is central in evaluation as well as interpretation.

In these theories of the reading process individual responses, personal experience, new disclosures of meaning, self-reflection, self-expression, knowledge derived from the experience of reading all have validity and value. Knowledge of literature is not regarded as fixed or as a settled systematic body of facts and concepts to be acquired; knowledge is generated individually and collectively through interacting with a text, evoking the work, interpreting and talking about it. Interpretation is not from the framework of a conceptual system (that is, critical literary theory) which must be learned before it can be applied, but from the framework of the reader's personal knowledge, experience and imagination. In this context the concern is not with the appreciation of literature for its intrinsic value as "art for art's sake", or with acquiring concepts of what constitutes "good" literature, or with knowing about literature. Literature offers the aesthetic subjective mode of experience and allows the exploration of the personal significance of such experience. Knowledge and appreciation of literature may be the by-products of this exploration but not the direct purpose.

Creative, expressive writing

The inclusion of creative, expressive writing in a program of literature study can be justified on a number of grounds. The integration of reading and writing activities in English is desirable for the development of a unified and coherent English curriculum. A writer uses a commonly accepted and widely understood medium, ordinary, natural language. As Sapir (1921) noted "Language is the medium of literature as marble or bronze or clay are the materials of the sculptor" (p. 222). The language used is natural in the sense that it is the product of the natural history and culture of a group of people and it is ordinary in the sense that it is not the highly abstract language of mathematics or of computer programming. At the theoretical level, therefore, integration seems logical from the point of view that language is the medium of literature, and literature provides us with examples of language use. Kramer (1977) maintains that the separation of language studies from literary studies is partly the result of over specialization: "Since no single person can any longer bring the same level of expertise of knowledge to the whole range of English literature and language" (p. 379). But specialization and separation should not apply to teaching at the primary, secondary and undergraduate levels. The concept "language arts" - rather than English, reading, composition, or speech - is apt for designating a program in which speaking, listening, reading and writing are regarded as complementary processes. Each can stimulate, follow-up or develop the other. By establishing links between these activities students can experience a sense of coherence and continuity in their work.

All writing involves some creativity and some contribution of the writer's self otherwise it is only a carbon copy of someone else's creative efforts. In Kramer's (1977) broad definition of literature as "all forms of writing ... which are <u>individual</u> attempts to interpret experience and to

transmit an understanding of it through a carefully considered arrangement of words" (p. 382), the use of the word "individual" points to the fact that the literary work reflects the author's orientation to certain experience and his or her perception of it is unique unless the writing is a transcript of a discussion. In order to "interpret" experience, the processes of perceiving, reflecting, feeling, abstracting and selecting must be activated. The use of the word "arrangement" coupled with the phrase "carefully considered" suggests the conscious design involved in transforming one's interpretation into the medium of language.

A sense of coherence and continuity is achieved when one recognizes the similarity of the creative process involved in writing and in reading. Natanson (1968) describes the process of writing in phenomenological terms. The first step involves an act of setting apart or "framing" a certain portion of the writer's experience from its original context. This is a self-conscious process in which the writer selects certain elements he or she wants to set up apart from the mass of possibilities. Subsequent to this setting apart is a necessary process of reconstruction or synthesis to convey the meaning the writer intends. The work that results is never entirely an objective reporting of an event. It is the product of conscious design imbued with the author's intention and perception of what is significant and important. Phenix (1964) refers to literary works as "ideal abstractions" no matter how realistic they may appear to be, "in the sense that certain aspects of experience are abstracted from concrete actuality for special emphasis" (p. 178).

Rosenblatt (1978) also sees writing and reading as analogous in some ways. In writing, a feeling, an emotion, an attitude or an idea guides the author's choices and "dictates the selection of the vitally relevant word and rejection of the one that blurs or weakens" (p. 51). The emotions and thoughts

ultimately expressed involve selection, synthesis and interpret-
ation as does the activity of the reader in interpretation.
Thus the creative process involved in reading and writing
functions as an integrating factor in these activities.

Another reason for including creative writing in a
literature program is to enable the pupil to develop
appreciation of literary works from the creator's point of
view; that is, to inform the pupil's appreciation with the
experience of creative expressive activity. This essentially is
Moffett's (1968) point of view in his claim that "A student
writing in all the same forms as the authors he reads can know
literature from the inside" (p. 7). He suggests that the
relationship between form, structure and subject is gradually
understood

> ... by letting students try to symbolize
> raw phenomena of all kinds at all levels
> of abstraction and then by discussing
> these effects under the guidance of a
> teacher who is linguistically and
> semantically sophisticated.
>
> (p. 9)

Linguistic and semantic sophistication require an understanding
of the various functions of language, how its various dimensions
can be manipulated for different purposes to yield a variety of
literary forms.

The central role of the student in learning to use
language for different functions is evident in the theories of
language function and teaching advanced by both Moffett (1968)
and by Britton (1970), however, neither of them explores the
dynamics of the creative process in "poetic" writing, that is,
in the use of language to construct linguistic art forms, nor
the possible role of the teacher in the student's creative
activity. It is Witkin's (1977) theory of knowing in the arts
and of forms of expression through various media which addresses
this issue and provides a more satisfactory theoretical

framework for the creative, expressive use of language. Witkin also stresses the central role of the student in expressive activity and offers an explanation of how writers can develop personal control of the medium so that their work is guided by their thoughts and feelings rather than the rules and conventions associated with the use of a medium.

Witkin's two modalities of experience, the "impressive" and the "expressive", are also applied to language use. The impressive use of language reflects an attempt to know the world objectively with oneself as an object in it and to represent one's experience of it as objectively as possible. The symbolic languages of logic and algebra provide clear examples of impressive use of language. The expressive use of language reflects an attempt to know and represent one's experience of the world through one's sensing and feeling or to represent one's subjective, feeling experience of the world. The poetic use of language is an example of language used for its expressive qualities where the intent is not to create faithful representation of reality but forms, which express feeling and imagination. When used in combination, both functions are served.

Witkin believes that while English teachers value self-expression in writing and speaking they are also afraid of it and thus unconsciously inhibit it or adopt a "rule directed" approach based on assessing students' writings on grammatical and technical criteria. The use of language is heavily socialized in both content and form. When students attempt to truly express themselves the context of legitimacy is evoked. Their verbal behaviour is perceived to be more legitimate when it is objective/impressive. Witkin's observations on the teaching of English in the U.K. lead him to conclude that English lessons were

> ... very largely devoted to the development of the object centred perspective in the furtherance of rational action in the world. Subject-centred speech is often experienced as alarming because it makes claims upon the world that are independent of logical principles and rational action.
>
> (Witkin, 1977, p. 38)

At the secondary school level English teachers are also keen to develop their students' capacity for objective thinking. Other aspects of adolescent development, however, such as "stirring emotionalism ... deep shifts of affect, the discovery of passion, the embrace of commitment, of undying love of absolute and total involvement" (p. 59), are, in Witkin's view, easily ignored, or, the pupils are rewarded for their capacity to be objective towards them rather than to express them. Teachers do not encourage self-expression because they do not know how to deal with it and they are also concerned about the welfare and vulnerability of the pupils who do "expose" themselves. Thus their attitude towards self-expression may be ambivalent.

Witkin (1977) and Ross (1978), who has attempted to apply Witkin's theory, see the resolution of these problems through the understanding that not all expression is creative. Witkin maintains that <u>creative</u> self-expression is "subject-reflexive", whereas self-expression is "subject-reactive" (p. 33). Subject-reactive expression is about the release of energy, the discharge of tension. When people kick in a window or jump up and down in joy, or show anger, they are expressing themselves by releasing or giving vent to their feelings. Their actions are expressive because they spring from feeling but in being expressed, they are discharged, exhausted and lost. The effect of the action is a release, a catharsis, "without being assimilated into Being" (Witkin, 1977, p. 33). Such actions are not creative "because no resolution of the stimulus, no

transformation of the impulse ... has been achieved. Only relief for the time being" (Ross, 1978, p. 43). If, however, the person experiencing the feeling chooses subject-reflexive rather than subject-reactive expression, then he or she must engage in a different process, one which involves some deliberation, an act of will and consciousness of perception. The impulse which gave rise to the feeling is held in the mind and one tries to transform it into a form, for example a verbal one, which reflects the impulse back or reciprocates it so that it recalls the original impulse. Thus the value of creative self-expression is not just the experience of handling a medium of expression but the development of a capacity to make sense of, or to sort out one's feelings; "to feel intelligently, to find our way among feelings by feeling" (Ross, 1978, p. 43). Ross, explains the difference between the two forms of expression in the following terms:

REACTIVE EXPRESSION

      IMPULSE ————→ MEDIUM ————→ DISCHARGE

CREATIVE EXPRESSION

      IMPULSE ⇄ MEDIUM

(Ross, 1978)

Creative, expressive writing may then be conceptualised as the subject-reflexive use of language "to further the development of intelligent feeling" (Ross, 1978, p. 44).

In addition to understanding these distinctions the English teacher would also need to understand how the various media of expression can be used in creative self-expression. Each medium has its own conventions, rules and tradition. The conventions and tradition of language can threaten the expressive act because they can give rise to imitation only or the production of forms by the application of rules, without

being self-expressive (Witkin, 1977, p. 45). The teacher's task, therefore, is to help the students develop their abilities to "control" a medium of expression like language, so that their control is "reflexive" not "rule-directed". This is very important in creative self-expression. In reflexive control

> ... the consciousness of the individual must 'oscillate' intensively between the impulse and the medium. It is this oscillation which is the basis of reflexive control. It has nothing to do with organising the medium objectively.

(Witkin, 1977, pp. 45-46)

The English teacher who would wish to foster creative expressive writing would need to understand what is involved in a creative expressive act, how to design appropriate conditions for encouraging and nurturing it and at what points and in what manner to intervene to help the students attain reflexive control and achieve the resolution they seek. Witkin provides a model for the teacher's participation which will be discussed later in this chapter.

By encouraging aesthetic reading and expressive writing the English teacher is able to promote activities which are truly student-centred and provide the opportunity to derive a different insight from experience than that provided by other linguistic activities in English or in other subject areas. Literature can, for example, be effectively integrated with the study of other subjects, particularly history and social studies (see for example the Schools Council Humanities Curriculum Project (1970) and the Integrated Studies Project (1972), also the Curriculum Development Centre's (1976) Social Education Materials Project). The English teacher need not object to such integration and the use of literature to illuminate and enrich studies in other subject areas. Strict boundary maintenance may lead to the fragmentation of students' educational experiences. But in the treatment of literature in other subject areas, there may not be an emphasis on the aesthetic/expressive mode of

experience. This emphasis in English can, therefore, complement and balance the other types of activities included in other subject areas in relation to literature and in English lessons themselves.

