

Perhaps the most critical comparison of all, in the light of the controversy caused by the university matriculation formula, is that between the 1966 Leaving Pass papers and the 1966 H.S.C. Third Level Specimen Paper. What such a comparison reveals is that the Third Level paper was certainly not of an inferior standard compared with the Leaving Certificate paper and that, in a number of aspects, it demanded standards higher than its counterpart. For example, while the Leaving Certificate questions on the comprehension passage in the Expression paper conspicuously avoided requiring the students to go beyond the mere recognitions of features of style, technique and paraphrasing the meaning of certain expressions, the H.S.C. covered all these areas but went further by asking students to evaluate the substance and meaning of the passage.¹³⁹ As was typical of Leaving Certificate examinations, the 1966 question limited its testing of students' comprehension to their identifying isolated components of meaning. It did not require students either to comprehend, or respond critically to, the passage as a whole. In the area of usage, the Leaving Certificate paper required students to define grammatical and syntactical rules. The H.S.C. questions directed students to rewrite inappropriate constructions.

Nowhere were Leaving Certificate Pass candidates in 1966 (or any earlier year) required to respond to "unseen" poetry - indeed poetry could be completely ignored. This was certainly not the case in Third Level. The Specimen Paper required students to discuss either an unseen poem or two of the poems they had studied during the year. The unseen poem was quite a challenging one - Bruce Dawe's "Public Library Melbourne". A number of open-ended questions were asked. They concluded with one which illustrated a common theme which ran right through the approach to the examining of the literature sections of the paper and which faithfully represented a major difference between the approaches of the 1953 and 1965 syllabuses to literature.

(e) How would you describe the attitude to the Melbourne Public Library expressed in the poem as a whole (as distinct from the boys to the library).

Answer in about half a page of ordinary writing.¹⁴⁰

Without employing the terminology of literary criticism, this question was demanding of the Third Level students a reasonably sophisticated grasp of the notion of a poetic point of view as distinct from those expressions of opinions articulated by characters within the literary work.

The novel and drama questions on the H.S.C. Specimen Paper were just as difficult, if not more so, than those of the Leaving Certificate questions. The differences between the Leaving questions on short stories and the H.S.C. questions on non-fiction prose nicely illustrate the differences between the respective syllabuses and their interpretation in examinations. The Leaving Certificate students were given the following.

"At its best, the short story evokes and sustains a mood: everything else, even character, is subordinated to this."

Do you agree? Illustrate your answer by referring to two of the following short stories.....¹⁴¹

This demonstrated precisely the subject of Professor Kramer's denunciations. Such a question encouraged the purchasing of literary cribs and a concentration upon technical terminology cheaply bought and tritely trotted out for the examination. On the other hand, the H.S.C. Third Level question on Gods, Graves and Scholars, certainly no flimsy work, asked students to,

...outline what you believe to be the most interesting series of archaeological discoveries in Gods, Graves and Scholars. Why do you think they are the most interesting?¹⁴²

A comparison between the Third Level Specimen H.S.C. English Paper of 1966 and its Leaving Certificate counterpart shows that the standards of the former were not inferior to those of the latter. This will be seen later to be significant in the light of the fate suffered by Third Level English as a consequence of the universities' matriculation decisions.

The first official interpretation of the 1965 syllabus was published in 1968. This was the English Examination Committee's Report. It serves to support the argument, maintained throughout

this chapter, that the H.S.C. syllabus constituted a significant rise in standards over its 1953 counterpart. Commenting on the First Level, the Report noted that

...there was strong evidence of independence, maturity, and of real interest in the syllabus. The level of literacy and the ability to argue coherently were generally higher than at the Leaving Certificate.¹⁴³

In the poetry section of Second Level, the examiners indicated that the students were superior to their Leaving Certificate predecessors.¹⁴⁴ This supported Wyndham's earlier predictions, despite university opposition, that the H.S.C. candidates would be superior in their performance to the earlier Leaving Certificate candidature. The report expressed its disappointment at over-entry at Second Level by candidates for whom Third Level had been designed.¹⁴⁵ The clearly more difficult texts of the H.S.C. (compared with the Leaving Certificate lists) had been handled splendidly. Students who had responded sensitively and personally to the literary texts, rather than paraphrasing or regurgitating "the learning of information about"¹⁴⁶ the texts, had been rewarded. The Third Level papers had been handled most satisfactorily by students. Poetry, which for the first time ever had been the subject of a compulsory question in a senior English examination, had been treated "refreshingly".¹⁴⁷ Answers on the novel and drama were praised. Only those papers which had relied heavily on "cribs" or displayed an inability to marshal coherent arguments, were criticised.

So, despite earlier fears expressed by certain university authorities that standards might decline, the English examiners' report demonstrated the opposite. The report also confirmed, what Wyndham and the English Teachers' Association had predicted, that a "not negligible proportion"¹⁴⁸ of candidates would be inappropriately entered at Second rather than Third Level.

WYNDHAM'S FINAL ATTEMPTED COUNTER-ATTACK UPON THE CONTROLLING
POWER OF THE UNIVERSITIES

In December 1967 Wyndham, as Chairman of the Board of Senior School Studies, commenced his final carefully planned counter-attack on what he considered to be the universities' domination of the senior secondary school curriculum in general, and the distortion of the English syllabus in particular. He wrote to Wilkes on 21st December to inform him of decisions taken by a committee of review that had been established by the Board. The word "Level" was to be replaced by some less pejorative word.¹⁴⁹ It was hoped that this would avoid the suggestion that these "courses" were determined by hierarchies of abilities or stratification of content. Courses must be student-centred, not subject-centred. They must not be designed principally in order to meet the needs of tertiary education, and they must cater for the differing interests and intentions of students.¹⁵⁰ The Board was obviously intending to undo the damage done to the status of Third Level by the matriculation decision and to reaffirm its original policy. Courses were to be redefined as follows:

Third Level: A course of study in a subject which, designed to meet the needs and to challenge the abilities of senior secondary students, will provide a valuable but terminal course at the Higher School Certificate Examination.

Second Level: A course of study which, in scope and difficulty, will provide a basis for further study of the subject beyond the secondary school.

First Level is intended for those students of outstanding ability in the subject concerned.¹⁵¹

This contrasts strikingly with the university professors' earlier out-of-hand dismissal of Third Level courses. In order to emphasize its policy that the difference between Second and Third Levels was not according to any general intellectual aptitude of the respective students, but rather according to the different purposes of H.S.C. students, the Board decided to award each course the same maximum raw mark. Initially the maximum marks

had been 180 for First Level, 130 for Second and 100 for Third. The Board now proposed the maximum mark for Second and Third Level to be 130. Wyndham once again vigorously propounded the policy to which he had adhered consistently and which had been severely damaged by the decision of the universities. Syllabuses for Second and Third Levels "while different in purpose", he declared, will be comparable in degree of challenge".¹⁵² Wyndham remained adamant that the whole H.S.C. candidature

...is a select group and is, in general, more able than the groups which were candidates for the Leaving Certificate Examination and with a somewhat smaller dispersion of ability.¹⁵³

Wyndham wrote to Wilkes to see what changes, if any, would need to be made to the 1965 syllabus in order to bring it into line with the new definition of courses. Wilkes was also informed that the official promulgation of these Board decisions would be delayed until after a meeting of all chairmen of H.S.C. syllabus committees. This was to be chaired by Wyndham who indicated his desire to discuss the new nomenclature as well as "the nature and orientation of syllabuses at what have been called Third and Second Levels".¹⁵⁴

Wyndham would have been alarmed at the numbers of students who had sat for English at First, Second and Third Levels one month earlier at the first H.S.C. examination. The matriculation formula had produced stunning results. The percentage attempting First Level English jumped from the usual 5% to 5.5% at Honours to 12.5%.¹⁵⁵ The 1967 English Examination Committee would later report that there had clearly been a major over-entry of students at Second Level. As stated earlier, Wilkes discovered, to his amazement, that there were seventy-six schools in which there had not been a single student enrolled in Third Level.¹⁵⁶ In attempting to explain to Wyndham why schools generally had shunned Third Level English, Wilkes said he had heard it attributed to timetabling difficulties in schools.¹⁵⁷ Wilkes did not mention that a principal cause might be what Wyndham, Yelland and the

English Teachers' Association, over a period of several years, had predicted; that is to say, the distortion of the English candidacy which had been produced by the matriculation formula that Wilkes had himself publicly supported. Indeed, Wilkes actually blamed the schools for the situation.¹⁵⁸ Those who had fought unsuccessfully against the universities' decision could have replied that the matriculation demands had produced irresistible pressures upon teachers from parents and students with any matriculant aspirations (whether justifiable or not) to avoid Third Level English. They also could have argued that universities were pre-eminently powerful organisations over which teachers, parents and even the Board of Senior School Students, had ultimately no control. At a meeting with Wyndham in September, Wilkes asserted that there was no need to re-evaluate the English courses, despite the Board's new directives.¹⁵⁹ Later Wilkes insisted that the Second and Third Level courses could in no way be equated in difficulty.¹⁶⁰

At the end of 1967 Wilkes went on leave. As Chairman he had patiently, yet firmly, refused to agree to the suggestion from the Board that the syllabus needed revision in the light of the Board's renewed efforts to weaken the power of the universities. His replacement as Chairman, the McCaughey Professor of Early English Literature and Language, H.L. Rogers, was more disposed to confronting, and vigorously rejecting, what he considered to be the Board's unwarranted intrusion into the area of English.¹⁶¹ At its first meeting under Rogers' chairmanship, on 21st May 1968, the English Syllabus Committee sent to the Board its five point rejection of the Board's decision of December. Any re-naming of the courses, the committee asserted, would be merely cosmetic. No syllabus revision was necessary. It rejected any notion that either the syllabus or the exams at Second and Third Levels were or could reasonably be made to be, equally "demanding and difficult".¹⁶² Wyndham had suggested at a meeting with Wilkes, Rogers and other chairmen in January, that one way of arresting the over-entry at Second Level would be to abandon the practice of allowing conceded passes at a lower level and to apply an 80% pass rate.¹⁶³ The Syllabus Committee flatly rejected this proposal

because it feared that the Second Level standard might thereby be lowered.¹⁶⁴

In his accompanying letter, Rogers re-asserted that point of view which identified levels with students' abilities and which Wyndham and his Board had been striving to broaden.

At present there is no doubt at all that the more able candidates attempt Level 2 and the less able Level 3.¹⁶⁵

This was beyond dispute. But it was precisely because this had happened, in contradiction of the intention of Wyndham and the Board, and under the influence of the matriculation decision, that Wyndham was endeavouring to have the English Syllabus Committee agree to a new definition. Rogers and his committee refused to co-operate in a plan which would have helped to arrest the vast over-entry at Second Level and under-entry at Third. By doing so, the English Syllabus Committee was showing solidarity with the universities' stand on matriculation and their refusal to recognise the case for making an exception for Third Level English, as had been advocated by Goldberg and the English teacher critics of the universities' decision. Of the fourteen members present when this decision was taken, eight were academics. Of the four representatives of secondary school teachers' organisations in government and non-government schools, two were not practising English teachers. Two others were Departmental inspectors. Of the fourteen only two were members of the English Teachers' Association which had been so critical of the devaluation of Third Level.¹⁶⁶

In the letter which Rogers wrote to Wyndham to accompany the committee's resolutions, it was made clear that his overriding concern was to safeguard the academic standards of the subject English. He, also, conceived of First, Second and Third Levels as stratifications of student ability, with Second Level being equated with the Leaving Certificate Pass candidature. As has been argued throughout the present chapter, this was at direct variance with the original directives given to the committee and upon which principles the syllabus was supposed to be erected.

Thus, as far as English was concerned, Wyndham's final efforts to curb the universities' control over the senior school curriculum failed. His successor, Dr David Verco, made another attempt along very similar, but slightly more complicated, lines throughout 1968. Students could select "long" or "short" courses. Some "short" courses would be designed, like the original Third Level concept, for students not wishing to pursue the particular subject at tertiary level. As far as English was concerned the short course would be based on the existing Third Level course. Verco, like his predecessor, refuted the prevalent university opinion that Third Level courses were only for students of low ability.¹⁶⁷ The original lower level concessional pass system would be abandoned. At the English Syllabus Committee meeting on the 21st March, 1969, Rogers denounced the new scheme. Firmly he expressed his resentment at the Board's having issued this edict to the English Committee without its having been consulted. Rogers and the committee were resolute that they would not in any way treat Second and Third Levels (or long and short courses) equally.

The reaction that the Board received from other chairmen to its edict forced it to postpone its plans for commencing the restructuring in 1970; but it was determined to proceed, nevertheless. Accordingly, the English Syllabus Committee was notified in October 1969 that a revision of its syllabus must be made. In November all school Principals were so informed. Appropriate changes would not come into operation earlier than in Fifth Form 1972. It was this decision of the Board which was to lead to a revision of the 1965 document and which culminated eventually in the 1974/6 syllabus. This will be the subject of Chapters Ten and Eleven.

* * * * *

From the very beginning of the period reviewed in this chapter, the fundamental questions of the nature and status of what had been, and what should be, the role of English as a compulsory subject, had been thrown wide open. This complete review of the definition of English in secondary education constituted a major "new beginning" in the history of English in N.S.W. secondary education since 1953. Never before, during the period under review, had the University of Sydney played such a dominating role in the construction of an English syllabus.

Russell had expressed his dissent from the majority view of the Subject Area-English Committee which had been that literature must retain a central position in such a syllabus. T.G. Hunter publicly attacked English teachers and called for the abolition of literature from a compulsory English syllabus. The resulting controversy had coincided with the growth of a vigorous and rapidly expanding English Teachers' Association whose Council members, along with their colleagues in the English Teachers' Group, had staunchly defended the place of literature in any senior school English syllabus. The English teachers' organizations had stood firmly upon two fundamental principles associated with the Newboltian definition of English. Literature, they declared, must assume a pre-eminent importance within the subject. This belief had been given strong syllabic expression in 1953 and had been reaffirmed in 1962. Literature retained a position of central importance in the 1965 syllabus. Secondly, the subject English was to be looked upon as the most important subject within the secondary school curriculum because of its perceived role in maintaining and enhancing those values of a civilized society which, it was believed, should be the object of a liberal education. This second aspect found far greater explicit endorsement in the 1961/2 formulation than in its

predecessor. The 1965 H.S.C. syllabus entirely avoided making any such claims of pre-eminence for English. While the First and Second Level courses required students to "develop an understanding of the literature of other ages",¹⁶⁸ they did so without championing the preservation of a 'cultural heritage' either in the pejorative sense of Dixon's definition or in the affirmative tone used by Arnold, Sidgwick, Sampson and Newbolt.

The literature sections thus embodied a major new direction away from an emphasis upon, and a preoccupation with, the transmission of literary taste and the analysis of literary form. The syllabus moved strongly towards having the students read literature and respond to it as honestly, intelligently and sensitively as they could. In doing so the syllabus reflected the approach to the teaching and learning of English literature advocated by Professor S.L.Goldberg. This syllabus introduced into the N.S.W. English curriculum for the first time the effects of the approach of the Cambridge School of English to the teaching of English. This had been propagated since the 1940's in British schools by the disciples of Leavis, notably Denys Thompson, especially through his editorship of Use of English. The Leavisite influence was reflected strongly, though not in a doctrinaire way, in the literature sections of the syllabus. The Syllabus Committee relied almost exclusively on the University of Sydney's undergraduate literature syllabuses for its lists of prescribed texts for First and Second Levels and for quite a number of texts set for Third Level as well. A totally new body of knowledge was incorporated in a N.S.W. syllabus in the 1965 section on Language. Whereas the literature sections minimised the importance of 'knowledge about' literature, the language sections maximised the importance of 'knowledge about' language. The language sections in the 1965 syllabus drew heavily upon the contemporary English I Language syllabus at the University of Sydney. In the First and Second Level courses, both the

literature and language parts of the syllabus made demands of students and teachers which vastly exceeded what had been defined in the 1953 syllabus.

