Chapter 1

The Rationalist Ascendancy in the Orders of Discourse in

*English K-6 Syllabus and Support Documents* (1994)

Some Introductory Remarks

Goodson has argued (1992, p.23-24) that the 'histories of school subjects' are one essential area for scrutiny when a system of schooling is being examined. This study records some parts of the history of the school subject labelled 'Key Learning Area English' in the NSW primary curriculum: those parts of the history, especially, which lead to two paradigm shifts in the 'written curriculum' of the primary syllabus for subject English published in the mid-1990s. Goodson (1994) has commented about the necessity and efficacy of studying the written curriculum:

> The study of written curriculum will, first, increase our understanding of the influences and interests active at the preactive level. Second, this understanding will further our knowledge of the values and purposes represented in schooling and the manner in which preactive definition, notwithstanding individual and local variations, may set parameters for interactive realisation and negotiation in the classroom and school, as well as for discourse construction and textual production. (pp. 19-20)

This chapter describes the schema Goodson (1992, 1994) has provided for the study of the history of school subjects, and in particular, of the preactive stage of the written curriculum. This present study examines the history of the preactive stage (see below, p.15) of subject English in NSW primary school curriculum documents from about 1990 until about 1996 and undertakes a detailed analysis of the *English K-6 Support and Document* (1994) (hereafter, *EK6SSD*).
The interactive stage of the curriculum is defined by Goodson as 'the written curriculum operationalised in classrooms' (1994, p.24). This present study gives only a small account of the interactive stage of the 1994 syllabus through quoting some teacher responses to the syllabus and support documents (see below, p.67). A view of this stage is available to the interested reader in the Eltis Report, Focus on learning: Report of the Review of outcomes and Profiles in New South Wales Schooling (1995, pp. 23-33) and in the BOS review of the syllabus required by the Eltis Report, English K-6 Review Report Part A: Findings from the Consultation (Terms of Reference I) (1996). Both of these documents contain extensive quotations from submissions to the two review panels. Despite the political ideology that determines the construction of both of these texts, the reader can get a good feel of the wide contextual variations that operate on the syllabus when it moves into the 'interactive stage' and is actually negotiated in schools and realised in classrooms.

The most significant change in educational 'values and purposes' represented in the 'written curriculum' of EK6SSD is the move to a model of outcomes-based education (OBE) and this certainly set new parameters for school and classroom practice. The move to rationalist values is most evident in the adoption of this educational model for school planning, assessing and reporting. This has come about partly because this educational model can be adapted to approximate an economic model where it is hoped that devices will be put in place so that the 'input' to schools and their 'output', or 'outcomes' can be seen to be commensurate. This economic model requires that when 'input' is not commensurate with 'outcomes', that correctives strategies will need to be sought. In Britain this model has meant that schools whose test results do not meet required standards are described as 'failing' schools. It is intended that the 'values and purposes' being endorsed in this British model are in social equity, efficiency and the accountability of all sectors
involved in the production and delivery of the education product according to Goodson (1994, pp.96-100).

Despite this strong rationalist presence in *EK6SSD*, (see below p. 54) the text of the document remains ideologically eclectic, as will be seen below, because the 'Introduction' (p.1), the second part of the Support Document, 'Dictionary of Classroom Practices' (pp. 171-230) and part three, 'Planning, Programming and Assessing' (pp. 231-308), all advocate a child-centred learning theory which situates these parts as ideologically progressive in educational terms.

The rationalist agenda for schooling is also evident in the inclusion in the document of the formal teaching of grammar. This is termed 'a functional approach to language' in the new discourse of *EK6SSD*. This learning theory invoked here, it will be seen below, signals a shift away from the child-centred learning theory of the 'natural language learning' model and 'whole language approach' of the Language Arts curriculum model previously in place, to a transmission model of teaching and learning subject English. In the booklet *A Guide to the English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document* (1996) published as a result of the recommendations of the Eltis Report, the shift in approach is described this way,

The functional approach to language is compatible with and builds on the whole language approach, taking it a step further. Both approaches encourage the use of whole texts as the basis for English language learning. Texts that are used in whole language classrooms are texts that students encounter in everyday situations...The functional approach examines how these texts are structured and how they function to make meaning in particular contexts. (p.9)

So, belatedly, the BOS document writers acknowledge and attempt to explain this paradigm shift inherent in *EK6SSD*. The paradigm shift to the new approach is constructed in the discourse of the document as the 'natural' extension of the model
that has been in place. The implication of this discursive formation of the paradigm shift is that it is needed to fill a gap that has been perceived in the earlier model. The intention is to allay fears of dramatic change and to assure the reader of the desirability of filling the gaps perceived in the curriculum.

As was seen above, Goodson has suggested the importance of studying 'discourse construction and textual production' as part of the sign system that alerts the reader to 'interests and influences' and 'values and purposes' that pertain in any contemporary educational context. The method employed in this study to analyse the discourse constructed in *EK6SSD* and associated texts, is derived from the work of the eminent linguist, Norman Fairclough. The second part of this chapter briefly outlines Fairclough's model of the discourse analysis that will be used throughout this study to demonstrate the ideological frameworks employed in the 'written curriculum' documents that are being analysed. Fairclough's concept of 'orders of discourse' within a document makes evident the ideological struggle occurring between different parts of the text. Such ideological struggle within a document is, in fact, quite common in curriculum texts which are generally produced by consultative processes (Print, 1993). This is the case in the Australian educational systems and is the major factor that accounts for ideological eclecticism (see Print, 1993, pp.56-57) of many curriculum documents.

Goodson (1994, p.19) is careful to define the word 'curriculum' at the start of his discussion because curriculum is a shifting signifier depending upon the context and discourse community in which it is being used. Goodson acknowledges that there is a great need for further work to be done in the area of curriculum theory in order that definitions of curriculum can be further refined (1994, p.37). Goodson sees the need to understand that curriculum has at least two distinct stages, namely the preactive stage and the interactive stage. The preactive stage of the curriculum includes all that goes into producing a curriculum for a public system of education before it is operationalised in a school context.

Goodson terms the 'written curriculum' as a part of the 'preactive stage' of the curriculum. Goodson emphasises the importance of examining the preactive stage because

The written curriculum both promulgates and underpins certain basic intentions of schooling as they are operationalised in structures and institutions. To take a common convention in the preactive curriculum, the school subject: while the written curriculum defines the rationales and rhetoric of the subject, this is the only tangible aspect of the patterning of resources, finances and examinations and associated material and career interests. (p.24)

The curriculum, as enacted in the classroom with teacher and students, is termed by Goodson, the 'interactive curriculum'. Goodson acknowledges the difficulty of determining how the preactive stage of curriculum merges with the interactive stage but argues that the written curriculum 'sets important parameters for classroom
practice' (p.24). This is certainly the case in NSW where the written curriculum in EK6SSD directed primary teachers to the new parameters in two areas of teaching and learning - those that occur as a result of adopting an 'outcomes-based approach' to planning, assessing and reporting and those that result from genre theory approach to learning to write, an aspect of the 'functional approach to language' model. The extent of change in work practices required by the first of these paradigm shifts led to a great deal of opposition as reported in the Eltis Review, Focus on Learning: Report of the Review of Outcomes and Profiles in New South Wales Schooling (1995), 'Section 5.5.1 Teacher Workload' (p.85).

Goodson sees curriculum as a social construction (1994, p.16) which has recently been undergoing rapid change to more conservative, rationalist view of education. Through the 1980s there has been an emphasis on the perceived need to get 'back to basics', or 'basic skills', in primary education and a reaction to a pervasive progressive ideology in the 1960s and 1970s. Alongside the 'back to basics' movement there has been a strong demand for the reinstatement of the traditional school subject as the foundation stone of school organisation (1992, p.23). The need for a 'core curriculum' of traditional subjects has also been asserted. These rationalist agendas can be seen in the British Education Reform Act (1988), the NSW Education Reform Act (1990) and the Australian Education Council's (AEC) national curriculum agenda proposed in 1988.

Goodson (1994) argues that historical study of curriculum is vital in order to understanding present day emphasis, in Western education systems, on those school subjects which are deemed to be 'basic' or 'fundamental' to a child's education. Goodson is concerned to alert readers to the 'historical amnesia' that is involved in government educational policies which claim that there is somehow a process of 'reform' being put in place by making certain school subjects essential to
education and prescribe that the school curriculum, in its interactive stage, be structured around them.

Goodson argues that the 'historical amnesia' of rationalist educational agendas must be addressed so that the illusion of 'reform' attached to this 'basic skills and 'core subjects' model of schooling can be exposed and the 'values and purposes' of the rationalist educational agenda be clearly delineated for all of those in the enterprise of schooling. Goodson writes:

> It is time to place historical study at the centre of the curriculum enterprise, to exhume earlier work on curricular history, and the spasmodic subsequent work, and systematically to rehabilitate the study of the social construction of school subjects and the school curriculum (p.23)

In this study it becomes clear that political will is immensely influential in determining the shape of the curriculum and in legitimating the discursive formations that will be reinforced through financial support.

The history of the school subject is seen in this study, to be linked intrinsically to the history of the political issues of the day. In Chapter 2, for instance, it will be seen that educational policy concerning outcomes-based approaches to teaching and learning is manipulated in order to facilitate a State political agenda. Goodson gives other examples. His historical work reveals the 'emergence and construction of the political economy of curriculum' (1994, p.25). Goodson explains that,

> The structure of resources and finance and the attribution of status and careers are linked to a system that has developed since the foundation of state schooling. This structure impinges on both individual intentions and collective aspirations. (p.25)
The general applicability of this is seen readily in the way power is exerted over employees when 'restructuring' is an ongoing part of the discourse of the educational bureaucracies.

In 'Studying School Subjects' Goodson (1992) outlines the importance of interrogating the concept of the school subject in order to avoid accepting it as a 'given', or 'natural', part of a schooling system. Goodson suggests that current sociological and philosophical arguments for the centrality of the school subject do not stand rigorous scrutiny (1994, p.25). Most important for Goodson, is that the school subject is not viewed as ideologically "neutral" (16). Goodson states:

The school curriculum is a social artefact, conceived of and made for deliberate human purposes. It is therefore a supreme paradox that in many accounts of schooling, the written curriculum, this most manifest of social constructions, has been treated as a 'given'. Moreover, the problem has been compounded by the fact that it has often been treated as a neutral given embedded in an otherwise meaningful and complex situation. (1994, p.16)

The educational documents analysed in this present study will be seen to illustrate Goodson's point exactly. The production of a primary syllabus for subject English signalled a clear shift to conservative political ideologies which value traditional school subjects and academic disciplines (Print, pp.47-48). These sought to stabilise the learning experiences offered in schools and ensure the delivery of a 'quality' educational product which would guarantee that all potentially enfranchised citizens had skills - the basic skills of literacy and numeracy - required for employment. Liberal or progressive educational ideologies would seek to be less utilitarian about the goals of education (Print, 1993, p.54).

Goodson (1992) further asserts the necessity of histories of school subjects being undertaken in order to reveal the differences that lie beneath subject labels that
superficially appear to be internationally approved. This study confirms Goodson's view that great differences are being overlooked if it is assumed that the label 'subject English' signifies the same ideologies and pedagogies on the one continent, let alone across the world. Goodson argues that curriculum is a social construction and so 'subject English' will be a different curriculum in different communities, regions and nations.

This is because each social phenomenon, each school subject in this case, must be located within its cultural and political milieu and within its historical context. (p.25)

Chapter 2 presents an interesting example of this showing that there are great differences between subject English as constructed at the State level in NSW and at the national level in Australia, despite the rationalist political framing of educational policy which is common to both levels of government. Furthermore it will be seen to what extent symbolic conflicts (Bourdieu, 1992) are undertaken in order to maintain the State's right to decide the 'legitimating rhetoric of schooling' (Goodson, p.24). The need for gaining symbolic power will be seen to override rationalist concerns for cost-cutting and efficiency.

This trend described by Goodson is clearly evident in the Australian educational context. In 1993, the Australian Education Council initiatives became the National Statements and Profiles documents for each of eight traditional 'learning areas', one of which was subject English. All of these legislated changes to school education endorsed the need for students to be inducted into the traditional academic disciplines and thus, presumably, to be assured of the acquisition of 'the basics' in literacy and numeracy. Goodson points out the irony that the 'reforms' put in place in Britain by the 1988 Act, returned the British curriculum to a 'core' of subjects legislated for in the 1904 educational regulations document (p.23). This is the reason that Goodson employs the term 'historical amnesia' for these current trends to represent themselves in a discourse of 'reform'. In educational discourse, then, it
will be seen that 'reform' is a contentious concept. The proponents of the recent various education reform bills do not find a return to the standards of 1904 is an embarrassment but a triumph.

In NSW the same pattern of 'reform' is evident. There had not been a subject called 'English' or an English syllabus since 1968. The State education authorities had followed a 'Language Arts' model (BOS, 1996, p.18 ) rather than a subject English model. The most influential documents to have appeared from the Department of Education were Reading K - 12 (1979 ) and Writing K-12 (1986). The latter document provides an important background to the genre theory debate which is the focus of Chapter 3 in this study.

Having identified 'the political economy of curriculum', Goodson hoped that,

By focusing our studies on the historical emergence and reconstruction of structures and the ongoing activities of individuals and groups we might progressively alleviate the current amnesia. (p.25)

It will be seen in Chapters 2 and 3 that the stories of individuals and special interest groups are indeed an important part of this whole historical context. The names of the scholarly writers and politicians, cited in the study, are only a few of those who have had a direct impact on the curriculum outcomes and who have been impacted upon by political prescriptions which had to implemented. While individual histories are beyond the scope of this study, there is one example that is recorded in Chapter 2. Goodson seeing that the history of written curriculum is a history of a social construction:

methods are required which allow us to study curriculum as it impinges upon individual experiences of schooling...Exploring curriculum as social construction allows us to study, indeed exhorts us to study, the intersection of individual biography and social structure.

(p.23)
The history of the 'written curriculum' that is *EK6SSD* must not be allowed to disappear for the very many reasons outlined above. The history of this document epitomises the fragility of the educational aspirations of individuals and groups falling before political agendas. The production, and indeed reproduction, of *EK6SSD* demonstrates that Goodson (1994) is not overstating the case when he says that the historical study of written curriculum will reveal it to be a 'major battleground where the futures and lives of generations of school students are influenced in crucial, yet so far substantially mystified, ways' (p.25). The very large assumption underpinning Goodson's claim must, of course, be acknowledged: he is assuming that tradition alone is not a sufficient reason for the retention of structures and systems in educational domains. Those currently in power would possibly disagree with this view, of course.

**Part B The Theoretical Framework for the Analysis of Orders of Discourse in a Text: the Work of Norman Fairclough**

Following the lead given by Goodson (1994, pp. 19-20) this study critiques educational texts - part of the 'written curriculum' - in order to see the 'values and purposes', or ideologies, that underpin the document. The close analysis of the text *EK6SSD* below reveals that a rationalist educational ideology is dominant, prevailing because of the positioning and ordering of the discourses in the document, not just because it is present by a greater number of rationalist discoursal conventions. To establish this case this study adopts an interdisciplinary approach to its examination of ideologies so that what is offered is an assessment of educational issues using the framework provided by Goodson (above) and also using the methods of critical discourse analysis delineated in the groundbreaking work of Fairclough (1989). This allows for a more accurate evaluation of the
relative power of the different ideologies at work in the discourses constructed in 
this ideologically eclectic document.

In Fairclough's terms 'discourse analysis' is much more than traditional text 
analysis. Discourse analysis involves combining text analysis with analysis of the 
process of text production and the processes of text interpretation (p.24). The text 
will disclose 'traces' of its production process and 'cues' to how the producer(s) of 
the text want it to be interpreted. The final step in full critical discourse analysis 
requires a further step in the task where the text and its processes are studied in 
terms of their relationship with their social conditions: 'both the immediate 
conditions of the situational context and the more remote conditions of institutional 
and social structures' (p.26). This historical dimension marks another point of 
intersection between Goodson's and Fairclough's work.

Fairclough's work in critical discourse analysis offers a method of textual study that 
shows how language is centrally involved in ideological power struggles. 
Fairclough argues that all language use is inherently ideological. When examining 
an educational document it can be seen that the word, 'language' needs to be 
replaced by the more accurate term, 'discourse' as this latter term refers to 'language 
as social practice determined by social structures' (p.17). Many very full definitions 
of discourse are currently available and some develop from Fairclough's work. 
These definitions are in accord - see, for instance, Bronwyn Davies (1993 p.14) or 
John Stephens (1992, pp. 11 -12). The definition following here is used because it 
is most recent and elucidates quite clearly, the integral nature of discourse and 
ideology.

A discourse represents the ways in which reality is perceived through 
and shaped by historically and socially constructed ways of making 
sense; that is, language, complex signs, and practices that order and 
sustain particular forms of social existence. These systems of
communication, which are constructions formed by particular
ideologies, play a significant role in shaping human subjectivities and
social reality, and can work to either confirm or deny the life histories
and experiences of the people who use them. If the rules that govern
what is acceptable in a particular society are exclusive, discourse can
be a major site of contention in which different groups struggle over
meaning and ideology. (Leistyna et al. 1996 p. 86.)

So the word 'language' can be seen as an insufficient term for describing the
complexity of textual meanings deliberately constructed in a text like EK6SSD
where the social practices in the domain of education are being impacted upon, in a
prescriptive way, by a social structure. In this case the social structure is the
institution of an educational bureaucracy. This bureaucracy of educational 'experts'
in a system of public schooling is government sanctioned and controlled and its
officials are charged with the duty of producing hierarchically approved 'written
curriculum' documents. For instance, the readers of the EK6SSD are almost
immediately aware that they are entering the world of institutional education by the
vocabulary, the high modality of the verb phrases, and the contexts and
relationships being described and mandated. The opening paragraph of the
Rationale of EK6SSD:

Language is central to children's intellectual, social and emotional
development and has an essential role to play in all key learning areas.
The learning experiences provided in this document will assist
students to become competent in English. They will learn about the
language system and how to make appropriate choices in different
contexts. (p. 2)

Here the reader usually accepts that the symbolic power and authority that
accompanies the lexis of 'syllabus' means that the text represents an accurate state
of educational 'actuality'. The high modality of the verbs in fact demands that the
reader should 'hear and obey'. In fact the discourse constructed here presents a
situation that, if analysed, is unsustainable. The second statement certainly does not bear interrogation; can a text, designed for an audience of teachers, really offer learning experiences for students? And who would be rash enough, in any another discourse situation, to claim that learning experiences, somehow encapsulated in a document, guaranteed that every single student would be a competent user of English.

The third statement of the "Rationale", that 'they will learn about the language system', is just as overstated and begs as many questions, in its attempt to prescribe what NSW primary school students will know. No one claims to understand the language system so why does EK6SSD make such a claim? It is then the ideological framing that matters rather than the accuracy of the claim. Here, the reader can see that this educational document for subject English has a clear focus on literacy and the 'basic skills' of reading and writing that ensure citizens are employable.

It is interesting to note the way rationalist views Print (1993, p.49) are constructed here. The paragraph propounds that the centralising expertise in the production of syllabuses and support materials, will ensure educational documents that empower most teachers, in most educational contexts to deliver a curriculum that is equally appropriate and effective for the majority students. It should be noted that the ideological position in the Rationale' stands in contrast to that foregrounded in the 'Introduction' to the document, as will be seen below (p. 35).

With regard to dominant ideological positions in a text, Fairclough writes:

I have argued on the one hand that power is exercised and enacted in discourse, and on the other hand that there are relations of power behind discourse. I have also argued that in both cases power is won, held and lost in social struggles. We might say that, in terms of 'power in discourse', discourse is the site of power struggles, and, in
terms of 'power behind discourse', it is the stake in power struggles - for control over orders of discourse is a powerful mechanism for sustaining power. (pp. 73 - 74)

An assessment of educational issues using the methods of discourse analysis then, can reveal more than a surface reading of the 'values and purposes' underpinning a document. It can in fact show the varying degrees of power exerted in an ideologically eclectic document and allow the relationships between the different ideological positions to be determined. This is achieved by what Fairclough calls determining the 'orders of discourse' within a document.

The term 'orders of discourse' originated in the work of Michel Foucault in his *The Order of Things* (1970). By the term 'orders of discourse' Fairclough means those socially constituted 'sets of conventions associated with social institutions' (p.17) or discourse 'conventions clustering in sets or networks' and 'these conventions and orders of discourse', moreover, embody particular ideologies'(p.28). Here, again, education provides examples: it would be most surprising to us if there was not a clear difference between the discourse of a classroom practitioner and a child in a primary school and the discourse of a parent with the same children. Different social contexts then have a variety of approved discourses. When social power comes into play in a discourse situation, Fairclough argues, 'orders of discourse' set the parameters for what issues are discussed and the manner in which the issues will be discussed. Fairclough sees orders of discourse as ideologically shaped by the power.