Both the impressive and the expressive forms of communication may be used by students in subject areas other than English. It is not likely, however, that the development of the creative expressive use of language would be the concern of teaching outside the English classroom. The expressive use of language seems to be the form which best conveys and reflects thoughts and feelings closest to the self. Therefore, the justification for fostering creative expressive writing in relation to literature study, in addition to the reasons already mentioned, lies in the potential educational significance of such experiences for developing the students' abilities to order and cope with their feelings and acquire skill in organizing and managing the expressive process in the medium of language.

The issue at the heart of the matter is the purpose of education. Implicit in this discussion of the creative expressive use of language is education for personal development. The expressive/aesthetic and the impressive/ efferent are complementary modes of apprehending experience. Both make demands of an individual for a response but one is focused inward and the other outward. It is not a question of one mode being "better" than the other but the education of both modes to enhance individual consciousness of experience. If education is to be for personal development, as is the aim in N.S.W., then we should not develop one mode at the expense of the other. Neither aesthetic reading nor creative expressive writing deny the feeling component of experience; both accommodate its expression. Neither activity attempts to separate knowing from feeling, processes which are, existentially, in an organic relationship. As Reid (1981) argues:

> The occurrence of knowing is, indivisibly, the occurrence of feeling. Or better, it is the person as a whole who feels - and - knows, knows - and - feels, indivisibly.
>
> (p. 68)

In aesthetic reading and creative writing this wholeness is acknowledged and by fostering these activities the teacher contributes to the development of an "integrated sensibility" (Rosenblatt, 1978), or personal development in an organic sense.

One would expect that Witkin would agree with Bonnett (1978) who claims that "there is an essential relationship between self-expression and coming to have a personally significant understanding of the world" (p. 51). Expressive activities in association with reading provide a means of self-exploration leading to greater self-understanding and knowledge of oneself, that is, personal knowledge. These claims receive support from others (e.g. Phenix, 1964; Buber, 1965a; Combs et al., 1971). At the theoretical level, the factors integrating these activities are the belief in their positive contribution to the pupils' personal development and the view that there is a subjective, creative process involved in reading and writing. At the practical level, the integrating factors are the teaching and learning activities used to encourage expressive activities of both types.

Implementing the Interactive Model

Curriculum planning

The implementation of the interactive model in literature study should be done in a way which is responsive to differences in motivation, expectations and learning styles among the students in the classroom. Figure 7.2 depicts in general terms the possible outcomes of planning in relation to the teachers'

and students' inputs in a developmental context which includes a
movement from a teacher-controlled position (A) to increasingly
shared decision-making and a student-controlled position (B).
The model provides structure with flexibility, combines teacher-
direction with self-direction and provides opportunities for
interactive decision making.

The two diagrams represent levels of functioning at two
different stages in the students' literary education. Diagram A
represents a structure for beginners in junior secondary
school. Diagram B is a suggested structure for senior school
students or for those who have had experience with this approach
and could be expected to take much more responsibility for their
own learning. The teacher's input is obviously greater at the
junior level than at the senior.

Jr. Secondary School   Sr. Secondary School

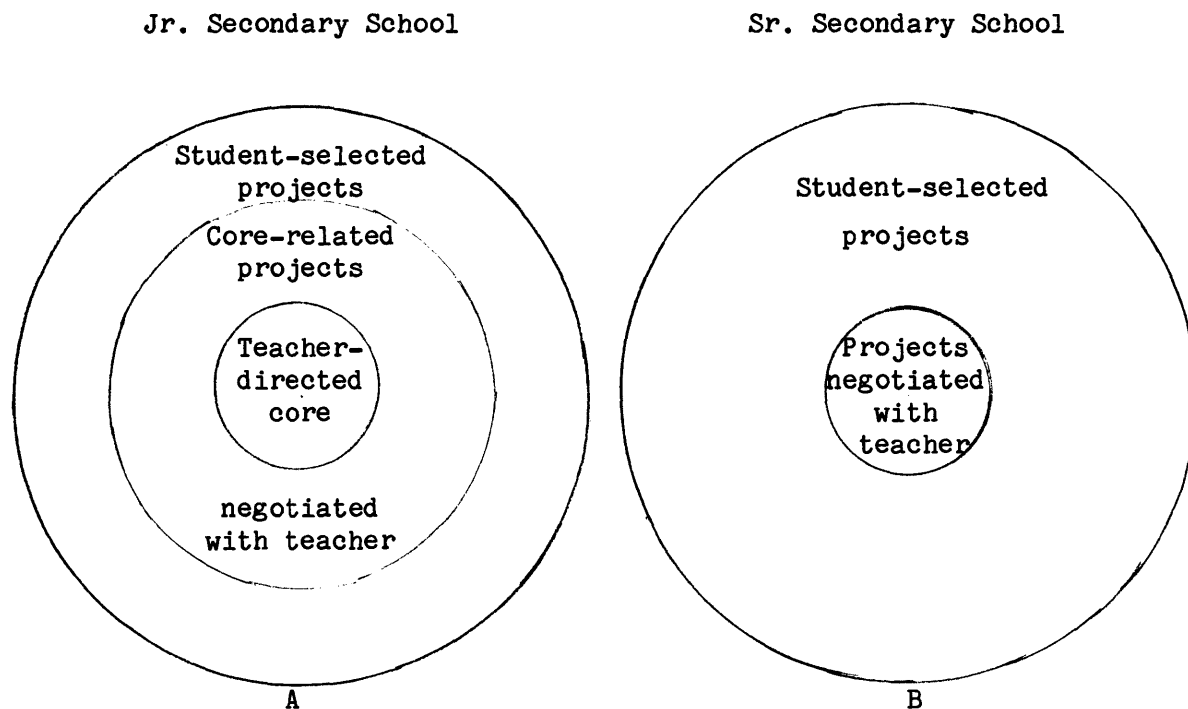A   B

Figure 7.2 Possible outcomes of planning
at junior and senior levels

At the junior level (diagram A), the teacher-selected core (inner circle) could comprise one-third of a year's program and would be best suited to those students who want close teacher-direction. The second and third circles represent the remaining two-thirds of the program but it would be possible for a student to work only at the inner and second levels. The provision of opportunity to initiate one's own projects independently or in a group of one's own choosing may gradually stimulate the teacher-dependent students to move towards greater self-reliance. The second circle represents the projects which students plan individually or in a group with the teacher. These may arise from or be related to the literature read in the core section. The outside circle represents the projects initiated and planned by individual or groups of students on their own and would accommodate the students who are independent and self-reliant.

It is envisaged that the teacher-selected core would initially be based on the teacher's general knowledge of the type of literature which interests the age group and would vary as the teacher gains personal knowledge of the students in her class. Such general information is readily available. Studies of students' reading interests (Purves and Beach, 1972; Purves, 1973) may be useful in helping to decide what to offer students the teacher does not know. The I.E.A. study (Purves, 1976) shows that fourteen year olds enjoy reading texts on adventure, science fiction, travel and exploration, mystery and detective books, humour, myths and legends. The teacher could also undertake a survey of students' reading interests and/or discuss with them the books they have already read and enjoyed. A reading list of possible titles could be developed based on inputs from both the teacher and the students and decisions made collectively about which titles will be discussed in class and which will be selected for individual reading. The linguistic and structural complexity of available literary works could also guide the teacher's input as well as the complexity of the events depicted.

Another factor determining the teacher's selection could be the cultural composition of the class. In an Australian school the class will include students of different ethnic backgrounds and the reading list should reflect these differences. This is important for two reasons: to reduce the degree of cultural distance of a text from the students' social experience, and to provide Anglo-Australian students with an opportunity to explore the experiences of people from other cultures and nationalities and to challenge their perceptions of the world. While it is not necessary that <u>all</u> students should read the same texts reading groups could be formed whose members did so that they would have a common frame of reference for discussion, for dramatic activities and for other creative projects.

The core-related projects in the second circle are those which the students decide to do but their content, structure, length, would be negotiated with the teacher. Negotiation would concern the selection of texts, their treatment and any follow-up activities.

At the senior level (diagram B), the teacher-selected core has been phased out. The inner circle represents the reading and writing projects which individuals and groups negotiate with the teacher and the outer circle represents the student selected projects. The fact that some work is negotiated with the teacher means that she can clarify her expectations and provide structure for those students who need it.

The pace of work at each year level could depend on the complexity of the projects undertaken by the students, their level of involvement and interest. With some groups the pace may be slow, but the interest high. The concern would not be with the amount of content covered but with the quality, the breadth and depth, of the student's experience.

The sequence in the teacher's input could be guided by the students' expressed interests combined with knowledge of their developing concerns and reading abilities. Moffett (1968) maintains that as children grow older there is a movement from the far-fetched "there-then" to the actual "here-now". Interest in fantasy, in myths and legends, high at the age of 12, generally begins to wane around the ages of 13 and 14 in favour of more realistic settings. Chapter III argued that social and moral values and interpersonal relationships are of intense concern to adolescents, relationships with members of their family, peer group, the opposite sex, and relationships with adults who have some role in their lives. Literature which deals with these issues and centres on adolescents appears to be of great interest. By senior secondary school, students' interests are turning toward the larger social environment, towards problems and issues of a moral, political and philosophical nature, including historical and future oriented content. These generalizations do not, however, adequately replace a sequence based on the teacher's knowledge of individual students' concerns and interest or a sequence based on the activities which actually occur in the classroom as a result of interactive decision-making.

Curriculum implementation: the teacher's and student's roles

The teacher's role in planning for implementation and during implementation would be based on the assumption that she would wish to encourage an aesthetic attitude to reading with an understanding of the kind of psychological processes that need to be activated, the readiness, the focusing of attention required, the social context favourable for it and the support required. For the purpose of clarity the following discussion identifies her input in terms of three phases, before, during and after reading.

a) Before reading. A person has to be interested or
motivated to begin reading and to continue thereafter. The
teacher cannot force motivation, only arouse it. One
requirement of the teacher is a knowledge of the type of
literature which is known to interest adolescent readers and the
teacher's first contribution could be to make such literature
easily available. The provision of time to read during English
classes to reinforce the view that reading is a worthwhile
activity, and the opportunity for students to select texts of
their own choosing should increase the desire to read.

The latter point deserves more emphasis because studies
of reading interest show that it is difficult to determine what
will be of interest to an individual (Purves and Beach, 1972).
Such studies show certain trends in interests among groups, that
is, differences in the interests of pupils of different ages and
sex, more pronounced sex differences in the junior rather than
the senior years, subjects of common interest, differences due
to family influence, greater interest in content rather than
form. However, individual variation is such that generalizing
of interests according to age or grade levels, style or form, is
dubious. What seems to determine interest in general is the
relationship of the subject matter to the reader's personal
experience, direct or imaginative. Purves and Beach conclude
their survey of research on reading interests with the view that
"students should be consulted about their interests more often
than at present and experts should be consulted less about grade
level placement of reading materials and reading interests"
(1972, p. 107). The opportunity to choose what one will read on
the basis of personal interest does not necessarily mean that
all students will read different texts in one class or that the
teacher's recommendations will be irrelevant. Interests are
often developed in a social context and are shared. We read
books others recommend to us on the basis of knowing our
interests and preferences. The teacher's recommendation will,
therefore, be of more value if it is based on personal knowledge

of the group she is working with which suggests that there should be opportunities available for talking about reading interests.