Both First and Second Level courses demonstrated a fundamental lack of unity or integration in the approaches taken towards language and literature. In this the syllabus reflected the differences of approach taken by the language and literature sections of the English Department at the University of Sydney. The dismemberment of the original Bernard-Delbridge document was the consequence of the wrangling between both sub-departments and the success of Goldberg's campaign. First and Second Level courses' exhortation, which urged teachers and students to integrate both components, was but an empty admonition.

The Third Level syllabus was not inferior to its 1953 predecessor. It would seem that there was some confusion in the minds of members of the Syllabus Committee concerning its status. The Syllabus Committee and its Chairman made no formal decision to propose to the universities that Third Level English be given a special position within the matriculation formula. On the other hand, Professor Goldberg had consistently been of the opinion that the Third Level syllabus constituted a splendid course for the majority of matriculants who would be studying subjects other than English at tertiary level. The Third Level course seemed designed to assuage the criticisms of Hunter and his supporters, while simultaneously to preserve the insistence of the English Teachers' Association and the English Teachers' Group that any senior English course must incorporate the study of literature.

The 1965 syllabus omitted any mention of having students engaging in creative or imaginative writing. Such an inclusion had been strongly advocated by the English Teachers' Group, the English Teachers' Association and especially the English

Association in its original submission to the Wyndham Enquiry. Yelland had chosen to ignore this aspect of English in his "English" section in that part of the Wyndham Report pertaining to junior secondary education. This area of English occupied no place in any of the English departments in N.S.W. universities at that time. The fact that members of university Departments of English constituted the largest single group within the syllabus committee may account for the absence in the syllabus of any encouragement of students to engage in creative or imaginative writing in this syllabus. All writing activities prescribed for students in the 1965 syllabus were of a discursive nature. The H.S.C. syllabus ignored the new emphasis given to imaginative or creative writing in the 1962 junior syllabus.

Great tensions were generated between the Board of Senior School Studies, particularly its chairman Dr Wyndham - who was also Director General of Education with a powerful personal commitment to implementing his scheme - and the universities. These tensions had profound implications for the English syllabus. Such tensions emerged at the initial Syllabus Committee meeting. At first Wilkes seems to have accepted the definitions of levels stipulated by the Board and to have been aware of the dangers of external pressures, such as matriculation requirements, being brought to bear on the decisions of his committee. Later Wilkes significantly altered his perception and defended his university's matriculation decision. Throughout this whole period Wyndham, and later to a lesser extent Verco, struggled to overturn the impact of the universities' matriculation formula. All such efforts were rebuffed by the English Syllabus Committee which was far more swayed by the position taken by the academics than by the vehement opposition to that position expressed by professional English teacher organizations. The committee was unable to ignore the Board's insistence that the English syllabus be designed at three levels. This was a decision that was in opposition to the

submission made by the English Teachers' Association and the English Teachers' Group and had been deemed to be quite unsuitable by both the Chairman of the Subject Area-English Committee and the English Syllabus Committee. However the Syllabus Committee managed successfully to ignore the Board's regulation that each of the three courses be self-contained

One can never speak with certainty about the motivation of human beings. To what extent the tensions between the principal protagonists in the great matriculation debate were due to malevolence or loyalty or stubborn self-interest or sincerely held convictions or lack of communication or lack of knowledge or other factors, is impossible to judge accurately. Evidence provided by Mellor, Gunn, Russell and Goldberg¹⁶⁹ would indicate that there was considerable lack of understanding within university circles of the definition of levels provided by the Board, despite the precision of these statements concerning the "A" Pass equivalence. Yet the professorial chairmen of syllabus committees, members of the Board and chairmen of professorial boards had certainly been in positions to know precisely what these definitions had been. Wyndham's argument on this particular point would seem irrefutable. Yet Wyndham's own absence from the sequence of three critical University of Sydney Senate meetings in August, September and October seriously hindered the process of communication that should have operated between the Board and the universities.

One of the ironies of the matriculation debate was that long before the crisis erupted, O'Neill, as Chairman of the Professorial Board of the University of Sydney, had written to Wyndham virtually to suggest that there should be a subject something like English, but without its traditionally heavy emphasis on literature. O'Neill indicated that all H.S.C. students should study such a subject which would give them an

excellent grounding in English Expression. This was similar to Russell's proposal. The irony is that the English Syllabus Committee produced a syllabus geared specifically to the purpose that O'Neill had in mind, although not quite so narrowly defined. Yet O'Neill was one of the principal architects of the matriculation regulations which had the effect of pressurizing all students with aspirations for tertiary studies in such fields as medicine, architecture, science, mathematics, the social sciences, foreign languages and so on, to take what was fundamentally an English literature course designed specifically for those wishing to study English at the tertiary level.

Thus, ironically, the Wyndham scheme, which had attempted to encourage students to pursue their own needs and interests and had sought to circumvent the power of the universities, had produced a situation whereby the majority of H.S.C. students would pursue the Second Level course with its heavily academic bias in English literature and language. In so doing, many of these students would be rejecting the Third Level course which had been designed specifically for them. Wyndham had always assumed that the H.S.C. candidature generally would be of matriculable quality. University authorities had chosen, culpably or otherwise, to apply their own definition of levels. For them there were three homogeneous layers of candidates - first, second and third levels. Students' needs and interests and their resulting choice of levels at H.S.C. were but minor issues for the academics deciding upon matriculation regulations. The university matriculation regulations ignored the unique role that Third Level English had been designed to play. Only Goldberg on the English Syllabus Committee had publicly supported Wyndham's position and had argued the case for recognising Third Level English as part of a matriculation formula.

Tensions were generated by the continuing problems, noted

in earlier chapters, of isolation and its attendant lack of communication. The English Syllabus Committee often complained about the Board's refusal to provide it with reasons for decisions which had serious implications for the English syllabus. Wyndham complained bitterly about what he was convinced was the ignorance and/or distortion displayed by senior university leaders. English teachers complained angrily of their powerlessness to break what they perceived to be the unwarranted control being exercised over their English teaching by university matriculation regulations which ignored all else but the future needs of these institutions. It was the strongly growing English Teachers' Association which provided a forum and a medium of communication for the dissatisfaction of English teachers, particularly about the distortion of the Second and Third Level course candidatures. Nevertheless, even that corporate strength made little impact upon either the decisions of the 1965 Syllabus Committee or upon the autonomous matriculation decisions of the universities.

A feature that this syllabus shared with its 1961/2 counterpart was the very great pressure exerted on teachers because of the lack of sufficient time for its intelligent implementation. Thus a syllabus which was supposed to come into operation in 1966 was still not in teachers' hands in October 1965. Teachers were furthermore severely hampered by the extreme tardiness of the H.S.C. English Examination Committee. Its report on the first H.S.C. examination of November 1967 was not approved by the Board until May 1st 1968, even though the task of marking the examination papers had been completed by January. Worse was to follow. The 1968 H.S.C. Examination Committee Report did not appear before the Board until September 1969. These reports would have been eagerly awaited by teachers anxious to measure their own interpretation of the new syllabus against the 'official' version proclaimed by the examination committee. By the time the 1967 Report was printed and distributed to schools, there would have

been only four or five months teaching left before the next exam. The 1968 Report appeared in schools just before the 1969 H.S.C. exam.

The analysis and argument developed throughout this chapter are supported strongly by a comparison of the 1966 Leaving Certificate papers in particular, and those from 1953 on in general, with the 1966 Specimen H.S.C. Examination Papers, and a review of the first H.S.C. examinations in 1967 as well as the Examination Committee Report on that examination. The demands made upon, and fulfilled by, the First Level students in the syllabus and tested by examination, were clearly superior in breadth and depth to those exacted of students who had undertaken English Honours in the Leaving Certificate. The Second Level course was not markedly inferior to First Level in its challenge, and was comprehensively more difficult than the Leaving Certificate Pass English syllabus. This superiority was reflected both in the questions asked in, and the students' answers elicited by, the H.S.C. examination. Furthermore, an analysis of the Third Level syllabus compared to its predecessor, shows that that course demanded a standard not inferior to that required in the 1953 document. This was also reflected in the examining of the respective syllabuses. Indeed it has been argued in this chapter that the 1965 Third Level course syllabus was, in its literature section, more demanding than its 1953 equivalent. Evidence provided by the 1966 Specimen, and 1967, H.S.C. examination papers, and the 1967 Examination Committee Report does not support the claim made by those defending the matriculation decision that the equivalent of a pass in English at the Leaving Certificate would be a pass at the distinctly superior Second Level in the Higher School Certificate. On the contrary, the examination papers and the 1967 Examination Committee Report provide evidence to reinforce powerfully the claims of those like Wyndham, Goldberg, Priest, the Council of the English Teachers' Association of N.S.W., the Principal and English staff of the Normanhurst Boys High School, and others, that special exemption should have been

made to allow the majority of H.S.C. students to take Third Level English without thereby seriously risking their chances of matriculation. All such efforts failed. In effect, Second Level English would become the de facto compulsory English course for any student who had any aspirations whatever of university matriculation for any Faculty.

The 1965 syllabus represented a major advance, both quantitatively and qualitatively, upon its 1953 predecessor. In formulating it, the H.S.C. Syllabus Committee made no effort whatsoever to take account of the 1961/2 syllabus for Forms I-IV. The 1965 approach to literature was entirely new in its emphasis upon honest personal response. The prescription of theoretical language studies was also an innovation, but one which was the subject of conflict. In designing the Third Level course the Syllabus Committee attempted to offer a course which would, inter alia, satisfy both Hunter and his supporters and the English professional teaching organisations.

The history of the formulation and proclamation of the 1965 English syllabus represents a most significant "new beginning" when compared to its predecessors. Its construction and content were heavily influenced by the power of the University of Sydney. This power was exercised within the English Syllabus Committee and also against the Board. The syllabus strongly echoed the pursuits of the language and literature sections of the English Department of the University of Sydney. Wyndham and Verco unsuccessfully tried to force the English Syllabus Committee to revise the 1965 document in such a way as to implement the guidelines on levels given to the Committee in the Board's "standard of attainment" document tabled at the first English Syllabus Committee meeting in July 1964. The Committee remained strongly aligned throughout 1964-1969 to the universities' position on these matters. In 1969

the Board ordered the English Syllabus Committee to undertake a major revision of the 1965 document. It would take seven years for the revision to be completed. This process and the ensuing syllabus will be the subject of Chapters Ten and Eleven.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE ENTRY OF THE "NEW ENGLISH" INTO N.S.W.:

TOWARDS A RE-DEFINITION OF ENGLISH FOR THE JUNIOR

SECONDARY SCHOOL

The comparative analysis of the various syllabuses which has been undertaken in the preceding chapters has revealed many "new beginnings". However, no more striking contrast between successive syllabuses will be found to exist anywhere throughout this research study, than that between the 1971 syllabus and its 1961/2 predecessor. The emphasis in the 1953, 1961/2 and 1965 documents had been upon content; although one must qualify this remark in reference to the 1965 syllabus, which had added a new emphasis upon students' responding directly and sensitively to literature. The 1971 document shifted its focus from content onto the student engaged in the processes of learning, growing and experiencing through language. At the same time, the Syllabus Committee retained what it believed to be of value from earlier syllabuses. Thus while Homer is correct in saying that the 1971 syllabus represented the first serious Australian attempt to write an English syllabus based upon Dixon's 'personal growth' model,¹ it must also be said that the Committee deliberately sought to preserve those features which it felt to be of value in those "skills" and "cultural heritage" models which Dixon had rather too sanguinely dismissed. The 1971 N.S.W. syllabus is suffused with the spirit of what has been called the "new English"² of the 1960's which led to and flowed from the Dartmouth Seminar of 1966.

There were two dominant factors acting in vigorously interdependent ways which account for the 1971 appearance of the "new English" in the N.S.W. curriculum so quickly after the 1966 Dartmouth Seminar. The first was the growth and influence of the English Teachers' Association of N.S.W. in championing and disseminating that general philosophy of English teaching and learning as expressed by Dartmouth's most prominent product, John Dixon's Growth Through English, as well as in the work of other writers prior to and after 1967.³ The second factor was the intense personal commitment of Mr Graham Little to reforming the 1961/2 English syllabus according to the general principles and spirit of the "new English". Little had been profoundly impressed

by the writings of two of the key figures at Dartmouth, John Dixon and James Moffett. These two men had played most important leadership roles in the transforming of the definition of secondary school 'English' which followed that trans-Atlantic conference. Little worked in England for twelve months in 1967, as a visiting Commonwealth Scholar, at the height of the enthusiastic wave that swept through Britain after Dartmouth. He returned to N.S.W. determined that the time had come to reform the 1961/2 syllabus. He let it be known that he would be willing to serve as Chairman of the Forms I-IV Syllabus Committee. Bowra was promoted soon after from the Inspectorate to become Deputy Director of Education in the St. George region and Little, already an Inspector, was appointed Chairman of the Junior Secondary English Syllabus Committee in June 1969.

THE ROLE OF THE ENGLISH TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION OF N.S.W. IN PREPARING THE WAY FOR THE 1971 SYLLABUS

The English Teachers' Association of N.S.W., which was founded in 1960 and which enjoyed a spectacular growth throughout the following decade, was a most powerful agent in endorsing and disseminating, through personal contact, publications, inservice courses and conferences, the "new English" developments of the period. The Association served quite dramatically to break down the isolation that had been suffered by English teachers for so long and which has been referred to in earlier chapters.

It has already been shown that members of the English staff at Sydney Teachers' College had exercised considerable influence upon the formulation of the 1961/2 and the 1965 syllabuses. Members of that department played a critical role in the creation of the E.T.A. and in its subsequent direction. The Head of the English Department, J.H. Britton, in his capacity as President of the English Teachers' Group, was contacted by a group of English teachers in South Australia who wished to establish a national association of English teachers in Australia after the fashion of N.A.T.E. in England or N.C.T.E. in the United States.⁴ On

studying the proposed constitution of this new body the President realized immediately that, because of the Group's refusal to accept women members, it would not be able to participate. He discussed the invitation with a member of his staff, Miss Phyllis Kittson, who was a staunch feminist and had always found the Group's membership policy distasteful; barring, as it had, so many able women like Bess Bannan and herself from being involved in an association whose interests were her own. Kittson and Britton decided to form an association of English teachers in N.S.W. which could be assimilated within the South Australian plan. Quickly they enlisted the enthusiastic support of Bowra, a member of the Group, who later became Chairman of the Forms I-IV Syllabus Committee.

After a preliminary planning meeting at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, the first official meeting of the E.T.A. took place at Sydney Teachers' College on 29th June 1960. Twenty-eight teachers attended.⁵ Although Britton and Kittson were the driving forces behind the establishment of the Association, they were adamant that the E.T.A. should be led by practising teachers. Accordingly, they approached a most prominent member of the English Teachers' Group, Rhys Jones, English Master at Scots College Sydney, and invited him to be President. Jones had been a member of a small committee which wrote the final draft of the 1953 syllabus. He was duly elected at the first annual general meeting on 29th August 1960.⁶ That meeting agreed that the aims of the Association would be

...to promote and stimulate the studies of English and English teaching by providing a medium for the friendly intercourse of teachers; to provide opportunities to exchange ideas and disseminate knowledge from sources at home and overseas; to institute regular meetings at which members may discuss developments in the teaching and examining of English with a view to exercising some influence on Syllabus revision and methods of examining of English.⁷

Reference has already been made to submissions from the E.T.A. concerning the 1961/2 and 1965 syllabuses. It would be the 1971 syllabus, however, which demonstrated most of all the powerful influence of the Association and especially of its Executive Council.

There were 112 members by 1962. By February 1963 the numbers had jumped to 532.⁸ Twelve months later the membership reached 701.⁹ By the end of 1964 there were 758 financial members.¹⁰ Four rural branches had been established by 1966 in the Hunter Valley, South West Slopes, North West N.S.W. and Sydney West. Until 1971, that is to say in the period prior to and during the construction of the 1971 syllabus, all members of the elected Executive Council were from Sydney. The councillors included men and women from government and non-government schools. Apart from Mr K.D. Watson, there was no university representation on Council up to the time of the formulation of the 1971 syllabus. In 1961 Professor Mitchell agreed to become the Association's official patron.