However, Fairclough argues further, the relationship between discourse and social structures is not a one-way relationship:

As well as being determined by social structures, discourse has effects upon social structures and contributes to social continuity or social change. It is because the relationship between discourse and social
structures is dialectical in this way that discourse assumes such importance in terms of power relationships and power struggle: control over orders of discourse by institutional and societal power-holders is one factor in the maintenance of their power. (p.37)

So Fairclough's defining the dialectical nature of discourses and orders of discourse allows the identification and the explanation of the 'about face' involved with the review of *EK6SSD*. There is otherwise a perceived irrationality about the authorised educational bureaucrats, who were responsible for producing the new prescriptive syllabus text, being advised, by the Eltis Report, to consult the views of the classroom teachers more closely before the revised syllabus is produced (Eltis, 1995, p.iii). Classroom teachers would see themselves, and be seen by those in the institutional structures of educational bureaucracies, as a less powerful group. It would be naive not to recognise the pragmatism of the Eltis Report in taking this direction, but that is not the concern here. Rather it is a case where the dialectical nature of orders of discourse can be seen to be involved in the possibility of either social continuity or social change.

Throughout the remainder of this study Fairclough's framework is employed for critical discourse analysis of *EK6SSD* and the other educational and academic texts that are central to the arguments being constructed here. As well as the traces of the process of the textual production in *EK6SSD*, by August, 1996 there was also

*English K-6 Review Report Part A: findings from the Consultation (Terms of Reference 1)* available which contains a very helpful section titled, "2.3 English K-6 Syllabus Development Process (Appendices A & B)" (pp. 22-23). This details, through the timeline in 'Appendix A: Chronology 1988-1996' (pp. 73-87), what is clearly meant to be interpreted by the reader as an 'exhaustive' consultative process because of the number of pages given over to it in the text. This interpretation of 'Appendix A' is undermined however by the opening admission of Section 2.3
A recurrent question to the English K-6 Review Committee concerned the origins and development of the *English K - 6 Syllabus and Support Document* - 'Where did it come from?' In examining this question the English K-6 Review Committee traced the process of development, including the consultation (p.22). The fact that the teaching community was largely unaware of the development of the syllabus speaks of the centralising tendency for curriculum production in a rationalist educational paradigm. This centralising tendency came with the inception of the BOS following the NSW Education Reform Act of 1990. The construction of the extract quoted above devalues the teacher consultation process by indicating that 'consultation' is, after all, only one, last aspect of syllabus development.

In Chapter 2 of this study, the cues to interpreting the text given in *EK6SSD* can be compared to and contrasted with the various interpretations offered in the Eltis Report, *Focus on learning: Report of the Review of Outcomes and Profiles in New South Wales Schooling*, and *English K-6 Review Report Part A: findings from the Consultation (Terms of Reference 1)*. In Chapter 3 the cues given in the text for interpreting its prescription of a genre approach to learning to write will be compared with and contrasted to the diverse and often disapproving interpretations of Australian and international English curriculum scholars and academics of prominence.

This process of critical discourse analysis of *EK6SSD* will illustrate Fairclough's claim that "power, whether it be 'in' or 'behind' discourse, is never definitively held by one person, or social grouping, because power can be won and exercised only in and through social struggles in which it may also be lost." (p.18) There may well be objections to the Neo Marxist rhetoric of 'social struggle' employed by Fairclough, however this study shows, that with regard to *EK6SSD*, the statement may be understood quite literally. The text of *EK6SSD* was a site of discourse.
struggle before its publication in 1994 and continues to be 'a major battleground' following the recommendations of the Eltis Report.

Part C A Description of the Text, *English K-6 Syllabus and Support Documents* (1994), and the Ideological Conflict in the Orders of Discourse

The history of *EK6SSD* reveals that it was conceived as part of a 'reform' process and as such was required to be groundbreaking in perceived areas of curriculum need - especially, increasing the basic levels of literacy in the community - that had to be prescriptively addressed by the 'written curriculum'. The document failed tests of public scrutiny whether from the English curriculum scholars, classroom practitioners or parents. While the negative findings of a government appointed committee can be viewed as a political act of symbolic power, the findings of the BOS *English K-6 Review* revealed more weaknesses and dissatisfaction with the document than did the Eltis Report (see Additional Findings, Eltis, 1995, pp. 48-65). The history of *EK6SSD* then is the history of an attempt to reintroduce a school subject - key learning area English - and to prescribe the refocussing of classroom practice on a more content-oriented praxis. In the dialectic milieux established once the 'written curriculum' moves into its 'interactive stage' in the school, the classroom, homes and teacher education courses the document became imperilled, as its credibility could be undermined from many direction: any aspect of its 'load of newness' could potentially become its undoing.

The history *EK6SSD* and critical discourse analysis of some sections of the document shows the ideological shaping of this text as 'written curriculum' and also exemplifies how educational documents are ideologically eclectic in their
framework. The orders of discourse in the document may however make it clear that certain ideologies are more powerful than others. In EK6SSD it is clear that the sections of the document framed by a rationalist ideology are dominant because of their positioning in the text and because of the 'load of newness' they carry and thus foreground.

It is neither unusual nor even surprising that educational documents, such as EK6SSD, which are produced by centralised, bureaucratic school systems, using input from a wide range of special interest groups, should have ideologically diverse conceptual frameworks. Ideological tensions then, are inherent in documents addressing a bureaucratic brief and developed through consultative processes. Such documents are commonly developed by teams of writers obliged to incorporate distillations of other mandated policy documents and reports as happened with EK6SSD when the National Profile outcome statements had to be incorporated in the text.

In Curriculum Development and Design, Print (1993) describes this category of documents with mixed ideological roots as "Eclectic" in their conceptual framework (p. 56). Adjustments to educational documents may be deemed necessary at any stage in the process of its production in order to receive the endorsement of the State Government of the day. With the 'reforms' (see above, p.16) in many education systems in the late 1980s and early 1990s there appeared a trend to establish new bureaucracies, or restructure existing bureaucracies, in order to allow more direct government intervention in educational matters and thereby hasten 'reform' (see above, p.16). The BOS is an example of such a tendency. The BOS is directly responsible to the Minister of the day and the process of developing the 'written curriculum' is in the hands of the Key Learning Area Curriculum Committee - educational 'experts'. Only after these authorities have developed the documents do
the nominated members of other educational stakeholders who form Syllabus Advisory Committees, have access to the development process (Print, 1993, p.89).

In the case of EK6SSD the ideological eclecticism is obvious almost from the first reading of the document. This is because the syllabus section is clearly organised in a highly structured way with its columns of information expressed in a discourse that is abstract, technical and hierarchical. The discourse suggests a rationalist framework with the monitoring role of the teacher to the forefront. This is also signalled in the formalist appearance of the annotated pages in the part of the support document, 'Teaching about Texts'. The emphasis on the teaching role as opposed to the learners role marks the discourse as being rationalist. On the other hand, the peri-text, 'Introduction' and some parts of the support document, like the 'Dictionary of Classroom Practices' are ideologically progressive in that they foreground the role of the learner rather than that of the teacher.

However, it is possible to see the beginnings of a rationalist ideological ascendency in the inherent conflict between the orders of discourse in the conceptual framework in the parts of the 'Syllabus' and the 'Support Document'. When analysis of the discourse of each part of the document is undertaken it reveals that there is what Fairclough termed a 'dialectical struggle' occurring in the text. There is an implicit power struggle in the conceptual framework of EK6SSD as a result of the differences between the ideological positions framed in the six sections of the text.

The rationalist ideological position (Print, 1993) holds that school experience is separate from other aspects of life and this could be gleaned from the discourse of the first paragraph of the "rationale" which was quoted above. At school the focus is on 'learning outcomes', 'net learning time' and 'structured teaching' (Quality Teaching, Quality Learning, 1994, 1,5,6). Print (1993) states that the rationalist conception of the school,
argues that schools as special places for the development of our future society, should expose students to the accumulated wisdom acquired through the study of academic subjects. It is not the place of the school to address the curriculum towards perceived (and changing) social needs...but rather the curriculum should provide students with the intellectual tools and understandings to face adult life. (p.47)

The rationalist position then, grows out of conservative roots where order and continuity are the hallmarks of a well run educational system; change is not looked for and is seen as threatening. Print explains that,

Curricula based on academic rationalism emphasise examinations and the testing of knowledge and skills. Rigour and quality of learning are valued highly and assessment of student performance has become extensive. However, there is some concern that assessment is used more as an end in itself rather than as a means of providing feedback to learners and teachers. (1993, p. 48)

Thus, accountability is an essential tenet of rationalist ideology. The appeal of an outcomes and profiles approach to schooling is clear since monitoring student progress through various learning levels, or stages or benchmarks, makes both the teacher and the student accountable for 'progress' at school.

The text, EK6SSD, is a very large tome, being 366 pages, and is in fact called a 'compendium' in English K-6 Review Report Part A: findings from the Consultation (Terms of Reference 1) (p.25) Externally the peri-text presents a cheerful looking volume with bright orange-coloured cover which belies the weight of the 'load of newness' contained inside it. EK6SSD is, in fact, impressively published when compared to the generally inexpensive and uninspiring nature of official educational documents. The lack of finance is usually the reason given for drabness and for poor design and layout in BOS and DSE publishing. The earliest versions of the Support Documents, released as separate texts during 1993, were
more typical, being on thick matt paper with no colour used anywhere in the text or
on the cover, apart from grey shading.

*EK6SSD* has its title in clear white lettering on its bright orange cover. The graphics
on the cover are conventional representations of childhood in dark blue, dark green
and red. Across the bottom of the front cover there are building blocks with a bold
letter on each one, the colour of the letters contrasting with the colour of the blocks.
'English K - 6' is printed in bold dark blue vertically up the centre of the front
cover. To the right of this printing there is a line drawing with the flat reductive
features typical of children's early drawings of human and animal figures. The back
cover depicts a staircase in block colours of blue red and green. To the left of the
staircase are the words, 'creating, interpreting, imagining, talking, writing listening
sharing reading' placed horizontally under one another. These blue words each
contain one white letter. When the white letters are read vertically, top to bottom,
they again form the word English. The discourse, both verbal and visual, here, is
suggesting that fun and games and thinking are a part of the field of subject English
in the primary school. Clearly the external appearance of the text is not intended to
intimidate the reader in any way; it feels impressively weighty but looks 'user
friendly' with its graphic representations of everyday objects. Only the title, in fact
announces that it is an authoritative and even prescriptive text.

There are other aspects of the peri-text that seem to be ideologically postmodern;
perhaps even more so than the informality and liveliness of the cover. The
'Introduction' (p.1) is especially important in this respect. In this part of the text,
curriculum varies according to the needs of a diversity of students. It is understood
that communities, away from the centre, have a part to play in the way that
curriculum becomes an 'actuality' in a specific school and particular classroom:

This syllabus encourages schools to recognise community values and,
to promote close working relationships with parents and to foster
community involvement and participation in school life. It takes into account:

gender equity issues...
environmental perspectives (p.1)

This discourse with its recognition of diverse social, educational contexts and degrees of language competence contrasts markedly with the rationalist discourse of the 'Rationale' and is indeed more in line with a critical theory paradigm of curriculum design.

There are, then, aspects of the text which announce it as a postmodern document that will be read differently in different community contexts. The 'Introduction' states that this is appropriate and expected. The recognition and valuing of difference is a key tenet of Postmodernism and Critical Theory. Some readers will feel that this section of the document contrasts with the texts use of the terms 'syllabus' and 'support document' which are a part of the peri-text. The cover describes the text as both the 'Syllabus' and also 'Support Document'. This terminology is formal; an example of the technical lexis of educational discourse. 'Support Document' is an especially remarkable phrase in the way that it contrasts with the assertion of the valuing of difference as is suggested by the eight diverse issues and student perspectives that the syllabus isolates as special in its 'Introduction' (p. 1). The terms 'support document' and support materials both carry a penumbra of associations that have to do with centralised curriculum documents, devised outside specific educational contexts but intended to standardise teaching practice, sounding even more formal than the commonly used phrase 'support materials'.

The discussion of 'support materials' for the NSW Department of Education's Writing K - 12 policy document is a relevant example that is analysed further in Chapter 3 (see below, p.83). The journal Education carried the debate between Bill
Cope (1988), Mary Kalantzis (1988) and Ernie Tucker (1988) where Tucker challenged the sense of support materials for a Progressive educational document being produced by a writing team who espoused the rationalist ideological stand on the role of the teacher, as Kalantzis and Cope (who were commissioned to write the support materials) clearly did. For the genre theory group at the time there was an obvious importance, as Goodson would argue, in terms of 'finance and resource allocation' if the group was contracted to devise 'support materials' for implementing *Writing K - 12*. There was also symbolic power to be gained by the genre group in that the document would be devalued in the educational community since it would no longer be seen as able to stand alone.

Effort has been expended to make the inside of the text of *EK6SSD* attractive too. It is printed in three colours - black and two bright blues. The blues are used to colour code the edges of the pages in order to identify the different sections of the text. The blues are also used for headings and as the outline colour for tables and forms and blue arrows highlight significant aspects of text forms and as shading behind lists and black headings. Unfortunately the layout and formatting of the sections of the text make the effort and expense rather a waste because the responses to the *English K-6 Review* surveys were very clear about the difficulties experienced when trying to navigate the text.

The epigraph on the inside fly leaf is particularly important in terms of realising that this document is about the rationalist agenda of traditional school subjects and the 'basic skills' of literacy and numeracy and the assumed concomitant of the population being ready for employment if these skills have been mastered:

> While the primary curriculum is divided into six key learning areas, this is not to be interpreted as indicating that each key learning area should have an equal time allocation. In line with NSW government policy, the Board of Studies encourages schools to give greatest
emphasis to English and Mathematics and to adopt a reasonable and responsible approach which will provide each child with substantial access to each key learning area in each year. (p.iii)

Here it is clear that 'some subjects are more equal than others' in this ideological framework. As Goodson indicated, the analysis of the discourse of an educational text will elucidate the 'values and purposes' to which schooling is being directed. There is no reason offered in the text as to why there is inequality among the learning domains when all of them have been termed 'key' areas but by using the 'cues' in the text and the context of situation - this being here the rationalist agenda of the State government - the reader can interpret the intention of the text. Of the school subject Goodson writes,

The written curriculum, notably the convention of the school subject, has here both symbolic and practical significance - symbolic in that certain intentions for schooling are thus publicly signified and legitimated; practical in that these written conventions are rewarded with finance and resource allocation and thus associated work and career benefits. (p.24)

There are then significant advantages for those whose expertise lies in the areas of curriculum that are privileged in the curriculum as the epigraph indicates that subject English is. The ideological position adopted in the epigraph is in a dialectical struggle with the ideas in the "Introduction" which foregrounds community languages and values. The world view of rationalist educators holds the view literacy, numeracy and employment are the hallmarks of a successful system of schooling.

The epigraph presents the rationalist position in valuing order and continuity, monitoring and accountability (Print, 1993, p.48). These values result in the discourse constructed in EK6SSD being presented largely as a tabulation of outcomes statements from the National Profile document. The pages are presented

36
horizontally instead of vertically and makes using the different parts of the
document quite awkward. The pointers have also been placed horizontally but at the
very back of the document so that the awkwardness of referring to the pointers and
outcomes is further compounded.

With regard to the outcomes statements that became the organisational framework
for EK6SSD, the BOS English K-6 Review confirmed the negativity of the Eltis
Report findings, that there were seven major areas of concern: the number, the
language used, their failure to relate to syllabus content, what they were to be used
for, their relationship to the pointers and work samples, the appropriateness of their
sequencing, the presentation being out of step with the content in stages.

Both the Eltis Report and the English K-6 Review commented on the problems with
the layout and formatting of the text. The English K-6 Review Committee reported
that "The first question on the survey asked if the English K-6 syllabus was easy to
understand. Fewer than 60% of those responding indicated that it is." (p.48). The
review document lists problems not only with layout and formatting but also with
size, organisation, design and language (pp. 48-53). The English K-6 Review
received suggestions for improving the document by making it more practical:
'using tabs, colour coding, cross referencing including more comprehensive
indexing, using pictures and diagrams,...' and the list continues (p.65).

It is the centrality of the role of the teacher that is immediately made clear in the
epigraph as well as in the syllabus's tables of outcomes and stages and the
'Teaching About Texts' section of the Support Document. This presents a stark
contrast with the progressive role conceptualised for the teacher in the principles of
the 'Dictionary of Classroom Practices'. The separation of the teacher and the
learner immediately implies an authoritative role, with an assumption of power, for
that person who is designated the role of 'teacher'. It is the hegemony of this
definition of the teaching role with its roots in conservative educational ideology that critical theorists and liberal educators would blame for much of the student resistance to 'normal' school culture (Apple, 1979, pp. 50-55). The rationalist educational model, growing out of conservative roots, advocates a teacher-centred approach, emphasising 'didactic, expository methods for the transmission of knowledge and skills, and reveals values that are inevitably acquired through role modelling.' (Print, 1993, p. 48). Print states that rationalism 'argues that the major function of the school curriculum is to enhance the individual's intellectual abilities in those subject areas most worthy of study. Thus curricula should both assist students to learn how to learn within the subject ....as well as to provide appropriate learning material (subject matter content).'</p>

In 'Teaching About Texts', a transmission model of learning theory is clearly invoked. The amount of formal detail with which each text form is annotated certainly appears very similar to the 'labelling of parts' exercises that were the mark of formalist English teaching in the first half of this century and in opposition to which, stands the 'whole language' approach. The reader sees that the model of the teacher or educator framed here is virtually the descendant of the positivist educator or rationalism's 'teaching technician'. In the ideological framework of rationalism teachers are devalued as experts and become technicist instructors who are kept from identifying with their students as a fellow learners. Such a role is felt to be inappropriate or in contradiction of the role of mechanistic competency assessors of the students. The role constructed for teachers allows for the possibility of surveillance of the work of teachers and students regardless of the local cultural context.

The second and third sections of the 'Support Document' conceptualise the learner much more in the model of the Liberal or Radical tradition. The 'Introduction' and 'Dictionary of Classroom Practices'. The teaching strategies employed in the
Radical classroom will be those that best mirror democratic ideals of equity and that serve to equalise power relations within the classroom: cooperative learning, language experiences, whole language approach with the home language encouraged, peer tutoring and active learner strategies where the expertise of learners is displayed and utilised to the advantage of the whole group. (Bartolome in Leistyna, 1996, p.238). This aspect of radicalism will generally be regarded positively by those educators whose learning theory endorses student-centred learning strategies. However the close alignment of the teacher and student in the learning experience is an unacceptable idea to rationalist educators.

Negotiation, as described in the 'Dictionary of Classroom Practices', is expected in the critical theorists' classroom and with every aspect of the schooling process. For rationalist educators this approach to curriculum design is extremely undesirable. Rationalists would point out the impossibility of establishing accountability measures. For their part, radical educators vehemently reject the various accountability stratagems proposed and implemented by Economic Rationalists: standardised national testing (Apple, 1979, p.164), national competency frameworks and national outcomes-based educational assessment (Apple, 1993) and prescriptive syllabus documents. There is a clear emphasis in these parts of EK6SSD on process, or praxis, on personal agency and empowerment that Radical educators see as a guarantee that learners acquire transformative power over their lives. (Leistyna et al, 1996, p.342)

The radical curriculum seeks to have teachers and students see the cultural terrain of the school as encompassing diverse interests which sometimes coincide and sometimes are in conflict. The necessity for resistance should be accepted as it is integral to the democratic process. Indeed the radical teacher must be committed to resisting definitions of the school as unitary and monolithic with absolute power.
Educators need to be skilled at promoting dialogue with the literacy learners. In the critical literacy process much time will be spent on discussion of cultural situations.

In 'Teacher Education and the Politics of Engagement: The Case for Democratic Schooling' (in Leistyna, 1996, pp. 301-331) Giroux and McLaren reconceptualise the teacher as a 'transformative intellectual' who undertakes a tertiary 'teacher education curriculum that links critical study of power, language, culture and history to the practice of critical pedagogy, one that values student experience and student voice.' (p.301) The writers stress the importance of a curriculum which gives emphasis to the way power operates in our society and the way that it is linked to various kinds of knowledge, to social theory and the notions of the dominant and subordinated cultures found in any society, and to semiotics.

The foregrounding of language competency in EKöSSD has led to the concomitant downplaying of the traditional importance of literature in this example of the written curriculum for subject English. This devaluing is unfortunate because the theoretical underpinnings of literary studies have shifted as clearly as it has in linguistic studies. To offer no comment on this aspect of subject English means that the current orthodoxy of 'reader-response' theories of teaching literature remains unchallenged (for example, Jack Thomson's model in Understanding Teenager's Reading, 1987).

The teaching of literature in New South Wales primary classrooms has been based on a loosely formulated reception theory/reader response model of enjoyment and interaction with literary texts. However it is not universally understood that the reading of literary works is a complex process requiring the active participation of the reader 'to fill the gaps' (Iser, 1978) left in the text. It is certain that young readers are often not taught to be active and critical in their engagement with texts but rather to be unwitting recipients of the socialising intent of the text's ideology.
The only statements about reading in *EK6SSD* are extremely brief and offer no reason for the distinction made between the process of reading 'Factual Texts' and 'Literary Texts'. No definition is offered of these two types of texts nor are suggestions given for how the reader recognises the different types. The literary texts are described in seven lines which are so general as to be quite ambiguous about the theoretical stance being adopted by the document-writers, although the authority of the text and the alignment of reader-subjectivity with focalising characters do seem to be foregrounded in this section:

- Literary texts include those spoken or written texts which explore and interpret human experience in such a way as to evoke in the reader or listener a reflective, imaginative and/or emotional response. Literary texts provide readers and listeners with a richness of meaning and imaginative experience... (p.45)

Statements such as this are entirely unhelpful as they in no way point to any distinctive qualities that reading of the literary work might require (Iser, 1978, Thomson, 1987). If the authority of texts is to be interrogated rather than assumed, if reader subjectivity is to remain intact and readers are to be allowed individual actualisations of a literary work, then it is important for teachers to have an understanding of the theoretical model they are employing and the alternative approaches that they could bring into play.