Even though time and books of interest may be available some students may not be motivated to read. Discussion of a situation similar to that in the work but closer to the students' own experience may generate interest.

A variety of dramatic activities may also be used to motivate interest in reading a literary work, to arouse curiosity, or to prepare students emotionally for the content of the work. These include dramatisations of a work, improvisation of an event, scene or situation in the work or related to it, role-playing, pantomime, theatre games, simulation games (see Duke (1974) for a more extended discussion). What is common to these activities is that they all involve physical representation of an imaginative projection into a character, situation or object. For example, Holmes, French and Coulter (1982) used a simulation game to introduce students to the theme of Paton's Cry the Beloved Country and to simulate an experience of living under apartheid. Key episodes or crucial scenes from the work to be read involving action and conflict,may be selected and improvisations developed around them. Situations analogous to those in the text to be read but translated into content close to the students' experience can also be the basis of an improvisation or of role-playing. The function of using analogous content for the drama is to help students identify within themselves experience correlative to that in the text. While discussion can develop and clarify ideas it may not be sufficient for understanding with feeling. Salvo's (1972) study provides some support for this point. Salvo compared the literature comprehension of year 11 students engaged in a performance-oriented curriculum with that of similar students in a discussion-oriented one. The text studied by both groups was Wilder's Our Town. One group spent three weeks preparing and

finally producing the play in their class; while the other
group participated in the interpretive analytical study of the
play through class discussion. On a standard comprehension test
for the play, students in the performance-oriented group
demonstrated significantly superior comprehension immediately
after the unit was completed and on two subsequent tests for
retention.

b) <u>During reading</u>. Assuming that the students' interests
have been engaged sufficiently to begin reading, interest has to
be sustained and sufficiently high to continue reading. Studies
of what happens during the reading process suggest the kind of
activities and conditions which the teacher can establish to
sustain interest and to help students evoke and interpret a work.

A study by Beach (1973) of the responses of English
majors at the tertiary level while reading poetry indicated that
students require a period of organizing the literal statements
of the poem and of pursuing personal associations before moving
on to interpretation. Also, those students who were willing to
discuss the poems in small groups were able to go beyond or to
extend the boundaries of their individual responses.

T. Phillips (1971) studied the responses of children in
small groups to poetry. Their discussion was not teacher
directed. He found that most of the responses were of a
"presenting" and "picturing" kind. In "presenting" responses
children offer something of their own experiences of life which
a poem reminds them of. In "picturing" responses they build up
a visual image of the objects, people or places in the poem.
From analysing the students' taped discussions Phillips
concluded that presenting and picturing responses <u>preceded</u>
interpretive responses. The presenting responses seemed to
allow the children to understand their own experiences a little
more and this understanding enabled them to move closer to
interpretive responses. The rate of this movement, however, was
very much determined by the children, when it happened at all.

Barnes et al. (1971) also analysed the undirected small group discussion of fifteen year olds of a novel. They found two kinds of talk predominant: "sorting-out" and "re-experiencing". In sorting-out talk the students sorted out the incidents in the plot, confirmed causes of incidents and the motives of characters. In re-experiencing talk they shared what for them were the most "telling episodes" in the novel.

These studies lend support to the approach used by Bleich (1975) in working with tertiary students. He suggests that students can be encouraged during reading to respond to the text in three ways: to make perceptive, affective and associative responses. In a perceptive response the readers tell or write about what they think and feel the work is saying; in an affective response, the readers describe the actual feelings the work evokes in them, such as sadness, surprise, delight, anger; and in an associative response they tell or write about the personal associations or analogies the text brings to mind. The object of the exercise is not to psychoanalyse these responses for what they reveal about the reader's personality but to enable the readers to stay in touch with their feelings and thoughts as they read and to increase awareness of the undercurrent of emotional activity that occurs during reading. Such exercises, even if written and not shown to the class, may be a new experience for many students who may be unaccustomed to articulating their feelings and thoughts together. Traditional written assignments on literature require the expression of thought, not feelings. Assignments based on feeling responses and auto- biographical associations, while perhaps unusual and difficult at first, may help to break previous conditioning to make an intellectual and impersonal "the author's intention is" type of response.

The public submission and discussion of such feeling responses must be treated delicately. The social aspects of the classroom climate and the teacher's role are important factors

in determining the nature of the experience. Feeling responses cannot be compelled. The classroom atmosphere and the work itself must evoke them. There needs to be a rapport between the teacher and the students and among the students themselves, a feeling of mutual trust and a feeling that they are engaged in a search for common understanding. Even if these factors are present some students may still not participate in the public presentation of affective and associative responses. In these cases the more dominant the view in the students' minds that there is an objective and correct interpretation of a literary work the greater the resistance to this approach. Such students may, however, be willing to submit an "objective" analysis of a work which can then be examined for its "truth-value" for the other members of the group.

A public discussion of feeling responses can serve a number of valuable functions. As we speak our feelings we intensify them and in this process new insights can occur. Bleich (1975) observes that "Once an experience is subject to articulation it loses its intractable quality and becomes susceptible to systematic comprehension" (p. 112). Also, the work of Barnes and Todd (1977) shows that one of the best ways of helping pupils increase their linguistic competence is by allowing them to discuss matters of concern to them in small groups. Through hearing the reactions of others one finds out what other people are like, what one has in common and how one is different. One has the opportunity "to look at the work as evoked by another personality and to see what frames of reference, what interpretative criteria, ... what assumptions about art, human beings and society he brings to the text" (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 150). Through this process one may shed egocentric attitudes and see experiences from other persons' points of view. By dealing with different interpretations the students are confronted with the idea that the relationship between a reader and a work is problematic. As Bleich notes the use of "associative responses shows most clearly that each

individual reworks ... [a text] according to the demands of his personality at the time of reading" (1975, p. 48). Discussion can help focus attention on words, phrases, images or scenes that the individual reader may have overlooked or slighted and thus strengthen the feeling of having "done justice" to the text.

Evidence suggests that discussion in small, self-chosen groups has advantages over the whole class discussion or in groups determined by the teacher. D'Arcy's (1978) study of small group discussion indicates that

> ... the extent to which members know each other and have chosen to come together, almost certainly affects the confidence with which they express their responses. It is easier to admit doubts to friends than to acquaintances; the degree to which each member is also willing to listen and respond to another speaker may also depend on how far they are friends in the first place.

(p. 146)

In a teacher-led, whole class discussion "what tends to happen is more like an oral comprehension test" since the teacher asks what she considers to be the relevant question and the class attempts to search for the answers they think will be acceptable (D'Arcy, 1978, p. 147). Without the teacher, in a small group, the questions raised are the ones the students are motivated to ask, the ones they wish to know or talk about.

In a self-chosen group the participants may receive sufficient support from other group members to enable them to sustain "a high degree of tentativeness and hesitancy ... without demanding resolution" (Torbe, 1978, p. 219). The supportive atmosphere may encourage group members to explore aspects of their responses which may be held back in a large group and in so doing deny the possibility of gaining greater insight into themselves as individuals.

The teacher can, however, also participate in such group discussions and would perhaps need to if students are unaccustomed to the activity. The teacher can model the approach being advocated by listening to others rather than arguing her own viewpoints; following a line of thought suggested by a student rather than her own; not taking the role of intermediary between the author and the readers; encouraging students to elaborate and expand their responses and draw on personal experience; not insisting on a "correct" interpretation and not assessing the correctness of others' responses; not assuming that she knows which questions will get at the essential meaning of the work; posing questions that require personal interpretation; and arranging the physical setting so that it is conducive to interaction between students.

The teacher has to be aware, therefore, of the dynamics of the group members' interactions in addition to being a member of the group as another reader; she has to be sensitive to the flow of the discussion and to the timing and impact of her inputs. She can provide new perceptions and new associations of the work to the group which may start them on a new path of engagement and inquiry but she should not lead them step by step. The purpose of the discussion is not the successful solution of the "problem" of meaning, but interpretation in which questions may be raised and left unanswered, and sometimes, to press for answers is to foreclose insight on the complexity of the questions raised. These seem to be important aspects of the teacher's role and contribution if the enterprise is to be an interactive, collaborative exploration of meaning.

The students' criteria for selecting literary works and their discussion and interpretation of them will not exclude consideration of value issues. This seems inevitable because adolescents are inclined to be concerned with values, with what is good, beautiful, effective, just, worth having, worth doing, or worth striving to attain. Discussion of values is also

unavoidable because literature does, either explicitly or implicitly, raise questions on a broad range of political, social, moral and aesthetic values. Literature presents a world of possible, credible and convincing characters and events in concrete detail so that they can be felt and lived through by the reader. Literature can set up moral dilemmas and resolve them for the reader; propose alternatives for social, political and moral action which readers may not themselves imagine; influence the reader to attach emotional commitments to value positions; and show the possible consequences of decisions and choices. As Frye (1963) remarks, literature "gives us an experience that stretches us vertically to the heights and depths of what the mind can conceive" (p. 42).

If a teacher is committed to education for personal development and the interactive model, their values cannot be avoided in her interaction with students because the development of values is an integral part of personal development and students' values enter into their judgements. Many writers, official reports, and teachers argue for the importance of schools addressing the issue of values education more directly than they do at present. For example, an extensive survey of teachers, administrators and teacher educators in Ontario indicates that ninety-two per cent of those surveyed agreed that values education should be undertaken by the school, that it could not be left up to the home or church alone (Beck et al., 1978). In Australia, the Tasmanian TEND Committee Report (1978) advocated that schools should aim "to teach students to think critically in values areas as in other areas, ... help students grow in self-confidence in their ability to recognize, analyse and judge value issues (pp. 19-20).

There are, however, differences in view about how this teaching should be done because there are many models advocated (see Purpel and Ryan (1976) for a review of approaches) and on whether it should be incorporated into the study of existing

subjects or treated as a separate course in its own right. The view that literature is an appropriate context for values education, particularly moral education, has a long tradition to which many current writers adhere, as discussed earlier. Literature makes abstract value concepts concrete and accessible by embodying them in concrete persons and actions. It offers a life-like context for a wide range of value issues enabling students to appreciate the complexity and interactive elements involved in decisions of value. Literature also provides opportunities to deal with a large variety of value issues of concern to adolescents without infringing on personal privacy but compensating for the lack of actual life experience. On the other hand, the focus on value issues of concern to adolescents can motivate students' interest in literature. A values discussion may be the lead into the study of a literary work and may be a pivotal factor in its interpretation and evaluation. Furthermore, integrating literature study with values education ensures that students do not regard the latter as another academic subject cut off from practical life or one that has limited application; but rather that the value perspective is a vital ingredient in human relationships and that personal values operate in a social setting and have social ramifications.