Basically the E.T.A. acted as a medium for its Executive Council, virtually all of whom were enthusiastic supporters of the "new English", to transmit to practising secondary English teachers the latest developments, both overseas and in Australia, of progressive theory and practice in the English teaching profession. A Newsletter was published eight, or sometimes nine, times a year and distributed to members. Not only did this produce articles written by N.S.W. teachers, but it also reprinted material from N.A.T.E., and to a lesser extent N.C.T.E., publications.¹¹ Kittson, who edited the early publications, and her Teachers' College colleagues who were associated closely with the E.T.A. - Jack Britton, Arthur Ashworth, Stuart Lee and Jack Allison - made strenuous efforts to keep abreast of overseas developments in theory, research and publication in the field of English in education and channelled their knowledge of such developments to classroom teachers through E.T.A. publications and

activities.

Phyllis Kittson edited the Association's journal The Teaching of English, which first appeared in September 1961 and reappeared annually until 1964 when it commenced its current practice of being published twice a year. Both the Newsletter and the Teaching of English resolutely pursued a policy of not limiting their scope to classroom practicalities or issues of strategic implementation. From its birth the Association remained true to its first President's insistence that its scope must be "to include everything that is relevant to the teaching of English" and not be restricted merely to practical issues such as "examining techniques and methodological details".¹² The Council met once a month. General meetings of the Association were held every month up to October each year excluding term holidays. These meetings normally consisted of an after-school function involving a guest speaker, followed by an open forum.

At the initiative of Peter B. McDonald, a former President of the South Australian English Teachers' Association, the Australian Association for the Teaching of English was formed in 1965.¹³ This linked the then existing associations in N.S.W., Tasmania, Western Australia, Victoria, South Australia and the Australian Capital Territory and set out to become "the authoritative body of English teaching in Australia".¹⁴ This body produced two issues of its journal English in Australia in 1966. From 1967 up to the formulation of the 1971 syllabus there were three issues of this journal published annually. All members of affiliated state branches received English in Australia. The annual conference of the E.T.A., like the organization's publications, sought not only to provide practical classroom assistance but especially to discuss, analyse, critically evaluate and disseminate overseas and Australian developments in English in education. Each year one State branch would host an A.A.T.E. conference in conjunction with that association's annual State conference.

There were many specific areas where the E.T.A. provided valuable assistance to teachers. The E.T.A. organised special in-service programmes to familiarize teachers with the new H.S.C. texts and with the new approach to, and the content of, the Language section of the H.S.C. syllabus for the First and Second Level courses. Special arrangements were made with publishers so that copies of the latest books being written in England, and to a lesser extent the U.S.A., during the 1960's ferment of the "new English" could be reviewed in E.T.A. publications and be made available for members to borrow from a special E.T.A. library. From the latter part of the 1960's Ken Watson, who took on the role of publications officer in the ETA, played an important role both in re-publishing significant overseas research and scholarship in English teaching and encouraging NSW teachers to broadcast their own ideas and practices through ETA publications. In particular, he made NSW English teachers aware of the exciting expansion in the field of children's and adolescent fiction which took place in the 1960's. The Council negotiated with the Australian Broadcasting Commission to advise it of English teachers' needs prior to the Commission's preparation of television and radio programmes.¹⁵ Through the generous financial and organizational support of the British Council, the E.T.A. was able to organize in-service programmes directed by such prominent international figures as John Dixon, Michael Halliday (before he settled permanently in Australia), Nancy Martin, Leslie Stratta, Dorothy Heathcote, David Holbrook and in 1972, in conjunction with U.N.E.S.C.O., James Britton and Roger Shuy. The Association also maintained a number of standing committees on examinations, teaching methods, publications, journals and conferences. Occasionally, as the need arose, special sub-committees were established to look at syllabus revision, mass media and drama.

Not only did the E.T.A. provide a richness of material which it disseminated to teachers throughout N.S.W., but it also brought English teachers together in conferences, meetings and in-service activities, and thus significantly attacked the problem

of isolation suffered by English teachers. Perhaps the most important significance of the E.T.A., as far as the 1971 syllabus is concerned, was the regular monthly meetings of the Executive Council. Nearly every person appointed to Little's Syllabus Committee was a member of that E.T.A. Council. Little himself had been President of the E.T.A. and was on the Council during the construction of the syllabus. The Council acted as a powerful force for raising the consciousness of the English teaching profession in N.S.W. to the highly significant developments then taking place overseas, especially in England. The history of these developments has already been well described by Shayer.¹⁶ The ideas of prominent leaders of these new developments such as Holbrook, Clegg, Britton, Hourd, Whitehead, Creber, Thompson, Summerfield, Squire, Dixon, Wilkinson, Stratta, Flower, Abbs, Adams and Moffett were now propagated in N.S.W. by the E.T.A. up to, during and after the construction of the 1971 syllabus. One can say generally that it was Dixon's account of the Dartmouth Conference, as expressed in his Growth Through English, that was endorsed in E.T.A. publications. The kinds of mild criticisms of Dixon that were to be made later by Homer and Shayer, and the more severe criticism of Allen, were reflected neither in the E.T.A.'s approach to English, nor in the syllabus itself; although a less enthusiastic account of Dartmouth written by the two Australian participants, Hansen and Sureties, had appeared in English in Australia.¹⁷

THE ROLE PLAYED BY GRAHAM LITTLE

None of his predecessors as chairmen of English Syllabus Committees exercised the degree of personal influence upon the shaping of a syllabus that Graham Little did in the construction of the 1971 document. Little had enjoyed a meteoric rise in the English teaching profession. He had completed a B.A. Honours degree in Psychology at the University of Sydney, undertaking third year English only after graduating. After taking his Diploma in Education at Sydney Teachers' College, Little received his first appointment to Fort Street Boys High School which was

still one of the most prestigious government secondary schools. There he soon acquired a brilliant reputation, especially for his drama teaching. Upon being promoted to English-History Master at Kurri Kurri High School (in the Hunter Valley) he became the first country member of the English Teachers' Association and agitated for the establishment of rural branches of that organisation.¹⁸ Upon Allsopp's retirement, Little was appointed at a young age to the most senior English teaching position in N.S.W. government boys' schools - that of English Master at Sydney Boys' High School.

During his time at Sydney Boys' High School Little was elected to the Executive Council of the E.T.A. In 1964 he was elected President and undertook his responsibilities in that vigorous and wholehearted manner that was characteristic of the man. He believed most strongly that the Association had a vital role to play in the development of the English curriculum in N.S.W. by maintaining and expanding its links with international and interstate influences and by disseminating such developments throughout the English teaching profession at both secondary and tertiary levels. He set out vigorously to forge links between English personnel in the universities, teachers' colleges, government and private schools, the Department of Education administration, the Inspectorate, N.S.W. Teachers' Federation groups and syllabus committees. He was a member of the H.S.C. English Syllabus Committee from its inception in 1963.

Little has always refused to permit himself to be stereotyped into belonging to any particular "school" of educational, curricular, or English thought. He sees himself as having and pursuing eclectic interests and of having a serious commitment to synthesising the diverse influences that have influenced his career in English education.¹⁹ As an undergraduate, Little had read, and been strongly influenced by, Matthew Arnold's Culture and Anarchy. While he shared Leavis' enthusiasm for Arnold, he found the Leavisites too moralistic and narrow. Nevertheless he welcomed what he saw to be the revitalization that took place at the University of Sydney during

the Leavisite revolution 1963-1966. Nor could he accept the derivatively Arnoldian principles as preached and practised in the English Teachers' Group. He had been invited to join the Group upon becoming English Master at Sydney Boys' High School.

Little was very disturbed by the possible threats to the English curriculum from what he termed the American behaviourist "measurement people"²⁰ such as Gagne, Taba, Bobbett and especially Tyler. He was resolutely opposed to the programmed or instructional model of learning that had been widely acclaimed in the United States under the influence of Skinner. Little felt much closer in spirit to Dewey's Child and the Curriculum. Little's work in England in 1967 brought him into contact with most of the leaders of the "new English" in the United Kingdom.

The two most important single influences upon the development of Little's theory as to what should be incorporated within the secondary school English curriculum were John Dixon's Growth Through English (1967) and James Moffett's Teaching the Universe of Discourse (1968). Little has declared that

...it took people like Moffett and Dixon to spark me off and say 'yes there are some large generalisations; there are some big formulations of principles that are worth taking!'.²¹

It is therefore necessary to examine these two books in some detail and to examine their relevance to the shaping of the 1971 N.S.W. syllabus.

MOFFETT'S THEORY OF ENGLISH CURRICULUM AS OUTLINED IN TEACHING THE UNIVERSE OF DISCOURSE

It is Little's own judgment that the single most important influence upon him, immediately prior to his being appointed chairman of the Syllabus Committee in June 1969, was his reading of Moffett's book.²² It had been written in order to provide teachers with a philosophy or rationale to accompany the

experimental English curriculum detailed in Moffett's companion work A Student-Centred Language Arts Curriculum, Grades K-13 : A Handbook for Teachers.

Moffett commences by insisting that there was a most serious need to re-examine the purpose and structure of English or "Language Arts". Above all, insists Moffett, English had always lacked a structure which would provide it with a purpose or focus of integration. Closely resembling Dixon's criticisms in Growth Through English, Moffett suggests that English had usually been defined only in terms of content such as literature, language, composition or skills such as reading, writing, listening and speaking.

From the outset Moffett stresses a distinction, which later would become a centre-piece of Little's syllabus, between requiring students to know about the forms of English, and their being able to practise such norms. "Learning and learning how to" insists Moffett "result in very different kinds of knowledge".²³ Moffett's position on the teaching formal grammar is quite clear:

...the evidence from research indicates that the teaching of grammar, old-fashioned or new fangled, has no effect on the skills (of language).²⁴

Moffett is particularly critical of the approach to teaching language by breaking it up into categories and units in the way that had been advocated in the "Language" section of the 1961/2 syllabus.²⁵ All that such an approach does, argues Moffett, is merely to transmit abstract information unless

...these things are ... kept as functions of each other, and they can be kept so only in the ultimate context of somebody talking to somebody else about something.²⁶

Such an emphasis would be made in the "Introduction" to the 1971 syllabus which acted like the preambles of its 1953 and 1961/2

predecessors in attempting to provide a philosophical foundation for all that followed. It also would endorse another of Moffett's fundamental convictions which was that it was improper to define English in terms of static content. Rather, affirms Moffett, drawing upon Suzanne Langer's development of Ernst Cassirer's²⁷ theories of language as symbol,

English, French, and Mathematics are symbol systems, into which the phenonemal data of empirical subjects are cast and by means of which we think about them..Symbol systems are not primarily about themselves; they are about other subjects. When a student "learns" one of these systems, he learns how to operate it.²⁸

Consequently, insists Moffett, students should employ their time in using language in every realistically possible way in which this symbol system is used, and not "analyze (language) or study it as an object".²⁹ He went so far as to assert that

...through reading, writing, and discussing whole, authentic discourses...students can learn better everything that we consider of value in language and literature than they can by the current substantive and particle approach.³⁰

Little himself completely concurred with this position.

Of central significance to Moffett's thesis is his belief in the supreme importance of students' perceiving the purposefulness of their language usage, whether it be reading, writing, listening or speaking. This became absolutely fundamental to the rationale outlined in the Introduction to the N.S.W. 1971 syllabus. Moffett was not generating completely new concepts. He uses the Aristotelian categories of Rhetoric - description, narration, exposition and argumentation - as a basic structure within which he discusses his theories of discourse. He draws upon the insights of Langer, Polanyi and Earl Kelley, all of whom also played significant roles in shaping the theory of James Britton.

It will be shown that one of Little's most important individual contributions to the 1971 syllabus was the creation of the "Meanings-Form-Values" triad which acted as the focus of integration for the whole syllabus. It bore a striking similarity to Moffett's structure of discourse in which Moffett summarizes the relationships between speaker or writer and listener, or speaker and speaker or writer, with the subject. He does this by the use of the words "how", "what" and "what for" which are all to be considered as "factors of each other".³¹ The first three terms approximate very closely to Little's terms "form", "meaning" and "values", respectively.

Having established a structure of discourse, Moffett proceeds throughout the rest of his book to establish the rationale for a curriculum in English which would be based on a theory of progressive abstraction in thought structures as the child grows from kindergarten to Year 13. Moffett's was the first well-publicised attempt to devise a curriculum which would encourage, in Dixon's phrase, "growth through English" along a conceptual continuum. Fundamental to the system which Moffett erects is Piaget's notion of perceiving "decreasing egoism as a dimension of growth".³² The rest of Teaching the Universe of Discourse is an exploration of a curriculum Moffett devises based on a "hierarchy of abstraction" which he establishes in detail.³³ While the 1971 syllabus was to demonstrate unmistakably the influence of Moffett in its statement of rationale, it did not go so far as to adopt Moffett's specific models of discourse as a way of resolving the problem of establishing principles of continuity. Moffett's model is based upon exploring progressive levels of abstraction within the three components of discourse - speaker, listener and subject. As will be seen later in Chapter Nine, the committee was satisfied with a somewhat hazy and general statement in Part III "Stages and Levels". To a certain degree the members of the committee were already inhibited by the Board's regulations concerning the three Levels of study to be pursued within N.S.W. schools.

In his concluding chapter Moffett re-emphasises his criticism of that view of English which sees it defined in terms of content or skills. Not only are the processes of symbolization, which are at work in the use of language, not being properly focused upon in English, argues Moffett, but other subjects are similarly being affected. He urges that "integration is desperately needed".³⁴ If there was one conviction held fiercely by Little prior to and during the formulation of the 1971 syllabus it was that "integration is desperately needed".

Moffett concludes by calling for a totally reorganized curriculum which should incorporate two basic principles, both of which can be found incorporated in the 1971 N.S.W. English syllabus. The first is that a curriculum should "center on the learner as producer and manipulator of symbols".³⁵ The second is that the curriculum should pursue as its aim the "growth of the whole human being",³⁶ which can be achieved only through a process founded on "a new integration of learning".³⁷

This review of Teaching the Universe of Discourse is meant to be neither exhaustive nor critically evaluative. It has concentrated upon some of the fundamental principles established by Moffett which were later to be incorporated and developed in Little's syllabus, because Little has acknowledged that the "basic insights" which he brought to the construction of the syllabus were principally taken from Moffett.³⁸ The major principles enunciated in Teaching the Universe of Discourse were discussed by the Syllabus Committee whose members "took (Moffett's) notions for granted".³⁹

DIXON'S THEORY OF ENGLISH CURRICULUM AS OUTLINED IN GROWTH THROUGH ENGLISH

John Dixon's Growth Through English was the other single most important contemporary English curriculum influence upon Little and his committee. All members had either read the book or were familiar with the theory expounded therein, because of its popularization and endorsement by the E.T.A.; in their early deliberations Little and his committee colleagues discussed the book.⁴⁰ Other Australian researchers who have referred, albeit in minor detail, to the 1971 N.S.W. syllabus have accepted that Dixon's personal growth model is the basis of the 1971 syllabus.⁴¹ However it would be an over-simplification to claim that the document is merely a syllabic implementation of the principles of Growth Through English. It is necessary therefore to review the basic principles outlined in Dixon's book in order to have a proper understanding of the background to the 1971 syllabus.