The revision of the syllabus for subject English in the primary school of NSW is clearly an enormous undertaking when one considers the areas of concern expressed by the findings of the two reports presented on the current document. The time line for the project may be far too short to attend to the breadth of issues that must be addressed. It will be most interesting to see whether the perceived importance of subject English in the political sphere will be enough pressure to ensure that the project receives 'financing and resourcing' in the political economy
of the curriculum to enable the task to be undertaken and published in a manner that meets with overwhelming approbation rather than overwhelming rejection.

To conclude

This chapter has outlined the two theoretical frameworks that are employed in the rest of this study and presented an overview of the conceptual framework of EK6SSD. The theoretical work of Ivor Goodson on defining the essential aspects of curriculum examination has been outlined as has the discourse analysis theory of Norman Fairclough. The final part of this chapter has presented a general description and analysis of the document which is the subject of the rest of this study, EK6SSD. As a part of the 'written curriculum', the analysis of EK6SSD has shown the potential power of the 'written curriculum' in a system of schooling, prescribing paradigm shifts in educational theory and learning models. It was certainly the intention of EK6SSD to set new parameters for classroom practice.

Goodson argued that the 'written curriculum' is a social construct and the analysis of the eclecticism of the conceptual framework of EK6SSD confirms this to be so. The 'orders of discourse' in the document show a rationalist ascendancy in the text because of the rationalist positioning constructed in the framing statements of the peri-text - namely the epigraph and the "Rationale" - and the rationalist framing of the parts of the document that most essentially present 'the load of newness' in the text - the formal section of the syllabus and the part of the support document, 'Teaching About Texts'.

In the chapters that follow these aspects of the EK6SSD will be examined in detail: the shift in paradigm to an outcomes-based model of educational planning, assessing and reporting and the paradigm shift to a genre theory approach to learning to write.
It will be seen that the history of *EK6SSD* demonstrates clearly the need Goodson expressed 'to analyse the ideological and political battles over curriculum at the state level.' (1994, p.18)
Chapter 2

Conflicting Ideologies and Learning Theory in NSW
'Outcomes and Profiles Approach' to Learning
and the National Profiles and Outcome Statements

Some Introductory Remarks

This chapter analyses the way in which the politically mandated imposition of a paradigm shift to the Commonwealth Government's educational initiative in outcomes-based education, contained in English - a curriculum profile for Australian schools (1994), was responsible in significant ways for undermining the full implementation of English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document (1994). As will be seen below, this was a clear case of a changed political agenda, in New South Wales in this case, directly impacting on 'the written curriculum' of that State.

When, in June 1993, the NSW Minister for Education and Youth Affairs agreed to support the use of national curriculum materials 'in all future and current syllabus documents' (Eltis, 1995, p.8), she overrode the model of outcomes-based education (hereafter, OBE) that had been developed by the Board of Studies NSW, since the Board's inception in 1991. This act of the political will effectively imperilled the whole syllabus project as one month after the 1995 change of government the pause was called for in the implementation of an outcomes and profiles approach (see above, p.4) and by the end of April the Department of School Education had ceased the implementation of professional development programs for the syllabus (Board of Studies, 1996, p.28).
This chapter examines the general trend in Western education systems to adopt an outcomes-based approach to education for both curriculum development and the task of reporting on student progress in school. The research background to the outcomes-based educational paradigm is briefly outlined as is the model of outcomes-based education that was incorporated in the British Education Reform Act (1988). The British model is reviewed as it was the immediate precursor of the Australian national curriculum initiatives. It will be seen that models developed in Australia at the national level and at the State level differ from one another and from the international models. This illustrates the need Goodson highlighted for 'written curriculum' to be studied at regional and local levels as well as nationally (See Chapter 1).

The national curriculum envisioned for Australia in 1988, was explained by the Commonwealth Minister for Employment, Education and Training, the Hon John Dawkins in a statement called *Strengthening Australia’s Schools: A Consideration of the Focus and Content of Schooling*. This national collaborative initiative was to include a common curriculum framework and a common approach to assessment with an outcomes-based approach to reporting student achievement. The rationalist discourse of the document is clear as the intention of these educational initiatives was to 'maximise investment in education, including determining ways to enhance cooperation, joint undertakings and remove unnecessary differences in schooling across Australia' (Eltris, 1995, p.6). Here is the familiar calls for efficiency through rationalisation of resources and programs that can be achieved by centralised control.

This chapter examines the model of OBE developed in NSW by the newly formed Board of Studies. The Education Reform Act 1990 in NSW had included an outcomes-based educational paradigm so the NSW educational system was soon
considerably in advance of the national collaborative curriculum initiatives put in
train by Hon John Dawkins in 1988. Work in NSW had begun in 1990 with the
particular terminology of 'an outcomes and profiles approach to learning' being
chosen to describe the specific model of outcomes-based education being developed
From 1991 to 1993 NSW syllabuses had included 'an outcomes and profiles
approach to learning': that is, Board of Studies syllabuses contained outcome
statements describing the expected, observable student achievements in knowledge,
understandings and skills typically acquired by participating in a particular school
course.

It was not until 1993 that the national outcomes were ready for implementation and
the model developed nationally was significantly at variance with the one already in
place in NSW syllabuses. The attempt to impose the national model on the State
syllabus will be seen as perilous in very obvious ways, for quite predictable
reasons, for *EK6SSD*.

The Research Background for Outcomes-based Education (OBE)

The Eltis Report, *Focus on learning: Report of the Review of Outcomes and
Profiles in New South Wales Schooling* (1995), is not at all convinced that a sound
research base exists for a belief in the general efficacy of an outcomes-based
educational paradigm. It delineates the views of many opponents of OBE and
explains that the British model is under review because of implementation
difficulties in the areas of teacher and student workload, of having ten levels of
attainment and of assessment practices (p.15). The Eltis Report does not delineate
the ideal model of OBE proposed by its originators (Spady, 1993, p.68)
It will be seen that the two educational models employing outcomes that are discussed here are not the direct descendants of 'outcomes-based education' as conceived by its original practitioners and this can lead to reader confusion about the terminology of the discourses in different papers on the subject. In 1980, a group of forty-two educators, including Spady, formed the Network for Outcome-based Schools. The group chose the name to indicate that their pedagogy had moved on from its mastery learning antecedents in Bloom's work. The Eltis Review points to the great variance in quality and findings in the research that has been undertaken into outcomes-based education. The work of Bill Spady is referred to in the Report. In 1991, Spady (1991) said in an interview with Ron Brandt, printed in *Educational Leadership*, that,

> Terms get distorted when policy makers get hold of them. It's understandable; they're trying to force accountability on a system...The result today that is that "outcomes" have been taken to mean test scores on tests of academic content. The notion of higher-order competencies - of complex role performances - is absent from most state agendas. (p.68)

It is quite possible that both models of the outcomes and profiles approach to education described below will fall short of the ideal that Spady and his colleagues envisaged. In the same article, for instance he said,

> most of the recent history of outcome-based education has involved people taking their existing curriculum and writing outcomes derived from it. Today we call that approach CBO: Curriculum-Based Objectives, not OBE... (p.68)

Spady explains that in the true enactment of OBE time is not a determining factor in learning and the traditional school subject (p.70) is not the basis for school organisation. The discourse of OBE is quite distinct as can be seen in Spady's definition of an outcome, offered in a paper, *Outcome-Based Education* (1993):
An outcome is a culminating demonstration of the entire range of learning experiences and capabilities that underlie it. It occurs in a performance context that directly influences what it is and how it is carried out. The word "based" means to direct, define, derive, determine, focus and organise what we do according to the substance and nature of the learning result that we want to have happen at the end. (p. 5)

Here the discourse has resignified words like 'culminating', 'demonstration' and 'performance context'; all have specialised meanings for this discourse community. Even the word 'end' needs to be understood in terms of the OBE pedagogy as being one of several exit points possible in learning environments. The most important 'end' is the exit from schooling (Spady, 1991). In the interview with Spady, terms like 'benchmarks', 'enabling outcomes' and 'ultimate culminating performances' illustrate a discourse that is entirely missing from Australian curriculum models of outcomes-based education. A paper like Dan Hendery's 'Outcomes-driven or Outcomes-drivel? The Answer is Alignment' (1992) offers another good example where distinctive terminology is crucial to the discourse community of OBE with 'alignment' being the significant OBE term in this case.

In analysing the discourse here, it seems that aspects of OBE, founded in progressive educational ideology, have been subverted to suit rationalist agendas in many educational spheres. Indeed the Eltis Report foregrounds where the slippage occurred in the rationalist ideological appropriation of the educational discourse of outcomes. In section 2.4 'The Impetus for Outcomes' the report states:

The developments partly relate to the drive for national economic efficiency, which in turn reflected the global climate of the 1990s. A world-wide emphasis on accountability required that public investment in schooling be matched by a comparable 'output' in terms of the measurable improvement in the performance of students. (p.11)
This shows how relatively simple a linguistic step it was, to slip from an economic understanding of the term 'output' to adding an economic dimension to the educational term 'outcome'. It can be seen in use in the educational discourse of a researcher like Shirley Grundy when she writes using 'outcome' as the antonym of 'input':

The profiles signal a fundamental change in the discourse of education...that is a switch from thinking about 'input to thinking about 'outcomes'" (1994, p.12).

Subsuming the educational term into economic discourse so blatantly, no doubt appears a travesty of the ideas that the term signified to the educational network that first coined it.

One point can be made so that the two Australian models do not appear to be entirely reductive. Spady (1991) and Hendery (1992) are in fact talking about the school curriculum in what Goodson termed its 'interactive phase' - that is, curriculum being negotiated daily in classrooms and in a school context. The models compared and discussed below are adaptations made for the 'written curriculum'. The Eltis Report points out that the model of outcomes-based education under discussion in EK6SSD would be categorised as a 'traditional' model of OBE according to Spady which 'restate(s) as outcomes what is identified as 'truly important' in existing curriculum documents' (p.14).

The Eltis Report concluded that:

What this analysis has shown is that much of the literature emphasising either the benefits or the dangers of outcomes-based education does not include a great deal of hard evidence to support the claims being made. We can also conclude that much of the research is not research at all, but a continuing dialogue based on beliefs, judgements and experiences. This, of course, is normal in social
policy, where policy objectives and imperatives cannot always await research evidence.

Yet the dialogue about outcomes-based education is now entering its third decade. That it has endured for so long without a strong research foundation or effort is testimony to the apparent power of the idea to teachers and educational professionals; and to the apparent lack of coordination of education research and policy formation. (p.21)

No doubt, this is a disappointing position for a committee of professional educators to have to report: that major educational policy shifts cannot finance the research to determine the effectiveness of the policy decision. The same situation will emerge in the discussion in Chapter 3 of the genre theory paradigm shift. Publications in Australia on the subject tend to be short papers, and collections of short papers that again present experts in dialogue and anecdotal experiences rather than reporting valid and reliable research findings. Where a research project is in book form, like Kress (1982), the reporting is usually inadequate in terms of the most basic information about classroom and school contexts both of which are vital to realising any sort of understanding of the situation in which students were producing the written texts that became the focus for the study.

The important comment to be made in terms of this study is that what follows is an evaluation of the two models developed in the Australian context for an Australian educational framework. The discussions below do not seek to enter the debate about how well these Australian models resemble international models or the ideal of Spady and colleagues in the USA. The shifts in meaning of the educational discourse of OBE from one regional context to another validate Goodson's claim for the necessity of 'local and regional studies' of curriculum (1992, p.25).
Australia's National Curriculum Agenda: The National Statements and Profiles

The outcomes-based educational paradigm was part of a package of educational initiatives that included the attempt to devise a national curriculum. National education was emulating the British model. The British model was first described in the consultative document, *The National Curriculum 5-16*, and then introduced as law in the Education Reform Act, 1988. Scholars, educationists and journalists in Britain were all quick to point out that the 'reforms' with the return to the basics and the 'core' curriculum, looked very similar to the 1904 Regulations for British curriculum (Goodson, 1994, p.22). A significant part of the national curriculum focused on methods of reporting on student progress. What was being sought, in the rationalist agenda, were measures of accountability for students, teachers and schools. The final products of accountability were statements of various levels within Attainment Targets (ATs) for students in schools. A cluster of ATs was to be termed a Profile Component. This school-based profiling was to be supplemented by four national testing programs called, Standard Assessment Targets. The ultimate stroke of accountability was that the Education Reform Act mandated that results achieved by schools were to be published in local newspapers (Stringer, 1991, p. 7).

The Australian Education Council (AEC) - the organisation of the State Directors General of Education - undertook an investigation of the British model. The rationalist trend to centralised control of schooling was widespread and had been supported by the OECD report, *Schools and quality* (1989) (Stringer, 1991, p.11) which highlighted the high cost of schooling. The British rationalist model of education could not just be transferred to the Australian situation because of the relationships that had to be negotiated between the central government and the State governments. Bill Stringer's paper, 'National Curriculum - The UK Experience'
(1991, p. 12) pointed out that there was evidence, in some States at least, that the British model was much favoured. This was certainly true of New South Wales where an Education Reform Act (1990) was only two years behind the British one.

The document, *Discussion Paper on the Curriculum in New South Wales Schools*, (1988) was issued by the NSW Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs, echoing the rationalist ideology of the British document *The National Curriculum 5-16*, that was the forerunner to the British Education Reform Act (1988). The NSW document speaks on its first page of the need for reform and this is followed by the discourse so familiar in the British documents (Goodson, 1994, p. 18): the call for the provision of 'regular testing of students' basic skills' and an 'increased efficiency in education in the use of the community's taxes' (p.1). The NSW document also speaks of the importance of the 'traditional school subjects' - to be termed, Key Learning Areas in NSW (p.12) - and the 'core curriculum'. It foregrounds 'the basic skills of literacy and numeracy', and the need for schools to 'be responsive to the overall economic and social needs of the nation' and hence schools should 'develop those skills which will allow students maximum flexibility and adaptability in their future employment.' (p.8). As with the British document there is an attempt to create a national identity, the illusion of 'one nation', (p.9) which is as fatuous in multicultural Australia as it is in contemporary Britain. This discussion paper, then, became the basis for the NSW Education Reform Act, (1990).

A significant change made by the Education Reform Act that was to directly impinge upon *EK6SSD* was to give the work of syllabus development to the newly created educational bureaucracy, the Board of Studies, which was directly responsible to the Office of the Minister of Education and Youth Affairs. The Department of School Education directorates continued to operate and conflicts of values and policies inevitably occurred. This has been counterproductive on more than one
occasion to economic efficiency, let alone educational cohesion. The confusion of powers and responsibilities is commented upon in the Eltis Report (p. 99).

Nationally, by 1993, the publication of the Statements and Profiles for Australian Schools was possible because a consensus had been reached by the various State governments. There were Statements and Profiles for eight traditional domains of knowledge for which the terminology of 'learning areas' was created. In EQ Australia (1993), David Francis, executive director of the Curriculum Corporation explained that the terminology of 'national curriculum' was replaced by Statements and Profiles for Australian Schools because of the 'megawatts of paranoia' released by the term 'national curriculum'. Francis went on to say that,

The recently developed statements and profiles in eight areas of learning are not a national curriculum. Although they are the products of the most ambitious collaborative effort in curriculum ever made by Australia's school systems, they are a long way still from a full curriculum. (p.3)

The chairperson of the national government's Australian Education Council Curriculum and Assessment Council, Dr Ken Boston, wrote that the introduction of the profiles and outcomes approach to education, contained in the eight national statements and profiles was, 'An Australian education turning point'. He went on to write, in Curriculum Perspectives - Newsletter Edition, 1993 that,

It is hard to exaggerate the significance of this event. It is only quite recently that curriculum developers have attempted systematically to define what students will achieve; and many doubted that the task can be done at all in some areas of the curriculum. The national collaborative project has shown that credible sets of student outcomes can be developed in all areas of the curriculum. Whatever the defects of this first attempt may prove to be, the publication of national
profiles marks a turning point in the history of the school curriculum (1993, p.12).

Boston’s views are most significant as he holds his position on the Commonwealth Committee because he is Director General of Education in NSW and thus, head of the Department of School Education. Despite Boston's celebratory discourse, it was still a struggle for the NSW State Minister of the time, Virginia Chadwick, to concede to Commonwealth Government intervention by the inclusion of National Profiles outcomes virtually unmediated into the NSW EK6SSD. With the new State Minister for Education, John Aquilina, ‘the defects’ of this attempt were to be revealed by the report of the Eltis committee of review, as mentioned above.

Boston described the most likely use of the National Profiles this way:

The profiles do stand alone and can serve as a general framework for developing a course for a particular class. It is more likely however that the profiles, along with the national statements for the curriculum areas will be a framework for more detailed syllabus development, course advice and support materials. (p. 12)

It is difficult to see how the expense of this 'layer upon layer' of hierarchical educational curriculum-making fits in with the economic restraint desired in what the rationalist world view sees as difficult financial times. In fact, the remarks about the expenditure required by the States are played down in Boston's discourse:

Systems and schools are the best judges of how ready teachers are to make this important and far reaching change, but it is very likely that every state will have to make a major commitment not only to the redevelopment of courses and materials but also to the professional development of teachers and the informing of parents about the use of profiles. (p.13).

In an economic rationalist political framework it may seem extravagant that these national government initiatives in education required a new national body of
curriculum designers, the Curriculum Corporation, to be set up in 1989. This body employs numerous curriculum area experts and has publishing facilities for the new curriculum documents and support materials (1993, p.13). A full discussion of the creation of this new curriculum organisation is found in Kevin Piper’s paper, 'National Curriculum Two Years On: An Undelivered Paper' (1991). This is a decision similar to the NSW State government’s decision to form the Board of Studies. The expense is deemed worthwhile because of the direct control that is possible when an educational bureaucracy is an arm of the minister responsible for education.

What is clear from Boston’s text is the rationalist tendency to centralise power. The trend is also clear to an ever increasing load of centralised expertise producing a variety of 'support material' that the classroom teacher is expected to absorb and then reproduce. The construction of Boston’s text here overtly portrays a rationalist view of the classroom practitioner in need of much input from 'experts' in the curriculum who are not classroom practitioners. Boston implies that an ordinary classroom teacher will be unable to go directly from the main framework of the national curriculum to a class teaching program. The inevitable appearance of prescription follows for the teacher when so many expert texts are mandated and what is needed is the 'teaching technician' to reproduce expert materials and to gather evidence - profile material - of student mastery of lesson content or skills. It will be seen, in Chapter 3, that the same view of the teacher’s role is expressed by educators of the genre theory school approach to learning to write.

Shirley Grundy (1994) has pointed out the prescriptive possibilities of the national statements and profiles if the ‘written curriculum’ is understood as the totality of curriculum. Like Schwab (1969) and Goodson (1994) Grundy goes on to argue that this is an inadequate conception of the curriculum which needs to be understood ultimately as the outcome of the interactive classroom process: what Schwab
described as the 'four commonplaces of schooling' - with teacher, students, subject matter and milieu all contributing to the curriculum. Grundy believes that this second conception of curriculum means that the prescriptive power of the written curriculum of the national statements and profiles is checked. Grundy argues then that the school context will determine whether the national statements and profiles are 'a very radical attempt to control the curriculum of schooling' or 'a significant resource in the construction and reconstruction of the curriculum of schools' (p.10). The findings of this study concur with Grundy's views however this study also shows that the interplay of the political parties is not at all straightforward and that the Commonwealth initiatives can be thwarted at State level.

Outcomes and Profiles in *English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document*

Despite the irreparable harm done to *EKoSSD* by the recommendations of the Eltis Report, the Board of Studies personnel who prepared the report *English K-6 Review Report Part A: Findings from the Consultation (Terms of Reference 1)*, 1996, use celebratory discourse, similar to Boston's, when introducing the section entitled, Section 2 "English K-6 Review: The Context". The writer reiterates the central reforms of the 1990 Act:

> The year 1988 marked the beginning of work on what was eventually to become the *English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document*. It was a significant year for NSW education. The newly elected Government set in train a process of reform of education in NSW which culminated in the establishment of the Education Reform Act (1990). For primary schools, major changes occurred in curriculum particularly in terms of the establishment of Key Learning Areas
structure (sic) and the model of curriculum which shifted the emphasis
from objectives and teaching, to outcomes and learning in specific
subject/content areas. (p.18)

So the 1990 Act currently binds ministers responsible for education to an outcomes-
based approach to education. However this does not mean that the outcomes of the
National Profiles have to be subscribed to. Hence, as was noted in the
"Introduction" to this study, while Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, John
Aquilina, favours an outcomes-based approach to education, he is empowered to
investigate whether or not the outcomes in the national documents are suitable for
inclusion in NSW syllabuses. It has already been seen above, in Boston's paper,
that the Commonwealth government continued to endorse the States and Territories
having constitutional responsibility for education. It was further accepted that States
would instantiate their conceptions of outcomes-based education as appropriate to
their differing contexts.