Given that integration is desirable, the position the teacher might take is that of "defensible partisanship" proposed by Fenton (1966). This position implies that the teacher does not teach values but is prepared to provide justification for her value positions. Defensible partisanship assumes that preference among competing values is unavoidable, and that people do consider some value judgements better than others; however, the basis of their choices should be defensible in terms of some acceptable criteria. To say that one's position should be defensible means that it should stand up to critical examination.

Given the nature of literature and students' interests, the teacher and students may well be engaged in examining the reasons why one value position may be better than another and in examining the arguments which are presented in the literature to support alternatives. When the students appeal to the teacher for her opinion on a value issue she does not have to be neutral or impartial. From the position of defensible partisanship she can take a stand and argue that a particular value position is worthwhile and preferable to another. She is, however, obligated to identify the nature of the criteria used to justify her stand and to argue why these criteria are more defensible than others. By taking this position the teacher models the stand that value judgements should not be accepted without question (a defensible value position in itself) but some values are preferable to others. She can not be accused of attempting to indoctrinate the students since the approach logically excludes an arbitrary or an authoritative imposition of values and the teacher's justification is open to challenge by the students provided she establishes a climate in which the students feel they can challenge her position.

Students can be encouraged to explore the value basis of their interpretations and evaluations of literary works; they could clarify,compare and contrast the value positions held by various characters; they could examine the criteria used by literary characters to defend their value positions; and they could examine the consequences of holding various value positions and the criteria by which the consequences could be judged.

The approach requires an understanding by the teacher of the role of values in literature and an ability to distinguish between the types of values raised, such as the difference between moral and non-moral values. The teacher would have to be willing to reflect on and clarify the basis of her own value judgements with respect to the value issues raised, be willing

to disclose them to the students and to subject them to critical analysis. Her willingness to admit uncertainty would be more of an advantage than a disadvantage from the point of view that students could see "the importance of their own autonomous pursuit of better answers to important questions" (Beck et al., 1978, p. 193). She would also need to be familiar with the various categories of evidence from which defensible criteria may be formulated and to what extent such criteria may be verified; that is, personal beliefs, feelings and intuition, authoritative opinion, tradition, personal observation and experience, factual information, logical reasoning, moral knowledge and religious beliefs.

Since the scope of literature is such that many types of value incidents are raised one could not expect the English teacher to be competent enough to help the students identify all the perspectives from which a value position may be judged or its consequences investigated - such as moral, legal, ecological, political, health and safety. Such investigations may be stimulated by the study of literature. However, support for students undertaking them would require a team teaching approach. Consequently, the integration of values education with literature does not mean that values education should be the sole responsibility of the English teacher. Students would also need the help of other teachers in developing their knowledge of the defensible criteria, from various categories of evidence, that could be brought to bear on a value issue.

c) <u>After reading</u>. Interpretation and evaluation of a work after reading can also occur in the context of a small group discussion. Bleich (1975) suggests three types of questions which may be posed by the teacher to stimulate interpretation and evaluation: these include selecting the most important word in the work, the most important passage, and the most important aspect of the work. Discussion from these perspectives raises

the question of importance to whom and members of the group will become aware that importance is relative to the individual reader.

Evaluative interpretations may then be "negotiated" in terms of their "truth value" to the various members of the group. In other words, group members can compare their own evaluative interpretations with those of others and decide to what extent they can assimilate them and make them a part of their own interpretations. This can easily be done if individuals are willing to discuss their interpretations or write them down and exchange them. The teacher can submit her own interpretation as well for analysis and those of other critics of the work which can be treated in a similar way.

It is possible for an individual or group to generate new knowledge about themselves and about the reading process if interpretive statements are treated as "secondary texts" and also subjected to interpretations (Bleich, 1978). Done individually the exercise may generate new self-knowledge particularly if different interpretations are written separated by time. For a group, written interpretations could be submitted anonymously, if preferred, and interpreted in terms of what made the reading experience enjoyable or dissatisfying for the reader.

Dramatic activities provide an alternative medium of expression to the traditional written response to literature and an opportunity to "recreate" the work through dramatizing one's interpretation which may motivate a more serious effort in interpretation (see Zbaracki, 1970; Moffet and Wagner, 1976). Interpretation through drama can reveal students' assumptions and levels of understanding and allow the teacher to get to know the students better as persons and not only as writers. In recreating a text in dramatic form students can explore aspects of literature as well as real life; for example, differences in

relationships, between two-way and three-way relationships, differences in pace and rhythm, in language styles of different speakers, in the dynamics and balances of interaction, differences in settings, circumstances, in the order of events and in behaviour (Moffett and Wagner, 1976, p. 100).

Converting sections of a novel or short story into a radio play provides experience of writing dialogue to convey action and the nature of the characters. Drama structured around interviews with key characters from the work read to identify their beliefs, motives and attitude, can demonstrate the students' interpretation and understanding of the character's nature and role. The performance of a text, whether poem or play requires careful reading, interpretation and rehearsal, processes by which one can come to possess the language of the work and deepen one's comprehension. Through participation in dramatisations and improvisations students can work with the concept of character, action, dialogue and setting and learn their function by actual experience. They can also work from the perspective of the artist, selecting, arranging, emphasizing and communicating their experiences.

Interpersonal skills and communication skills are also learned. Dramatic activities usually require a group effort: discussion of the situation to be enacted or recreated, consideration of the ideas of others and a weighing of them in relation to one's own, and allocation of tasks and parts in preparation and performance. Such activities can strengthen feelings of self-worth (Bellman, 1974) because personal responses are needed and valued. It is the incorporation of personal experience in an improvisation which makes the drama come alive. The quality of communication between persons is more readily seen not to be dependent on words alone but also on tone and voice quality, on inflection, on gestures and on movements.

Research into the psychological effects of role-playing and socio-drama (Moreno, 1953; Flavell, 1968; Lunz, 1974) indicates that significant improvements can occur in one's understanding of others after role-playing experiences. It seems that in putting on the "mask" of another role, one feels less inhibited to indulge in spontaneous fantasy. In losing self-consciousness one can surrender attention and energy to the imagination. When rational controls are lessened in thinking, the imagination works more spontaneously, consequently, the flow of imagery is stronger, one becomes more alert to possible alternatives and is likely to grasp intentions and meanings which in everyday experiences one may miss.

The concept of empathy seems central to both drama and reading. Role-playing and reading with an aesthetic attitude both seem to require an ability to identify with a person, situation or condition, projection and introjection of thought and feeling, a lowering of psychological defences and a "willing suspension of disbelief". By promoting opportunities for empathic identification, dramatic activities may be the means for developing the capacity for greater empathy in reading literature.

If students have never worked in the medium of drama before much of the responsibility for initiating and structuring activities will rest with the teacher initially. She will require skill and sensitivity to achieve the right degree of involvement for the participants. She will also be a reflector of the group's experience helping the students consider the implications and significance of the activity through discussion. She can structure activities in which she also has a role and thus remove herself from the position of observer and audience and interact with the students within the drama as well as in discussion afterwards. The English teacher, while a non-specialist in drama, nevertheless needs an understanding of the demands the activity makes on the students in both real and

symbolic terms and she needs to pay attention to the pre-requisites for successful work in drama, that is, concentration, co-operation, relaxation and spontaneity of response.

Curriculum evaluation

The aim of personal development provides a framework for evaluating students' progress, the curriculum plans and their implementation. It suggests that the teacher bear in mind the concept of a person as multidimensional and what the teacher and students do in the classroom can contribute, positively or negatively, to growth along several dimensions. At the same time, to assess progress in relation to literature study, teachers need a more specific framework. The following discussion attempts to identify some of the dimensions along which growth might be expected as a result of implementing the suggested teaching-learning activities. The proposed goal statements are not objectives for day to day planning to be achieved within a specific time but criteria which the teacher could present to students to evaluate the quality of their learning experiences and achievements.

With respect to reading one would hope to see increasing ability to derive personal meaning from reading; enjoyment of reading and wide reading in literature; increasing awareness that meaning is in the reader and that different people may see the same things differently; a growing self-confidence in expressing thoughts and feelings about what is read, and an increasing ability to read for multiple meanings as well as literal comprehension.

In relation to speaking and writing one would hope for an increasing ability to communicate personal experience, thoughts and feelings in words; to control language to represent thoughts and feelings; to order and represent more complex

experiences; and increasing ability to use language figuratively to communicate multiple meanings and to elaborate ideas in speech and writing.

With respect to the development of values one would hope for a greater willingness to examine, reflect upon and clarify the value positions encountered in literature and their relationship to their own values; a greater understanding of the differences in types of values, of the relevance of values in decision making and of the kinds of criteria people use to justify their value positions; a greater willingness to consider and reflect on the consequences of different value positions; and perhaps a value redistribution towards democratic and humanitarian values as a result of classroom experiences, although one would not expect dramatic value changes.

In relation to decision making one would hope to see increasingly greater participation in decision making over the content and manner of learning; growth in ability to rely on the self in decision-making, to set goals and follow them through. Finally, in relation to the development in the social area one would hope for growth in ability to listen to others, to consider their feelings and interests, and to respect their points of view; growth in ability to work co-operatively with others and to be responsible for commitments made to a group.

Growth along these dimensions could be assessed by means of a variety of techniques. The students' productive activities in writing, discussion, in dramatic activities and in other selected projects would be the most direct indicators of growth. The teacher's daily observation and interaction with individuals would also provide valuable feedback. Teachers could encourage student involvement in assessment by teaching self-assessment and collaborative assessment techniques (discussed in previous chapters); encourage students to specify

the aspects of their work they wish to be assessed at various times, and to identify the methods of assessment they find most useful. Portfolios of work completed for each semester could be developed by each student and if grades are required, each person's total work could be graded rather than individual pieces in terms of the quantity, length and quality of the submitted pieces.

The teacher's role in creative, expressive writing

The arguments for including creative, expressive writing in a program of literature study have been already discussed. However, the nature of the teacher's role and relationship with the students has not been fully examined. Witkin's (1977) conception of the processes involved in creative activity is compelling for educationists because it addresses the nature of this role and relationship. Witkin sees the relationship as interactive and depicts the teacher's role in relation to three phases of the creative process: (i) the setting of the expressive problem; (ii) the making of a holding form; and (iii) the movement through successive approximations to a resolution.

In the first phase, the teacher's role is to help the students decide what they want to say or to see that they are expressively motivated, that they have an expressive impulse. Ross (1978) suggests that to stir a feeling impulse (or an expressive impulse) the teacher can encourage the student to recollect a previous emotional experience either experienced directly or in the imagination. If creative activity in the form of drama or writing follows upon previous reading of literature, or if writing follows drama then these experiences may well be the sources of an expressive impulse. The recollected or imagined emotional experiences are the basis of the "form" the students will develop in some medium,

e.g. language. In order to develop this form, the recollected experiences have to be focussed enough to allow the students to retain them in their minds as they work them through into their selected media. If the activity is a group one, as in drama, then the focussing process is a group task.