It can be deceptively simple to define the new English as expounded in Growth Through English and associated writings prior to 1971. The "old English" paradigms of "skills based" and "cultural heritage" models, against which Dixon places his "personal growth" model, were more complex than Dixon describes them. Shayer, Homer, Ball and especially Allen,⁴² in his too harshly critical attack on Dixon, have shown this to be so. While it is not the purpose of this chapter to undertake a detailed critical evaluation of Dixon's book, it should be said in passing that some of his critics have been quite inaccurate in their accounts of what Dixon actually wrote in Growth Through English. For example, one of his most trenchant critics, Anne E. Berthoff, has an unfortunate tendency to misrepresent Dixon's arguments and then to demolish her falsification of Dixon's

position.⁴³ Dixon modestly acknowledges that he was not sure just what the culmination of the developmental growth of students through language should be, and that much later work should be carried out in such areas because at that time there was a lack of "detailed knowledge and analysis of psychological, social and linguistic patterns of growth."⁴⁴ It is rather unfair, therefore, of later critics such as Allen, Homer, Sureties and Hansen⁴⁵ to attack Dixon for his failing to provide a detailed model of sequential development when Dixon had been sensible enough to admit that such a task should not be undertaken without adequate consultation with, and experimentation undertaken by, classroom teachers.⁴⁶

Some of those who criticize Dixon's account of Dartmouth cite Muller's The Use of English in their defence.⁴⁷ Written from the perspective of an American participant at Dartmouth and prepared specifically for an American lay audience rather than that of the English teaching profession, Muller's work certainly displays emphases which, at times, are different from Dixon's. He provides a clearer delineation of the areas of disagreement between the participants, especially on issues of dispute between the British and the Americans, than does Dixon. Nevertheless on all the major issues raised by Dixon's book which will be referred to briefly below, Muller's work serves to reinforce the arguments and conclusions reached by Dixon. One most important insight that Muller provides in his discussion of the differences between the British and American positions, which must be taken into consideration when reviewing both the Dartmouth Seminar and Growth Through English and their significance in the shaping of the 1971 syllabus, is that of the significance to the history of English teaching in America of Deweyan progressivism and the counter-reaction to it.

According to Muller, and this is certainly borne out by Dixon's account, the British were united in reacting against an authoritarian tradition in schooling that was typified by the English system of stereotyped examinations which had rigidified the curriculum in classrooms. In particular, there was a fierce rebellion against the all determining "Eleven plus" examination.⁴⁸ According to Muller, the Americans were reacting against the "slackness and confusion" that they believed to have resulted from the "excesses (of) the progressive movement in the last generation".⁴⁹ In particular, the Americans opposed the British view at Dartmouth that "we don't teach a subject, we teach the whole child".⁵⁰ In fact this very view, ascribed to the British, is central to the theory outlined in both Dixon's and Moffett's books. It was as if the Americans were discrediting Dewey at a time when their British counterparts at Dartmouth were just discovering what Dewey and other American progressive educational writers had been advocating so many years before, in their championing of a child-linked personal growth model of English curriculum. Dewey's The Child and the Curriculum (1902)⁵¹ had vigorously defended a child-centred personal growth model of education well over half a century before the British were proclaiming this as a new approach at Dartmouth. Dewey had warned against adopting an exclusivist position which would have the teacher electing to concentrate only upon the child or the curriculum. The two should be linked by relating the subject matter to the child's developing experience. Dewey, like Dixon, Moffett and later Little, was adamant that for optimal learning to take place, the activity must be perceived by the student to be purposeful, enjoyable if possible and relevant to the student's needs, capacities and interests. Dewey referred to this process as "psychologizing the curriculum".⁵²

Sir Arthur Clegg, one of the earlier significant figures in the post-war development of English, has observed that most of the people who started the "new English" seemed "never (to have) heard of Caldwell, Cook or Dewey".⁵³ Clegg went so far as to assert that the English reformers in the United Kingdom

...owed nothing to the progressive school movement of the nineteen twenties and thirties.⁵⁴

In noting the emphasis upon a personal growth model to be found in the U.K. Plowden Report (1968) on primary school education in England, Lawson has observed that such a position was merely a re-statement of what American progressives like Rugg and Schumacher had been advocating in the late 1920's.⁵⁵ In Growth Through English Dixon seems either to have been unaware of this earlier American progressive tradition or did not consider it worthy of consideration.

It is also necessary to appreciate that the British, as opposed to the American, model of English teaching was itself far from being neatly cohesive. Watson, for example, implies a unanimity among the British participants that is inaccurate.⁵⁶ It is true that the Dartmouth Seminar agreed to accept the British insistence that English teaching should be based centrally upon the child's experience rather than the transmission of what Dixon called the "cultural heritage" or the teaching of grammatical structures and rules, whether they be of the traditional or modern type. Nevertheless there was tension between, on the one hand, the proponents of what Abbs and Ball have termed the Cambridge School of English such as Thompson, Whitehead, Inglis and Flower, and on the other those who adopted what Ball terms the socio-linguistic paradigm.⁵⁷ The central figures of this latter movement were associated with James Britton and the London Day Training College, which later became the London Institute of

Education. Dixon, Stratta, Martin, Halliday, Barnes and the Rosens were associated with this group. The principal area of tension between these two British groups concerned the role that literature should play in the English curriculum. The Cambridge School of English, which had controlled the journal Use of English, followed the line which could be traced from Arnold through Newbolt and on to Leavis and Thompson. They believed fiercely that the study of, and response to, literature of the highest quality must be central to any English secondary school's curriculum. The influence of both the Cambridge English and the socio-linguistic "schools" can certainly be found in Dixon's account of Dartmouth, and their emphases would emerge in the 1971 syllabus. The open warfare that was to flare up between these two movements did not occur until well after the formulation of the 1971 syllabus. Whitehead's strong personal attack on Britton in 1976⁵⁸ signalled the public ending of a harmony which had somewhat uneasily prevailed between the two groups at Dartmouth. In more recent times later protagonists of the Cambridge School, such as Abbs⁵⁹, Allen⁶⁰ and Hunt⁶¹ have maintained the assault on the socio-linguistic paradigm of English.

Dixon's brief description and dismissal of the "skills based" and "cultural heritage" models has been discussed earlier.⁶² The rest of his book explores what he terms the "language and the personal growth" model. The principles thereby developed will be seen to suffuse the 1971 document. Language, argues Dixon, is a process that human beings use in the process of selecting and ordering experience and cannot be separated from their learning and pursuit of meaning.⁶³ Human beings use language to make experience real.

Recalling experience, getting it clear, giving it shape and making connections, speculating and building theories, celebrating (or exorcizing) particular moments of our lives - these are some of the broad purposes that language serves and enables.⁶⁴

Like Moffett, Dixon, in his effort to re-define English, moves away from focusing upon content and skills or on any such things as described in such nouns as "skills, proficiencies, set books, and the heritage"⁶⁵ towards a definition by process, a description of the activities we engage in through language.⁶⁶

In place of the traditional body of knowledge or content of the English curriculum, Dixon argues that the curriculum should represent the teachers' hopes of

...what pupils will discover and build as discussion arises from day to day, not a package to be handed over.⁶⁷

This represents a shift in the definition of English from content towards process.⁶⁸ The 1971 syllabus would endorse two other fundamental principles enunciated by Dixon. These were that teachers must be given a great deal of responsibility to establish an atmosphere of trust in classrooms, and that the most effective work in English would come from students engaging in reading, writing, listening and speaking activities that are not only purposeful, but perceived to be so by students.

Dixon is not blind to the dangers of what might be called a progressive over-reaction to traditional models. He acknowledged the American participants' fear of any

...chaotic approach to operational English associated with a "child-centred" curriculum in which the major concern was social adjustment and not a child's growth in intellectual, imaginative and linguistic power.⁶⁹

He acknowledges other American fears that there would be teachers who would opt for a simplistic "faith blundering from dull skills into the simple formula of 'self-expression'".⁷⁰ He emphasises that there are linguistic conventions and systems, such as spelling, which cannot be ignored. At the same time he agrees with Holbrook who had, through his writings and experience as a teacher, given his fellow English teachers "a new right to talk about the creative potentialities of all children".⁷¹ Dixon

concurs with Moffett in advocating "a unitary rather than a fragmented approach to English".⁷² Learning, he argues, takes place through talk as distinct from specialist courses in speech. He cites Barnes approvingly.

Such talk does not occur in the classroom, however, without deliberate design; it is most likely when small groups of pupils talk about matters which engage their deepest attention.⁷³

Students are to be encouraged to move between the private world of what Moffett, and before him Vygotsky,⁷⁴ calls "inner speech" to the social shared and public world. Thus the vital core of all work in English, according to Dixon, must be the student's "personal experience".⁷⁵

Dixon agrees with Moffett that, through interaction with fiction, students develop a "poetic metaphoric intuitive understanding" which is "a form of knowledge although it cannot be objectively measured".⁷⁶ At the same time he asserts that one of the more unfortunate consequences of the cultural heritage model of English curriculum design and practice has been that teachers have tended to approach life only through fictions. Teachers need to go further.

If an interest in literature is to inform and modify our encounter with life itself, the teacher must bring into a vivid relationship life as it is enacted and life as it is represented.⁷⁷

Dixon widened the traditional concept of literature to incorporate the students' own writing. External examinations in literature are condemned. "It is literature not literary criticism"⁷⁸ which should be the subject of English teaching and learning. There was consensus among all participants, according to both Dixon and Muller, that there had been a misplaced emphasis in the past upon the 'knowledge about' literature and in particular, knowledge about literary history.⁷⁹ Dixon's exhortations about the teaching of literature would be implemented in the 1971

syllabus. Dixon, however, went even further than this position, which he shared with Thompson⁸⁰, Whitehead⁸¹ and the Cambridge School of English. As the American Louise Rosenblatt had been insisting since the 1930's,⁸² Dixon advocated that literature should take its readers in two directions

...outwards into our own shaping of experience, tapped and activated by our reading - and that is the usual direction - or in towards the writer's experience, sifting and savouring the thing for itself - and that is rarer.⁸³

Consistent with his and Moffett's criticism of English curriculum planners of the past, that they had prescribed a body of knowledge, of content, "at the expense of the rest of the process",⁸⁴ Dixon declared that the teaching of any body of systematic grammar, new or old, could not be justified. On the contrary, teaching which moved

...outward from their sense of language as an artifact, a given, to a sense of themselves as organizers of experience in the act of speaking and writing (or reading)...is an absolutely invaluable part of the life of the English classroom (Dixon is quoting an unnamed Dartmouth participant).⁸⁵

Throughout Growth Through English Dixon stresses that the Dartmouth conception of what English should be, involves making heavy demands of the professionalism of each individual teacher. The teacher must start with the child's experience and help him or her to expand and deepen his or her cognitive and affective learning.⁸⁶ Muller's account of the Dartmouth Conference heavily supports Dixon's insistence upon the critically important role to be played by each individual teacher.⁸⁷

LITTLE PREPARES THE N.S.W. ENGLISH TEACHING PROFESSION FOR THE
1971 SYLLABUS

Having examined the two critical influences upon Graham Little immediately prior to his becoming Chairman, it is now necessary to demonstrate how Little used the publications of the English Teachers' Association as a medium for publicising his own philosophy of English in the period prior to the construction of the 1971 syllabus. Upon his appointment as an Inspector, Little resigned the Presidency because he firmly believed that that office should be held by a practising teacher. He remained on the Council, however. Through the E.T.A. he was able to prepare the N.S.W. English teaching profession for a new syllabus.

A figure of major importance in the development of the new English in the United States after Dartmouth was the linguist Neil Postman. His Teaching as a Subversive Activity,⁸⁸ co-authored with Charles Weingartner, would become one of the books most widely read by teachers of English in the U.S.A. In February 1968 the Newsletter reprinted a scathing article by Postman in which he denounced the widespread practice of teaching schemes of systematic formal grammar, old and new, in English classrooms. Citing I.A. Richards in his support, Postman based his article on the fundamental premise that

...the primary goal in language teaching is to help students increase their competence to use and understand language, especially those styles, varieties, and functions of language that most intimately affect their lives.⁸⁹

Like Moffett and Dixon before him, and Little and his committee later, Postman placed an absolute importance upon the introduction of purposeful language activities into the English curriculum.

Quite simply, people do things for reasons. Their activities have purpose...to talk of human activity without human purpose is both shallow and irrelevant. I am assuming therefore that the teaching of English has purposes and that none is more important than helping students to manage their lives more effectively by increasing their control over language.⁹⁰

Like Richards, Postman insisted that "language is always produced by human beings for human purposes to share human meanings".⁹¹

In an article in the June 1968 Newsletter Little expressed his enthusiastic support for Postman's argument and gave members of the E.T.A. a preview of the kinds of principles upon which he would later erect the syllabus. He re-echoed Moffett's belief that English should not be merely "about" English or "about" communications. Having been into British schools where the Dartmouth principles were being implemented, Little had returned to Australia even more convinced that

...the ability to communicate (comes) from communicating matters of interest and importance, not by studying communication.⁹²

In May 1969 the E.T.A. journal The Teaching of English published Little's address 'Language I-IV : Directions to Consider' which was given at the 1968 E.T.A. Annual Conference. Little has always sought to maintain a balanced position between extreme positions and has tried to avoid being stereotyped. While suggesting that the 1961/2 syllabus was "much in advance of what...had (been) before" and could be "compared favourably with what (could) be found elsewhere"⁹³ he declared that it was his opinion that the time had come to revise that syllabus. Without openly criticizing Bowra's syllabus, Little spoke of "tensions" within that document, the most "free and open" part of which he found to be the poetry.⁹⁴ The tightly prescribed grammar section (Little's address was given prior to the later 1968

revision of that section)⁹⁵ worried him. Little's most vigorous comments concerned the lack of a sense of integration within the various parts of the syllabus. He feared that, as a result, English was tending to "fall apart into independent and rather purposeless activities".⁹⁶

According to Little, the weakest section of the 1961/2 formulation was that dealing with Language. He conceded that in 1961 and 1962, when the documents were being prepared, there was still considerable uncertainty about language. But by 1968, he declared, enough was known to justify a thorough revision of the former grammar-based approach. While the syllabus made some vague gestures towards the more progressive developments in language theory extant in 1962, Little was of the firm opinion that most teachers in 1968 were continuing to follow the "old grammar school".⁹⁷ Quickly and succinctly he made his own position clear. Along with Dixon, Moffett and Postman, among so many other prominent figures in the progressive post-Dartmouth era, Little preferred "not to bother very much with grammar of any kind".⁹⁸ Reflecting on his experiences in British classrooms throughout 1967, Little recalled that consistently he had encountered fluent, literate children who had no explicit knowledge of grammatical systems or taxonomies of grammatical terms, yet who were to be so fluent and literate, apparently

...because they experience a wealth of reading, talking, and writing about matters of interest to them and (experience) plenty of interested "flashback" in relation to what they had said and written.⁹⁹

The words of Little repeated succinctly what Moffett had written in the first section of Teaching the Universe of Discourse.¹⁰⁰ Little extolled the practice, adopted by a small minority of syllabus framers in the U.K., of abandoning the prescription of the teaching of systematic formal grammar while retaining the use of some terms to be used only in a purely descriptive manner. This should be the practice adopted in a revision of the 1961/2

syllabus, declared Little. In less than twelve months after delivering this address, Little would be putting this hope into effect. Towards the end of his address he offered his audience what proved to be a neat summary of a basic assumption of the 1971 syllabus.

Most students should get on with reading and writing and talking about matters of interest and importance and grow that way.¹⁰¹

Little acknowledged that this was what Moffett was advocating. It was also what Dixon, Stratta, Postman and others were proposing and what was being urged in E.T.A. publications.

Little was also a vigorous proponent of incorporating mass media studies in the English curriculum and for approaching the media in a positive rather than merely a pejorative way. The author convened the 1969 Annual Conference of the E.T.A. which examined the role that mass media studies should play in an English curriculum, and chaired a lively, at times heated, open forum towards the end of the Conference. The more 'conservative' English teachers at the conference vigorously attacked the notion, put forward by the more 'progressive', that the mass media should occupy a more significant place in the English syllabus than they did under the then current Bowra syllabuses for junior secondary high school. R.D. Walshe, who on the issue of Writing was justly perceived to be most progressive, adopted a staunchly anti-media position. Graham Little, just as energetically, pursued the opposite position. Walshe later wrote to Little, and Little replied. Both agreed to their correspondence being published in the September 1969 Newsletter.