The third draft version of the new English syllabus, the Formal Consultation Draft
(1992), contained outcomes which were "written in stages, related to the draft
syllabus objectives and to the content." It was not until 1993 that the then Minister
for Education and Youth Affairs, Virginia Chadwick, supported the use of the
National Profile outcomes in Board of Studies' documents. In the BOS report
English K-6 Review Report Part A: Findings from the Consultation (Terms of
Reference 1), this late change is expressed in a discourse that attempts to be
objective:

The organisational structure of the National Profiles was
superimposed on the nearly completed English K-6 Syllabus ...

The imposition of this structure on the developing English K-6
Syllabus required a reorganisation of the strands, sub strands and
content of the syllabus...The final draft of the English K-6 Syllabus
tries to articulate a relationship between the outcomes in levels and the content in stages of the syllabus. (p.24)

The words 'superimposed', 'nearly completed' and 'attempts to articulate' all betray the 'Catch 22' situation in which the syllabus writers found themselves when required to follow the instructions of the Minister with regard to the National Profiles. The writers of *English K-6 Syllabus* were now doomed to producing a document that lacked coherence with other post-1990 Board of Studies syllabus documents, in terminology, structure and organisation.

The Board of Studies response to the Eltis Report, *English K-6 Review Report Part A: findings from the Consultation (Terms of Reference 1)* explains the fact that the Eltis review committee chose to comment on the nature of the syllabus content, rather than just focusing on the inclusion of the outcomes and profiles in the document, this way:

> While the terms of reference for the Eltis Review did not specifically include the *English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document*, as this syllabus was the only one in the primary curriculum area which had incorporated the national outcomes and profiles, it became a significant focus of comment for many who responded to that review. (p.20)

It is this intersection of those matters which are strictly concerned with a profiles and outcomes-based approach to education and those matters that are to do with subject English which has imperilled the whole *English K-6 Syllabus* project. When the Eltis Review Committee questioned users of the document - whether classroom practitioners, school executives or community members - it was difficult for interviewees to separate the comments about syllabus content from the organisational framework in which the content was presented in the text.
Integrating Two Discordant 'Traditional' Models of Outcomes-Based Education

The Eltis Report, *Focus on Learning: Report of the Review of Outcomes and Profiles in New South Wales Schooling* summarised the expected benefits of an outcomes and profiles approach to schooling as including:

coherence between curriculum, assessment and reporting;

assistance for teachers, students and parents to develop and apply explicit teaching and learning strategies;

provision of a common language, to improve communication between professionals and to focus system support for teachers and schools.

This common framework also potentially provides an external standards reference for teaching and reporting, and for reporting and accountability in a number of local, state and national settings. (pp. 21,22)

These benefits do seem reasonable, and even perhaps desirable to both educational practitioners and the community at large. The rationalist desire to structure ends as well as means is certainly satisfied. The possibility of accountability at all levels of the educational hierarchy also holds great appeal in the rationalist world view.

Following from this, the Eltis Report described its task as being to test whether the belief of the education professionals and the community in the benefits of a systematic approach to outcomes and profiles had been realised by the way outcomes and profiles had been incorporated in *English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document* (p. 22). It can be argued that this is a simplistic description of the task that the review committees was really undertaking. In reality, the Eltis review committee was required to demonstrate the obvious: that the belated incorporation of the national profiles into a document developed in the context of NSW state
education policy of an outcomes and profiles approach to schooling, had produced an incoherent, if not unusable, document. Indeed the Report carefully records its conclusions in many areas by condemning the effects of the input to NSW documents from the National Profiles while stressing the strong general support for NSW education documents produced since 1990 but prior to the 1993 endorsement of the national documents. For instance, section 4.2.3 concludes somewhat scathingly:

It has to be said that there are doubts about the quality, content, rigour, interpretation and validity of NSW curriculum documents produced since 1993 as a result of the impact of the National Profiles, and to some extent the National statements. The panel was therefore led to question the wisdom of continuing to tie syllabus development and revision so closely to the National Profiles. (p.41)

In NSW, then, the 'traditional' model of outcomes-based education, (curriculum-based objectives) was mandated by the Education reform Act 1990, and developed by the Board of Studies in its document, Curriculum Outcomes (1991). The Board of Studies adopted its own terminology of 'an outcomes and profiles approach' so that the NSW model was clearly distinguishable from other models. The 1991 document describes outcomes in the following way:

Syllabus outcomes are the intended result of teaching and learning expressed as a set of broad, comprehensive, assessable and observable indicators or benchmarks of student achievement at each stage of a course. Taken together they cover the range of knowledge, skills and attitude expectations of the syllabus. (p.5)

The model then sees the outcomes as being closely tied to the syllabus document. The Eltis Report describes the relationship intended by the Board of Studies between the syllabus and outcomes as "integral" (p.34). Between 1991 and 1993 three new syllabuses were published using this model and one draft syllabus. The
Elitis Report found that syllabuses developed on this model were looked upon favourably by interviewees (p.34).

The 1991 *Curriculum Outcomes* document states that any syllabus developed by the Board:

- is to indicate the aims, objectives and desired outcomes in terms of knowledge and skills that should be acquired by children at various levels of achievement by the end of specified stages in the courses,
- and any practical experience that children should acquire by the end of such a stage. (p.3)

So the word 'stages' was to become key terminology in the NSW model. There were to be six 'stages' of schooling, each stage corresponding to approximately two chronological school years. This arrangement was to conflict with the National Profiles eight 'levels' of achievement. The two structures sat awkwardly side by side as can be seen from the diagram in the *English K-6 Syllabus*, 'Stages' of Schooling and Levels of Outcomes" (p. 9). The Board of Studies determined that outcomes would be included in syllabuses for the end of each of these 'stages'. The Board of Studies document was careful to disclaim any suggestion that 'stages' were representing a model of linear progression in learning:

- Rather than being rigidly defined, the stages should be regarded as overlapping because students will not only achieve outcomes at differing levels within each stage but they are likely to achieve some outcomes from different stages. (p.4)

This view of learning stages was overridden when the discourse of the profiles levels and outcomes statements was introduced into *EK6SSD*. The *Curriculum Outcomes* document stated specifically that outcomes, were not meant to be in the form of an exhaustive behavioural list. They could be viewed as being on a continuum between the very general aims of core knowledge, skills and attitudes in
the syllabus to the much more detailed and specific outcomes expected from classroom activity.

By May 1994 the Department of School Education and the NSW Teachers Federation had agreed to the following definition of outcomes which was published as *Shared understandings: the language of an outcomes and profiles approach*:

Learning outcomes refer to the knowledge, understandings and skills a student is expected to achieve within a course of study. The achievement of an outcome can be demonstrated and assessed. In an outcomes and profiles approach, the outcomes in NSW syllabuses describe in progressive order the knowledge, understandings and skills that students typically acquire as they become proficient in a course of study. NSW Board of Studies syllabuses also include learning outcomes for values and attitudes. (p4)

The *National Statements and Profiles* documents speak of learning areas as opposed to traditional school subjects or the NSW terminology of Key Learning Areas (KLAs). Each Statement set out an agreed position on the curriculum of a particular learning area. A definition of the learning area is given and then this definition is expanded to describe the essential knowledge, skills and processes of the learning area. The breadth of the learning area within the curriculum is outlined. The learning area is divided into ‘strands’ which focus on the crucial aspects of learning in that domain. The English Statement, for instance, has the following strands: ‘Talking and Listening’, ‘Reading and Viewing’, and ‘Writing’. Within the strands there are sub-strands elements of ‘Texts’, ‘Contextual Understandings’, ‘Linguistic Structures and Features’ and ‘Strategies’. The Eltis Report found that many respondents were happy that the strands represented ‘natural elements of the learning area’ (p.35). However alternative views were also very strongly put that such divisions are artificial (p.44). The imposition of this matrix on the nearly
completed NSW syllabus proved to be transparently foolhardy. The matrix of the NSW syllabus also had to include an election promise given on this issue.

A *National Profile* has also been developed for each learning area. The main purpose of the profile is to improve teaching and learning in the classroom. A *Profile* describes the 'typical progression of learning outcomes that a student usually achieve' (p.6). Each Profile outlines eight levels of possible student achievement for that particular learning area. This provides the agreed framework for reporting student progress. Each profile contains descriptive Level Statements, Outcomes Pointers and Annotated Work Samples for the learning area. The eight level statement in each profile give a holistic description of the student performance at that level. The Eltis Report found that there was confusion about the terminology of 'profile' as there was with the term 'outcome'. There were six different understandings of 'profile' operative in the schools and community (p.37).

Teachers and school executives often believed the two separate documents were to be implemented (p.37) rather than understanding that the National Profile outcome statements were comprehensively incorporated into *EK6SSD*. Outcomes, the main element of each profile, are described as a hierarchy of knowledge and skills that students acquire as they become increasingly proficient in that learning area. This definition is at variance with the NSW Board of Studies concept of an outcome where ideas of linear, or hierarchical progression, are explicitly rejected, as was noted above. It is intended that the outcomes in the profile will offer a framework from which syllabuses and courses can be developed. This means that the outcomes are not directly related to content and this became a major problem for the *EK6SSD* (Eltis, 1995, p.41).

With the range of understandings of 'outcomes' on offer in educational documents, it is not surprising that the Eltis Report found confusion existed in the minds of
many educational practitioners. The Report offers eight distinct definitions of an 'outcome' that were operative in 1995 ranging from a very general notion of 'a map of probable student learning' through to a behaviourist 'checklist of what students should achieve' (p33). The definitions in operation were found to influence the classroom praxis of teachers as well as the assessing and reporting practices of teachers and schools.

'Pointers', as used in the National Profiles are behaviours that give a clear signal that a student has achieved an outcome statement within a level. The annotated work samples present examples of student work for each learning area which demonstrates achievement of one or more of the outcome statements. The pointers in the EK6SSD (see Chapter 1), are positioned as the abstract outcomes in the syllabus. The pointers are, in fact, attempting to fill a gap in the learning theory of the document but in doing so manage to highlight the difference in the ideology and learning theory of the National Profiles.

The Eltis Report concluded that the imposition of the National Profiles in NSW syllabuses, including EK6SSD had compromised subject integrity, clarity, practicability and the professional judgement of teachers (p.43). This led to the recommendation (R2, p.i) that 'statements of syllabus outcomes for each of the five stages of compulsory schooling ...to be developed by the Board of Studies for each subject, and replace the current use of such terms as "profiles" and "levels" in NSW'. The final point in R2, rescinding the decision of the former Minister of Education and Youth Affairs, is that 'the Board of Studies no longer be required to incorporate the National Profiles directly into NSW syllabuses.' Thus the power of the State government in NSW to have control of the 'written curriculum' of public education is reasserted.
With the release of the Eltis Report, *Focus on learning: Report of the Review of outcomes and Profiles in New South Wales Schooling*, in August, 1995, the agenda for NSW State education reverted to the situation of pre-June 1993. The Eltis report recommended that the paradigm shift to the *National Profile*’s outcomes-based education model, imposed on *English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document* (1994) be overturned (Recommendation 2, p.i). The report reversed the decision of the previous State Minister of Education and Youth Affairs to incorporate the Commonwealth Government’s Profiles model as a standardised framework for reporting student progress, and use these new ‘outcomes’ in NSW syllabuses to ‘define what students can do’ (Boston, 1993, p.12).

The National Profile outcome statements have a frame that is quite distinctive and were not intended to be incorporated into State and Territory documents without mediation. They are definitely unsuited to links with syllabus content outcomes as they are contentless. Experience has now also shown that the total National Profiles package gives far too many outcomes for teachers to manage comfortably (Eltis, p.48). The discourse of the national outcomes is semantically complex, the lexis is often abstract and there are serious arguments that can be made against the sequencing of learning that is presented.

These clear problems with the outcome statements in the text of *English K-6* must have been apparent to the educational professionals developing the syllabus. It is also surprising that the eminent members of the BOS could not see that the educational discourses of the National Profiles outcome statements and the *English K-6 syllabus (1992 Consultation Draft)* were discordant. Yet such is the power of the political will when it comes to subject English that the Minister’s will is enacted against the expert knowledge of the educational community.
The purpose of this short study has not been to unravel the stories of political protagonists although it is certainly to be hoped that some other scholar in the field will do so. This study has demonstrated that the discourse used is transparently ideological in intent, being constructed to claim symbolic power.

The political desire for symbolic power in this case has been seen to be so important that rationalist economic objectives are set aside in order to fulfil political power agendas. This is certainly the case with the NSW Government being prepared to declare the 1994 syllabus expendable so that control over Education could be reestablished with all signs of national initiatives removed. The need for 'written curriculum' to be studied at all levels of educational authority is well illustrated by what has happened in Australia with attempts at introducing OBE into educational documents. As James Gee states in "Postmodernism and Literacies" (1993),

A sign system operates not because it is inherently natural or valid, nor because it is universal, but simply because some group of people have engaged in the past, and continue to engage in the present in a particular set of social practices that incorporate that sign system (p.281)

What is well illustrated by the various extracts from the educational documents quoted in this chapter is the pervasive power of language-discourse - to represent divergent world views as if each is the 'natural' or 'commonsense' construction of educational reality. A comparison of extracts serves to reveal the extent of the construction as it occurs. This discourse leads us to ask, with James Gee, all we have got are sign systems; we have no immediate access to reality apart from a sign system. So what licenses any one of them? A given sign system (language, way of seeing the world, form of art, social theory and so forth) can claim universality or authenticity or
naturalness, but this is always a claim made from within the system itself. (p.281)

Gee expresses a postmodernist view when he answers his own question by suggesting that no one site of power has any more legitimacy than any other. Within the educational communities, then, discourse is a site of struggle for authority and if possible, dominance. As Gee says,

It is important to realise that this view of meaning sees sign systems simply as the historically derived social practices of particular groups. These practices have often evolved in order to claim authority and privilege for one group against other groups. The sign system is a social and historical tool in terms of which groups of people carry out their desires and claim and contest power. It is not a disinterested reflection of an ahistorical and asocial reality. (p282)

This has been demonstrated by the contestation in the discourse of the 'written curriculum' but also applies to the use of the government practice of the 'Review Committee' and 'Report' mechanism for gathering apparently objective information to support the desires of current policy direction. Gee's work reinforces Goodson's view of the need for investigating the 'written curriculum'.

If, for instance, the discourse of the Eltis Report is considered once again, the paragraph below is constructed as an objective statement about how the accumulated evidence that came to the committee's attention led them to their conclusion,

The panel found it necessary to question whether it would be justifiable, and feasible, to recommend continuing with an approach so strongly linked to the structure and concepts of Levels and Outcomes, as derived from the National Profiles. Such an approach, it believed, would be unlikely to command widespread support. On the other hand, the majority of the submissions gave support to the general idea of outcomes... (p.43)
The surface meaning of the text is to summarise the attack on the learning theory and ideology of the national document delineated in the previous section of the Report as indicated by the phrase 'structure and concepts of Levels and Outcomes'. The paragraph is read differently if it is understood that the Eltis Report had a symbolic function in the battle between the State and national education authorities about which body is dominant in NSW education. The task of the Eltis Report then becomes to use the discourse of the Report to repudiate the usefulness of the national OBE model and thereby allow the symbolic expunging of national discourse from the 'written curriculum' of NSW in the revised syllabus.

In the case of the BOS response to the Eltis Report, *English K-6 Review Report Part A: Findings from the Consultation (Terms of Reference 1*, the political agenda is also transparent as the document must carefully reject only the national outcomes model and not the BOS model. The celebratory paragraph quoted earlier (p.11) attempted to indicate the way that the achievements in the 'written curriculum' since the 1990 Education Reform Act had been introduced. This is reinforced and more closely focused on the outcomes issue by the extract quoted in the Report from the written submission to the review from the BOS appointed Syllabus Advisory Committee:

Outcomes are essential - they MUST be retained BUT they must not be vague or difficult to interpret. They need to be understood by all stakeholders - parents included - as they will become a valuable way of sharing common understandings - parent/teacher (assessment and reporting) and between teacher/educators (in order to give directions and a clear understanding of where we are taking our students and whether we have achieved our goals.) They allow for continuity across all areas, from student teacher training, K-6 and 7-12.

Outcomes should be used when planning, when teaching, and when assessing and evaluating. (p.30)
The claims here for OBE are large and made with urgency, as indicated by the use of capitalisation in the first line, to ensure that the NSW outcomes project is not implicated in the attack on the National Profile outcomes statements. It is ironic to note, however, that the second sentence in the paragraph is in the future tense.

To conclude

It has been argued in this Chapter that political imperatives were to the forefront in the issue of the review of the EK6SSD in 1995. It has been further argued that a very careful discourse constructions were employed in documents like the Eltis Report, *Focus on learning: Report of the Review of Outcomes and Profiles in New South Wales Schooling* and in the response of the BOS, *English K-6 Review Report Part A: findings from the Consultation (Terms of Reference I)*. Both of the documents are linguistically constructed to ensure that the removal of the National Profiles statements from the revised syllabus.

These are contentious issues. The theme of the most recent *English in Australia: Journal of the Australian Association for the Teaching of English*, edited by Marion Meiers and Claire Wyatt-Smith, (December, 1996) was 'Surveying the national scene: the English statement and profile and more'. In this journal there is a more extensive State by State description provided of the progress in each region of the deployment of the National Profiles documents than the outline offered in *Common Ground, Australian Literacy Federation Newsletter*, (see above, p. 3) In this latest edition, Paul Hardage's paper (1996a) on behalf of NSW, 'The National English statement and profile in NSW', side-steps the issue of the Eltis Report's rejection of the National Profiles and outcomes statements. He writes in his conclusion that:
It should not be thought, then, that the story of NSW is a compromised environment for the national statement and profile. In reality, policy makers in NSW public education give the highest priority to literacy...p.26

The discourse here, glosses over the significance of the recommendations of the Eltis Report. The discontinuity- or lack of coherence - between the first and second statements in the paragraph is glaring. The use of the terminology 'compromised environment' is the only significant marker of the extent of the NSW break with the national initiative. The use of 'in reality' is also a clear reminder that there are many 'realities' and 'levels of reality' operating in this debate. The discourse chosen by Hardage carefully represents the NSW regional situation as complying with the very open and general recommendation R3 of the Eltis Report that NSW continue to cooperate with the national curriculum initiatives particularly to 'influence', 'to contribute' and 'to assist' (p.ii).

This is a case identified by Goodson in Chapter 1, where educational experts, at whatever bureaucratic level, are some of those stakeholders in the educational domain whose 'status and career prospects' depend upon 'the structures that have been developed since the foundation of state schooling'. Unfortunately Goodson goes on to point out that this leads to the 'structure impinges on both individual intentions and collective aspirations' (p.25).

Where education is a focal point there will be political capital involved in the struggles over the written curriculum. There are many stakeholders in the educational domain whose continued existence depends on the success of their strategies to claim authority and the consequent 'finance and resource allocation' (Goodson 1992, p.24). In Hardage's report (1996b) it is possible to see how individuals play a role in the 'construction and emergence of the political economy of the curriculum' as Goodson suggested. This is why Goodson argues that the
biographies of people in the educational domain must also become an aspect of the history of curriculum, understood in the broadest sense possible (p.25).

When parts of the terminology of a powerful discourse are appropriated into different educational environments, the words (signifiers) gather a penumbra of meanings (signifieds) depending upon which specific educational discourse is being decoded. The construction of a distinct discourse is an act of symbolic power (Goodson, 1992, p.24, Bourdieu, 1991), ensuring ownership of the discourse is marked and lending authority and legitimacy to those who successfully operate within that discourse. It has been demonstrated above that the discourse choices of the various educational documents analysed above, are constructed with ideological frameworks in mind which have learning theory implications. Such documents then can be seen as what Bourdieu calls "performative utterances". As Bourdieu explains,

The question of performative utterances becomes clearer if one sees it as a particular case of the effects of symbolic domination, which occurs in all linguistic exchanges. The linguistic relation of power is never defined solely by the relation of the linguistic competence present. And the weight of the different agents depends on their symbolic capital, i.e. on the recognition, institutionalised or not that they receive from a group (1991, p.72).

This is clearly the case with the outcomes and profiles debate. The national government would not necessarily be expected in terms of linguistic discourse if the NSW State Government holds greater sway - greater symbolic power - in the recognition by their audience of which authority they believe holds 'symbolic capital' in each particular case (Bourdieu, 1992).