The teacher's role in this focussing process consists of helping the student convert the recollected experience into an "expressive problem". This involves abstracting an image from it or identifying what Ross calls the "deep structure" of the sensed experience. Witkin maintains that there are a number of general ordering principles or structural categories (deep structures) that are unique to sense experiences and have parallels in various art forms. These are contrast, semblance, discord, harmony, polarity, identity, dialectic (contradiction or paradox) and synthesis. He suggests that the first four are lower categories of experience whereas the latter four are higher and more complex. To convert the recollected sense experience into an expressive problem the student has to try to identify its deep structure. The expressive problem is the particular and fleshed out embodiment of one or more of these basic categories. It is "particular" in the sense that it is unique to the student's own experience in terms of its content but it nevertheless contains at least one of these structural categories. The teacher can help the student acquire experience at formulating expressive problems by designing appropriate exercises. For example, the teacher can provide various stimulus forms, such as selections of music, pictures, various fabrics, each of which contain a selected general category, perhaps contrast or harmony. The stimulus forms should be different from the medium in which the expressive problem is to be worked out. If the selected medium is language then the stimulus forms could be music, paintings or sculpture. The use of a different stimulus form from the one in which the student will try to express themselves is done to reduce the danger of the stimulus inhibiting or dominating their subsequent creative expression.

The second phase of the creative process occurs after the sense experience is converted into an expressive problem or "set" in the student's mind. It is then converted into a "holding form"; that is, a symbol is created for it which the student uses as a reference point in developing his or her final product, which may be a poem, or a story. The holding form is the student's first effort to represent the expressive problem in the medium of his or her choice. In language it may be a written statement, a metaphor or an image expressed in words. It helps the students stay on track in their subsequent efforts to find the right combination of words, to refine their drafts until they are satisfied that it says what they want to say. It is, in other words, their guiding image. In the theatre, a similar technique is used to guide work on the production and it is referred to as the director's "central metaphor" for the play which then guides the set design, acting, lighting, costuming etc. The teacher can help the students find an appropriate holding form by discussing the expressive problems with them and together identifying a holding form or by suggesting possible holding forms.

Once an appropriate holding form is developed the final phase involves achieving a satisfactory resolution of the expressive problem through working it out in the selected medium. In Witkin's terms this involves "movement through successive approximations to a resolution" (1977, p. 183) or a process of revision and refinement. Again the teacher's role is supportive and guiding. This is where her knowledge of the special characteristics of a medium are brought to bear. This is where she can teach the students the linguistic techniques and skills they require to help them say what they want to say. Skills are not taught as ends in themselves but in relation to the expressive act and the students' expressive problems. The lack of skills inhibits the students from using a medium effectively but the teaching of skills in isolation reduces the process to a mechanical exercise. The use of the medium is not

"rule-directed" but "pupil-directed". The teacher tries to help the pupil develop a "reflexive" control of the medium; that is to select and arrange words in such a way that the arrangement is guided by the pupil's feeling impulse rather than the conventions of the language.

Teachers working with Witkin's model in secondary schools in Devon, in the U.K. (Clement, 1977) found that it takes some time to "set" the expressive problem, sometimes as long as three to five hours, or several classroom periods. Similarly, the making of a holding form involves trial and error and time as does the process of refinement and revision. The teachers used many types of stimulus materials to focus students' attention on aspects of a concept being explored (such as, contrast, dialectic or harmony) including music, films, art prints and various objects from the environment. While in the work reported by Clement the teachers presented the structural category to be explored by the students in the form of stimulus materials, there is no reason why students could not collect their own stimulus materials and then examine them for their structures. A theme could arise from literature being read and then explored for its structural components. Personal identification with the theme, however, seems to be the most important factor if the subsequent work of the students is to be self expressive.

The process of setting the expressive problem may be a group activity involving much discussion but once each person has established a holding form then the work proceeds individually and the teacher's input is at an individual level.

Witkin comments on the fact that students can experience much frustration because their command of a medium, for example their linguistic skills, does not allow them to cope with the ideas and images generated by their expressive problems. This is where the significance of "movement toward successive

approximations" needs to be remembered. If the students and teacher perceive the expressive act in these terms the teacher can encourage the students to revise and refine their work to bring it closer to a satisfactory resolution or change the choice of medium, for example, from writing to drawing or to drama. In other words, the creative process takes time; the medium should be subservient to the impulse; and words may not be the appropriate medium for a pupil's problem at a particular stage of development.

Creative activity of this nature demands a great deal of the teacher. She has to establish mutual trust so that the students will feel secure and confident that their expressive activities will be respected and valued. This is important because as Ross (1978) observes, the creative process always involves "some element of risk ... some abandonment of the self we present to the world" (p. 61). The teacher also has to know the students, if not individually, at least as a group, to have some idea of the kind of problematical learning experiences they are ready for. Time is required to work with individuals which suggests a need for small classes. The teacher also has to understand the creative process from the inside. At best, this should be understanding based on her own creative efforts, but at the least, she should have a clear conceptual grasp of what is involved to enable her to decide what kind of input can support and guide the pupil's activity, when her support is needed and when she should withdraw. To provide effective guidance she has to know the special characteristics of the medium in which she is encouraging the students to work. In the case of an English teacher this implies having linguistic sophistication, and ideally, a love of language, but perhaps more importantly, a playful attitude towards it. Finally, she needs to understand when group activities can be used to effectively stimulate, to support, to increase understanding by sharing and to celebrate the pupil's creation or insight. As with group discussion in reading, group activities should not be used only as an administrative convenience.

Implementation in the N.S.W. Context

The preceding discussion indicated how the study of English literature may be conceptualized in a way which accommodates an active role for both teachers and students. The following discussion is concerned with identifying the frames which may facilitate or obstruct the implementation of this model in N.S.W. secondary schools.

Australian trends in the teaching of English

State curriculum documents indicate that English is perceived as a complex set of interrelated language "skills" or "arts" rather than as a subject, consisting of speaking, listening, reading and writing, to be developed in contexts to which the students can relate (Maling-Keepes and Keepes, 1979). Most of the documents see personal growth as central to the teaching of English. Teachers are encouraged to build upon the language resources and experiences that children possess when they arrive at school, through talking, listening, reading and writing, small group work, discussion and drama. Emphasis is placed on unifying and integrating activities around themes and on designing writing activities based on personal and imaginary experiences and real life situations.

All State syllabuses rely more or less explicitly on psychological models of development and psycholinguistic models of language learning. All those focusing on the junior secondary level are concerned with outlining guiding principles and desirable practices rather than with prescribing in detail the content of the courses to be taught or the specific approaches to be taken in teaching reading, writing and literature study.

Thus the general orientation of the curriculum documents is toward a student-experience-centred approach to the teaching of English, and they are, in philosophy, compatible with the interactive approach. Yet one would be hasty to assume on the basis of the documents alone that student-centred approaches to the teaching of English are actually being implemented in the schools. As Christie and Rothery (1979) point out in commenting on the documents, there is very little research evidence about their implementation and "observation of many educators appear to indicate that changes in practice were not as widespread as is sometimes suggested in the community" (p. 206). One cannot, therefore assume a consensus in views about English teaching on the basis of the curriculum documents. Even in the documents themselves there are hints that some uncertainty exists about directions in English teaching evidenced by the use of both the terms arts and skills to describe English. Skill "implies some kind of expertise to be acquired and practised", whereas art "suggests the development of inner capacities or potential" (Christie and Rothery, 1979, p. 202).

One also wonders how widely held is the view of English as integrated, student-experience-based language and literature study upon reading the report of the 1978 National Conference on language development (Maling-Keepes and Keepes, 1979). The report purports to express the views of the conference participants which included educationists and English specialists from all parts of Australia. It deals with the fundamental characteristics of language, the various modes and uses of language, language development and the role of the school. What is surprising is that the use of language for creative self-expression receives very little attention and neither does the role of literature in language development or in personal development. References to literature are made in only three short paragraphs in approximately forty-three pages. The first is as follows:

> Language can be a creative form of
> expression. It not only helps us in
> evaluating and responding to the arts,
> but can be consciously manipulated to be
> an art form in its own right. Literature
> is the most highly valued form of
> language. Aesthetic criticism is a
> learned skill, requiring considerable
> language sophistication.
>
> (Eagleson, Horvath and Rothery,
> 1979, p. 314)

One can sense "Leavisite" assumptions in these statements and hints at the analytical-critical approach to literature study. The report says nothing about integrating programs in language with literature. It does however, acknowledge the value of self-expressive language: "It is only from a confidence in using personal expressive language that the more sophisticated and disciplined forms of language grow" (p. 314), but says very little about how a teacher might encourage creative self-expression. The last mention of literature is as follows: "Thus it may be said that language teaching includes the teaching of literature, although teaching literature does not embrace the full scope of language teaching" (p. 344). The emphasis is on language across the curriculum and all teachers are urged to be aware of the linguistic demands their curriculum areas make on the student's use of language and to assume responsibility for helping the student master the linguistic modes of each area.

A lack of unanimity about the teaching of English is evident in journal publications such as English in Australia and Teaching of English, and in recent books on the teaching of English. For example, Watson and Eagleson's (1977) book, English in Secondary Schools : Today and Tomorrow, includes articles by Australian writers which argue for a literature-centred English, language-centered English, experience-centred English, and the integration of language and literature. Watson (1981) in a more recent publication argues that "all English teachers need to develop a clear philosophy of English teaching

which will give support and direction to their day-to-day classroom practice" (p. 5). It is possible to infer that a reason for the book's publication is that such a philosophy is lacking for many teachers and the book certainly tries to integrate various available strands of thought and emphases in the teaching of English.

While curriculum development in English at the state level reflects the concerns with language, growth and the pupil's experience, there is reason to suspect that these concerns may not necessarily be widely reflected in teaching practice and this practice may not be underpinned by a widely held and coherently worked out student-centred philosophy of language learning, literature study, and personal development.

The trend in N.S.W.

a) The 1971 English syllabus. One could probably not ask for a statement of aims and objectives for the teaching of English more compatible with the values implicit in the interactive model than those contained in the current syllabus for Years 7 to 10. It is the work of the 1971 English Syllabus Committee of the N.S.W. Secondary Schools Board.

It espouses a philosophy of growth in English having as its aim "to develop in pupils the utmost personal competence in using the language" (Secondary Schools Board, 1971a, p. 4). Furthermore, the "competence sought is not some aggregate of separate skills but ability to deal with a wide range of language situations" (p. 4). The need for integrating various facets of English is persuasively put. The stated objectives emphasize English as activity rather than English as information, and activity centred on the pupil's experience. The suggested activities are set within a framework of language in use in context.