Walshe argued fervently that the role of the English teacher was to mount a vigorous attack on the media in order to show students its evil and all-pervasive influence. He used terms reminiscent of similar attacks by Leavisites printed in Use of English and in Denys Thompson's Discrimination and Popular Culture.¹⁰² In his reply Little revealed the significant

re-direction he would later pursue in the English syllabus' approach to the issue of mass media. Little agreed with what Walshe had written - but argued that this was only part of the whole picture.¹⁰³

Little pointed out that his own education owed much to the mass media. Fantasia had introduced him to Bach, Beethoven and Stravinsky. The A.B.C. and the recording industry had nourished his musical education. The education of his own children, he wrote, had been enhanced by Kindergarten of the Air, Disney at his best, and "Adventure Island". He cited Simon and Garfunkel, Bob Dylan, Steptoe and Son, and Z Cars as further examples of his own education having been enhanced by the mass media. Little maintained vigorously that his interest in Browning and Blake was not in any way incompatible with his reading of newspapers. He concluded with a statement that was to be re-echoed decisively several years later in the mass media section of the 1971 syllabus.

Have my standards gone astray? Am I foolish in taking the view that because I am interested in the best that is thought and said and done, not despite this interest, I want to see the media afforded more room in English, along with all other kinds of exploration of the language in use.¹⁰⁴

Like Leavis, Thompson and Whitehead, Little saw himself to be following ideals in the tradition of Arnold, but he rejected the moralistic exclusiveness of those Leavisites who were so vigorously opposed to such "popular culture". The 1971 syllabus would abandon the 1961/2 syllabus' somewhat patronising attitude to the media and adopt a formula that teachers should teach "in, for and against the media".¹⁰⁵

While engaged in writing the 1971 syllabus Little prepared "English in New South Wales", an article which was published several months later in the January 1971 edition of English in Australia. This paper demonstrated that characteristic concern of

Little to tread a liberal, yet balanced and reasonable path, in reforming English in N.S.W. He admitted to a number of biases:

...one is towards the newer more creative and flexible approaches, and another is against problems of rapid expansion being allowed to obscure the progress that has been made in English teaching.¹⁰⁶

Once again Little maintained that there had been a tradition of continuity in N.S.W. English syllabuses and that syllabuses had been agents of change rather than of conservatism.¹⁰⁷ He suggested that what was central to his committee's work in writing what would become the 1971 syllabus was

...an effort to clarify basic objectives of English (which) involves distinguishing more sharply between prescription and suggestion.¹⁰⁸

His committee was attempting to provide teachers with a short yet clear statement of aims and objectives

...while avoiding even seeming to give teachers instructions about how they are going to help pupils to do these things.¹⁰⁹

This clear-cut distinction between suggestion and prescription proved to be difficult to maintain in practice. Little was not claiming that his syllabus should not be prescriptive, but rather that it should not detail the specific means of implementing the prescribed aims and objectives. The syllabus, he stated, would prescribe a breadth of students' development in the ability to listen, speak, read and write in contexts of everyday communication, the mass media and literature. It would proscribe the drilling of systematic knowledge about linguistic or literary theory as an objective of English for student in Forms I-IV.

Little expressed his dissatisfaction with the failure of N.S.W. English teachers generally to integrate the various aspects of the subject. This, although Little did not say so, was a

direct legacy of the 1961/2 syllabus, as has been discussed in Chapter Four and Chapter Five. Little showed that he wished to retain the best features of the Newbolt conception of English and to reject any purely functional or skills-based definition. English, he said, should be "a humane and civilizing study, not merely a utilitarian one".¹¹⁰ Furthermore, he insisted,

...English is concerned with personal growth and response, and the development of abilities, rather than systematic knowledge about subject matter.¹¹¹

He seemed to recognise, however, that this assumption was more a sanguine hope than a firm statement of the then current N.S.W. situation, when he conceded that this tenet was "held somewhat waveringly".¹¹² Nevertheless, he declared that

...the assumption was becoming increasingly held. Terms such as "response" rather than "knowledge about" are becoming characteristic in talking about English.¹¹³

Little expressed his regret that the post-Dartmouth "new English" had not enjoyed wider application in N.S.W. classrooms.

Only a small though increasing minority seem to be using the newer approaches as the complete basis of their work. Most classrooms are still set out in serried ranks. Most English is timetabled as poetry today and language tomorrow.¹¹⁴

Yet Little concluded by testifying to what he saw to be the "remarkable achievements" of N.S.W. English teachers over the past decade. He claimed that they had invigorated their teaching of the subject, despite having had to work under trying conditions of over-populated classrooms. Such optimism was, no doubt, the basis for his committee's decision to place so much responsibility on the shoulders of the individual English teacher in the 1971 syllabus.

* * * * *

This chapter has examined the role of the two most important single factors in the setting of the scene for the most significant and innovative revision of any previous syllabus in the twenty three years under review in this study. The English Teachers' Association played a most significant role in raising the consciousness of the N.S.W. English teaching profession by endorsing and disseminating the "new English" prior to and after the Dartmouth Conference. As a result of its activity, with most of the members of the future syllabus committee being, or having been, members of the E.T.A. Council, one can say that no other syllabus of the period under examination had had the way prepared for it so comprehensively. Graham Little, a long time member of Council and a former President, had used the E.T.A. as a forum for expressing his own developing theories about how the syllabus should be re-constituted. In doing so he drew heavily upon Dixon's Growth Through English and Moffett's Teaching the Universe of Discourse. Most of the members of his syllabus committee also had, or would, become familiar with the re-definition of English that emerged from these works. The extent to which these new ideas and ideals, vigorously endorsed and communicated by the English Teachers' Association of N.S.W. in general, and by Graham Little in particular, were to find expression in the 1971 syllabus, will be the subject of Chapter Nine.

CHAPTER NINE

THE 1971 SYLLABUS FOR FORMS I-IV:

THE MOST SUBSTANTIAL DEMONSTRATION

OF "NEW BEGINNINGS" IN THE PERIOD 1953-1976

The 1971 English syllabus established a new definition of English in N.S.W. secondary education. As Homer remarked in 1973, it represented the most carefully considered application of 'growth' principles yet seen in Australia.¹ It has also been described as manifesting a "dramatic innovation".² At the same time it must be stressed that the 1971 syllabus does not represent a total rejection of all features of earlier "skills" and "cultural heritage" models. As noted in the previous chapter, some members of the Cambridge School of English have stridently criticised the progressive model of English based upon personal growth principles as developed and shaped by the socio-linguistic movement represented by Britton and the London Institute of Education group. The chief areas of criticism have been that what has become the Dixon-Britton English theoretical orthodoxy has separated language from literature, devalued literature, ascribed an unbalanced pre-eminence to linguistics and constructed an English curriculum bereft of any consideration of values.³ Allen maintains that nowhere has an English curriculum been designed that holds together a sensitive understanding of, and response to, literature and a concern for values, along with a concern for and enhancement of language through use, that distinguishes the thrust of the socio-linguistic approach so heavily influenced by Dixon and Britton. This chapter will show, however, that the Forms I-IV Syllabus Committee, under the strong leadership of Graham Little, did attempt such an integration in the N.S.W. English Syllabus for Forms I-IV, 1971. Furthermore this committee took seriously those principles of syllabus construction set out in the Wyndham Report. It was instructed to do so by the Secondary Schools' Board which, in a direction to the committee to review the 1961/2 document, ordered it to prepare a relatively short document of aims and objectives and to divest such a document of vast amounts of specific detail.⁴

When it finally appeared in 1971, the syllabus was in four sections. The final draft was the last of seven prepared and scrutinised successively by the committee. The "Introduction" served the same purpose as the preambles of its 1961/2 and 1953 predecessors, in setting out its fundamental rationale. It focused upon the ways in which the 1971 syllabus differed from its immediate predecessor, without placing too much emphasis on this difference. Indeed Little and his committee were to go to considerable lengths to claim that there was a substantial continuity between the 1961/2 and the 1971 syllabuses. It will be the contention of this chapter, however, that the differences between these two documents are considerably greater than exist between any other two successive syllabuses during the period 1953-1976.

Part I "The Aim and Scope of English in Years 7-10" expands the points made more generally in the Introduction, and introduces the completely new triad of "Meaning-Form-Values" which Little himself devised as the principle of integration upon which the whole of the syllabus was erected. This section also briefly states what kinds of competence students were to exercise in their use of language in various contexts. These matters are examined more specifically in Part II, "Objectives", but the syllabus is careful to stress the interdependence of these factors and the subservience of any specific aspect to the paramount aim of pursuing a purposeful and integrated approach to the teaching and learning of English. Objectives are listed under the headings of Usage, Vocabulary, Structure, Style, Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing, Everyday Communication, Communication in various media and Literature. The syllabus concludes with Part III, which deals with the controversial issues of "Stages and Levels". Instead of providing a "Commentary", as the 1953, the 1961/2 and 1965 documents had done, the Little syllabus committee decided to produce a "syllabus" booklet of aims and objectives complemented

by a series of commentary Notes. These consisted of General Bibliography and Commentary, Language, Literature, Listening, Speaking, Reading, Literature, Mass Media and Resources. As was the case in all previous chapters, the use of the word 'syllabus' will be understood to incorporate both the simple statement of aims and objectives, and the commentary (in this case the Notes) issued by the Syllabus Committee and officially promulgated by the Secondary Schools Board.

CONSTRUCTION OF THE 1971 SYLLABUS

Within several weeks of being appointed to replace Bowra as Chairman of the English Syllabus Committee, Little called his first meeting, on 18th June 1969, and announced that the time had come to revise the 1961/2 syllabus.⁵ A single document was to replace the separate Form I and Forms II-IV components. Furthermore the Board wished to stop the practice of issuing a separate "modified" English syllabus, prepared by a separate Syllabus Committee which had been part of a separate "Activity" curriculum, for intellectually and emotionally retarded children.

Little quickly demonstrated his own determination to produce a thorough-going revision. He pointed to the 1965 H.S.C. syllabus, which was so different from its 1953 predecessor, and which had adopted approaches to literature and language significantly different from the 1961/2 statement. He argued that it was therefore necessary to produce a junior secondary English syllabus which would be consonant with that approach. He suggested that the 1968 amendment to the 1961/2 syllabus concerning grammar⁶ had brought the need for some more general review of matters of language. He also referred to new developments in English curriculum theory in such matters as language, creative writing and mass media.

Little then turned to what he considered to be "more personal and probably more controversial"⁷ reasons why he

believed revision was absolutely necessary. Above everything else, insisted Little, a new English syllabus must set out to counter "the chronic threat of disintegration of the subject"⁸ by providing a sharper definition of the objectives of English in order to encourage "broader and flexible programmes of teaching".⁹ His fear that English could be disintegrating in classrooms was a permanent concern of Little. The Secondary Schools' Board had instructed chairmen to revise syllabuses by issuing a statement of aims and objectives rather than providing a catalogue of specifics. This had been Wyndham's intention all along but, as has been shown in Chapter Five, the Bowra syllabuses had not conformed to the Board's directives to produce shorter syllabuses.

Little laid down his plan in which the first six months would be used to explore, discuss, and resolve the general principles upon which foundations should be built. A further six months would then be devoted to working out the syllabic details. He adhered to this programme. He also insisted that all discussions, in the first stage, be undertaken in full committee rather than in separate sub-committees. Little was absolutely determined that his syllabus would have a coherence and an integrity which, he was convinced, could emerge only if the whole Committee worked together on establishing fundamental principles. Little also suggested that the document should be written for an 'audience' of the school English Master or Mistress, and should be devised on the assumption that there would be an ever-increasing move towards school-based curriculum development.¹⁰ His Committee agreed. While the majority of the members were familiar with, and supporters of, the "new English",¹¹ Little played a dominant role. For example, he himself typed all seven drafts of the syllabus as well as all the minutes of meetings. He wrote many discussion papers during the formulation of the various drafts.

Little's constant effort to effect some kind of continuity between what he felt to be of value from the past and what were new developments is illustrated in a comment he made in the first rough draft which he presented to his colleagues on July 2nd 1969. He said he was seeking

...a new pattern to stress purpose and integration while allowing for both continuation of the provisions of the existing Syllabus and some innovations.¹²

He and his colleagues abandoned the Advanced/Credit/Ordinary stratifications imposed on Bowra's committee which had proved to be such a burden in the preparation of the Forms II-IV document. In the preamble to the fifteen foolscap page draft syllabus, which he presented to his colleagues in October 1969, Little urged that any consideration of apportioning aspects or sections of the syllabus according to Levels or Forms I, II, III and IV should be completely ignored in the construction of the syllabus. There should be, instead, some kind of general statement on such matters at the end of the document.¹³ The Committee welcomed this decision. It was endorsed.

The first page of the syllabus consists of a series of quotations. Significantly, the first was from Dixon's Growth Through English: "English is the meeting point of experience, language and society".¹⁴ Little's purpose in listing these quotations was not only to illustrate some of the new theorists in English curriculum, whose ideas had played a significant role in the genesis of the syllabus, but also to demonstrate that the document emerged at the end of a continuity of development which should be acknowledged.¹⁵ Thus the second statement is from Nathaniel Bailey's Universal Etymological English Dictionary. It stressed the important roles of speech and writing in a civilized society. The syllabus then dips into the roots of Newbolt's "cultural heritage" English by citing Arnold's view in Culture and Anarchy that

...culture...does not try to teach down...it seeks...to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere.¹⁶

There follows a lengthy extract from the preamble to the 1961 Form I syllabus, which had strongly emphasised the Newbolt assertion of the absolute pre-eminence of the reading of literature to the individual, to the community and to civilization as a whole. The syllabus acknowledges the 1965 document's directive that in literature "there are no right answers"¹⁷ and repeats David Daiches' remark that literature "has for its purpose not the communication of fact but...the giving of pleasure".¹⁸ As if to draw attention to the new prominence that the 1971 statement would give to mass media as a language context, there are two quotations dealing with the media - one from McLuhan and the other from Perkins, who was the leading Australian protagonist for mass media studies. Then follows an extract from the most prominent British authority on English teaching for over a quarter of a century and who was the leading exponent of the secondary school expression of the Cambridge School of English, Denys Thompson. The only individual American author cited is Moffett. The list concludes wryly with an extract from a National Council of Teachers of English (U.S.A.) publication: "English teaching may be not so much a profession as a predicament".¹⁹

The "Introduction" to the 1971 syllabus

The extent to which the 1971 syllabus differs from its 1961/2 predecessor can be measured by comparing its "Introduction" with the earlier document's "Preamble". It has already been pointed out that the 1961/2 syllabus clearly espoused a combination of both the "skills-based" and "cultural heritage" models, and vigorously propounded the Newbolt conviction that no other form of knowledge could take precedence over a knowledge of English".²⁰ By contrast, Dixon's assessment that "English is the meeting point of experience, language and society", endorsed

by the 1971 document, is less dogmatic. In one of his many memoranda circulated to his colleagues, Little had demonstrated such a less exclusive definition of any superiority that English might claim, by urging the Committee to accept that English

...shares with other subjects a deep interest in man and his world, and with language as a vehicle of thought and feeling.²¹

The 1971 definition of English, for students between first and fourth forms, goes well beyond the range of its predecessors. While earlier formulations did not specify the kinds of language activities which should be at the centre of English curriculum, Little's syllabus does so.

This syllabus assumes that English for twelve to sixteen year-olds should be an active pursuit: a matter of pupils developing competence by engaging in an abundance of purposeful language-activities enjoyable because they are appropriate to needs, interests and capacities. For this reason all objectives of English are stated as "ability to do something": to listen, read, speak and write, and in doing so to interpret, discriminate, communicate, evaluate...²²

Never before had a N.S.W. syllabus insisted that activities be purposeful and enjoyable because they are appropriate to needs, interests and capacities. The influence of Moffett and Dixon is unmistakable. The "Introduction" is much more child-centred, less moralistic in its tone and far less concerned with fitting the student into patterns of civilization than the 1961/2 preambles. Once more the personal leadership of Little emerged here. In words which re-echoed Dewey's Child and the Curriculum,²³ and more recently Moffett and Dixon, Little, in a memorandum, had directed his Committee to re-define English by concentrating upon the child.