The language of 'an outcomes and profiles approach to learning' in NSW is the specific creation of BOS and those who work under the authority of that body are
expected to become familiar with all aspects of that discourse and the ideology and learning theory that it encodes and legitimates. This NSW curriculum discourse differs significantly from the National Profiles, with its outcomes statement, and both of these Australian models differ from other international models in Britain and USA discussed above in Chapter 1.
Chapter 3

The Genre Theory Debate about Teaching Writing: Conflicts of Ideology and Learning Theory

Some Introductory Remarks

The history of the debate about the genre theory approach to learning to write in NSW schools is a case of continuing the dialectical interaction between what Goodson terms 'the professional groups and subgroups who inhabit curriculum territory' (1994, p.39). In the struggle that occurs for dominance in the genre theory debate it is possible to see 'the political economy of curriculum' stands behind the concerns of the various professional 'voices' in NSW as they seek to have their paradigms included in the 'written curriculum' of the region. As NSW is Australia's most populous region, the outcomes of these dialectical struggles in education have enormous ramifications in terms of the number of teachers and students affected by 'setting new parameters of classroom practice' and also in terms of which educational programs are financed in the field of subject English. As Goodson explains,

The written curriculum, notably the convention of the school subject, has here both symbolic and practical significance - symbolic in that certain intentions for schooling are thus publicly signified and legitimated; practical in that these written conventions are rewarded with finance and resource allocation and thus with associated work and career benefits. (1992, p.24)

It will be seen that the genre theorists have gained symbolic power by the incorporation of their work into $E_{K6SSD}$: their pedagogy was 'publicly signified
and legitimated' by its place in the 'written curriculum'. It is also clearly the case that they gained in a practical sense too, being financially advantaged - even gaining career advantage, it could be claimed - when the NSW government decided to finance the LERN project that is discussed below.

However the dialectical struggle surrounding genre theory and learning to write has continued so that by the mid-1990s there is a reversal of the 'symbolic power' (Bourdieu, 1991) accruing to the NSW genre theorists. This is the result of regional and international criticism of the inadequacy of the genre theory model first constructed by that professional group. It is this early model - often called the "Rothery Model", after its designer - that is now included in the English K-6 Syllabus and Support Documents (1994).

The conflict that surrounds genre theory and learning to write has a strong ideological dimension. The Critical Literacy educational ideology that was espoused by the group is being continually challenged by their opponents as barely liberatory since the learning theory espoused lent itself so easily to a transmission model of teaching preferred by rationalists. The intention of genre theorists was to ensure that all students in NSW schools, especially where the home language was other than English or standard English, would have access to the forms - or genres - of writing that were essential for academic success in the school system. The liberatory ideological claims by the genre theorists could only ever be upheld as educationally progressive at a very 'micro' level.

It was not difficult for opponents to point out that this change only proffered more students a chance to join the old order of things rather than leading to real change at a 'macro' societal level. It has taken many years for genre theorists to heed what was being said and to attempt a reconciliation of ideological progressivism and learning theory. This is discussed further below. (This presents another case of
'ideological shifting'; in Chapter 2, it was seen that OBE, with its progressive ideology, was appropriated into rationalist frameworks.)

This chapter, then, reviews nearly a decade of the background research and debate about genre theory and its application to learning to write in NSW schools. The 1980s scholarship lead to the NSW Board of Studies having a clear paradigm shift to the genre theory approach to teaching writing in NSW schools. This chapter looks at the early scholarly writing in Australia and from the mid-1980s and the later, 1990s research in both Australian and international texts.

The early debate in NSW about genre theory became very public and very newsworthy in 1987/88 with the publication of the Department of Education's Writing K-12 document. This chapter reviews the educational media's version of the debate, as well as the scholarly debate in Ian Reid's seminal text, *The Place of Genre in Learning: Current Debates* (1987). It is worth noting that the debate was so contentious that the Board of Studies attempted to mask the genre theory of writing being incorporated into the new syllabus by inventing its own special terminology for the syllabus, with 'text forms' used instead of 'genres', for instance.

The ideological and educational issues surrounding the genre theory debate were as important for workplace writing and tertiary students' writing as for children learning to write in schools. Hence the theoretical debate and research work continued through the 1990s. The review of the 1990s debate in this study looks at essays in texts such as Aviva Freedman and Peter Medway's *Genre and the New Rhetoric* (1994) and Wayne Sawyer's *Teaching Writing: Is Genre the Answer?* (1995). This review of aspects of a decade's research and theoretical debate in this chapter concludes with some recommendations for adjusting the way that genre theory has been incorporated into the 1994 NSW BOS *English K-6 Syllabus and
Support Document These suggestions emerge from the review of developments since Joan Rothery conceived her particular model for use in schools, which was based on studies she undertook with Jim Martin in 1983 (Martin, 1985, p.16).
Setting the Scene: Genre Theory Studies in Subject English in NSW, 1987 - 1994


R6 that for the English K-6 Syllabus

The Board review the use of "Functional Grammar" in English K-6 with a view to
- supporting the functional approach to language
- replacing the "Functional Grammar" terminology with conventional terminology
- developing a document to include sources for teachers relating to traditional grammar and its use in the classroom (p.iii)

This recommendation highlights the second area where a clear paradigm shift was evident in the document: the shift to a new focus on the findings of recent developments in linguistic research which foregrounds the importance of the teaching of written forms/structures to school students who are learning to write.

The recommendation is most problematical for English curriculum experts because it shows a lack of understanding of the interrelatedness of a functional approach to language, 'Functional Grammar' and genre theory. For those with expertise in the relevant areas of linguistics and English education it appears a nonsense to have a' functional approach to language' preserved only in the 'text types', or genre theory, aspect and not in the functional grammar. In Halliday's (1985) work the whole text and its features are inseparable. The preeminence of genre theory in the orders of discourse in the text, is shown by its being included as the first part of Support Documents, entitled 'Teaching about Texts'.
There has been an attempt to distract from this foregrounding the genre theory approach by presenting the material with a new lexis in its discourse. This proves to be regrettable in terms of the trust that can be placed in the writers of the document and the damage done to the integrity of the academic research and theory that genre theory is based on. There is another problem, too, in terms of the teachers undertaking their own further reading since the pertinent texts in the References for Teachers (Part 4, pp. 311-324) have titles that employ genre theory and critical literacy terminology rather than 'text types'.

There is good reason then to use the 'pause' offered by the current Minister of Education in NSW most constructively in order to examine the ideology and learning theory underpinning the genre theory model in the 1994 syllabus text. There is the possibility that a reconsideration of current research may lead to a different conception of genre theory proving useful to teachers in school education and probably in areas not considered by the Rothery Model (or the Sydney School) with its fixed number of genres and inflexible, hierarchical forms.

The possibility of genre theory being significant in education, at all levels, was recognised fairly early in Australia with this theory being very publicly debated in education circles in 1988 at the time the NSW Department of Education implemented its important document on writing-for-learning across the whole curriculum, Writing K-12 (1987). The pedagogy of the new writing-for-learning document was devolved from the work of Douglas Barnes in Language, the Learner and the School (1971).

Interest in the field of genre theory has continued to grow steadily throughout the 1990s with many linguists, English scholars and curriculum experts presenting new research findings or beginning new research projects. Currently in NSW, for
instance, linguists at Macquarie University are undertaking a large longitudinal study across three faculties, of how genres are learned by tertiary students at that institution. This research extends that undertaken in Canada by Aviva Freedman who looked at how tertiary students studying Law learned the generic forms appropriate to that academic discipline (Freedman, 1994). Freedman's findings will be discussed below.

In NSW schools, the DSE, DEETYA and the Catholic Education Office are funding a large longitudinal study of a program called 'School Wide Early Language and Literacy' (acronym SWELL). The study involves 80 DSE schools. The three stage, highly structured literacy program has been devised by educational researchers Dr Yola Center and Ms Louella Freeman both of Macquarie University as an intervention program 'particularly for those who are socially disadvantaged' and is 'designed to teach comprehension skills in the context of literary, factual and procedural texts. It typically ends at the completion of Year 2' (11-12). Genre theory is clearly central to teaching students to write in the SWELL program. The learning theory that underpins this program will be further discussed later in this study. It should be noted that this is another case of 'finance and resourcing allocation' and 'associated work and career benefits' resulting from being a successful professional 'voice' in the political economy of curriculum' (Goodson, 1994, p.24).

Throughout the 1990s, the usefulness of genre studies being foregrounded as the prime means of students learning to write has continued to be a hotly contested issue in the pedagogy of subject English in NSW. The work of English curriculum scholars, Watson (1987, 1995), Sawyer (1987, 1995), and Sawyer and Watson (1995) have strongly opposed the foregrounding of genre theory in the teaching of writing in schools, denouncing the learning theory of genre theory as being based on a transmission model of teaching rather than on a more progressive constructivist
model. These scholars have also continued to question the ideological position of genre theorists who present themselves within the Radical/Critical Theory model of education philosophy.

The genre theory scholars in NSW see their work as politically crucial to marginalised students in our schools because the powerful genres in our society are mastered 'naturally' only by the culturally and socially privileged. Consequently, early genre theorists in NSW saw that a need existed for the explicit teaching of genres as a means of extending the agency of the economically and culturally disadvantaged within their society. Luke (1994) and Sawyer (1995) have quite correctly pointed out that this is not genuine social change, merely giving greater numbers access to power in an unsatisfactory social structure.

Bill Green, a leading Australian educator and English curriculum scholar correctly forecast (in Reid, 1987, p. 84) that the dominance of the process writing paradigm, as in the Writing K - 12 document, was about to end. Those who believed that linguistic study had been ignored for too long in English curriculum documents in NSW naturally saw the inclusion of 'a functional approach to language' in the EK6SSD as confirmation of the success of their research and publishing efforts since 1988 and the Writing K - 12 document. Those advocates of the writing-for-learning paradigm were concerned that the move was pedagogically regressive as it allowed for a return to 'drill and skill' methods of writing in English classrooms (see Watson's comment in Sawyer, 1995, p.50). They believed these methods had already been empirically demonstrated as ineffective in either improving children's abilities or in developing writing confidence, let alone developing a willingness to regularly use writing to learn (Barnes, 1971). However, as Green stated,

For various reasons the 'genre' position looks stronger and more coherent in the current situation.....it has the potential to tap into both popular and bureaucratic sensibility, having "Right" on its side for one
thing in its concerns and calls for greater rigour and structure in literacy education. (p.85)

There is irony in Green's comment about the genre theorists' connection with the political 'Right' for many of the most eminent linguist-educators supporting the genre movement present themselves as radical educators and in the vanguard of the critical theory school (Lankshear and McLaren, 1993). Freedman saw this as an appropriate framing for the aims of NSW genre work, describing it as the 'politically motivated project of genre education...' where 'educators are enjoined to intervene directly with students who are economically and culturally disadvantaged, in order to help them master such genres and consequently gain access to the corridors of power' (1994, p.191). She went on, however, to see the pedagogy as less than progressive. Likewise Sawyer and Watson (1995) felt impelled to comment on this ideological positioning of genre studies in their paper to the International Federation for the Teaching of English, 'We find it ironic that the genre school should see themselves as part of the critical literacy paradigm... but not the stuff of thorough-going critical literacy theory' (p.3).

It has emerged clearly in the preparation of this study that the mixed ideological perspectives of the genre group is a factor that seriously thwarted any progress being made in the NSW genre debate in English curriculum forums. On the one hand it is posited by the international voices of genre theory (see Freedman et al, 1994) that it is involved in a liberatory educational movement which reveals the discourse of power to the marginalised in society. On the other hand there was the pedagogy of genre theory in NSW from a group who explicitly present themselves as falling in with ease to an Rationalist learning theory as may even be read in Freedman's description, above, of the NSW genre school's advocating that the teacher should 'intervene directly with students...'. To put the best gloss on the discourse of 'directly intervene', are we perhaps seeing political urgency as an excuse for transmission model teaching?
The Early Phase of the Genre Theory Debate in NSW

The academic debate about the usefulness or otherwise of genre theory to the teaching of writing in schools had been raging in NSW educational circles for a decade with the 1988 policy document *Writing K - 12* being a particular focal point for public pedagogical skirmishes as will be shown below. The NSW debate is seen as highly significant internationally and is referred to in books like Aviva Freedman and Peter Medway's *Genre and the New Rhetoric* (1994), where the term 'the Sydney School' (p.191) is used to refer to the work of the genre scalars like Joan Rothery, Gunther Kress and Jim Martin scholars. The strong voices of the group in 1988 emerged from the University of Wollongong's Centre for Multicultural Studies with the writing of Bill Cope and Mary and Bill Kalantzis. They were linked to colleagues Joan Rothery at Macquarie University, Gunther Kress at UTS and Jim Martin at Sydney University who were also researchers in the area of linguistics and language education. Professor Frances Christie was also to be an important voice for the genre theory movement in Australian education.

When the policy document *Writing K - 12* appeared, genre theorists saw it as being grounded in the dominant personal growth-process writing paradigm of teaching writing in schools. Their holding this position tended to ignore the document's foremost intention which was to establish the nexus between writing and learning. As a result of *Writing K - 12*, all NSW teachers, across all curriculum areas, were from then on to see themselves as facilitators of students learning to write. The genre theorists believed their research findings had been ignored (for example, Kress, 1982) by *Writing K - 12* but managed to forge a strong political win by being involved in the production of 'support materials' for *Writing K - 12* which was intended to 'fill the gaps' left by a document which genre theorists insisted was just

82
a 'policy' rather than a teaching document designed to assist teachers with their daily classroom programming.

In 1983 Martin and Rotherapy had undertaken a research study of 1500 primary school student's written texts from Years 1-6. They found the results of their analyses of these scripts disturbing as 1272 of them were in narrative/personal expressive forms (Martin, 1985, p.16). In 1985, Martin had outlined, in *Factual Writing: exploring and challenging social reality*, some of the inadequacies he and Joan Rotherapy found in the classroom implementation of a personal growth-process writing paradigm:

If children received explicit instruction in writing, for example, including models and direct teaching making use of knowledge about language, many more children would learn to write effectively than at present. And success in education depends on writing. But at present, writing is not taught. Bright middle class children learn by osmosis what has to be learned. Working class, migrant, or Aboriginal children, whose homes do not provide them with models of writing, and who do not have the coding orientation (in Bernstein's sense) to read between the lines and see what is implicitly demanded, do not learn to write effectively. (p.18)

Ironically, today Martin's comments, derived from Bernstein's work, ring with structuralist sociological reification of certain groups in our culture which make his writing seem elitist. This aside, Martin's educational argument continues with specific examples of what he felt was a vacuous writing pedagogy that emerged from the tradition of Graves: the emphasis on the personal expressive mode of written texts, conferencing with the teacher without teacher intervening in the writing task, children always selecting their own topics for writing, and its 'complete mystification of what has to be learned for children to produce effective
written products'. Martin believes that the situation will be addressed by explicit teaching of written forms:

the sooner they (children) control factual writing of different kinds, the sooner they will be able to understand and challenge the world in which we live. And they need to be taught to write; only a few of them can learn it on their own (p.18).

This debate emerged in the very public arena of the journal of the NSW Teachers Federation, Education. Bill Cope’s article, entitled 'The Fundamentals of Literacy', in the Feature section of Education (pp. 14 & 15) announced this "win" and explained the objections that he and his colleagues had to the NSW Department of School Education’s Writing K - 12. Cope announced that the LERN group had been commissioned to develop learning materials to support the Writing K - 12 document. The materials would also redress the three major educational areas in which Writing K - 12 was judged to be deficient by genre theorists. The missing key ingredients in their view were a functional model of grammar, a methodology for teaching genres and student evaluation strategies. This list of perceived 'deficiencies' in Writing K - 12 signalled to the exponents of the document that their position was in conflict with the genre theorists in both learning theory and ideology.

Ideology presented a clear focus for disagreements between the LERN group and those educators involved in the writing of Writing K - 12. Cope objected to the emphasis on 'relevance' in the document's approach, referring to it as "the writing ego" (Section 4, p.15). His claim that teachers would leave student writers 'unfettered by formal conventions' is unfair to the document as can be readily demonstrated from the parts of the document which address these topics (p.14 and p.56). Writing K - 12 says that if writing is to be learned as 'naturally' as possible this will entail students being in learning environments which are saturated with examples of language being used in the conventional ways. Cope was advocating a
return to the Positivist ideological view of teachers as authoritative instructors and children as homogeneous receptors of learning who will all progress uniformly through instructional programs. To advocates of the writing-for-learning paradigm this revives passive learning. Such methods as Cope espoused are, indeed, supposed to ensure that the delivery of educational product is efficient so that nothing is left to chance at the local school level. Nothing could sound more threatening and more like Conservative backlash for those who had taught under that older 1950s paradigm where subject English involved 'drill and skill'. Cope's attempt to seek common ground with the opponents of genre theory and to value the essential 'spirit' of Writing K - 12 in the development of support materials to teach the linguistic knowledge described in Section 11 (p.15) was doomed to failure. The ideological positions of the writers of Writing K - 12 and the LERN group were diametrically opposed in the areas of the role of the teacher and pedagogy.

In a short editorial piece in the same edition of Education, Cope's colleague, Mary Kalantzis (1988), constructed what was clearly a rationalist curriculum framework when she argued that to achieve 'Excellence' efficiently in literacy learning, we needed to have 'experts' devise curriculum materials. In this proposed top-down, hierarchical organisational model, teachers delivered curriculum and materials to students that were prepared by the education experts at, or near, the apex of the institutional education hierarchy. Continuing the rationalist argument, Kalantzis said that this would allow us to 'concentrate limited funds into innovations of excellence'. Here, of course, is a world of controversy in the discourse: excellence' and 'expert' certainly fall into the realm of ideologically driven unstable signifiers. Kalantzis wrote of the need for 'new Basics'. Like Goodson, the writing-for-learning advocates have seen the use of this discourse as a dire warning of the rationalist agenda that informs the learning model of genre theorists. However it must be acknowledged other genre theorists like Kress and Christie (see below) would certainly decry being seen in such a light.
Kalantzis' argument rejects the teacher-scholar model of the Liberal/Progressive philosophy of education which sees the teacher's role as being to meet the specific needs of their individual students. This model requires teachers to be expert practitioners. Kalantzis is proposing the model of teacher as technician as the following quotation shows: 'On top of the actual job of teaching, each teacher has to reinvent the wheel by creating their own curriculum.' The latter part of the sentence tells the reader that what is meant by the phrase 'the actual job of teaching' clearly has nothing to do with either designing curriculum or curriculum materials. Kalantzis elucidated this point by an assertion that the job of curriculum design puts 'too many, too complex, too subtle demands' on teachers! This confirms the Positivist view of the teacher as technician that emerges earlier in the article.

Several months later a reply to Cope and Kalantzis was published by Ernie Tucker, representing the process writing/ writing-to-learn paradigm. Tucker was a member of the original writing team for Writing K - 12. In his article, 'A Defence of Writing K - 12,' Tucker (1988) argued that the research basis of the Writing K - 12 document came from a decade of successful classroom praxis by NSW teachers. He rejects the proposition that the 'spirit' of Writing K - 12 could in any way be honoured or enhanced, as Cope and Kalantzis claimed, by the imposition on NSW teachers of externally designed teaching materials based on recent linguistic functional grammar models and genre theory.

Tucker argued that the LERN group's real intention was a paradigm shift which incorporated the introduction of a new grammar and genre theory to NSW classrooms. Far from embracing the 'spirit' of Writing K - 12, Tucker argues that what Kalantzis and Cope are proposing completely undermines the central tenet of the document, that right across the curriculum students should be using writing to
learn. It would further undermine the document, he wrote, by ensuring that knowledge about writing remained the province of linguistic experts.

The time frame for the production of *Writing K - 12* had been a long one: a planned five years which drew out into seven years as funding issues needed to be addressed. Tucker argued that this document delivered to all NSW schools the insights about teaching writing that had already been in place in high schools through the *English Syllabus 7-10*. Tucker wrote that,

> it represents a clear statement about where the teaching of writing has reached at the present time, and because it encourages all teachers to advance on the basis of their fellow teachers' success (1988, p.13)

Equally important to the 'spirit' of *Writing K - 12* was the concept that teaching writing was a task for all teachers that ran across all curriculum areas. For Tucker clear dangers were evident in the proposals of Cope and Kalantzis because of the ideological shift implicit in their view of language learning: formalistic teaching of language which precludes the 'process' approach to writing which he believed was clearly so successful; a denial of the essentially integrated nature of development in the modes of reading and writing, speaking and listening; opening up the possibility of mechanistic testing of the structures and features of language which denies the complexity of finding meanings in whole and real reading contexts.

In Ian Reid's *The Place of Genre in Learning: Current Debates* (1987) there was a clear attempt being made by reputable scholars to sustain reasoned debate about the issue of genres in the pedagogy of English teaching; a genuine attempt to understand one another and to establish the common intellectual ground which could lead to refinements in pedagogical practices used to teach children to write. This debate had all the hallmarks of ideological and pedagogical incompatibility that Reid's book tried to move beyond. Bill Green (in Reid, 1987) offered a sadly accurate description of the situation back in the late eighties: 'There is no middle
ground, it seems, between these two positions, rather a battlefield where they meet periodically to lock in mortal, impassioned combat' (p. 84).

Gunther Kress (1989) in a short article in *Education Australia*, entitled, 'The Genre Debate' agreed with Green's summation and wrote himself of the impasse that seemed inevitable as a new paradigm challenged the established one. Kress saw that the genre theory paradigm undermined the established power base in English education. This was particularly so, he felt, because genre theory's recent history had to do with examining the genres of popular culture. Kress claims genre theorists, unlike the dominant group in English education, refuse to privilege the texts of high culture and deny the primary importance of aesthetic appeal in determining the worth of a text. The writing-for-learning group would reject Kress' accusation as quite unjustifiable since no such conclusion could be drawn from the work of Barnes (1971). Genre theorists also rejected the liberal-humanist focus on the individual as the central concern of a culture, Kress stated, and looked instead to the social group as being the pre-eminent concern of a culture. Kress, then was claiming very strongly that ideologically, genre theorists' pedagogy was based in radical/critical literacy traditions. Because Kress deals with a much broader range of English curriculum issues than just learning to write, he manages to avoid addressing the specific issues of the genre theorists pedagogy in this regard.