The Notes on the syllabus for literature (Secondary Schools Board, 1971b) maintain that literature is the most important "context" of English. Literature is broadly defined, including the pupil's own writing as well as those of mature authors. The stated objective of reading literature is "development of ability to experience and respond to literature" (p. 13). Breadth, relevance, and depth of experience are to be encouraged, and each of these is defined in terms of pupil abilities. Thus, for example, depth of experience is defined as "Ability to respond to works in terms of their meaning, form and values, at a depth appropriate to the reader and the work ..." (p. 13). Students are to be encouraged to respond to texts in personal terms. A variety of responses is sought, including interpretation through dramatisation, through illustration, reading aloud, critical appraisal and creative expression in various media.

The choice of texts is seen to be crucial and the criteria stressed are the "pupils' developing needs, interests and capacities" (p. 13). Other criteria suggested include "mankind's experience in other times and places", works which will "foster enjoyment and encouragement of reading interests ... insight into human nature" (p. 13), works which include local content, also the exotic and strange, contemporary as well as classic forms, non-fiction, fiction, prose, poetry and song.

It is not deemed necessary that all pupils read the same texts, but the sharing of response is advocated. A varied treatment of texts is recommended, again in accord with pupils' interests and abilities. Suggested possible treatments include consideration of a work from the perspective of its meanings, themes, vision of life; from its form, structure, tone and style; from the values it expresses; from the interest, relevance and worth perceived by the pupils. The use of drama to teach every facet of English is also recommended.

The syllabus also emphasizes "the development of competence by the pupil in the social act of speech, both as speaker and listener, in a widening range of situations and with a widening competence in language levels" (p. 11). The Notes on the syllabus (on Speaking) stress that a considerable amount of time could be spent on "talk" which consolidate concepts and clarify feelings (p. 2). The Notes also suggest that in order to develop competence in speech a considerable amount of time should be devoted "to discussion and pupil interaction, whether the lesson is ostensibly classified as reading, listening, speaking, writing, media, theme-study or anything else." (p. 7). The use of dramatic activities is also recommended to develop fluency in speech and awareness of speech in different contexts, registers and dialects.

As mentioned in Chapter VI, Watson's (1978) study in 1975 indicated that the principles implicit in the new syllabus were widely endorsed by teachers. Thus in terms of the current orientation of the syllabus (for years 7 to 10) and in terms of the attitudes of teachers in 1975, it could be expected that the interactive model to literature study outlined in this chapter would be favourably received and likely to be implemented by some teachers. The question of interest then is why has the current syllabus been only partially implemented?

b) The degree of implementation. Watson's (1978; 1979) study on the degree of implementation of the new syllabus shows that a skills model of teaching was grafted on to it. Teachers relied heavily on repetitive language and comprehension exercises. There was a widespread belief that reading comprehension and written language competence "can be broken down into a number of discrete skills and items of information which can then be taught" (Watson, 1979, p. 47). Many teachers relied on materials in SRA Reading Laboratory kits and on comprehension exercises in other textbooks in the belief that such materials develop ability to read for understanding. These

materials have been developed on the assumption that comprehension involves separate skills which can be trained separately. "Such a view was given explicit endorsement in the English programs of several Departments" (Watson, 1978, p. 260). There is little research evidence, however, for this view of comprehension and, as Watson argues, available evidence suggests the contrary, that comprehension is not divisible into separate skills (1978, pp. 260-270). Nevertheless teachers in seven of the eight case study schools "operated on a model of the reading process that sees reading as an aggregate of skills, each of which can be taught separately" (Watson, 1978, p. 262).

Teachers were also extremely intolerant of non-standard language use in writing exercises indicating a view of English teaching as the inculcation of "correct" use of language. He observed very little use of drama in the case study schools although "There were many occasions during the lessons observed when some improvisation work seemed to be called for, but the opportunities were ignored" (1978, p. 313).

The syllabus goal of developing ability to express personal responses to texts through creative activities "was rarely in evidence" (Watson, 1979, p. 49). Also, whole-class discussion rather than small group work, "was the most favoured teaching method" (1978, p. 176). Furthermore, what many teachers saw as discussion

> ... was often the narrowest form of question-and-answer. It was common too, to find teachers over-estimating the number of pupils actively involved in such lessons ... the number of pupils actually given the opportunity for even the briefest of replies seldom exceeded 50%.

(Watson, 1979, p. 49)

"The single self-contained lesson" unrelated to the previous day's work, previous discussion, reading or writing "and leading nowhere, was extremely common" (1979, p. 46).

c) <u>Obstacles to implementation</u>. In reviewing the process of curriculum change in English in the U.K., Ball (1982) concludes that "we tend to radically under-estimate the degree of persistence of entrenched teaching practices in our schools even in the current climate of criticism and accountability" (p. 25). His review of curriculum change from a historical and sociological perspective suggests that "all possible paradigm positions are represented in the allegiances of teachers" (p. 25). The situation in N.S.W. has some parallels with that in the U.K. Watson's (1981) historical review of curriculum change in English in N.S.W. over the last eighty years identifies some of the roots of <u>existing</u> "paradigm positions" which individuals identify with and refer to in justification for resisting change. The results of his 1978 study suggest that resistance to change is due to the existence of the belief in a certain "professional wisdom" based on assumptions of what learning in the "real world" of the classroom actually involves - namely, instruction in grammar. The persistence of this professional wisdom, upheld and supported in spite of contrary research evidence, is due to its relationship with the teacher's professional self-image (Watson, 1979, p. 59). If, therefore, a teacher's professional self-image is identified with a particular set of assumptions and beliefs about the teaching of English and if it is also reinforced by views of colleagues, then any challenge to these assumptions and beliefs is a threat to the self-image and professional status.

The widespread endorsement of the 1971 syllabus, however, requires us to look for additional obstacles to its implementation. The 1975 survey also indicated that teachers perceived the lack of time for preparation and background reading as a major obstacle in the path of effective teaching (Watson, 1978). This factor is also identified by the studies of Hunt (1981a) and Cohen and Harrison (1982). In addition, the 1975 survey indicated that among the two thousand and thirty-two

teachers surveyed only a small percentage (29.8) taught just English which means that preparation, marking and background reading time has to be divided to cover more than one subject area. Also, a large number of teachers lack sufficient experience as the 1975 survey showed that

> ... nearly half the teachers (49.9%) completed their last year of training after 1969, and 38.8% listed their teaching experience as being one and five years in length. A further 15.7% were in their first year of teaching.

(Watson, 1978, p. 61)

This suggests that any professional self-image in conflict with the new syllabus is likely acquired during the experience of teachers as students themselves, during their secondary school education and during teacher training.

Watson also found that many English teachers felt at odds with their colleagues in the rest of the school and were afraid of being criticized and misunderstood which discouraged them from using teaching methods, such as drama, which others did not use. A lack of knowledge about how to use drama or what type of activity one should use would also be inhibiting and Watson refers to a study he conducted in 1972 which revealed that "child drama was the area of greatest uncertainty" among teachers (1978, p. 313). Since 1972 there has been more drama included in pre-service teacher training and in in-service programs, nevertheless, many teachers still feel that the use of drama is not "the province of the English teacher", or that it should be "taught by a drama specialist" (p. 315) or that its use "was only appropriate for the abler classes" (p. 318).

Watson (1978) reports that many teachers complained that their teacher training programs did not provide them with adequate knowledge of language acquisition and development or with an adequate conceptual framework to make informed judgements about their pupils' language use. Other researchers

have also commented on the inadequacies of English teacher training programs. Brock (1980), for example, is critical of current pre-service training programs for English teachers. Writing from the perspective of an English Methods Lecturer at a N.S.W. University, he argues that pre-service training should place greater emphasis on training to teach all aspects of a specific subject. For English teachers this means more than two or three courses in literature; it requires greater emphasis on the curriculum theory underpinning the teaching of English rather than general courses in curriculum theory and other foundation courses, and more experience in program development, program implementation and practice teaching. Boardman (1977) also argues that the training of teachers must include "much practise reinforced by theory" (p. 497). At present it seems to be the other way around.

Watson maintains that the partial implementation of the syllabus is also due to teachers' lack of understanding of its philosophical underpinnings and an inability to formulate programs compatible with the vaguely understood philosophy. He suggests that the syllabus itself is partly to blame for this in being too much concerned with outcomes. Its statements of aims and objectives and accompanying notes are not adequate enough "to articulate the preferred model of English teaching with sufficient clarity and detail to obviate the danger of other models being grafted on to the aims and objectives" (1978, p. 58). Its philosophy is not explicit enough and it does not provide sufficient examples of learning activities compatible with the philosophy. Brock (1982) maintains that the Department of Education's approach in introducing the new syllabus was "sadly inadequate" citing as evidence the fact that it was not until 1974 that a full time curriculum consultant was appointed to assist schools in implementation (p. 26).

Among the schools that Watson studied, the ones which were successful in implementing the syllabus had staff who were experienced and staff changes were not frequent. In these

schools the head of department had a clear conception of the underlying philosophy "and took great pains to communicate that understanding by regular discussion with staff" (1978, p. 356). The staff shared a single staffroom and the head of department encouraged "an atmosphere in which ideas were exchanged and continuous professional discussion occurred" (p. 356).

All schools are, however, not so fortunate. The power wielded by the head of department in N.S.W. schools can be a disadvantage as well as an advantage. Cohen and Harrison's (1982) study on curriculum decision making indicates that teachers in N.S.W. perceive very little participation occurring in decisions about the programs of individual students or in the evaluation of the curriculum. If a head of department does not understand or agree with the philosophy of the new syllabus and if he or she does not encourage discussion then even if individual teachers are willing to implement the syllabus in their own classrooms their efforts would go unappreciated and may even be thwarted. The nature of the secondary school English curriculum thus seems to depend a great deal on the heads of departments. The fact that so much of the decision making is in their hands is an unfavourable feature of the system in relation to the implementation of the interactive approach because if teachers themselves do not participate fully in curriculum decision making then it is highly unlikely that they would, or could, provide students with an opportunity they themselves as professionals do not have.

Another factor bearing on the implementation of the 1971 syllabus and on the interactive model is the discrepancy between the English syllabus for Years 7-10 and for Years 11 and 12. Whereas the junior syllabus is experience-centred the senior is very much literature centred with a prescriptive content that is externally examined although internally moderated. While the aims of the senior syllabus are as broad as that of the junior, the breakdown of aims into specific objectives reveals a different picture.

On the one hand, the syllabus states that the student is not "expected to produce sophisticated literary criticism, so much as to explain his own view of the nature and significance of a work, to present a personal understanding and response to it" (Board of Senior School Studies, 1976, p. 3). Such a statement is very much in the tone of the junior English syllabus. On the other hand, when one reads further, one finds that in order to meet general aims, objectives such as the following are to be pursued:

* training in logical and coherent discussions, with issues of linguistic "correctness" emerging naturally from the situation;

* ability to write essays that reveal the skill to marshall an argument, select evidence to support statements, and use precise language;

* acquire the critical vocabulary to explain and justify opinions;

* develop a sense of English literature in its historical perspective;

* test different interpretations against evidence of the text;

* recognize the role of technique in shaping a work;

* understand how external technical features serve the work;

* understand what is involved in tone;

* understand the wider implications of specific episodes;

* understand the relationships of parts, their relationships to the whole, and relationships between character, plot and setting;

* develop a sense of artistic entity.