Whatever its starting point or mode of organisation, a satisfactory English course should reveal a balanced and purposeful concern with the child's observation and listening, reading, speaking and writing; with the whole world of English in relation to the child as a whole person.²⁴

The Committee agreed.

Another innovation was that element of the 1971 definition of secondary school English which declares:

the competence sought is no mere utilitarian skill but involves essentially human qualities of thought and feeling, because it is by language that we organize our human experience.²⁵

The evolution of this part of the Introduction demonstrates the Committee's determination to avoid any hint that what it was recommending could be interpreted as a form of operant-conditioning behaviourism. The passage cited above did not appear in any of the first five drafts. The fifth draft was circulated to schools for comment in 1970. Little collated and analysed such responses and appended the report "Response to the Draft Syllabus" to the meeting notice for 18th June 1971. He noted the concern of some teachers that the emphasis upon "doing" language activities in the Introduction might be interpreted to mean that the syllabus was reducing the definition of competence in English to easily measured quantifiable criteria.²⁶ Like Bowra, his predecessor, Little was opposed to reducing English to 'teacher-proof' programmed learning strategies that had been popular in the United States in the 1960's. Little stressed that it was his strong conviction that the syllabus should not be open to any interpretation that it was urging a competence that was merely functional or utilitarian. Rather it should demand "far more of an emotional or cultural kind than (such an interpretation) would allow".²⁷ Accordingly, the members of his committee agreed to add the sentence referred to above.

The 1953 and 1961/2 syllabuses had placed emphasis upon what Moffett terms "knowledge about"²⁸ English. Bearing the unmistakeable stamp of Moffett, the 1971 Introduction goes so far as to proscribe "knowledge about" as an objective of English in the junior secondary school. This was yet another quite dramatic innovation. The 1971 definition of English

...differs significantly from formulations in terms of set knowledge about linguistic or literary topics. In this syllabus there is no requirement for systematic knowledge of this kind. This is not to deny the validity of literary and linguistic scholarship, but to refrain from placing it as an objective of Forms I-IV when competence in the language in a wide variety of situations is sufficiently demanding.²⁹

The Committee amplifies and defends its position in the Introduction concerning its proscription of "set knowledge about linguistic or literary topics" in the first set of ancillary Notes on the Syllabus Forms I-IV entitled General Bibliography and Commentary. It does this after commencing with a strong assertion that there was a

...fundamental continuity between the English syllabuses of the 1960's and the current revision of them.³⁰

As has already been stated, it is one of the contentions of this chapter that the areas of so called continuity were much less significant than those of discontinuity and innovation. So determined seems the Committee to have been to reassure the readers of the document that little was being changed, that one finds the following remark

...the "new syllabus" is thus far from new in its aim or scope, or in its basic materials and methods appropriate to it.³¹

This coyly understates the true situation. It has been suggested that such comments were made because the Syllabus Committee feared that if the syllabus were to be discovered to be too radical a change from the status quo, then the Secondary Schools' Board,

which had called only for a revision rather than a radical reformulation, might have withheld its approval.³²

It is within this claim of continuity that the ancillary document defends the Introduction's proscription of the need for students to have a systematic knowledge of language. In conformity with its spirit of minimising admissions of discontinuity between the 1961/2 and 1971 statements, the Notes proceed to make a defence of the 1961/2 syllabus by asserting that, prior to 1968, the 1961/2 document had been unfairly interpreted. The General Bibliography and Commentary claims that those teachers who had taught considerable amounts of grammar in the wake of 1961/2 had been misinterpreting the syllabus. As has been shown in the discussion of these issues in Chapter Five, this is just not true. That syllabus had indeed made heavy demands for the classroom drilling of many grammatical functions and formulae. Almost as if apologizing for its own decision on grammar, and commending the previous Committee for its 1968 decision, the commentary continues merely to say that the "current revision takes the further step" of completely removing "such material entirely".³³ If, as Little's Committee claims, the move from 1961/2 to 1968 was a "step", then the action it took to remove entirely the requirement for systematic grammatical knowledge and to proscribe the use of such knowledge in any formal evaluation of student competence in English, was quite a leap. Dixon's Growth Through English had shown clearly that there had been virtual unanimity at Dartmouth about the irrelevance of the learning of formal grammar to the task of significantly improving students' linguistic performance. Moffett had been just as emphatic in Teaching the Universe of Discourse. The General Bibliography and Commentary concludes this section by reaffirming a corollary which had been staunchly advocated by Dixon and Moffett.

English is not constituted by knowledge of literary and linguistic terms, ideas and information, but by pupils' personal experiences and responses in language.³⁴

Another major innovation enacted in the Introduction to the 1971 syllabus is the devolution of considerable power and responsibility for English curriculum implementation to the classroom teachers. This had been a fundamental aspiration of Wyndham which, for reasons examined in Chapters Four and Five, the Bowra committee had not pursued. The 1971 Introduction expressed far greater optimism about teachers, as well as students, than had its predecessor. Teachers are encouraged to undertake "responsible experimentation in all aspects of English".³⁵ Rejecting any charges of naivete in this endeavour, Little argues strongly that he and his committee saw their role to be that of designing the best possible syllabus which would, indirectly, demand a raising of teaching standards to meet such challenges, rather than of pandering to the lowest common denominator. Little always hoped that the government would outlay the funds needed to provide the inservice formation that would be necessary to familiarize teachers with the principles underpinning the new syllabus so that they could implement it effectively.³⁶ His hopes were to prove unfounded.

The final principle enunciated in the Introduction, before it turns to strategies of implementation, was the one to which Little returned constantly in meetings, in memoranda and which he had stressed in the earlier E.T.A. and A.A.T.E. publications. This was the supreme need for an integrated conception of, and approach to, the teaching of English. The 1961/2 syllabus had headed off in five, arguably seven, different directions.

"The Introduction" to the 1971 document then proceeds to suggest various strategies of curriculum organisation that would encourage such an integration. Little came to regret very much

his inclusion among these strategies, of the "traditional pattern of weekly lessons in various facets such as poetry, composition, vocabulary and so on"³⁷ because, in his opinion, the majority of teachers subsequently used this concession to justify their continued practice of teaching English in that fragmented way which had been encouraged by the earlier syllabus, and to which Little was so steadfastly opposed. For such teachers the programme resembled the following: Monday - class novel; Tuesday - Comprehension; Wednesday - grammar and expression; Thursday - Drama; Friday - Poetry or Prose, and so on. It would seem that Little and his Committee incorporated this traditional fragmentary approach because of their strong determination not to emphasise the differences between this and the earlier syllabus, and to sustain their claim that a clearly observable continuity with earlier syllabuses was being preserved.

PART I: The Aim and Scope of English in Forms I-IV

This section amplifies the general rationale outlined in the Introduction by concentrating on three fundamental areas. It defines the aim of the syllabus as "to develop in pupils the utmost personal competence in using the language".³⁸ It proceeds to explain what was entailed in "utmost personal competence" by using and delineating Little's triad of meaning-form-value. It then details the specific aspects and functions of the use of language in those various contexts which required to be covered in the English curriculum. Simultaneously it stresses that

...to achieve the aim of English scope must
be given to all (these aspects and functions)
in their interrelationships.³⁹

Typical of the committee's insistence upon students' using the language, rather than "knowing about" the language, is the change in the first draft's expression of the "aim of English in Forms I-IV" from "to develop in pupils the utmost personal competence in the use of the language" to "to develop in pupils the utmost

personal competence in using the language"⁴⁰ (italics, the author). The gerund "using" denotes more activity and student involvement than the abstract noun "the use". Indeed, throughout the syllabus, verbs or gerunds are preferred to abstract nouns when outlining what is required of students.

It was Little who proposed the way of defining competence in language by using the meaning-form-values triad. In his original memorandum on this matter, he defined "meaning" as "what is being said"; "form" as "how something is being said", while "values" raised questions such as "was this worth saying and in this way?".⁴¹ He admitted that his proposed interdependent triad was probably the most controversial of all the proposals in his paper and was "quite prepared to abandon the suggestion should the Committee not like it".⁴² He offered this suggestion as an all embracing pattern which could act as an integrating perspective throughout "all topics in language and literature".⁴³

The Committee endorsed Little's proposal unanimously. Indeed the very first statement agreed upon for inclusion in the new syllabus enunciated this central principle of integration. In the final draft the committee used these three interdependent concepts

...to sum up what is centrally involved in
the appreciation and good use of language in
any situation.⁴⁴

The triad was to be used as the criterion for evaluating all objectives of the syllabus. A consideration of "meaning" demanded investigation of both thought and feeling. No previous syllabus had placed such an emphasis upon "feeling". A consideration of "form" would, inter alia, require examining "selections and arrangements of words, sentences, and other parts and aspects of the whole".⁴⁵ The 1953 and 1961/2 syllabuses had only obliquely and rarely touched on the issue of value. The 1971 statement places such questions as whether something was worth saying or not, and issues such as the "achievement, interest, relevance and

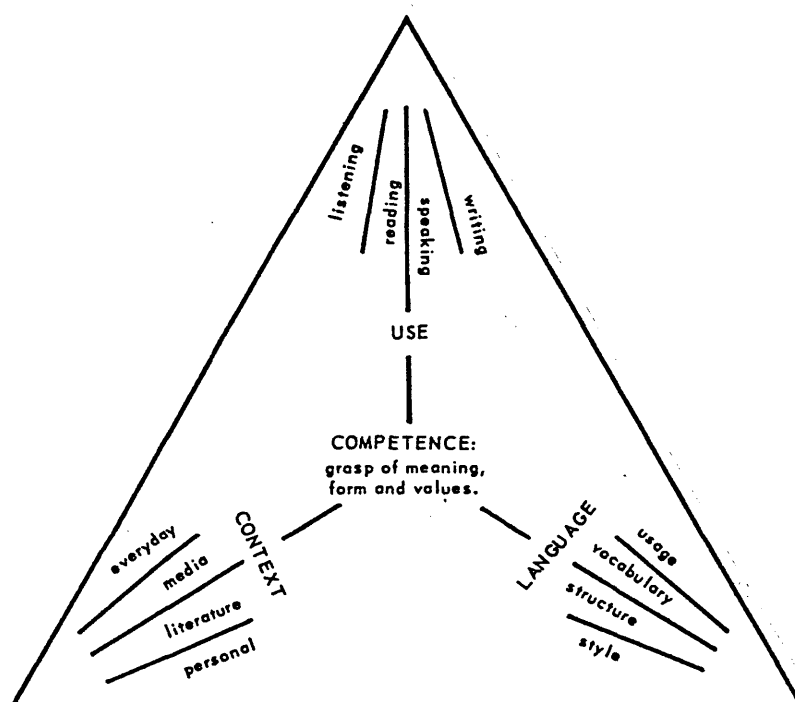
worth" of the substance of the language under consideration, right at the very centre of the English syllabus under the concept of "values". Such matters were to be explored from various points of view and especially "the pupil's own".⁴⁶

Along with Dixon and Moffett, Little shared the conviction that any emphasis upon skills or content, which was not shaped by a purposeful pursuit of meaning, was arid. In confronting the essential issue of how to define English, Little had found himself at one with Moffett.⁴⁷ What should distinguish a discipline, they both believed, was not its data of content, but the way in which the discipline treats the questions generated by the data. In the process of moving towards the enunciation of his triad, Little had defined the data of English as spoken and written "texts". Little rejected the proposition, which underpinned both the 1953 and most of the 1961/2 syllabuses, that students should be concerned more with delineating content and discussing literary forms and technique, than with engaging in the issues and values aroused in, through and by language. Thus he rejected the "taste" model of literary education as being too narrow. He insisted that as a reader, or listener, one cannot but be concerned, even if only unconsciously, with the values of the writer or speaker. These values would include those enacted in the "text", one's own, those lying outside one's own and those embodied in the text. Little was convinced that just as one cannot separate thought, feeling and action, therefore one cannot separate "meaning", "form" and "values".

While Little did not claim originality in asking such questions, he does acknowledge, as do his colleagues on the committee, that he was responsible for establishing this particular meaning-form-values triad definition of what is meant by competence in English. It provided the syllabus with an integrating coherence, just as the 1953 syllabus had done in its preamble. However the 1971 syllabus embodies a far more

comprehensive definition of English than can be found in the 1953, 1961/2 or 1965 English syllabuses.

Little and his Committee spent some considerable time seeking to arrive at some fairly simple schema which would demonstrate how the triad should be used to integrate all component parts of an English syllabus. It is Little's retrospective judgment that this proved to be the most difficult task undertaken by the Committee.⁴⁸ Members experimented, for example, with flow charts, input-output diagrams, concentric rings and communication models. Finally it was once again Little who produced a solution which was inspired by Moffett. Taking the phrase "competence in the language in use in context" Little constructed the following triangle



Explaining the symbolism of the triangle, the syllabus states that

...it emphasises that competence, language, use and context can only occur together and not apart; and that all aspects of English interact, as all lines in the triangle, if produced, would intersect all others in the central area of competence.⁵⁰

The syllabus also carefully points out that the diagram was concerned with relationships rather than weighting; it was not meant to imply equal importance or time for all aspects. Thus there were twelve interdependent components of the English 1971 syllabus incorporated in the following way.

Competence in the language in use in context: usage, vocabulary, structure, style.

Competence in the language in use in context: listening, reading, speaking, writing.

Competence in the language in use in context: everyday communication, communication in various media, literature, personal expression.⁵¹

Part II: Objectives

This third section of the syllabus lists the objectives of each of these twelve specific aspects. After having analysed the responses of teachers to the fifth draft, which had been circulated in 1970, Little decided there was a need to re-emphasize the necessity of teachers' adopting an integrated approach. Hence he added a final clause to the opening paragraph: "the emphasis is on integration".⁵²

Most of what is used in Section A "THE LANGUAGE in use in context" can be found in the 1961/2 document, but conversely much of what was in that earlier document's section on language is eliminated. All reference to "knowledge about" language is

deleted. The most obvious omission was the former syllabus' prescription of learning a system of formal grammar.

The syllabus makes clear that the evaluation of competence is in terms of what the pupil can do with the language, rather than what he knows about it in some systematic, theoretical way. Under this syllabus there is no requirement for knowledge of any grammatical system.⁵³

In justifying this omission in the General Bibliography and Commentary, the 1971 Syllabus Committee points out that contemporary linguistic research and the "remarkable upsurge of critical and creative study of English" in the 1960's had established that

...while the forms of language need positive treatment with young people...it is neither necessary nor sufficient to deal with them through the formal definitions and rules of some abstract system of language-theory, whether traditional or modern.⁵⁴

The syllabus did not go so far as to proscribe the use of grammatical terms, if their use proved to be of some use, but it consistently repeats Moffett's argument that the emphasis must be upon students' varied and resourceful use of the language rather than the assimilation of abstract knowledge about the language.⁵⁵

There is a fairly clear distinction between the 1961/2 and 1971 syllabuses in their approach to "Usage". While the Bowra syllabuses conceded that usage can legitimately exceed the bounds of formal Latinate grammatical rules, there was a strong implication that where such divergence exists it is usually due to "problems" that need to be corrected. The 1961/2 syllabus did not explore the legitimate distinction between spoken and written language usage. The concept of linguistic appropriateness being a valid criterion was not countenanced. The message that emerged fairly clearly was that the community's unstable linguistic habits were in need of being rectified.