Kress pointed out that genre theorists were not a single voice by any means. Nevertheless he proposed six broad points of agreement among this diverse group of linguists. The points are paraphrased here: Kress asserted that most genre theorists held the view that texts (genres) are produced as a result of a social process and the needs of social institutions; this leads to texts having a stability of form, expectations about their register and denies the possibility of any text being entirely an 'original' work; as a consequence of these social processes, texts are imbued with socially determined degrees of power; it follows that people's empowerment
within social structures and social institutions requires that they gain knowledge of
the society's processes of text production and of the linguistic features of the many
text forms in use; and finally Kress believes that all genre theorists would agree that
giving access to such knowledge should be one of the functions of the school
curriculum. Following this useful delineation of the six basic tenets of genre theory,
Kress demonstrated the great differences embodied in a postmodern view of the
text. Postmodern theorists, like Derrida (1976), as opponents of Structuralism,
challenge ideas of fixity whether of the human subject or the meaning of words
(signifiers). This anti-postmodernist stance leads Kress to acknowledge,
unashamedly, that genre theory's view of the text is quite unfashionable;
unfashionable to paradigms of postmodernity and unacceptable to paradigms of
process writing.

In the Education and Education Australia 'combat' there was a tendency to focus on
the parts rather than an attempting to deal with the whole - the large issues which
could lead the way forward to genuine advances in curriculum and classroom
praxis. Green wished to move beyond this impasse:

We need, instead, an argument to inform our work which transcends
the current struggle and represents a new synthesis, and I want to
sketch out the outlines of such an argument.... (pp. 84 -85)

Following Green's lead, Australian genre theorist and educator, Frances Christie's
paper, 'Genres as Choice' (in Reid, 1988, pp. 22 -34), attempted to find the
common ground with John Dixon. Christie's discussion of developing student
subjectivity is particularly important in countering the sort of impression created by
Mary Kalantzis (1988) in her article in Education that all genre theorists hold a
conservative view of the student's role in the learning process. While personal
growth-process writing advocates follow the liberal ideological tradition in
foregrounding the individual, Christie says that seeing the individual as being
formed in and by social conditions does not mean that genre theorists like herself
are any less concerned with the development of the human subject. In the strongest terms she denies that there is any wish to see people constrained in any way by the praxis which devolves from genre theory.

Advocates of the writing-for-learning approach to writing are usually seen as being ideologically Progressive in their view of the teacher and child-centred classroom praxis but Christie says she approved of the progress of the lesson outlined by John Dixon in his paper, 'The Question of Genre' (in Reid, 1987, pp. 9 - 21) and felt that the teacher dialogue was most appropriate. There was also agreement about the importance of reading texts that were used as models before the students undertook their own writing. Christie also points out that she, like Kress, accepts that genres change and are in fact sites of 'contestation' (in Reid, 1987, p.30) evolving and then shifting as new insights were achieved.

As stated above, there was clearly a division of ideological positions between the NSW linguist/educators and those from overseas and other parts of Australia, especially with regard to the role of the teacher, the place of the student in classroom learning and the teaching strategies to be employed. The genre school articles in *Education* by Kalantzis can only be read as presenting genre theory as advocating rationalist, or even positivist, educational ideologies, with the teacher as central authority in the classroom, and knowledge being distributed to students by the 'expert' teacher.

To demonstrate the need for ongoing concern about the genre theory ideology there is value in reviewing an example of a literacy program designed on the genre theory model of learning to write. The SWELL program is a reputable one which quickly reveals itself as exemplifying the sort of learning materials described by Cope and Kalantzis. Its implementation follows a passive learning theory rather than the active dialogical model that Christie and Kress said they valued. The teacher in the
SWELL program is no more than rationalism's 'teaching technician'. Indeed the opening section of the program says that 'a trained volunteer' may be used rather than a teacher to run the program. In the ideological framework of rationalism teachers are devalued as experts and become technicist instructors who are kept from identifying with their students as a fellow learners as this is inappropriate or in contradiction of the role of mechanistic competency assessors of the students. The role constructed for teachers allows for the possibility of surveillance of the work of teachers and students regardless of the local cultural context.

SWELL is a centrally designed program which takes no account of the student's cultural context. As such it does not fit the model of curriculum proposed by the radical-critical theory. The radical-critical theory curriculum is devised locally starting with the experiences of the students. The needs and problems determined by the students, their community and home cultures shape the curriculum which will be interdisciplinary in its approach so that dominant forms of knowledge are not privileged or entrenched (Leistyna, 1996, p.322). The radical-critical theory curriculum will reflect the language, discourses and cultural practices of the community which may require great changes on the part of the teacher (Giroux and McLaren in Leistyna, 1996, p.325). Classroom practices must be aligned with the cultural expectations of learning held by the community. This could mean that rationalist-conservative notions of the educational 'basics' are rejected or prioritised differently. This stands in direct conflict with the ideas of a program like SWELL which is designed to offer students 'dominant culture' understandings of literacy and methods of literacy acquisition.

In the Journal of Basic Writing Collins' article, 'Basic Writing and the Process Paradigm' (1995, pp.3-19), points out that genre theorists see the advocates of the process approach as espousing the role of the teacher as offering implicit or tacit, non directive instruction and as a facilitator of student learning. The critique offered
of this model of the teacher's role is that what is implicit, or 'natural' or even 'commonsense' is usually the discourse of the dominant social groups in a culture.

Collins argues that,

If schools avoid teaching the mainstream code used tacitly in writing instruction, then instruction favours students who already know the code and how to use it to construct meaning. (Collins, 1995, p. 4)


The genre theorists have produced many research papers and books which use, as their research data, texts produced by school students. These texts are used to show intellectual development as children grapple with the business of polishing a variety of texts where distinct generic choices have been made (see, for example, Kress, 1982 and O'Brien 1992). Many educators remain unimpressed by this research data because the writings often tend to be reductive and therefore exemplars of banality in writing. No more than 'writing to formulas'. This can even be seen in a fine and lengthy research work like Kress (1982) where his extensive case studies were school-based and involved discussions with teachers about the writing and the learning contexts of their classrooms. Where this is the case children are no more advantaged in intellectual development than if they are engaged in the production of the often maligned solipsistic recounts that were central to the "personal growth" dimension of the process writing approach (Moffett, 1968, p.195 and Graves, 1983, pp.12-13), the sort of 'gropey ... feeling' (Dixon, in Reid, 1987, p.21) writing that the genre theorists accuse the process approach teachers of encouraging children to write.

This tendency to argue from sample student texts does not really allow for broad conclusions to be drawn about whether students can independently make
appropriate generic choices for themselves or whether they can explain the significance of generic choices made by other writers. It certainly does not indicate whether the students can use writing to increase their capacity to learn more easily and with more enjoyment.

The methodology of presenting student scripts as is done by both sides of this dialectical struggle is questionable. Little of value can be derived from repeated discussions of student scripts because the scripts are more and more divorced from their classroom context. Sawyer’s use of Rothery’s text in ‘Teaching Writing’ (p.12), is a pertinent instance of this. Sawyer criticises the student script as an example of ‘exposition form’ because it in fact shows someone only achieving the barest mastery of the form and not, in fact, accurately answering the question that was set for discussion. The student was set the question, ‘Are governments necessary? Give reasons for your answer.’ What the student text shows is an explanation of how governments can function usefully for the citizenry. Sawyer is censorious about the high praise Rothery offers for the text which captures the form of an argument but whose content is so inadequate. Sawyer’s point may be justified but follow Anne Freadman (1994) in arguing that without knowing the context of situation, without understanding classroom context, the sociocultural position of the learner or the student, we are in no position to assess the worth of this student’s ‘uptake’ of the challenge set by the teacher.

Sawyer also re-presents a student text used by the ‘genre group’ to demonstrate the ineffectiveness and inadequacy of the teacher conferencing model in the writing-for-learning model. Sawyer attempts a revaluation of the conference by saying that far from it being without direction and offering no real help to the apparently confused student in this conference, something of real importance was occurring: the student was sorting out his/her ideas. While Sawyer may be satisfied with this, it seems surprising that neither the conference dialogue nor Sawyer’s commentary points out
that Barnes' concepts of purpose for writing and the audience for the writing are not components raised by the teacher during the conference. The point is that once again the reader is so far from having an accurate picture of the classroom context (Coe's context of situation), the learner's context and the specific 'uptake' outlined at some point in the lesson, that the reader could not possibly know how to assess the worth of this text as evidence in the argument being constructed.

Another issue that early genre theory needed to address was the reductive approach to genres that they appeared to advocate as appropriate, even essential, for success in school writing. The process writing advocates point to the inadequacies in the model of narrative offered by the genre group. The Rothery strategy for modelling the fairy tale genre as narrative is presented by Martin, Christie and Rothery (in Reid, 1987, p.58) If the teacher were truly engaged in the task of elucidating the narrative genre then Rothery's model is a very limited tool for analysing what is happening in such a text. Indeed to do justice to narrative genre one would turn to the work of Seymour Chatman (1978) and Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (1983) to discover the complexities of narratorial strategies represented in even 'simple' stories like fairy tales. In this work on narrative there is no acknowledgment that in the postmodern texts of the late twentieth century, narratorial strategies encourage the reader, the focalising characters (Rimmon-Kenan, 1983 p.75) and the narrator to be allowed agentive subjects maintaining discrete ideological positions in a harmonious way, which is Bakhtin's true 'polyphony' (Bakhtin, 1981).
Genre Theory in the Mid-1990s

Since the first important debates about genre theory and learning to write in NSW, in the late 1980s, genre theory research and dialogue has moved in many interesting directions and the early results of longitudinal studies undertaken by researchers Aviva Freedman, have become available for analysis and comment. Freedman's work can be read firstly in her own text, edited in collaboration with Peter Medway, *Genres and the New Rhetoric* (1994) and there is also a revised version printed in Sawyer's *Teaching Writing: Is Genre the Answer?* (1995).

The main review of Freedman's research, below, is from her paper in Sawyer's text as that version was revised with the Australian audience in mind. Richard Coe's paper (in Freedman and Medway, 1994) has extended and clarified the definition of genre in terms of both its functions and effects in ways that are very useful for educators seeking to incorporate understandings of genre theory into educational documents where the learning theory is constructivist. In Australia, Sawyer's text *Teaching Writing: Is Genre the Answer?,* (1995) advanced the discussion of genre theory into significantly more sophisticated analyses with writers being aware of Freedman and Medway's text. These papers delineate the areas of praxis which genre theory still needs to address in order to move it clearly beyond the possibility of being ideologically and educationally conservative and even regressive as early versions were and indeed as is the version in *EK6SSD.*

In 'Locating Genre Studies: Antecedents and Prospects', in the first chapter of *Genres and the New Rhetoric*, Freedman and Medway (1994) write,

Traditional definitions of genre focused on textual regularities...Current genre studies (which incidentally tend to concentrate on non-literary texts) probe further, without abandoning earlier conceptions of genres as 'types' or 'kinds' of discourse.
characterised by similarities of form and content, recent analyses focus on tying these linguistic and substantive similarities to regularities in human spheres of activity. In other words, the new term 'genre' has been able to connect a recognition of regularities in discourse types with a broader social and cultural understanding of language in use.

(p.1)

The implications of this, when substantiated by the other papers in *Genre and the New Rhetoric*, immediately dates the Sydney School, or Rothery Model of genre theory. The key phrase for Freedman and Medway comes from Caroline Miller) 'genres change, evolve and decay' (in Freedman and Medway, 1994, p.36).

The fixed number of school genres can be seen as an inadequate construction of generic choices and generic possibilities. Freedman and Medway address the question of pedagogy early in the chapter, arguing that,

For teachers, consequently, a failure to understand genre as social action turns what should be a practical art of achieving social ends into a productive art of making texts that fit certain formal requirements. This is the main importance of the reconceived genre studies for teachers. Put positively rather than negatively, they enlarge our sense as teachers of the ends we may have, and allow us to see our work in the teaching of writing as contributing to an emancipatory social agenda. (p.2)

Freedman and Medway, and the work of the other scholars they are drawing on, offer the intermediate steps in thinking that had led John Dixon (in Reid) to argue for the importance of students understanding how to make 'generic choices' as the crucial aspect of knowledge about genres.

In a number of ways, Richard Coe's paper, "An Arousing and Fulfilment of Desires: The Rhetoric of Genre in the Process Era" (in Freedman and Medway, 96
1994, pp. 181-189) offers a lucid unfolding of the complexities and diversities of genres that had previously only been intuited by scholars like Green (1987) and Dixon and Stratta (1995) or demonstrated by Freadman (in Reid, 1987) rather than enunciated. His recapitulation of the historical development of rhetorical studies allows him to precisely define the ways he conceives that genre must now be understood:

If rhetoric is the study of verbal persuasion, then the rhetoric of genre is the study of how generic structures influence (i.e. 'persuade') both writers and readers. In Aristotle's terms, generic discourse forms count among the 'available means of persuasion' we apply in particular situations. The social availability and efficacy of particular forms influence writers and speakers - in effect persuade them, as they articulate their intuitions and shape their materials. (p.182)

Following from this definition which insists on the fluidity of choices involved in generic decisions, Coe believes that in order to describe the functioning of a genre it is necessary to move beyond the three well accepted parameters of the rhetorical situation, that is, purpose, audience and occasion, to a consideration of social context of the rhetorical situation (p.186). This means that a writer or speaker will also be guided by consideration of the social, cultural, historical, and even ideological context that is being encountered. This conception of genre is far more open-ended than that described by the Sydney School for use in learning to write.

Coe (1994) writes that 'Generic structures are abstract; we can consider form qua form only by extracting from the concrete substance of particular instances.' (p.184) which leads us to reconsider the helpfulness of placing 'exemplars' of particular kinds of genres in a school syllabus. He is forthright about genres being 'both constraining and generative' (p.185) Coe is also making it explicit that genre theory is inevitably as much about learning how to read, or decode, texts as it is about writing texts because 'Categorical expectations translate into genre-specific
reading strategies (and thus when a genre is misidentified - or evolving - into misreadings) (p. 183). Positioning himself with the New Rhetoricians, Coe sees that their theory explicates generic structures as social processes, discursive practices for responding to rhetorical situations and adapting to contexts of situation. It directs our attention past the reified structural descriptions and taxonomies of traditional genre studies, moves us to explicate what traditional genre studies put (or at least left) under erasure. Its approach is both archaeological and ecological. Genres are understood as evolving rhetorically in contexts of situation. To persevere, they must somehow 'work', must serve rhetorical purposes, achieved desired effects, be 'ecologically' functional. (p. 186)

This clearly challenges any suggestion that the genre theory model currently in English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document ought to be retained. Part 1 of the syllabus, "Teaching about Texts" (pp. 93-170) is exactly that sort of collection of "reified structural" descriptions of the genres Rothery's research showed to be needed to write successfully in NSW schools.

Sawyer's text, Teaching Writing: Is Genre the Answer? (1995) contains the scholarship and theorising of the next generation of writers who reject the early genre theory model of the NSW group. Sawyer attempts to move the debate from Coe's description of a 'false dichotomy between form and process' (1994, 9. 181) or as Sawyer describes it, between genre theory approach to writing vs process writing, to a broader frame of genre theory approach vs writing-to-learn model.

This is seen as an important distinction by Sawyer. Sawyer is arguing that whenever student writing is usefully 'groping' and exploratory then it is being used to help develop student understandings. Consequently generic concerns are often not anywhere in the learning frame, yet writing is being employed powerfully in the learning process of the student.
Coe's definition (see above, p.97) does allow at least one response to Sawyer in terms of the new conception of genre theory. The new definition addresses the issue of the reductive genre theory model necessarily interfering with the notion of writing-to-learn to which Sawyer (1995) drew attention. Following Coe's definition it can be seen that if the rhetorical situation is that of students writing-to-learn within a school discipline, in the social context of the school, then whatever form the 'gropey' or exploratory writing takes will be decided by the students who know the purpose for which they are writing, and that they are the only audience for which the writing is intended. Sawyer outlines the complex cognitive development that is possible when writing is a key strategy used by students to learn. Indeed there is reason, according to Sawyer, to see writing and thinking as closely aligned.

Sawyer recapitulates the inherent ideological conflict in the contrast between the genre theorists claims to a liberatory ideology and their anti-radical, anti-progressive pedagogy. The claims that so many students are disempowered because they lack access to the main forms of writing in secondary school is not a good reason for altering primary school writing curriculum, according to Sawyer. More appropriate would be reforming the writing curricula in secondary schools. The reader is reminded again that the pedagogy espoused in NSW by the genre school lends itself to the purposes of rationalist educational ideology with its desire for tests of accountability for students and teachers.

There is a second paper from Sawyer in the text, written in collaboration with Ken Watson which demonstrates the complexity and diversity of written forms in a subject other than subject English. 'Writing in Science' ( pp 62 - 76), develops the argument only briefly addressed in their earlier paper in Reid's text (1987, pp.46 - 57). In the first section of the paper Sawyer and Watson address the question 'Can science be expressed only in limited linguistic forms?' and the negative answer
offered to the question is probably not very surprising. Sawyer and Watson challenge the notions prevalent in the writing of the Australian genre school educators that academic fields have specialist languages without which it is impossible to gain entree to an understanding of the content of that discipline.

Such thinking is carried over into genre theory educators' texts in statements like, 'Geographers mean what they do because of the language they use.' (Martin, Christie and Rothery, in Reid, 1987) The writers reproduce a number of texts of internationally eminent scientists communicating in a variety of forms, not just in a 'scientific form' or genre. The generic choices of scientists are influenced, like the choices of all successful communicators, by those basic issues of the rhetorical context: purpose, audience and occasion. Sawyer and Watson do not deny the existence of a set of discursive practices in science writing where 'expert-to-expert' communication is occurring. However they argue that this discourse of a specialist speech community will not be the most helpful for those learners who are only being initiated in that field of learning.

Sawyer and Watson argue that as part of making personal meanings and consequently, learning, in that field students need to be allowed to use their own language. Using one's idiolect in writing seems to be a most important means of scaffolding learning, research has shown. Here the writers draw on the concepts already well understood about writing development from the work of Barnes (p. 72). Indeed, they include, from the influential Radio National program, the Science Show, excerpts of an eminent Australian scientist, Dr McCallister, discussing paradigm shifts in scientific writing with Robyn Williams. This is not at all surprising since all scholars concerned with genre theory allow that genres change and that genres are sites of contestation in discourse communities. It is unfortunate that in English K-6 it is the fixity of genres that is emphasised rather than their fluidity and flexibility (See pp. 101 - 102.)
The last section of the paper is entitled 'Learning theory of the genre school' and here Sawyer and Watson once again address the third pressing issue of the pedagogy of Australian genre theory, namely pedagogical aspects of their work which seems to point to their favouring a direct instruction model of learning or what Barnes called a 'Transmission Model of Learning'. The transmission model of learning is contrasted with the alternative model proposed by Barnes, that of the Interpretation Model (see Sawyer's table on p. 73) which is student centred and depends for its success on the belief that learners have the means to acquire and reshape knowledge and skills so that it is the learner who interprets knowledge within his/her own world view: the emphasis is always on the student making sense of what is being learned (p.73). Sawyer and Watson conclude that what really matters in the debate about genre approach to writing in schools are the epistemological questions. As will been seen below in this paper, this view is shared by the Canadian scholar in genre studies in education, Aviva Freedman.

John Dixon and Leslie Stratta's 'New demands on the model for writing in education: what does genre theory have to offer?' (pp. 77 - 91) attempts to offer readers broad strokes in terms of the further directions needed for research into the usefulness of genre theory in learning to write. The first section of the paper is entitled, 'The need for a new model'. They feel that there is a need to clarify a paradigm shift in English curriculum as a result of the research findings of linguists, but so far they believe that satisfactory transference of linguistic theory into writing pedagogy has not been achieved. In a very balanced way the writers show that they have taken on board the potential positive significance of genre theory in writing pedagogy because awareness of a range of patterning options allows writers to think about the effectiveness of the generic choices they might make as they focus on the rhetorical context - purpose, audience and occasion.
Dixon and Stratta usefully remind readers of the twenty-five year history of successful pedagogical research that has advanced our understanding of teaching and learning, transforming the classroom context in many cases from a teacher-centred domain to places where 'teaching and learning has become a dialogic process.' (p. 78). The writers point out that the national curriculum documents seem to support the latter kind of classroom being grounded as they are on sound teaching-learning theory. They are not so certain however that the list of language 'functions' to be mastered fluently is based on equally sure theory.

This leads to the second section of the paper, 'An Australian alternative', where the writers examine the work of the Australian linguist/educators, Martin, Rothery, Christie and Kress. They show how this work has developed and changed over a decade with refinements being sought to every aspect of genre study. However, as analysed by Dixon and Stratta in their discussion in sections three and four, 'The effort to define genres, and How many genres are there?', the definitions and range of genres presented by the Australian group are still far from satisfactory. This is because, in the case of the definition of genre, the terms are so broad as to include almost any culturally recognised, recurring patterned behaviour. Dixon argues that where the Australian scholars attempt to support definitions of genres with textual examples the examples can very easily be shown to have characteristics that would allow the texts to fit just as easily within other generic classifications.