In other words, in the senior years students are expected to translate their knowledge of language, acquired inductively in the junior years, into demonstrable knowledge about language.

Literature is to be explored in terms of what they know about language and this knowledge is to be applied through analysis of texts. As Wilson (1981) comments, "Paradoxically the conscious systematization of knowledge which has been eschewed in the junior years provides the key to successful performance at the senior level" (pp. 8-9). With increasing numbers of students staying on for the senior years instead of leaving at the completion of year 10 (Brock, 1982), it is not surprising if teachers attempt to incorporate approaches to literature required in the senior years down at the junior levels. Thus the senior syllabus exerts a lot of influence on curriculum decision making in general and on the junior level as Hunt (1981a) found in her case studies of six N.S.W. schools.

The senior English courses are oriented towards tertiary literary studies and while more students are remaining in school longer and undertaking senior studies because it is compulsory for the H.S.C., they do not all intend to go on to university. The composition of the senior student body has changed to include students whose career interests lie elsewhere than in English; those who have a non-literary background; those whose first language is not English and who are recent Australian immigrants; and those who cannot find employment (Bell, 1981, pp. 19-20). The present English curriculum does not, however, provide seemingly worthwhile alternative English courses to suit the needs and interests of these students. Furthermore, when one takes into account the increasingly multicultural composition of the senior student body it is of interest to note that among the texts prescribed for the English courses no European authors other than British have been included, very few Australians and Americans, and no South-east Asians.

The system of external examinations for the H.S.C. at the end of Year 12 also provides an effective brake on curriculum change. At present this external examination counts as fifty per cent of the student's total score. The other fifty per cent

is determined by the school (Board of Senior School Studies, 1979). Brock (1982) speaks of them in terms of "deadening and straight-jacketing" the teaching of literature (p. 24). Other studies have also commented on their constraining effects (Cohen and Harrison, 1982; Hunt, 1981a).

Teachers obviously have a professional obligation to ensure that students are prepared for the examination, that they have the requisite skills to perform the tasks the examination requires. The kinds of responses the H.S.C. examination requires of the student may be determined by an analysis of the content of the examination questions.

Purves and Rippere (1968) have developed a comprehensive content-analysis scheme for classifying written responses to literature derived from a close study of what many readers have actually said or written about various works. Four general categories of response are given, which are then further divided into sub-categories and further sub-divided into "elements" or possible statements about works of literature. The four general categories briefly summarised are as follows:

(i) Engagement - Involvement

Statements in this category refer to the reader's personal reactions to the work, the ways in which he or she has experienced the work or its various aspects, degrees of identification with the characters or situations, personal associations with parts or the whole, moral reactions.

(ii) Perception

This category includes statements which attempt to describe the work as an object distinct from the reader, e.g. statements describing the structure and organization, the language, figures of speech, point of view; statements about the characters and their relationships, about setting, plot; statements about the work as representative of a type of literary work, and statements about its context in terms of history or the author's biography.
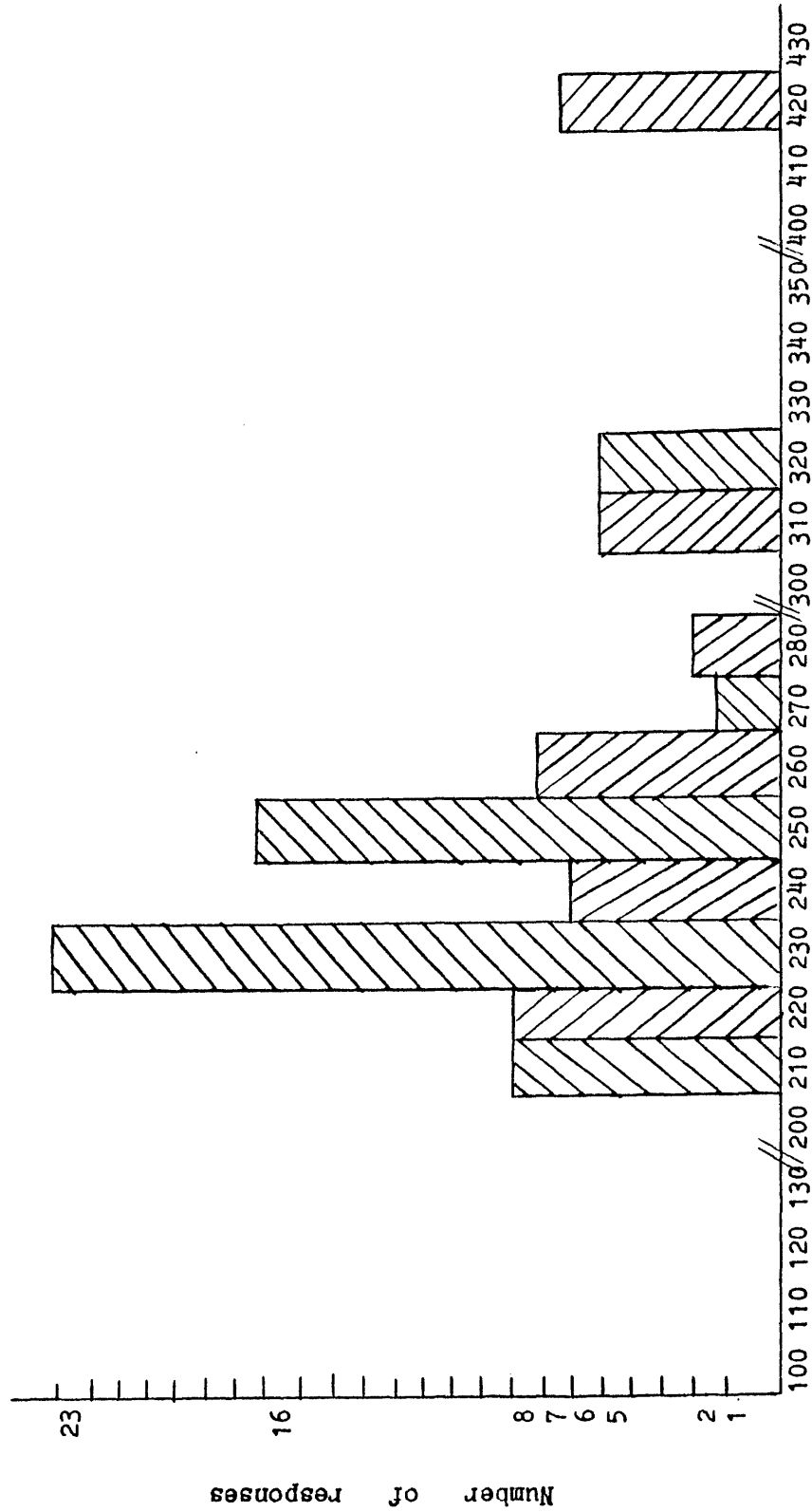
(iii) Interpretation

> Statements in this category relate to the meaning the reader perceives in parts or in the whole work; generalizations made about it, inferences drawn from it, and analogues found to it in the reader's experience.

(iv) Evaluation

> This last category encompasses statements which indicate the writer's judgement of the work, why he or she thinks it is good or bad. The criteria used in judgement may be personal or in terms of a particular framework (aesthetic, ethnical, psychological etc.).

A summary of the four main categories and related sub-categories with examples of the types of statements deemed appropriate for each sub-category is included in Appendix 1. A further breakdown into "elements" is not shown but is available in Purves and Rippere (1968).

By applying this classification system to the questions in the H.S.C. literature examination it is possible to construct a profile of the type of responses expected and to identify the areas emphasized. Figure 7.3 is a summary of the categories of responses elicited by the 1980, 2 Unit examination questions (two papers) in terms of the number of the sub-categories invoked. The 2 Unit English examination paper (Appendix 2) was chosen for analysis because it is the intermediate one, in terms of complexity, depth and breadth, between the 3 Unit and the 2 Unit A examination and it is the course taken by the majority of students. The classification of the questions in terms of the category of the response expected is based on the clues provided in the questions which are often quite specific; for example, "What, in your view, is the central theme of 'Summer of the Seventeenth Doll'?" (Board of Senior School Studies, 1980a, p. 9). Also the Examining Committee's

Figure 7.3 Profile of the 1980 2 Unit H.S.C. English Examination.

Report (Board of Senior School Studies, 1980b) on each question, (Appendix 3) provides additional specific information on the type and quality of response expected.

As Figure 7.3 indicates, the largest number of expected responses falls into the general category of Perception or analysis of parts (numbers 200-280 on Appendix 1). The subcategory receiving the most emphasis is perception of content (230). This subcategory includes questions or parts of questions which require responses about perception of the theme of a work, identification and description of characters, and events, discussion of their relationships, discussion of the setting of a work and its relationship to the events and characters. In the two papers examined there are at least twenty-three occasions when responses of this nature are required.

The second most emphasized sub-category is perception or analysis of structure (250). This sub-category includes statements on the organisation of a work, the relation of parts to other parts, the relation of parts to the whole, the ordering of events or the actions of characters, the organisation of a poem, the characterisation of a whole work in terms of an obvious pattern. Responses of this nature are expected at least 16 times in the exam questions.

The sub-categories of perception of language (210) and perception of tone (260) receive equal emphasis in the questions (7 times). Perception of language requires analysis of grammatical structures, punctuation, sentence patterns, ordering of sentences, sounds of words, identification of sound patterns, analysis of choice of words as they affect understanding. Perception of tone requires analysis of the author's apparent attitude to the subject, analysis of the generalised effect of parts of the work, of the general mood of

the work and its pace, analysis of the author's point of view on the subject and of the general orientation of any images in the work.

The sub-category of perception of the relation of technique to content (240) is called for at least five times in the exam questions. This sub-category includes those instances in which the student is required to identify the association or relationship between the verbal, stylistic techniques used and the general sense or effect of the work.

The sub-category perception of contextual classification (280) is expected twice in the exam questions where the student is required to describe how a work or a part of it is representative or typical of the rest of the work or of the author's other works.

The sub-category perception of literary classification (270) is expected once and here the student is required to classify or categorize the work in terms of type or literary convention.

The general category of Intepretation is elicited much less frequently than Perception/analysis in the exam questions. Two sub-categories can be identified and they each occur five times. The first sub-category is interpretation of style (310). This includes all those instances where the student is expected to provide responses which ascribe meaning, motive or significance to a stylistic device used by the author, or invest some aspect of the work with particular significance, or infer a logical relationship or disjunction in parts of the work. The second sub-category is interpretation of content (320). This includes inferences about the past or present events in the work, inferences and generalisations about the characters and their motives and behaviour, inferences about the setting and about the author's intentions.