On the other hand, the 1971 syllabus recognizes that there are various kinds and levels of legitimate usage. The concept of appropriateness, rather than of some absolute standard of formal correctness, permeates the syllabus "This does not mean that 'anything goes'", insists the syllabus, "but that language acceptable in one context may be unacceptable in another".⁵⁶ This bears the hallmark of the influence of the Language section of the 1965 H.S.C. English syllabus.⁵⁷ There was what Connell has termed a "top-down" influence from the H.S.C. Syllabus Committee to Forms I-IV.⁵⁸ Little was the only person who was a member of both Committees. Former members of Little's Form I-IV Committee attest to the serious impact that the 1965 H.S.C. syllabus had upon those framing the 1971 document.⁵⁹ As will be shown in Chapter Eleven, no corresponding influence "upwards" was exercised by the 1971 syllabus upon the construction of the 1974/6 H.S.C. syllabus. The influence was distinctly one way.

The syllabus treats Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing under "B. The language IN USE in context". There had been only two sentences on "listening" in each of the 1961 and 1962 syllabus documents. Four objectives are listed in the 1971 document. The first "of auditory perception" is the

...ability to discriminate between words and to respond to variation in pace, pitch, stress and pause as affecting meaning and tone.⁶⁰

The other three areas "Listening for meaning", "Critical listening" and "Listening and Observing", all conform to the pattern of outlining the objectives in terms of what students should do, rather than knowledge about abstract skills. The H.S.C. syllabus' stress on "appropriateness" rather than some abstract notion of universal correctness, is again outlined. As usual the syllabus goes to considerable length to present the meaning-form-values triad as a mode of coherence, and to stress integration.

Although the 1961/2 statement on Speaking was much longer than its successor, there is a great deal of similarity between both statements. Yet there is a considerable hiatus between the approach to speaking adopted by the 1971 syllabus of aims and objectives and that urged in the ancillary Notes on Speaking. The former, like its 1961/2 predecessor, required speech to be precise, clearly pronounced, rhythmical and properly intoned and stressed. Students are to practise in specific speech situations. Nowhere in the syllabus is the word "talk" used - contemporary theory then used this term frequently to stress the relationship between spoken language and learning. The term "talk" is, however, frequently used in the Notes. The commentary shares Britton's notion of informal talk as being used to "give shape to experience".⁶¹ The 1961/2 syllabus had shown little, if any, sense of the notion of appropriateness in speech. It had urged teachers to eradicate what it confidently proclaimed to be "common speech faults" and to remove students' "unpleasant voice quality".⁶² On the other hand, reiterating what appeared in the Listening Notes, the 1971 Speaking Notes display a far more tolerant approach to such issues as accent.⁶³ The Notes share the approach to informal talk that had been suggested in Dixon's Growth Through English. They go considerably beyond the syllabus proper itself, which is not markedly dissimilar from its 1961/2 predecessor.

The immediate difference between the objectives of Reading outlined in 1971 compared with its predecessor (apart from the brevity of the former) is the opening statement that the development of competence in oral and silent reading must involve "the enjoyment of reading".⁶⁴ The 1961/2 syllabus had put its opening emphasis upon "efficiency in reading" declaring that this would be achieved "through the intensive study of comparatively short passages".⁶⁵ The matter of motivating students through interest and enjoyment had been mentioned in the 1961/2 syllabus, but these issues, as well as the relationship between enjoyable

purposefulness and growth in learning, received much greater emphasis in the 1971 document. The 1971 Reading Notes insist that the teachers' provision of a purpose for students' reading should be the pedagogical starting point. The 1971 syllabus does not merely rely on some naive romantic belief that children will just spontaneously read. Throughout this syllabus, a heavy professional responsibility is entrusted to teachers to implement these aims and objectives. Thus, urge the Reading Notes, only through careful personal direction by the teacher will students be led to realize that "reading is not a sterile exercise but an adventure of the mind".⁶⁶ Teachers are directed to read widely within children's literature.

While the latter document retains the 1961/2's initiative of recommending speed reading, it places much less emphasis upon it. The 1971 formulation cautions teachers against reliance upon "so called comprehension exercises" and other reading kits, and also warns against any over-reliance on the diagnostic reading tests which had been advocated by its predecessor, but which might "destroy the confidence pupils may have acquired".⁶⁷ While the section on Reading, as did other sections, emphasises the personal growth, child-centred purposeful approach to English which had been advocated by Moffett and Dixon, it also incorporates an emphasis upon the skills of reading. The Reading Commentary specifies such skills as whole word recognition, phonic analysis, responding to cues suggested by affixes, syllabification and word compounds, as well as dictionary skills. Only students working at Credit and Advanced levels were encouraged by the 1962 syllabus to think critically about the quality of what they were reading. The 1971 syllabus and ancillary Notes go beyond the 1961/2 basic requirements for all students to decode accurately the words on the page and to understand the writer's meaning, by insisting that

all students be able to read with discrimination and constantly to exercise a judgment based upon, and sensitized by, their own experience.

The Little syllabus also is much more comprehensive in its definition of what should constitute reading material for all students in the junior secondary high school. The Bowra syllabuses had been heavily oriented to literature. In its Form I document there had been very little of any other material, such as that associated with any of the mass media, while the Forms II-IV specified that only students in Credit and Advanced levels should study newspapers and magazines. The 1962 tone was somewhat deprecatory in its attitude towards such material. While the 1971 syllabus certainly does not exclude literature, it goes beyond the scope of reading outlined by its predecessor and does not display a patronising tone towards non-literary material. The range includes a wide spectrum of popular newspapers and magazines, government documents, insurance forms, various types of instructions, letters, circulars, hire purchase agreements, taxation forms, insurance policies, textbooks in other subjects and so on. A wide range of literary non-fiction is listed in addition to what is suggested in the literature section. Biography, travel, sport, social economic and political comment are all included.⁶⁸

The 1971 section on Writing moves into areas not discussed in the earlier syllabuses. The Bowra formulation had gone to great lengths to provide specific details on Written Expression with an emphasis more upon the form than the substance of students' writing. As throughout the 1971 syllabus, this section emphasises the critical roles that should be played by purpose and pleasure in students' writing. Students are to write for differing audiences besides the teacher, such as members of the class, other students, imagined groups or individuals or just for themselves. Completely absent from the syllabus are the minutiae

of details concerning the construction of sentences and paragraphs which were detailed in the 1961/2 document. There was no ancillary commentary published on Writing.⁶⁹

The third and final section of Part II Objectives dealt with "the language in use IN CONTEXT". The first of these, "Everyday Communication", merely indicates the students' use of language in contexts outside of literature and mass media. The adding of the fourth context "Personal Expression" represented a subtle, yet significant, departure from an important direction taken by Dixon. One of the controversial aspects of Growth Through English was that Dixon had suggested that students' own imaginative writing should be considered to be part of what is termed literature. Originally the Syllabus Committee agreed. The fifth draft had the single heading "Literature and Personal Writing". In his report on the teachers' submissions, Little incorporated the following sentence from one of the submissions:

Make clearer that the section is about the literature children read and that which they make.⁷⁰

However the committee refused to retain this approach. Instead, it deleted "Personal Expression" from the "Literature" context and treated it separately.

The most obvious observation to be made concerning the literature component of this syllabus is that it is given far less prominence than in any earlier syllabus in N.S.W. Although it is the largest of the twelve sub-sections in the document, it is still only one and a half pages out of a total of seventeen pages in the syllabus as a whole. Almost as if anticipating that there would be some disquiet about the literature section, Little told an E.T.A. audience that the section on literature was handled with "great love and care, and no apology (was) being made for giving it special prominence".⁷¹ "Prominence" was a misleading term. Although it was the longest sub-section in the whole syllabus, it

was hardly prominent; it was now but one of twelve sub-sections. Previously it had held a pre-eminent position of importance in the 1953, 1961/2 and 1965 syllabuses.

The 1971 statement on literature goes considerably beyond requiring students to know about literature. It goes beyond insisting that children be able to talk about literary features and qualities. It goes beyond emphasising the observation of form and the comprehension of meaning. It places a heavy emphasis, which can not be found in the 1953 and 1961/2 documents, upon encouraging students to respond genuinely and honestly to the meaning and substance of literature. The approach to the teaching of literature advocated in the 1965 H.S.C. syllabus, is re-echoed in the 1971 statement. The 1971 document makes "no demands about literary history, information about lives and works and influences and so on".⁷² The syllabus affirms the belief that students are capable of justifying their own personal views about texts in the same way that the 1965 H.S.C. syllabus had done.⁷³ Like its H.S.C. predecessor, the 1971 document is at pains to point out that it is not seeking sophisticated literary criticism but rather to have students "developing and justifying (their) personal views" by drawing upon "abundant evidence from the text as genuinely experienced".⁷⁴ The Bowra statements had concentrated upon the observation of literary form and the expression of the student's comprehension of meaning. Only for Advanced students, in the Bowra syllabus, was there a requirement for "searching exercises in discrimination" in which such advanced students could "be encouraged to express sincere judgments at all times".⁷⁵ The 1971 formulation displays not only greater emphasis upon personal response to meaning, but also the confidence that this can be achieved by all pupils, not merely by those pursuing English at the Advanced level. The integrating principles of the meaning-form-values triad are emphasised once again.

While insisting, as Dixon had done, that teachers must choose texts according to the criterion of relevance to pupils' experience, the 1971 document also reiterates the needs, interests and capacities criteria of the Introduction and urges teachers to extend students' horizons in ways not emphasized by Dixon.

As well as the contemporary time there should still be a place for such traditional classics in all literary forms which still have power to involve young people and make them aware of the heritage left by previous generations. Relevance is important, but included in the idea should be relevance to universal human experience, thoughts, feelings and aspirations.⁷⁶

Thus the 1971 syllabus clearly states that the endorsement of a personal growth type of model to English teaching should certainly not exclude attempts to retain the better features of the cultural heritage or skills models that could be found in the earlier syllabuses. The 1971 Syllabus Committee saw itself as taking the best from traditional approaches and going beyond their limitations. That Dartmouth and Newbolt both are to be found incorporated in this syllabus, was emphasised by Little himself:

John Dixon is right: English is "the meeting-point of experience, language and society". Tradition is right: it is the central humanity.⁷⁷

This syllabus is considerably more wide-ranging in defining what it considers to be the subject matter of literature. Since 1961 there had been developed a vast body of "literature...being written especially for young people" much of which was "excellent".⁷⁸

There are significant differences between the approaches of the 1971 and 1961/2 syllabuses to the teaching and learning of drama. It is only in the Drama section of the Bowra syllabus that one finds reference to dealing with literary works "of lesser

merit".⁷⁹ Teachers were warned to expose to their students the presumed inferior calibre of the drama of the mass media.⁸⁰ The 1961/2 syllabus stipulated that by the end of Form IV "two types of Shakespearean plays (were) to be treated".⁸¹ Advanced level students were to study more Shakespearean plays and other longer dramatic works. Teachers could abridge such plays if "necessary to maintain interest and to give correct emphasis to the dramatic highlights".⁸² The 1971 syllabus expresses a strong disagreement. Teachers are advised against the inappropriate use of full-length, especially Shakespearean, plays. They are specifically directed not to indulge in abridgement. A Shakespearean play was to be taught in its integrity or not at all.⁸³ In its treatment of drama in the mass media, Little's syllabus betrays nothing of the patronising tone of its predecessor.⁸⁴

While the 1961/2 syllabus touched upon the mass media only marginally, and then rather perjoratively, the 1971 document apportions a distinct sub-section of "language in use IN CONTEXT" to "communication in various media". This syllabus is emphatic that the language, and what it terms the 'non-language', areas of the mass media should occupy as legitimate a place in the contexts of the English curriculum in secondary education as those occupied by literature, every day communication and personal expression. The tone of the syllabus is neither pejorative nor patronising and embodies that opinion of W.H. Perkins which is cited in the frontispiece of the syllabus, that teachers should "teach in, for and against the media".⁸⁵ The syllabus urges

...a discovery approach through open-ended enquiry and creative work rather than any attitude of "passive acceptance or inveterate hostility".⁸⁶

The supplementary Notes (No.6) on the Media make it clear that a complete study of the media in their own right is not expected. Students are to be encouraged to become involved in the creative use of the media.

The 1971 syllabus acknowledges that the inclusion of a substantial component of mass media studies amounts to a significant addition to what had traditionally been conceived of as the content of an English course. In order to accommodate this new section no teaching time is to be taken from literature and written and spoken expression, but, as the Media Notes indicate,

...media studies might take time previously devoted to language studies of the formal kind, which are no longer a requirement of English courses in Years I-IV in N.S.W.⁸⁷

The syllabus manifests its usual preoccupations with having students 'doing' English and with teachers pursuing an integrated approach to the subject.

Many specific areas of the mass media are listed. Students are to respond intelligently to, and to use the language of, radio. They are to grasp the significance of music and other sound in relation to speech in the media. The significance of graphics such as typefaces, illustrations and layout in the print media including posters, newspapers, pamphlets and magazines in the expression and comprehension of meaning in such media is to be explored. The final areas discussed not only incorporate completely new material in a junior secondary English syllabus in N.S.W. but also illustrate the constant emphasis of this syllabus upon "doing" English rather than merely "knowing about" English:

- (d) Ability to discriminate and evaluate communication in the screen media (film and television) including ability to discern uses of the camera, editing and sound mixing as parts of the communication. Ability to plan or make screen sequences.
- (e) Ability to understand and use language in news presentation and advertising as in the various media.⁸⁸

Part III: Stages and Levels

The greatest irritant experienced by Bowra's committee had been having to conform to the Secondary Schools Board's insistence that the syllabus should demonstrate clear demarcation between Advanced, Credit and Ordinary Levels in content and methodology of approach. At a very early stage in its deliberations the members of Little's committee had agreed to draw up a syllabus which would pay no heed to specific levels within the candidature, and to include at the end a general set of guidelines on stages (specific to each of Forms I, II, III and IV) and levels (Advanced, Ordinary/Credit and Modified). The committee was also careful to insist that its directives were to be interpreted no more authoritatively than merely as flexible guidelines.⁸⁹

In seeking to establish principles upon which to base some differentiation according to Forms, the syllabus adopts the notion of a continuum towards maturity from Form I to Form IV.

The movement is from childish interests towards a more adult orientation, and from a relatively concrete and egocentric thinking to a more reflective outlook upon a wider world, usually accompanied by an increase of self-consciousness.⁹⁰

Little and his committee would appear to have drawn upon the extremely similar notions of adolescent maturation which James Moffett had used and explained in his Teaching the Universe of Discourse. What Moffett terms the process of decentring, which comes with the growth towards maturity, is adopted in this syllabus. As the student grows towards maturity, the English curriculum should reflect such decentring. Thus, by Forms III and IV, the curriculum:

...needs also to appeal to interests that are becoming more reflective, less directly personal, and more social. With increasing maturity, the pupil is capable of more conscious realization of what is involved in the uses of language.⁹¹

Such a formulation shows more subtlety than its 1961/2 predecessor. In its awareness of factors other than cognitive that must be taken into account when preparing material for pupils of different needs, interests and capacities, the syllabus warns of the grave mistake of equating social with intellectual maturation:

...slow learners need material that though simple in form is relevant to their age-group in content, ... not even the brightest pupils are adults.⁹²

Modified level students should be able to follow a course approximating the Ordinary Level, while Activity Level pupils are said to need "special techniques of teaching and special materials to make the most of their abilities".⁹³ Previously the Modified and Activity Level students had followed a completely separate secondary school curriculum.