The fixed number of genres (or 'text forms') published in EK6SSD is clearly considered reductive by many educators and linguists. The choices are based on the work of the Australian educators already mentioned above, and those included in the syllabus are the "curriculum genres " isolated by the research of Joan Rothery. They offer an entirely inadequate picture of the generic choices offered to writers in our culture and the text of EK6SSD does not indicate that this is the case.

Freedman, commenting on the difference between North American genre pedagogy
and the on the fixed number of curriculum genres chosen by the Sydney School states that 'The most striking difference, however, is both the prescriptivism and the implicit static vision...expressed by the Sydney School project.' (p.9). It is a case similar to that of the British national curriculum directive on the functions of writing that students must master: there is not sufficient research evidence to move confidently in this direction. As will be seen below in Freedman's work, there is more evidence that other directions are preferable in teaching writing.

By 1995 Kress, Christie, Martin and Rothery had all moved beyond Kress' concept of 'a fixed number of genres' (Kress, 1982, p. 28). The repetition of this in the Watson Sawyer school is tedious but their point is simply poorly explained. In terms of classroom practice they see official English documents like EKδSSD apparently giving rise to classrooms where the original fixed number of genres are taught in an explicit method that gives an inadequate picture of the complex and exciting interplay of genres that occur in all our texts. This point is nicely illustrated by Ian Reid as he analyses the generic choices and shifts made by the academics who write in his volume (Reid, 1987, pp. 1 - 5).

The concluding section of the Dixon and Stratta's paper poses another question: 'Further directions for theory and practice?' Dixon and Stratta acknowledge having ideological goals in common with the Australian genre theorists and the members of the Cox committee in wanting to empower students, both in the classroom and especially when they move outside to participate in wider social activities' (p. 87). There is then more common ground in that all groups are attempting to produce "a map of 'purposeful social activities''' that must allow for a dialogic approach to teaching and learning. (Here they are rejecting any ideas that the new paradigm could revert to methods of 'direct teaching') Secondly the arbitrary and restricted lists for thinking and communicating functions must be reviewed, revised and refined. Thirdly, the writers believe that the 'staged' structures in generic forms...
must be further examined especially in the light of generic mixing being more usual than generic purity. Not surprisingly, the writers feel there is much work to be done by all.

The field of genre theory studies has had recent and very impressive empirical research carried out by Aviva Freedman, described in Freedman's 'Show and tell? The role of explicit teaching in the learning of new genres', (Sawyer, 1995, pp. 25-61). In his 'Introduction' to the text, Sawyer writes that 'Freedman is appropriately cautious in her claims' and this is so, despite hers being by far the most impressively framed and elaborated argument in Sawyer's volume. She writes that, 'Ultimately ... this paper is a plea for much more focused research and theoretical consideration of this question.' (p. 26). Much of her article carefully reviews the research findings in which her own research must be situated. She does not simplify this context at all and is as frank about the uncertainties as she is about possible useful findings.

While Sawyer finds her paper 'particularly compelling partly because her subjects in one major empirical study - college level students - are the very people one would expect to benefit from such direct teaching' it is possible to read the situation oppositionally since college students are likely to be those who have years of experience of successfully learning about form and generic choices by the 'acquisition process' described by Krashen, or tacit learning as Freedman mentions herself.

Freedman's paper covers the research evidence available to comment on both a strong and a weak hypothesis. The strong hypothesis states that 'explicit teaching is neither necessary nor useful (even if in fact possible); the restricted hypothesis allows for certain carefully specified exemptions to this general principle'. Later in the paper she states that,
Both hypotheses can account for the research evidence that is available, so this paper is in part an argument and in part a plea for more focused research and theorising. (p. 31)

Freedman speaks of the reconceptualisation of genres that results from research in four fields of scholarship: speech act theory; literary theory and particularly the work of Bakhtin; philosophical work on argumentation by Toulmin, Rieke and Janik; and socially based linguistics of M.A.K. Halliday. With this increased knowledge at our disposal should we necessarily rush to share our knowledge with our students, she asks.

Freedman outlines her research in schools where her team of researchers looked at 7,500 narrative scripts from students in grades 5, 8 and 12. Clear mastery of narrative was exhibited to a sophisticated level using story grammar indices and all without explicit teaching. Freedman deduces that structural features of narratives were inferred by the students from their life experiences. In the research Freedman undertook with first year undergraduate law students she observed students learn to construct the law essay without direct instruction or explication. The law essay was shown to be a quite distinct linguistic sub-genre of academic writing of a kind more complex than other forms required by first year subjects. Simply by being immersed in the world of the law classroom, the students became masters of this genre. The genre was inferred from the learning context and practised as the written tasks required of the students called for responses of particular form and content. The learning of the genre appears to have been tacit and to match the "natural" language acquisition of children.

The research of Krashen (1984) is one frame for Freedman's paper. He draws the distinction between two processes: the learning process which describes 'the conscious learning of rules such that they can be explicitly formulated by the learner' and the acquisition process where knowledge about language 'entails the
unconscious inference of rules on the basis of exposure to the target language' (p.39). Krashen believes that conscious learning is used only at the monitoring or editing stage of writing and even here only a limited number of rules are significantly useful. This is clearly in line with the views expressed in Watson's paper, 'Does one need a metalanguage to teach writing?' (Sawyer, 1995, p.97) and Sawyer's reiteration of this point in his paper for the Sixth International Conference of the International Federation for the Teaching of English, 'New Models: Personal Growth for the 21st Century' (New York, 1995) where he asks 'which meta-knowledge is useful and which is simply distracting?' and expands this question into a larger formulation:

How much of the 'meta-' sense of post-structuralist theory do we want to incorporate into curriculum models? Are there 'naturalised' practices that must become conscious knowledge for students if students are to have power over them? Nevertheless, do we want to retain some meta-concepts as crucial and relieve ourselves of others? Are there 'naturalised' practices that do not need to be made problematic? Are there, indeed times when teacher knowledge does not need to become student knowledge? (p.11)

Two comments must be made about the position of the NSW English syllabus and the views expressed here by Krashen, Watson and Sawyer. Sawyer makes it clear that he assumes the teacher is an expert in the field. However the Eltis review recommendation that the revised English K-6 'include sources relating to conventional grammar' suggests that in NSW, at least, neither schooling nor teacher training has facilitated the acquisition of linguistic knowledge. Secondly, radical-critical theorists would reject the use of the term 'naturalised' because what has been assumed to be 'naturalised' in the school curriculum is the 'cultural capital' of only a part - the dominant and privileged part - of any society (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p.47) and this is especially the case in a multilingual and multicultural society. A critique of the inappropriateness of the concept of 'natural language
learning' being transferred from the home context to the school context and cross-cultural contexts is found in Christine Walton's 'Literacy in Aboriginal contexts: re-examining pedagogy' (in Luke and Gilbert, 1993 pp. 39-45). Walton says that teachers who work cross-culturally have to tell about moving beyond implicit teaching strategies into a pedagogy were explicit and implicit learning strategies both play a part without any return to 'Basics' or overemphasis on 'content, drills and skills' so strongly, and correctly, rejected by the progressivist pedagogy of the Personal Growth - process writing model (p. 43).

Freedman reviews the findings of Phelps whose work cast doubt on the 'myth of natural literacy'. There are three bases for the myth - the biological position as found in Chomsky and Piaget; the Romantic position as found in Tchudi, Graves and Britton where the focus is on the individual's personal power to operate symbolically and expressively with language; and thirdly the contextualist position, growing out of the Romantic position, and placing the emphasis on meaningfulness and seeing the child as an active participant in literacy events (p.42) as typified in the work of Harste. Phelps has argued that this 'natural literacy myth' can only really be useful very early in literacy education as it fails to address the more sophisticated levels of cultural literacy since it doesn't account for the production of literary artefacts and the craftsmanship required to do this. Nor does it account for 'the sense in which literacy promotes or implies critical consciousness and reflexivity.' (p.42). This is surely a crucial issue which impinges on that other concern of students not just learning to write, but learning to write successfully.

The rules of our language, Freedman argues, are not yet fully described even by Chomsky. Still what we already know is far too detailed and complex to be taught explicitly. Nevertheless Freedman says that 'teachers have a central role to play in setting up facilitative environments' and especially in establishing the reading writing nexus, also establishing conducive affective frames for writing in the
classroom (low anxiety levels are essential for acquisition according to Krashen), and in creating that rhetorical exigency that will elicit in the student an intention for writing. (p.46).

When addressing the restricted hypothesis, Freedman draws on the work of Ellis with second language learners and finds that, 'when interacting with students over work-in-progress either individually or in mini-lessons, certain kinds of explicit instruction may be useful to students who are ready and who have the appropriate learning style.' Ellis further found that 'conscious knowledge may also be able to 'facilitate acquisition' in certain situations.' (p.51)

Freedman's concludes the paper with an impressive yet formidable array of specific questions to which answers will need to be found in the future. In particular she points out that her studies have only focused on students achieving minimal competency in the required written form. This means that the issue of how the most impressive writers in any cohort of students have attained their greater proficiency is still to be investigated.

The papers in Freedman and Medway's *Genres and the New Rhetoric* (1994) were particularly important for the way that they address specific problems that have arisen. Freedman for instance is directly motivated by the need to respond to the Sydney Schools model of genre theory for schools,

lest precisely such teaching become attractive in North American jurisdiction, where educators are desperately seeking to respond to the ongoing onslaught about student 'illiteracy' from the media to the business community. (p.192)

Freedman especially wished to raise issues to do with 'The explicitness, the sequentiality, and especially the necessary authoritarianism implicit in the new genre pedagogy' because these 'may be very appealing to educators who are daily being
accused of lack of discipline, clear goals and explicit frameworks. Particularly seductive is the associated liberationist rationale: who would deny empowerment to
the disadvantaged?' (p. 192)

Freedman here is reiterating the point argued previously by John Dixon that he feared that the teaching of writing as a fixed number of genres could suit a rationalist political climate in terms of efficient measurement of outcomes of learning to write (Reid, 1987, p.9) Critiques, like this one of Freedman's have borne fruit with some genre theory scholars. In the work of the New London Group there is a thorough re-engagement with the problems that challenged early genre theory models in education. Since the 1980s the early Sydney genre theory network have transformed themselves into an international network. In 1994 this group adopted the name of the New London Group. The members of the group from the early Sydney group are Bill Cope, Mary Kalantzis, and Gunther Kress. They continue to work on refining their pedagogy for subject English especially attempting to transcend the reductive nature of their early genre theory work and the ideological problems identified by their opponents.

Conclusion

The ideological and learning theory tensions surrounding the history of genre theory and learning to write make it truly interesting as we again see how the 'written curriculum' of subject English is a site of pedagogical contestation. This particular debate is clearly ongoing but sufficient new evidence is available to at least suggest that the model of 'text-types' in EK6SSD could be substantially redesigned so that it was not transparently dated.
While it is believed that the recommendations below for \textit{EK6SSD} are justified in terms of the theorising and research evidence available at the moment, it must be noted that the amount and quality of the research undertaken in this area was disappointing in many ways. There is a general lack of recent, rigorous research data in NSW to support claims by either side of the genre debate. (Goodson's belief in the need for studies of the written curriculum in local milieux has most certainly been demonstrated by both of the paradigm shifts investigated in this study.) Key questions are not formulated and issues lack definition by the 'experts' and researchers of professional groups. Just as the Eltis Report (p.21) commented about the lack of 'hard evidence' for OBE, so there is a similar lack in the genre theory field. Instead, what is presented is a continuing dialogue based on beliefs, judgements and experiences.

What, for instance, is the definition for 'writing-for-learning'? It is hard to believe that the vocabulary of international English does not have terms that would quite adequately describe those formative and preliminary writing activities students undertake in ways more helpful than 'gropy'. Does 'gropy', exploratory writing ever develop into something for an audience other than the individual student? The issue of the solipsistic nature of children's early writing has not been addressed by either side. For instance, is writing any less personally meaningful if the child writes about a procedure regularly engaged in, if the word 'I' is not used? If this notion is cognitively too complex for an infants school child then research needs be undertaken in order to gather the data that indicates this is the case. Certainly, too, the writing-for-learning group need to address the issue of how learning to write in English will be different for non-native speakers. If it is as 'natural' to the non-native speaker as for the native speaker then evidence needs to presented to support this view.
The fact that the Board of Studies has the task of redesigning the EK6SSD by 1998 will hopefully mean that the problems inherent in the early NSW genre theory model of fixed school genres can be rectified. There is a need for a reconsideration of the research data gathered on the usefulness of genre theory to learning to write. This study has shown that there are sufficient reasons to question the value of genre theory as a central approach to learning to write in the primary school. This is not necessarily to suggest that genre theory may not have worthwhile educational insights to offer. However it is possible that educational value of genre theory may lie in other areas: for instance, it may be more helpful in learning to read rather than in learning to write.

The refusal of the writing-for-learning exponents to find an 'uptake' for genre - either scholarly or in terms of classroom practice - may make that professional group appear inflexible. In literary scholarship, back in 1990, the function of genre was already so well established that it appears as a given in John Stephens and Ruth Waterhouse's, *Literature, Language and Change: From Chaucer to the Present,* (1990); as a basic element of textuality in both the encoding and the decoding of a text (p. 12). The authors give equal attention to explaining the effects of generic choice in the production of a text and to the consumption of a text. The author's production of a text is

preconditioned by the genre which the author chooses to work within, whether the larger, loosely conceived 'genres' of novel poetry or drama, or more narrowly conceived ('sub') genres...all place inherent constraints on the discourse.

The reader's reception of the text is isomorphically conditioned by similar factors: any synchronic or diachronic differences between the reader's milieu and the author's will affect the process of decoding and re-encoding the discourse; the initial recognition of genre will arouse
expectations which may be fulfilled or defeated as the discourse unfolds... (p. 12)

Possibly the primary function of genre theory is being shown here as to do with the reading process rather than the writing process. If genre theory has a part to play in the analysis of literary texts then this is should be demonstrated in *EK6SSD*.

The current syllabus suggests that there are only a fixed number of generic forms *extant* and that these forms are immutable. The statement under the heading 'Text Forms' reads:

Text types can be presented in a range of forms. They have predictable features, though writers often choose to vary these. The table below. (p. 102)

This statement, which heads the section on genres, could not alert the uninformed to the overwhelming evidence which would support the expansion needed to this small list. Nowhere in the text of the section which follows is the statement demonstrated in any way.

The syllabus clearly carries the implication that there are a fixed number of text forms (that is structures) for particular text types (that is, genres). The fact that generic mixing is a hallmark of writing in contemporary Western culture should be clearly acknowledged within the text and exemplars presented. At its extreme, the view of textual forms presented here suggests that postmodernist writers, whether the Ahlbergs in *The Jolly Postman* or Peter Carey in *Oscar and Lucinda*, are in error.

The terminology employed to describe genre theory in the syllabus needs to be brought into line with that used by scholars in the field. If the teacher-scholar is to exercise critical judgement about matters of curriculum content included in the syllabus it seems perverse to write up that syllabus content in terminology that will
not be found elsewhere. Using terminology not generally recognised by the
academics and scholars concerned with genre theory is not empowering students
any more than it does teachers. Terms like 'text types' and 'text forms' must not be
confused: 'text type' refers to a finished and polished written product while 'text
form' refers to structure, as in a sonnet, or letter.

In the syllabus support document, 'Teaching about Texts', the grammatical
annotations are clearly formalist grammar labels. These give the impression that the
syntax of 'text types', as well as their structure is fixed. Such is not the case and the
presentation denies the whole idea of a 'functional approach to language' which is
intended to allow analysis of what happens in real texts rather pronouncing
authoritatively the way texts ought to be.

The history of the genre theory debate in NSW has demonstrated the dialectical
nature of the struggle for symbolic power by attribution in the 'written curriculum'.
The genre theory debate shows professional groups accruing symbolic capital at one
time and losing it at another time. This is why Goodson asserts the historical
context for curriculum is of major importance. It should be noted that even though
EK6SSD is 'on hold' the document, 'Teaching Text Types' is out in the schools
and classrooms, in the interactive stage of curriculum and is therefore able to 'set
parameters for classroom practice.
Recommendations and Implications Arising from this Study

In *Studying Curriculum* (1994) Goodson offers education scholars a broad schema for the study of curriculum. Scholars and researchers interested in the histories of school subjects are shown the varying aspects of the 'preactive' and 'interactive stages of the curriculum which must be focused upon in order to understand both the rationales of educational authorities and the 'actuality' of curriculum operationalised in classrooms. Goodson has concluded that only the study of the various parts of these curriculum stages will lead to the possibility of any adequate theory of curriculum. Goodson shows the limitations of prescriptive curriculum theories and argues that to find another model it will be necessary to gather greater diversity of evidence about all aspects of schooling from a multitude of regions. Goodson writes:

> We are left requiring theories that pursue systematic investigation of how existing curricula originate, are reproduced, metamorphose and respond to new prescription; a theory, in short, of how people involved in the ongoing production and reproduction of curriculum act, react and interact. Put in this way it seems a tall order but there is important work already undertaken on which to build. The initial focus of future work has to be on the interest groups and structures that currently operate and frame curriculum. (1994, p.39)

This study has attempted to be a small part of that larger exercise envisioned by Goodson of the formation of a theory of curriculum. This study has recorded the history of the origins of the NSW curriculum document, *English K - 6 Syllabus and Support Document* (1994).

It has been possible to trace its development from the mandate of the Education Reform Act (1990) in NSW with its desire for basic subjects - called Key Learning
Areas - and the consequent establishment of subject English in the NSW primary curriculum. Subject English was to be a privileged KLA among a core of traditional subjects which were to be conspicuously the foundation of the curriculum structure in schools. In this, NSW education was following the international trends in public schooling that Goodson identified but that he also asserted would only be an external appearance of homogeneity to Western education systems.

As has been seen, the primary syllabus in subject English was required to metamorphose twice in major ways with regard to the paradigm shifts in OBE. The metamorphoses in the case of OBE were clearly linked to political agendas of the State and national government and their ongoing symbolic conflicts for authority in matters educational. For those educational bureaucrats who were responsible for the production of the syllabus, there was the need in each case to respond to 'new prescription'.

This study, then, presents a history of one part of the 'preactive stage' of the curriculum process, the 'written curriculum', in a regional milieu in NSW, Australia. The regional study is undertaken in order to test the accuracy of Goodson's claims that traditional subject labels, like 'English', may mask great variation in curriculum content and ideology, giving a false sense of homogeneity to Western education systems. This study is one of those Goodson called for which would 'detailed local and historical studies of how common subject labels override different patterns of knowledge formation and institutionalised practice' (1992, p.25). It has been shown that with OBE and genre theory approach to learning to write that NSW educational has developed its own education discourse to advocate particular classroom practice with regard to the knowledge and skills that students must acquire.
This study of the 'written curriculum' has demonstrated how very important, indeed central, is this aspect of an educational system, if one is to understand the economic, social, and academic influences that are operating within a community. In particular, by looking at the Board of Studies NSW curriculum text, *EK6SSD*, it is clear that this is a curriculum document whose history confirms the need "to analyse the ideological and political battles over curriculum at the state level." (1994, p.18) The *EK6SSD* has been shown as a site of ideological struggle on at least three levels:

- Ideological struggle over national curriculum
- Ideological struggles over outcomes based educational assessment and reporting
- Ideological struggle over control of the curriculum of subject English

Goodson suggested that the "histories of school subjects" are one important area for scrutiny (p.23) So this study records some parts of the history of subject English, that part at least which lead to paradigm shifts in its written curriculum in the mid-1990s.

*EK6SSD* has been shown to fall into that category of educational documents whose ideological framework would be described as 'Eclectic', to use Print's term. A more important question then, is whether the Rationalist framework and the Liberal/Progressive and Critical Theory frameworks can be expected to coexist in a way that is workable for teachers and the community. Print says that if the 'attributes of the conceptual approach adopted be disseminated along with the particular curriculum, its chances of being comprehended, and adopted successfully are greatly enhanced.' (1993, p.57) The document makers have not chosen to make the ideological tensions explicit for its readers. In fact they have presented oppositional ideologies without comment. However it is the tensions in the document that make it truly interesting as a research topic, as we again see how
education is a site of ideological contestation. Unfortunately the orders of discourse in this document are so unusually placed throughout the document that if readers do not pay close attention to the changing discourses they will miss the most powerful signs of the current struggles in English curriculum ideologies.

The history of two examples of traditional outcomes-based education were presented in Chapter 2. Symbolic power in the domain of education was being contested when the Eltis Review was put in place to examine the appropriateness and usefulness of National outcomes statements for NSW syllabuses. In both the discourse of the National outcome statements and the outcomes and profiles approach to education in NSW, the rationalist ideological agendas are evident. Despite this, symbolic power remained with the national government while EK6SSD contained the national outcomes rather than those derived directly from the content of the NSW syllabus and in the discourse of the State document. The discourse of the Eltis Report ensured that the inappropriateness of the national outcomes statements would be obvious and allow the report to recommend a reversal of the former mandate that all NSW syllabuses would contain the national OBE model. Here it was clear that discourse construction was central to achieving the goals of the NSW government.