The general category of Evaluation is also less emphasized. Only the sub-category evaluation of method (420) is called for and it is required 5 times. It is included in questions which require the student to judge the form of a work, its style and coherence, the adequacy of its organization, its adequacy as a work of a certain type and its adequacy in relation to the inferred intention of the author.

Noticeably lacking are questions which would require the students to express their subjective response to the work, their degree of engagement and involvement with either its form or content (sub-categories 100 to 130). Also lacking are questions which would require the students to interpret the work as a whole, either as mirroring the world in some way or as presenting a particular view of the world (sub-categories 330 and 340). Neither do the questions invite interpretation of a work as a statement of what should be the nature of things - for example, in the social, political or ethical realms (sub-category 350). The questions do not invite any affective evaluation on the part of the student (sub-category 410), that is, responses which indicate whether the work succeeds or fails in moving the student emotionally. Neither do they invite any evaluative responses on the credibility of the work or its originality, imaginativeness, vitality, seriousness, or its moral significance or moral acceptability (sub-category 430).

It is of interest to compare this profile of the 2 Unit examination papers with the response patterns of Australian students identified by Corcoran (1980) and with the response patterns of students internationally as identified by the I.E.A. study (Purves 1973; 1974; 1975). Corcoran studied the free written responses of 120 teacher-nominated students in years 8, 10 and 12, to a short story and a poem. He also coded their responses in terms of the framework developed by Purves and Rippere (1968). He found that the largest number of responses (31.24%) were in the Perception/analysis category which is

interesting if we bear in mind that the responses were free, that is, not in response to questions. There was also a marked drop in responses in the Engagement category from year 8 (26.72%) to year 12 (12.30%). Only a very small percentage of the responses was in the category of Affective Evaluation and these also dropped in frequency from year 8 (3.23%) to year 12 (2.12%). Interpretation of content increased between the two year levels from 6.87% to 17.02%.

Corcoran maintains that his results place "the Australian students more firmly in the tradition which disdains expression of personal reaction in the pre-tertiary year" (1980, p. 55). The tightly argued analytic literary essay is favoured over the response which is personalistic or evaluative. Corcoran concludes that:

> By grades ten and twelve, almost definitely as a result of teacher expectations, the superior student distances himself from the work by consciously avoiding statements of conjecture or identification, or by relating features of the literature to those in his own life.
>
> (1980, p. 57).

The I.E.A. study shows that the dominant goals of literature study, favoured by the majority of countries fall into those encompassed by the formal-analytic approach to literature (Purves, 1973, pp. 32-33) and among the ten countries studied (Australia was not included) a pervasive orientation in training is the verbalization of an analytical, critical response (Purves, 1975). The emphasis in the 2 Unit examination papers suggests a similar orientation in N.S.W.

What is perhaps of even more interest in the I.E.A. study is its conclusion that response patterns to literature (i.e. ways of thinking about literature and literary

experiences, and ways of ordering communication about them) are learned by the student; that is, they are the result of schooling modified by what the students read and their cultural environment. However, Purves (1973) notes that "As students go through secondary school they tend to become more consistent and more definite in their pattern of response" and their preferences tend to coincide more with those of their teachers (p. 26). The school's effect then seems to be "the inculcation of a preferred set of responses" (1973, p. 34). In an early interpretation of the I.E.A. findings Purves (1974) expresses this conclusion more bluntly: "The schools do indoctrinate students to become the kind of reader - the kind of critic ... - that the 'establishment' approves" (p. 70).

While many N.S.W. teachers are dissatisfied with the external examinations (Brock, 1981), the fact that few of them advocate their abolishment in favour of complete internal assessment can be seen as a reflection, in part, of wider community attitudes. The importance attached by the community to external examinations is one aspect of community attitudes unfavourable to the implementation of the new English syllabus and the interactive model. Two other aspects are an emphasis on functional literacy and a general undervaluing of the importance of the arts in personal development (Collins and Hughes, 1978; Cohen and Harrison, 1982; Walton and Hill, 1985). These emphases would lead to greater prescription in curriculum content and a narrow focus.

d) Facilitating frames. A favourable aspect of the N.S.W. context in terms of implementing the interactive model is the feeling among many teachers that the senior English courses do not accommodate the changed nature of the student population and that there should be alternatives available to existing courses, alternatives which do not emphasize the analytical approach to the study of literature (Bell, 1981). The favourable attitude of teachers to the new syllabus for years 7-10, as revealed by

the 1975 survey (Watson, 1978), suggests that a good number of teachers would be inclined to change the nature of the senior courses rather than to change the junior courses so that they may be more in line with the senior ones.

Studies of community expectations and public opinion reviewed earlier certainly indicate a lower value being placed on creative self-expression, the development of cultural interests and the study of cultural subjects than on other educational goals. But the findings are not all entirely negative. The lower ranking of cultural interests in relation to other clusters of goals in Baumgart's study does not indicate little or no importance being attached to these goals. All five clusters were well above the scale of "moderate" importance, indicating that all were "regarded as important functions of schools" (Baumgart, 1979, p. 47). It is also important to note that the item "Teaching students how to express themselves clearly when speaking and writing" (emphasis added) is included in the highly rated basic skills cluster, which suggests that public opinion would be sympathetic to approaches to teaching subjects which could be shown to contribute to the attainment of this goal. Also included in the personal development cluster, which was rated second to basic skills, is the item "Developing interests to enable students to use leisure time beneficially". The problem then may not be so much one of changing negative public opinion of cultural interests but one of educating the public to greater awareness of the contribution of cultural interests to self-expression and personal development and hence to support an approach to education concerned with development in these areas.

Similarly the Collins and Hughes (1978) study shows the high expectations that teachers, students and parents have of secondary schools since very few items received a mean score approaching the point of "slight importance", and no mean ratings fell below this level (p. 151). However, creative

expression and literature study are distinctly less valued by the three groups than the other items and the study by Cohen and Harrison (1982) suggests that teachers and principals do not perceive a link between intellectual, aesthetic and emotional development. The reason for this may lie with the way values are acquired. If values are learned and if schooling is an important agency for teaching values then the respondents' rating of goals may be the cumulative result of a cultural and educational environment which did not place a high value on creative expression or on knowledge and appreciation of the arts. As the I.E.A. study shows, students' preferred responses to literature are learned, and if teachers and parents rate knowledge and appreciation of literary works and creative expression relatively low, as they did in the Collins and Hughes study, then it is not surprising that students would rate them similarly.

We do not, however, know how parents interpret "literature". They may, as Mason (1979) suggests, interpret the term narrowly, and see it synonymously with the study of Shakespeare. Also, we do not know if the students' rating is a reaction to the way literature is taught. If the emphasis in the teaching of literature is on critical analysis, as it seems to be at the secondary school level, then the students' rating of literature may be an indication of their value of critical analysis of literature rather than literature itself. If the emphasis in teaching was on personal development through literature study then perhaps literature may be rated as highly as self-understanding and understanding of others. The above survey results suggest that the academic subjects as they are now taught (and as parents assume they are taught) do not seem to be associated by any of the three groups with the highly valued personal and social development goals.

To change these attitudes teachers themselves need to arrive at a different conception of their subject and of its teaching. Watson's study shows that "Acceptance, even enthusiastic endorsement of a syllabus by teachers may not mean that they have come to the new understanding necessary to implement it fully" (1978, p. 364). What the implementation of the 1971 syllabus and also of the interactive model in literature study requires are changes in pedagogy, changes in the activities and processes which occur in the relative privacy of the classroom, the teacher's domain. As Brown and McIntyre (1982) argue, pedagogical changes as distinct from organizational changes

> ... will be implemented in any classroom
> only insofar as the individual teacher
> has a favourable attitude toward it, has
> the motivation, skills and resources to
> modify his current patterns of teaching
> and understands what is meant by the
> innovation and how to go about
> introducing it.

(p. 43)

Changes in attitudes occur over a long term and in the context of interacting with others whose attitudes are different from one's own. Watson found that teachers perceived "discussion with other teachers" as the most valuable source of influence on their teaching (Watson, 1978, p. 67). After tracing the patterns of curriculum change in the U.K. over the last hundred years Ball (1982) supports the long-term interactive view of the change process. He maintains that curriculum change is "a long-term and inter-personal process based upon the establishment of subject paradigms, via networks of communication and apprenticeship" (p. 25, emphasis added). These findings suggest that strategies of change which promote greater interaction and mutual influence between teachers would be the most useful ones for promoting changes in teachers' conceptions of their subjects and of appropriate teaching methods.

Undoubtedly the pre-service training of teachers is also an influence on attitudes, motivation, skills and resources when one considers the relative youth and inexperience of large numbers of teachers. Brock (1980) has made some practical and sensible suggestions for improving the training of English teachers which have already been discussed but these changes alone would not provide adequate preparation for teachers for implementing the interactive approach. What their pre-service training should provide is the experience of living in an environment where they themselves participate in decision making over their own learning; where they experience interactive curriculum development; where they participate in dramatic activities linked to their study of literature, in small group discussions, and in collaborative assessment; where they experience subjective interpretation and criticism and the effort of creative self-expression. In other words, their pre-service training should, ideally, provide opportunities to experience a "new" pupil role which their previous educational experience may not have provided. This process should provide experiential understanding of the roles, relationships and processes implicit in the interactive model; that is, experience of living in an environment created by implementing the interactive model in teacher education, so that subsequently, in their own schools as teachers, they can recreate a similar environment based on experiential understanding. Similarly, inservice training should entail resocialization through experience based programs.

It is possible to develop programs interactively at the tertiary level, as demonstrated by the examples Boud (1981) provides, if educators are willing to abandon the transmission concept of education and instead adopt a model of education based on collaborative enquiry. One may argue that this is essentially the model for graduate studies but many teachers will never undertake graduate studies and thus never experience the collaborative-enquiry model. Also, those who do enrol in

graduate studies will experience difficulties if their undergraduate programs do not prepare them for such an active role. In other words, one learns by experience. In order to be able to teach others to take responsibility for their learning one must be able to take responsibility for one's own.

Summary

This chapter has examined the possibility of implementing the interactive model in N.S.W. secondary schools to a limited extent, in the context of a subject area which lends itself to conceptualization in terms of student participation. A theoretical framework for student participation for the study of literature was provided and the nature of the existing context was examined. An attempt was made to generalize from the findings on studies of the implementation of the 1971 English syllabus to the implementation of the interactive model. It seems apparent that the external examination, with its emphasis on content, the decision-making structures in the English departments and teachers' attitudes would be the biggest obstacles to implementation even though departmental policy on English teaching in Years 7 to 10 is congruent with the outlined approach to literature. Without the changes indicated at the system and school levels the possibility of implementing the interactive model within only a subject area are remote. However, the fact that English is a contested subject area and that consensus on many aspects of its teaching is lacking offers some hope for possible future changes.