The document sets out to define the parameters of Advanced and Modified Levels in broad and flexible terms. Advanced pupils are said to be capable of perceiving a greater depth of meaning and of a greater recognition of and capacity for abstract thought. Their English course should challenge, broaden and deepen their language. The needs, interests and capacities of Modified students are outlined succinctly yet quite comprehensively. Such students are said to be distinguished by a very limited range of language, especially in the written mode. Their writing displays little flexibility, their vocabulary is limited and their sentence structure is repetitive. They are said to have great difficulty sustaining continuity in both written and spoken expression. They need an English course

...that makes realistically modest demands on verbal skills, and seeks to develop skills through rewarding experience engendering a feeling of success.⁹⁴

At the same time the syllabus insists that for such students

...the need for remedial-style teaching in the formal sense should not be allowed to obscure the need for enjoyable experience and expression in creative forms which frequently provides the real basis for progress.⁹⁵

Without specifically citing Holbrook, it is highly likely that Little and his colleagues were aware of Holbrook's arguments along these lines in his English for the Rejected.⁹⁶

Having broadly defined these strata of the continuum, the syllabus defined Ordinary as falling between the two. Those in the "Activity group" are said to have needs which will be met frequently by what the syllabus terms "basic language learning".⁹⁷ By way of some kind of defence of this very general statement, the syllabus promises that "ways of meeting these needs will be made in the Notes to the syllabus".⁹⁸ This promise was not honoured. Until this document, syllabus committees in English had not addressed themselves to the needs of such "Activity" students. This separate curriculum had been instituted in 1951. There had been a Modified English syllabus prepared by a separate committee in 1967. This had been basically an abbreviated form of the Bowra syllabus with slightly more emphasis upon the encouragement of creative or imaginative writing. The Little syllabus incorporated such Modified students in its candidature. The 1971 syllabus was to be applied to such students with certain appropriate emphases:

...Modified Level pupils need straightforward narration, uncomplicated structure and relevant themes.⁹⁹

* * * * *

In many ways the 1971 syllabus was significantly different from its predecessors. It was similar to the 1953 document in that both Mitchell and Little had feared that English was

approaching some kind of crisis: for Mitchell it was one of declining standards of student literacy, while for Little it was the possible disintegration of the subject's coherence. Both the 1971 and 1953 syllabuses were erected upon an integrating rationale which was enunciated in the respective preamble or introduction. The rationales themselves were, however, fundamentally different. The 1953 syllabus was based on the Newbolt assumption that English could be defined as the expression and comprehension of thought. The 1961/2 statement seemed to assume this to be true but the structure of the Bowra documents had the effect of disintegrating the subject. The 1965 H.S.C. syllabus' definition of English had been heavily influenced by the division of the subject into the two academic areas of literature and language by the Department of English at the University of Sydney. English Expression was added to these components. The 1971 syllabus established a new definition of English in secondary education: it represented a "new beginning". It assumed that English must be an active pursuit with students being engaged in purposeful, enjoyable language interests appropriate to their needs, interests and capacities. It repudiated that definition of English which had included the requirement that students need to acquire "set knowledge about linguistic or literary topics".¹⁰⁰ Throughout the 1971 syllabus there is a constant reiteration of the necessity of, and the rationale for, integration in the teaching of the many facets of English.

The absolutely central theoretical rationale upon which such integration was to be achieved was Little's triad of meaning-form-value. This new definition of English was used to incorporate and demonstrate coherence between and within the components of usage, vocabulary, structure, style, listening, reading, speaking and writing, in the contexts of everyday communication, communication in various media, literature and personal expression.

One of the significant differences between the 1961/2 and 1965 syllabuses, and the 1971 syllabus, was the immense importance of contemporary overseas influences, especially of Moffett and Dixon. These English curriculum theories were channelled into the process of syllabus construction because of the influence of the English Teachers' Association in general, and of its former President and the English Syllabus Committee Chairman, Graham Little, in particular. The majority of the members of Little's committee belonged to the English Teachers' Association and, indeed, were members of the central executive Council of the E.T.A. which met every month. At such meetings, overseas developments were discussed and the inservice functions of the Association planned. Thus the E.T.A. was important, not only for its dissemination of English curriculum reform through its publications, conferences and inservice courses, but because at the Council level it brought together a group of influential English teachers and members of the Sydney Teachers' College English staff, a number of whom were also members of the Syllabus Committee. The chairmen of all six sub-committees established during the formulation of the 1971 syllabus were members of the E.T.A. Council

The role played by Little personally was of extreme importance. Certainly he had a Committee that was in strong empathy with his own approach to English. His fellow members were well aware of the "new English" curriculum movement shaped at Dartmouth, not only because of the influence of the E.T.A. and A.A.T.E., but because most of them had read Dixon and Moffett. Little provided vigorous, diligent and extremely well-informed leadership. The long Introduction and Part I sections of the syllabus, which provided the fundamental rationale and underpinning structure of the syllabus, were the direct products of Little's own papers presented to his colleagues. When the Committee ran into an impasse searching for a simple yet comprehensive model which would incorporate the basic themes of

the syllabus, it was Little who provided the solution. The Committee strongly supported the Chairman in his determination that the syllabus be based on a commitment to the purposeful use of language in context. It was Little's own triad of meaning-form-values which the Committee adopted as the central integrating force in the document's rationale. Little had shown at the 1968 E.T.A. Conference, that he was determined to upgrade the function of mass media studies in the English curriculum against the background of a traditional distaste for the mass media which had been enshrined in the 1961/2 and 1965 syllabuses. Subsequently, mass media studies became the most substantial addition of content in the 1971 syllabus. Little had been a strong supporter of the new approach taken to literature studies in the H.S.C. 1965 syllabus. He had been the only member of the Forms I-IV Committee on the H.S.C. Committee. The approach taken by the 1971 syllabus to literature strongly reflected the assumptions of that H.S.C. syllabus.

Little had not only been elated at the spirit of the "new English" which he had found in Britain during his 1967 visit - he had also been alarmed at some polarisation of teaching practices which he saw emerging. He was concerned that the new revolution might lead to an uncritical repudiation of everything that had been 'traditional' in English teaching and/or an uncritical endorsement of everything that was or claimed to be 'new'. It was this fear of either uncritical fadishness or unthinking conservatism, that drove Little on to construct a syllabus firmly based on an integrating rationale which he claimed did not too obviously repudiate the 1961/2 syllabus. It has been argued throughout this chapter that, despite a number of claims made in the syllabus (and especially the General Bibliography and Commentary Notes) to the effect that there was a clear continuity between the 1971 document and its predecessor, the true assessment is that the 1971 syllabus pioneered some major redirections of English curriculum in N.S.W.

While there is some substance in Watson's criticism that

...at no place in the syllabus were these ideas brought together in a coherent statement about the personal growth model of English or the idea of experience-centred English¹⁰¹

his comment is nevertheless somewhat irrelevant. It is clear that Little and his Committee did not see their role as making coherent statements about theoretical models but rather as that of constructing a syllabus which, while retaining some continuity with its predecessor's document, would nevertheless reflect the Committee's own concepts of what should be included in such a syllabus. Little and his colleagues did not perceive their task as one of merely translating into a syllabus any specific model which might automatically reject alternative approaches to English teaching and learning. In terms of Dixon's models, Little saw his task as constructing a syllabus which, while certainly based upon the personal growth model, nevertheless at the same time would incorporate the best features of the earlier skills-based and cultural heritage models. In the terms used by Abbs and Ball, the 1971 syllabus effected a combination of the emphases of both the Cambridge and socio-linguistic schools which Allen claimed in 1980 had been achieved nowhere. Although the syllabus statement of aims and objectives itself does not clearly delineate the theories referred to by Watson, the supplementary Notes certainly amplify the theoretical principles which underpin the syllabus.

Finally, Little and his Committee chose to make the assumption that their syllabus was being prepared for professionally competent subject Masters and Mistresses who would be, or would become, aware of the foundational theory of the "new English" as outlined especially in Dixon and Moffett's writings and propagated by the E.T.A. However at the same time they were realistic enough to acknowledge that not all such Masters and Mistresses, and certainly not all English teachers, would be so informed. Little and his colleagues assumed that those

responsible for education in N.S.W. would institute inservice programmes to provide teachers with the appropriate theory which would ensure that the syllabus would be properly implemented at the classroom level. As has been already shown, this syllabus encouraged a great deal of initiative by teachers to devise their own implementary strategies, as had been recommended in the Wyndham Report. Not long after the syllabus was officially endorsed by the Secondary Schools Board, the Board wrote to Little to see whether his committee would favour the abolition of the full-scale public examination at the end of Fourth Form and its replacement of school assessment moderated by a State-wide reference test employing carefully constructed 'objective' testing as well as requiring students to write several essays.¹⁰² Little's Committee strongly supported this suggestion as it felt that the compulsory public examination would impede, rather than enhance, the chances of the syllabus being properly implemented. Little wrote to the Minister for Education urging him to use the money thus saved for the establishment of inservice courses for English teachers throughout N.S.W. in order to familiarize all teachers with the theories upon which the 1971 syllabus was based. His call fell on deaf ears.¹⁰³ Little felt that it was not up to a committee, charged with the responsibility of preparing an "aims and objectives" document, to incorporate within that syllabus a thorough, theoretical exposition of the underlying philosophy, nor to detail specific features of classroom implementation.

Another important, indeed, up to that time, unique feature of the formulation of this syllabus was that the Committee circulated a rough draft to every school in N.S.W., in which it solicited the comments of all English teachers, prior to preparing the final draft that was submitted to the Board. Little was able to report both to his Committee and to a public meeting of English teachers at the 1971 Annual Conference of the N.S.W. English Teachers' Association that the response of the majority of teachers was one of approval.

Little's Committee had succeeded in exercising a greater degree of independence from the Board's control on the matters of stages and levels than Bowra's had managed to achieve. English, as defined in the 1961/2 syllabus, had been, in effect, reduced to seven almost separate components which, in turn, were sub-divided in content and sometimes methodology according to the levels of Advanced, Credit and Ordinary. Little's Committee resolved this problem by presenting an English syllabus for all students with an additional Section III, which delineated broad guidelines for stages and levels, and supported it by Notes of varying degrees of comprehensiveness. Decisions as to the appropriateness of specific content and methodology were to be left to the professional competence of English Masters, Mistresses and teachers. Suggested reading lists appropriate for Advanced, Credit, Ordinary and Modified were subsequently drawn up. These, however, in keeping with the whole spirit of the syllabus, were most comprehensive in range and prescribed no specific texts whatever.

Despite the insistence of Little that there was not anything radically new about this syllabus when compared to its 1961/2 predecessor, there was very much that was new in this document when compared with either the 1961/2 or 1965 formulations. Virtually every point made in the "Introduction" represented a component of a new definition of English. The emphasis upon action-knowledge rather than knowledge-about, was new. It was an innovation to insist that students should develop competence through an abundance of purposeful language activities "enjoyable because they are appropriate to needs, interests and capacities".¹⁰⁴ The proscribing of set knowledge about linguistic or literary theory as an objective of an English curriculum represented a dramatic change from the 1953, 1961/2 and 1965 syllabuses. The invitation to teachers to engage in responsible experimentation and to develop their own courses had never before been offered. No other syllabus defining junior secondary school English had offered methodological alternatives to the traditional approach of weekly lessons in various,

reasonably discrete, facets of English. Although the 1953 syllabus had been constructed upon an integrating principle, no syllabus prior to that of 1971 had placed such repeated emphasis upon constructing a document which integrated all the various facets of English.

No previous syllabus had placed such importance upon the role of the student's experience in an English curriculum. While the 1953 document had argued for an organic relationship between language and the expression of thought, this syllabus went much further by insisting that the competence being sought for pupils

...involves essentially human qualities of thought and feeling, because it is by language that we organize our human experience.¹⁰⁵ (*italics, the author's*)

Part I of the syllabus "The Aim and Scope of English Forms I-IV" represented another completely new perception of English based on Little's triad of meaning-form-values. The 1953 and 1961/2 syllabuses had virtually ignored that dimension of English which the 1971 syllabus described as "values". The triangular representation of a holistic and integrated conceptualization of the English syllabus was completely novel.

While many of the specific linguistic skills included under Usage, Vocabulary, Structure and Style can be found in its predecessors, both the briefly worded syllabus and the more expansive Notes are suffused by the "new English" of Dartmouth in general and Dixon and Moffett in particular, as shaped by Little and his Committee in the earlier sections of the syllabus. The section on Listening gave far greater prominence to this mode of communication than any previous syllabus had done. The Reading part of the syllabus, especially as expanded in the Notes, went beyond the parameters of the 1961/2 syllabus. While the Speaking section of the syllabus proper added nothing to its predecessor, the Speaking Notes reflected the significant developments in the

role of talk in the English curriculum that had been discussed at length both by Dixon and Moffett. The Writing component of the syllabus reflected some of the new developments in the theory of writing but suffered by not having any supplementary Notes.

While the Everyday Communication and Personal Expression contexts of the "language in use in context" section did not incorporate anything new from what had been included in the 1961/2 documents, there were significant changes in the other two areas of Literature and Communication in various media. Following upon the new emphases of the literature sections of the 1965 H.S.C. syllabus and reflecting the meaning-form-values triad, the literature section of the 1971 syllabus placed great emphasis upon breadth, relevance, depth and variety of personal response to, and the experiencing of, literature by students. Furthermore, compared with the 1953, 1961/2 and 1965 documents, what was defined by the term "literature" was considerably broadened in the 1971 syllabus by the Notes' inclusion of the students' own imaginative writing. No mention of such writing appeared in the First and Second Level courses of the 1965 H.S.C. syllabus. While the 1971 syllabus retained the requirements that students be aware of the various aspects of literary techniques such as characterisation, setting, dialogue, imagery, irony, tone, rhythm and so on, the emphasis was upon seeing the ways in which these forms related to the total meaning and values of the literature under consideration. Once again the 1971 formulation reflected the influence of the 1965 H.S.C. syllabus. However, whereas the 1965 syllabus had insisted upon the study of separate language topics, the 1971 document deliberately eliminated the prescription of any systematic "knowledge about" language or literature. There was a far greater depth and breadth of response to literature encouraged in the 1971 syllabus than in its 1961/2 predecessor. There was also a directive to cease making the study of Shakespearean plays compulsory for all students.

The most substantial addition of content to the syllabus was that of communication in various media. Print, screen, television and radio media now became orthodox areas of linguistic and non-linguistic investigation and practice within, but not beyond, the parameters carefully laid down in the earlier sections of the syllabus. Absent was the patronising, sometimes clearly pejorative, tone of the 1961/2 syllabus and, to a lesser extent, of the 1965 H.S.C. document.

The syllabus, formally approved in 1971, could be introduced at the discretion of each individual school in 1972 for Forms I-IV and became the official syllabus for Forms I-IV in 1973. Little and his Committee had not only assumed that a thorough inservice education programme would be designed to implement the syllabus, but they also seemed to be prepared to accept that any such proper implementation would take time. Little presumed that there would be a gradual devolution of curriculum implementation and control to teachers at regional, and eventually, school level. The syllabus was written in the hope that this would occur. However, it was not until the late 1970's, following upon the establishment of the N.S.W. Directorate of Studies in 1974, that there would be any State-wide programmes to assist classroom teachers to understand, assimilate and properly implement the 1971 syllabus.

The 1953 and 1961/2 syllabuses, which were the immediate junior secondary school predecessors of the 1971 document, had been based upon a definition of English which had been formulated in the United Kingdom in 1921 by the Newbolt Report. The 1965 H.S.C. syllabus owed its literary emphasis to the Cambridge School of English, as mediated principally by Goldberg and supported by Wilkes and the majority of that Syllabus Committee. The new area of Language Studies was based on the curriculum followed in the early undergraduate years by the English Language section of the University of Sydney's Language Department. The "Expression"

component of Third Level was not dissimilar from the spirit of the relevant section of the 1953 and 1961/2 syllabuses.

By way of dramatic contrast the N.S.W. English Syllabus Committee for Forms I-IV commenced, in June 1969, to design a syllabus whose rationale was founded firmly on the then most recent overseas advances in English curriculum theory. The Dartmouth Seminar had taken place in 1966. Dixon's Growth Through English appeared in 1967, when Little was in Britain. Moffett's Teaching the Universe of Discourse had appeared in 1968. The difference between the Newbolt conception of English in 1921, and that of Dixon and Moffett was profound. From 1953 until 1970 while successive N.S.W. English syllabuses operating in junior secondary school classrooms had manifested "new beginnings" in various ways, they had not deviated markedly from the general Newbolt orientation towards English. One year later, however, the Secondary Schools Board promulgated in 1971 an English syllabus which represented the most dramatic re-definition of junior secondary English for N.S.W. in this century.