Chapter 3 has shown the contentious nature of the genre theory debate in the NSW English teaching milieu. The genre theory debate poses a continuing threat to the credibility of the English teaching community if the counter-productive combative nature of the NSW engagement does not lead to an outcome that advances our understandings of a useful praxis in the teaching of writing. The academic and research leadership of the English teaching community cannot continue to be seen haggling over the local bone. Well informed intellectual decisions need to be made which acknowledge ideological difference and use them constructively and explicitly so that all learners in English education- in schools or in tertiary teacher
training settings - know of the apparent differences in pedagogy inherent in the two writing paradigms and can make their own choices for the learning in their particular educational contexts. This is a postmodern approach which may equally threaten the experts on both sides of the genre theory debate as they both believe that their experiences support their claims to make authoritative pronouncements on the teaching of writing in primary schools. An essential aspect of the postmodern position is the rejection of 'any theory that subsumes every aspect of social reality into one totalising theory that goes unquestioned' (Leistyna, et al, 1996, p.341).

This study then has confirmed that the label, subject English, is a shifting signifier in Australia. There are substantial differences in the 'written curriculum' of this subject at the State and national levels. This is the case even when the ideological frameworks of the different tiers of government are the same. The 'written curriculum' that evolves from the consultative process of curriculum development by diverse professional groups and subgroups will deliver significantly different texts and possibly incompatible texts. Goodson argued that 'only where these aspects of uniqueness have been fully explored can we begin to pursue more overarching analytical frameworks, more comparative and general perspectives' (1992, p.25) of curriculum. This study is one of the 'detailed local and historical studies of how common subject labels override different patterns of knowledge formation and institutionalised practice'.

The study shows subject English as a site of contestation on two fronts. Firstly subject English has been shown as a site of contestation within the educational communities who are stakeholders in subject English and concerned with 'patterns of knowledge formation'. Secondly, this study has shown subject English as a site of contestation in Australian politics where 'institutionalised practice' varies from one State government to the next. In particular, this study presented the political nature of the school subject, English, in a regional educational context of the State.
of NSW. The brief curriculum history of the NSW BOS *English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document* (1994) which has been delineated here shows how a curriculum document can be a focus for power struggles between State and Commonwealth Governments in Australian education. It is ironic that economic rationalism is the ideological force shaping *English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document* (1994) for the historical record of the NSW 'Clayton's' Primary English Syllabus would be better read at a Mad Hatter's tea party than at the sparse repast of Economic Rationalists.
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and Support Document (1994)

Imperilled by Politics and Paradigm Shifts

A Project Presented to the Faculty of
Education
The University of Western Sydney Nepean

by

Beverley Pennell B.A. Dip Ed (University of Sydney),
M.A. (Macquarie University)

March 1997
PLEASE NOTE

The greatest amount of care has been taken while scanning this thesis,

and the best possible result has been obtained.
Certificate of Originality

I certify that the substance of this research has not already been submitted for any degree and is not currently being submitted for any other degree.

I certify that any help received in preparing this research, and all sources used, have been acknowledged in this thesis.

Signature:

[Signature]
Abstract

*English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document* (1994) is NSW's "Clayton's" Primary English Syllabus in that it was released in 1994, was 'on hold' and under review early in 1995 then recommended for revision by 1998. This is an extraordinary example of 'the written curriculum' of subject English, a site of intense ideological and pedagogical contestation.


The general across-the-curriculum terms of reference for the Eltis Committee Review were that it was to examine the outcomes currently in syllabuses, in order to determine their suitability to the subject areas; the workability in terms of manageable implementation in schools; the accessibility of the discourse employed in the statements. These terms of reference were inevitably to make *English K-6 Syllabus* a key focal point for the review as subject English, or 'Key Learning Area, English' in NSW Board of Studies curriculum framework, had the only primary syllabus which thus far incorporated the National Profile outcome statements. The history of the paradigm shift from State outcomes in
syllabus documents, to the inclusion of National Profiles outcomes statements, forms the first part of this study. The Eltis Report's rejection of the appropriateness of the National Profile outcomes statements for syllabuses in NSW, meant a rejection of a major part of the organisational framework of English K-6 Syllabus.

The recommendation of the Eltis Report to remove 'Functional Grammar' from the syllabus was equally politically motivated but has pedagogical implications for all of those teachers, professional English educators and scholars who have been in divisive debate for nearly a decade about the broadest aspect of the frame of 'Functional Grammar', namely genre, or 'text type' as it is termed in English K-6 Syllabus. This study also looks at the history of the genre theory debate about teaching students to write and the paradigm shift that led to the inclusion of genre theory in the 1994 syllabus.

This study, then, examines the essentially political nature of the school subject, English, in a regional educational context of the State of NSW. By presenting a brief curriculum history of the English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document (1994) it will be seen that a curriculum document can be a focus for power struggles between State and Commonwealth Governments and a site of contestation within the educational communities who are stakeholders in subject English.
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I am grateful for the help of my colleagues in the English curriculum field - both in the educational bureaucracies and in the academic domain of education. As the views expressed in this study have not fallen into line with any of those expressed to me by my colleagues, I can only hope that I have been equitable in my distribution of offence.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NSW's &quot;Clayton's&quot; Primary English Syllabus</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part B Mapping the Terrain of the Study</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 1 The Rationalist Ascendancy in the Orders of Discourse in *English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document* (1994)

| Part A Theoretical Framework: The Work of Ivor Goodson                    | 16   |
| Part B Theoretical Framework: The Work of Norman Fairclough               | 22   |
| Part C A Description of the Text, *English K-6 Syllabus and Support Documents* (1994), and the Ideological Conflict in the Orders of Discourse | 29   |

Chapter 2 Conflicting Ideologies and Learning Theory in NSW 'Outcomes and Profiles Approach' to Learning and the National Profiles and Outcome Statements

| Part A The Research Background for Outcomes-Based Education              | 44   |
| Part B Australia's National Curriculum Documents: National Statements and Profiles | 46   |
| Part C An Outcomes and Profiles Approach in NSW education                | 51   |
Part D Integrating Two Discordant ‘Traditional’ Models of Outcomes-Based Education

Chapter 3 The Genre Theory Debate About Teaching Writing: Conflicts of Ideology and Learning Theory

Part A Setting the Scene: Genre Theory Studies and Subject English in NSW, 1987 - 1994
Part B The Early Phase of Genre Theory Studies
Part C Genre Theory Studies in the Mid-1990s

Recommendations and Implications Arising from this Study

Reference List

Introduction


This study offers an analysis of the history of one contemporary Australian example of 'the written curriculum': the 1994 primary syllabus in subject English in New South Wales, Australia. In Studying Curriculum (1994), the influential scholar of English Curriculum Studies, Ivor Goodson (1992) coined the term 'written curriculum' to describe those documented aspects of the state public schooling system which are created well away from actual classroom contexts. In Studying Curriculum Goodson offers education scholars a broad schema for the study of curriculum. Scholars and researchers interested in the histories of school subjects are shown the varying aspects of the 'preactive' and 'interactive stages of the curriculum which must be focused upon in order to understand both the rationales of educational authorities and the 'actuality' of curriculum operationalised in classrooms. Goodson's schema for studying (see below, pp. 16-21) the preactive stage of the written curriculum, and in particular the histories of school subjects, is employed in this study to examine the NSW primary syllabus text, English K-6 Syllabus and Support Document (1994) (EK6SSD).

This study focuses on the two significant paradigm shifts in primary English curriculum which are evident in EK6SSD: firstly, to an outcomes-based model of educational planning; secondly, to a genre theory approach to teaching children to
write. It also highlights several conflicts of educational ideology and learning theory that are either overtly or covertly inherent in both of these paradigm shifts. As Ivor Goodson states,

In the 1990s, it would be folly to ignore the central importance of controlling and defining the written curriculum. In a significant sense, the written curriculum is the visible and public testimony of selected rationales and legitimating rhetorics for schooling (p.24)

The paradigm shifts in *EK6SSD* demonstrate to users of the document that certain powerful rationales can change the legitimated rhetoric, or discourse, of a school subject.

*EK6SSD* also provides an example of how too great a shift in the curriculum perspectives presented an educational document can lead to the rejection of a whole document. This is what happened to *EK6SSD* with the election of a new government in NSW in 1995. This is regrettable when all the expense of wasted resources is considered: the intellectual time and effort, the time spent consulting with experts and the community, the research effort and, of course, publication expenditure. This is hardly the ideal of efficiency so strongly urged within current educational rationalism.

In this study the term rationalism (see further definition below, p.32) is generally used to describe the current ideological position of the managers of public education. This is done largely in the interest of attempting to be gracious as there is fairly clear evidence that it is economic rationalism that holds sway in the minds of educational decision makers. The case for such a claim is based on the evidence provided by a documents such as the *Report of Quality of Education Review Committee* of the Commonwealth Government in 1985 where 'value for money' in education (Oliver and O'Donoghue 1994 p.15) is an explicit concern. A paper like McGaw's "Efficiency or Economy as a Goal in Education" in *Curriculum*
Perspectives - Newsletter Edition, June, 1994, would lead to a similar conclusion. As McGaw states, after discussing the discrepancy between private school funding and public school funding in NSW, 'What is advanced as an argument for increased efficiency, on the grounds that the same can be achieved with less, should be seen as an argument for increased economy' (p.8). Comments about the economic rationalist agenda in NSW can be found in documents used in this study,

This study indicates that issues of political control over educational initiatives are activated when the Commonwealth government directions in curriculum conflict with those of the state government. It becomes apparent even from the brief history of EK6SSD that rationalist economic concerns can be set aside by governments when it becomes more important to pursue political goals which are imbued by the combatants with symbolic capital to be gained, maintained or regained (Bourdieu 1991). In other words, education becomes a site of contestation in the power struggle between the State and Commonwealth governments.

In Goodson's schema for examining the school subject and the written curriculum, he stresses the importance of the analysis of the educational discourses (1994, p.20) constructed in these examples of the written curriculum. To analyse the discourses used in EK6SSD, and the other texts which come under discussion, the methods of critical discourse analysis developed by Fairclough (1989) are employed. This enables assessment of the ideological constructions presented in the texts that are discussed.

In the English K-6 Review Report Part A: Findings from the Consultation (Terms of Reference 1), (1996), the term, 'paradigm shift' is not used anywhere to
describe the syllabus content but rather the euphemism, 'load of newness' has been constructed from everyday lexis. This syllabus review document produced by the Board of Studies NSW (BOS) states:

Other factors that have emerged in the process of consultation include: the 'load of newness' involved in this particular syllabus. While the extent to which this has varied for individual teachers and schools, (sic) the English K-6 Review to date has noted in particular the extent to which the new English syllabus was the prime vehicle for the introduction of a number of other aspects of teaching and learning. Each of these interacted with the implementation process and for some individuals and schools the challenge of reorientation was compounded by that process and experience. Few if any other syllabuses in the past have been burdened by such a 'load'. (p.6)

Some of the sentence construction is unpolished in this document - as in sentence 2 above - this is due largely to the haste involved in writing up reports of this type. This study then presents some of the history of a 'Clayton's' syllabus, the NSW EK6SSD imperilled by its own paradigm shifts, or 'load of newness'.

The first paradigm shift evident in EK6SSD is to an outcomes-based model of educational planning, assessment and reporting. This shift is overt and dominant in the text of the syllabus. What appears in the discourse of the syllabus is an attempt to blend the 'outcomes and profiles approach' model of the BOS with the very new, collaboratively developed National Profile outcome statements for the learning area of English. This State government decision to introduced the National Profiles into the English syllabus came very late in the period of preparing the document for publication (see below, p.56). The NSW State Government's Minister of Education of the day agreeing to fall into line with the Commonwealth Government's initiatives on outcomes-based education contained in English - a curriculum profile for Australian schools (1994). It will be argued that the move to a national
curriculum was part of an international trend (Goodson, 1992, p.23) which was educationally conservative and specifically the result of a dominant ideology of economic rationalism.

The second, less overt, paradigm shift in EK6SSD is to a genre theory approach to learning to write. This shift in the syllabus marked the successful campaigning of linguistics scholars, concerned with school education, who had established a wide regional movement which sought to promote the efficacy of a genre theory approach to learning to write since the mid-1980s. In 1987 the English curriculum scholar, Ian Reid, wrote,

"Genre is one of the most contentious topics in curriculum theory today, and important practical issues are at stake. This is especially so for language learning, and for writing development in particular."


In 1997, a decade later, the subject of genre theory remains contentious. Much more has been researched and theorised about the subject so that the areas of consensus and the issues to be debated have shifted markedly. This means that for many genre theory and curriculum scholars (Freedman et al, 1994, Sawyer 1995, Dixon 1995) around the world, EK6SSD contains an unsatisfactory or inadequate model of genre theory.

This relatively new syllabus, EK6SSD, with its two paradigm shifts, is under review. A revised text is planned for release in 1998. The change of NSW State Government early in 1995 meant that readjustments of dominant educational ideologies were followed by changes of educational policies and agendas. The new Minister for Education and Youth Affairs, while committed to the general approach of outcomes and profiles in educational planning, felt a 'pause in the implementation' was needed because the introduction of the outcomes and profiles approach by the previous government had been carried out in haste. The Minister
believed that the quality of the outcomes should be examined, and so too should the increased workload of teachers related to the new approach (Eltis, 1995, p.1).

The new government commissioned a review committee, headed by Professor Ken Eltis of Sydney University, to examine these concerns. When the committee's report, *Focus on Learning: Report of the Review of Outcomes and Profiles in New South Wales Schooling* (1995), was published, *EK6SSD* was immediately imperilled. It became a focal point for the review process as it was the only primary syllabus which had incorporated the National Profile outcome statements. The recommendation of the Eltis Report that National Profile outcome statements no longer be mandatory for NSW syllabuses meant *EK6SSD* became the 'Clayton's syllabus' to parody advertising idiom: 'the syllabus you have when you're not having a syllabus'.

The fact that the Eltis Report chose not only to make recommendations about the outcomes-based educational paradigm, but also about the curriculum content of the new syllabus demonstrates that to have the authority to shape the 'written curriculum' is to have symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1992, Goodson, 1994, p.19) The Eltis Report highlighted the second area where a clear paradigm shift was evident in *EK6SSD*: the shift to a new focus on the findings of recent developments in linguistic research which foreground the importance of the teaching of genre theory to students who are learning to write in the primary school (Martin, 1985, Kalantzis, 1988, Cope, 1988).

The hold placed on *EK6SSD* in 1995 by a newly elected State Government in NSW reflects the situation outlined by Wayne Sawyer in 'Writing genres, writing for learning and writing teachers' (1995). Sawyer accurately depicts the state of play in education at this time: conservative politicians, with an economic rationalist agenda, wanted 'grammar' reinstated in English curriculum documents; that is, the
'conventional' grammar they had learned at school. So, ironically, while a very important contemporary intellectual debate was occurring for scholars and researchers in the area of English curriculum design, the nature and outcome of this issue was determined by politicians who framed their will in terms of the views of 'the electorate'. The complexity of this educational and linguistic debate was still so far from being a part of everyday reality that new understandings in many areas of English praxis that were presented in EK6SSD had endorsement withdrawn because politicians were ensuring that English curriculum approximated their view of subject English.

In 1996 when the NSW Department of School Education (DSE) English Curriculum Officer, Paul Hardage, was asked by the Australian Literacy Federation (in Common Ground, No. 5, August, 1996, p. 2) to write briefly about the state of implementation of the Commonwealth Government's initiatives in subject English, A Statement on English for Australian Schools and English - a curriculum profile for Australian Schools, Hardage's report gave equal priority to the decisions that, firstly, The NSW Board of Studies is no longer required to incorporate the national profiles directly in NSW syllabus'(p.i) and secondly, 'The existing English K-6 Syllabus will continue to be implemented in 1996 and 1997; however, functional grammar is no longer mandatory' (p.iii) It seems that the issues surrounding both of the paradigmatic shifts in the syllabus - outcomes and profiles and the functional model of language - were targets for revision.

Both of the paradigm shifts in EK6SSD, as outlined above, are conservative in terms of educational implications for teaching praxis. It will be seen, in Chapter 3, that despite the genre theory movement claiming a critical literacy agenda, the model of learning theory espoused by the early exponents of genre theory was a transmission model. Many linguistic and education scholars highlighted this fact and the later genre theorists have attempted to address the situation. Whatever the
liberatory intentions of the genre theorists, it was clear that the learning process espoused by genre theorists would suit the ends of conservative, rationalist education bureaucrats.

Mapping the Terrain of this Study

The ideological position adopted within this study is aligned to that of the Radical/Critical educational theorists in that it acknowledges, and indeed relies upon, the power and necessity of critique. This necessity of critique continues to be asserted in the Radical tradition because of the centrality of language in the construction of all interactions and particularly in maintaining dominant power structures in our social forms: as Giroux and Freire state, 'language, time, and space actively work in a given historical period in constructed forms like schools to position and legitimate certain kinds of experience.' (in Livingstone, 1987, p.xiv).

As Goodson and Medway show in Bringing English to Order (1990), no school discipline is more overtly political than is subject English. And, as will be seen in the chapters that follow, ideological positions have been foregrounded in both the debate about outcomes and profiles approach to learning and the debate about genre theory approach to learning to write.

Chapter 1 of this study outlines the two theoretical frameworks used to facilitate the analyses presented here and also presents a full description of the text of EK6SSD. An interdisciplinary approach is used to examine the ideologies and learning theory underpinning the different parts of EK6SSD. The use of the dual theoretical frameworks allows a more extensive and accurate evaluation to be made of the effect and relative power of the different ideologies and learning theories at work in all the documents analysed here. The theory and research of Ivor Goodson (1992) offers a framework which facilitates an assessment of English curriculum and educational issues within the syllabus document. The methods of critical discourse
analysis suggested by the work of Norman Fairclough in *Language and Power* (1989) will be used to analyse the discourse of the text of the *EK6SSD* and the other documents that are integral to the fate of this syllabus.

Chapter 2 of this study looks at the theory and research which led many Western education systems to implement an outcomes-based approach to learning during the late 1980s and early 1990s. It also looks at the negative impact of the hurried imposition of the National Profile on the *EK6SSD*. The Eltis Review committee, in their report, *Focus on learning: Report of the Review of Outcomes and Profiles in New South Wales Schooling*, specifically recommended that 'the Board of Studies no longer be required to incorporate the National Profiles directly into NSW syllabuses.' (p. 1). So, with that sentence, the Report overturned the *EK6SSD* as published in 1994.

Chapter 3 of this study focuses on the history of the genre theory approach to writing in NSW over the past decade, from the perceived exclusion of this pedagogy from the *Writing K-12* document (1987) until its foregrounding as Part 1 of the Support Document section of the syllabus, called 'Teaching about Texts'.

The Eltis Report specifically wanted the Functional Grammar in the document replaced by what it calls 'conventional grammar'. The implications that flow from these Eltis Report recommendations are in fact enormous. One of these which must be mentioned here is the apparent lack of understanding shown by the review panel about the relationship between the 'functional approach to language' that underpins the syllabus and its dependence on the linguistic theory from which it devolves. This is Michael Halliday's grammatical model - described in texts such as his, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (1967) - which the review recommends replacing.
The Eltis Committee of Review either did not know, or chose to ignore, the fact that 'conventional grammar', also often termed 'traditional grammar', is the foundation from which Functional Grammar terminology develops. Functional Grammar is based on, and continues to employ, what the review panel calls 'conventional terminology', as a tool in its descriptions of how texts work. This can be confirmed by reference to the NSW Board of Studies English Literacy Round Table Monographs (1991) on the subject, 'A Functional Model of Language' presented by Bev Derewianka. Derewianka's paper was central to the decision to adopt a functional model of grammar in the syllabus.

Another implication of this Eltis Report recommendation is that it endorses the paradigm shift to a genre theory approach to the teaching of writing in schools. The informed reader of the Eltis Report will understand that the approval of a 'functional approach to language', as opposed to Functional Grammar, means that the aspect of Functional Grammar which involves the genre theory approach to learning to 'write, was allowed to remain in EK6SSD while other aspects of the functional grammar are rejected. This creates a distortion of the Hallidayan grammatical model which is a 'top down' model where generic concerns are just the first considerations to be addressed when a text is being either encoded or decoded.

Ultimately this study serves to confirm Ivor Goodson's view that the school subject is not at all a 'given' in the curriculum and the histories of school subjects need to be recorded and interrogated in their own regional contexts. Even more than this, this study confirms Goodson's view that:

The school subject is in a continual flux - a recurrent terrain of political contestation. Periods of stability may be discerned but so are periods of remarkable instability and flux. (1992, p. 25)

To have a syllabus released in 1994 and then be under review in 1995 is certainly to see a school subject in a period of 'instability'. It will be seen in Chapter 3 of this
study that a similar situation of flux occurred for subject English in 1988 when strong objections were raised by some genre theory exponents to the *Writing K-12* document.

Scholars, professional educators and most teachers of subject English are very aware that they are involved in intellectual struggles within the discipline as is clear from the responses received by the Eltis Committee of Review for *EK6SSD*. It is equally well understood by these concerned parties that they face challenges to their praxis from the community and two layers of government, all of whom hold differing conceptions of how their Key Learning Area (NSW) or learning area (National Statements and Profiles) should be represented in the 'written curriculum' of subject English.